

**English 130 (Section 05, Fall 2006-07)**  
**Syllabus and Achievement Requirements**  
**Instructor: Andrew Wright, MFA**

vawright@umich.edu

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:20-12:35, 247 Briggs

Office: TBA

Office hour: Thursday, 12:35-2:00

Mailbox: Briggs 128

Welcome to English 130. The purpose of this course is to acquaint you with the basic skills required for academic writing and prepare you for future college-level courses that require writing. In this document, I will answer most of the questions you might have about this course. You are responsible for knowing the information in this document, and your performance in the class may suffer if you do not know the policies, so please read this carefully.

Desired outcomes

Almost all academics agree that writing skills and communication skills are important to success in the university and beyond. However, we must acknowledge that the evaluation of writing skills is subjective. Because of this, when we approach a writing class, we must be clear about the writing skills we teach. A nationwide meeting of writing teachers (the Council of Writing Program Administrators) agreed on these four overall goals:

- To teach *rhetorical knowledge*, approaching writing as an interaction between reader and writer with a specific goal in mind.
- To teach *critical thinking, reading and writing*, using writing and reading as an opportunity for education and personal growth.
- To teach *processes*, strategies of generating and revising writing ideas.
- To teach *conventions*, the common expectations of readers in a particular community.

Required texts

The required texts are *The Longman Writers' Companion*, Third Edition, *They Say, I Say* by Gerald Graff, and *Civil Disobedience: A Wadsworth Casebook in Argument*.

Also required

- I would like you to have a folder to store your own assignments, records, handouts, etc. You may choose to use a spiral notebook with a pocket for this.
- For organizational purposes, you should also have a portable calendar, appointment book or day planner.
- You also need an e-mail account and access to a computer or word processor. As a student, you have access to several labs on campus.
- You should have a college-level dictionary to consult as you work on your essays.

Bring to class

It should go without saying that you need to come to class prepared to work, take notes, write, and help other students. Showing up to class empty-handed, therefore, is not acceptable.

You should plan to bring your handbook every day. Also, you should bring your calendar and notes from previous classes, in case we need to refer to them as you work. On days we work on the computers, you will need to bring a disk.

Finally, whenever you are working on an essay, bring the current draft of the essay with you to class.

Aspects of the course

**1. Essays.** You will write four major essays over the course of the semester. We will work together on topic selection and discussion, and you will receive the assignments well in advance of the due date. I will see each essay in at least two forms, a rough draft and a final draft. The final draft must be significantly revised from the previous draft, showing new insights and a greater understanding of the topic. These will be graded on clarity, development, quality of research, sophistication of ideas and originality. Essays must be turned in on time. Late essays will not be graded, but will receive 50% for effort.

The essays are considered the major sign of your success in this course. If you complete all four essays, the three best will count for 60% of your final grade. If you do not complete all four, your grades will be

averaged with a zero for uncompleted essays.

**2. Process writing.** As we work on the essays, I will assign several short writing assignments designed to help you plan, draft and revise your essays. These are required, and may be collected. Regardless of whether I collect them, though, I expect you to do them, for the purpose of learning. If you consistently complete these, you will get full credit for process writing. If you come to class unprepared when process writing is due, or if you do not come to class when process writing is due, you will lose some or all of this credit. This counts for 10% of your final grade.

**3. Writing Center conferences.** You are expected to attend at least six sessions in the Writing Center. You need to schedule these and keep track of them yourself. If you do not complete this, you will lose 10% of your final grade.

**4. Attendance and participation.** It is *essential* that the students and instructor are always working together and communicating. Therefore, you need to adhere to the attendance policy, stated below, as well as participate in class discussions. This will count for 10% of your final grade.

**5. Portfolio assessment.** At the end of the course, you will select and revise the two essays you feel are strongest and best demonstrate your skills as a writer. You will also include a self-evaluation where you discuss your own skills as a writer. This will count for 10% of your final grade.

#### Grade scale

A: 92-100 A-: 90-91 B+: 88-89 B: 82-87 B-: 80-81 C+: 78-79 C: 72-77 C-: 70-71 D: 61-69 F: 60 or lower.

#### Attendance policy

You need to be present for every class meeting and every scheduled conference. I believe that you cannot learn writing without actually being involved in the process of class time. If you merely copy notes from a classmate, you will miss the opportunity to add to class discussions. In class, we will discuss writing techniques, share successes and failures, clarify essay requirements, and work to make everyone into proficient writers. You cannot learn these processes unless you are in the classroom.

Attendance is mandatory for every class meeting. If you have four unexcused absences, your grade will be lowered by 10%. If you have five or six unexcused absences, your grade will be lowered by 20%. If you have seven or more unexcused absences, you will be advised to drop the class.

If you have a job or other responsibility that will prevent you from attending class on a regular basis, you need to switch to a section that's in a more convenient time for you.

If you must miss class for emergency reasons, follow this procedure.

1. Let me know as soon as possible. E-mail is best for this purpose, but if you can't get to a connected computer, call the office.
2. Arrange with me to turn in a make-up assignment for a missed class. This will usually be one typed page, on a topic related to that discussed in class.
3. Contact your classmates to find out what was discussed, what notes you missed, etc. It is not my responsibility to repeat lessons for people who didn't come to class.

Absences will only be considered excused if I am aware of them before they happen. Remember, it is your responsibility to communicate with me in this circumstance.

#### Writing Center conferences

Within the first two weeks of classes, you need to register for the Writing Center.

1. Go to <http://libarts.udmercy.edu/english/twc>
2. Click on *Book a Session*.
3. Click on *First-time users click here to register*.
4. Enter your email address, and choose a password. Be sure to remember your password.

You need to schedule and attend at least six Writing Center conferences over the course of the semester. This is your responsibility to make sure these happen. You will get full credit for the Writing Center conferences if:

1. You register within the first two weeks of classes.
2. You attend six tutoring sessions that are logged by the tutor on the website.

3. You keep track of your username and password so you can book sessions throughout the semester on the same account.
4. You show up to each session prepared with your draft, your class notes, and your assignment sheet.

If you do not complete these things, you will lose some or all of your credit for the Writing Center portion of the course.

#### Other assorted policies

Essays are due at the beginning of the class period on the day stated on the assignment sheet. Essays submitted later than this will receive a grade of 50%.

Unless you arrange otherwise with me *before* the fact, I will not accept essays via e-mail or in my mailbox. Turn them in during class.

While class is in session, you should give the course work your undivided attention. Communication from outside the classroom is distracting and detrimental to our purpose of learning. Cell phones should therefore be turned off before class starts, and you should not use Instant Messenger or other chat programs while we are having a class discussion. Likewise, you should be present and ready to work at the time class starts. Excessive lateness will count as an absence.

English 130 is not a course in grammar, though some students will likely have grammatical difficulties. Ideally, if you have problems with spelling, punctuation, sentence structure or word choice, you will learn to find answers in the Longman Writer's Companion. If you have difficulties with these issues, contact me and we will arrange a way to help you learn the skills, such as regular conferences with the Writing Center. Otherwise, I expect you to edit your own work. Final drafts with excessive spelling, punctuation and/or sentence errors will not be accepted or evaluated.

You are expected to use respectful and fair academic language in your writing. Part of this means being aware of the standards and expectations of the academic community with regard to ethnicity, religion, gender and sexual orientation. You should try your best to use the current accepted terms for groups, most likely the terms they use for themselves. You should also not use language that assumes a particular identity to a generic subject, or to the reader. Rather, you should use language that includes as many potential readers as possible.

Course evaluations will be performed online during the last week of class. They provide helpful feedback that will shape future classes and help your educational experience. I will give you information on this during the last two weeks of class. I encourage you to find time then to complete them.

#### Academic Honesty and Academic Dishonesty

Academic honesty is a very simple thing. When assigned to write a paper, you write a paper. When assigned to research sources, you research sources. An academically honest student will read the assignment sheet and try to fulfill the expectations of the assignment. What's more, he or she will communicate with the instructor if there are any questions regarding the assignment.

Academic dishonesty, on the other hand, is a complicated issue. A dishonest student will try unfair ways to avoid doing course work. Rather than writing a paper for an assignment, the dishonest student will turn in a paper written by someone else, or turn in a paper that was written for a previous class. Rather than researching sources, a dishonest student might make up sources and use false quotes.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. Students who violate the policy of academic honesty will not pass the course, and may be reported to University authorities.

#### Students with disabilities

Resources are available to help students with documented disabilities. If you have a learning disability or medical condition that I need to know about, please discuss it with me before our second class meeting. You should also make sure to get documentation from Disability Support Services.

#### English Major Portfolios

All English majors are required to submit a senior portfolio before they graduate. If you plan to major in English, be sure to save all your writing assignments, including drafts and related materials.

#### Schedule

It's very important to stay on top of the activities in this class, and not fall behind. Things may get hectic, and if you fall behind, it will be difficult to catch up before the session is over.

Sept. 5: Introduce class and syllabus.

Sept. 7: Discuss process writing. Introduce assignment sheet for essay #1.

Sept. 12: Before class, read pp 1-14 in They Say, I Say. In-class writing.

Sept. 14: In-class work day. Come prepared to work, and bring Longman Writer's Companion.

**Sept. 19: Rough draft #1.** Sideshadowing in class.

Sept. 21: Read 17-47 in TSIS. Peer workshop. Bring LWC book.

Sept. 26: Read pp 108-127 in Civil Disobedience.

**Sept. 28: Final draft #1.** Introduce Assignment #2.

Oct. 3: Read Antigone in class. (Bring Civil Disobedience book)

Oct. 5: Continue reading Antigone.

**Oct. 10: Rough draft #2.** Sideshadowing.

Oct. 12: Read 51-73 in TSIS. Peer workshop. Bring LWC book.

Oct. 17: Read 154-172 in CD.

**Oct. 19: Final draft #2.** Introduce Assignment #3

Oct. 24: Read 227-240 in CD.

Oct. 26: Read 257-270 in CD.

**Oct. 31: Rough draft #3.** Sideshadowing in class.

Nov. 2: Read 74-97 in TSIS. Peer workshop. Bring LWC book.

Nov. 7: Read 273-283 in CD.

**Nov. 9: Final draft #3.** Introduce Assignment #4.

Nov. 14: Read 115-132 in TSIS. Additional reading to be distributed.

**Nov. 16: Rough draft #4.** Sideshadowing and reflective writing.

Nov. 21: Peer workshop. Bring LWC book.

Nov. 28: In-class work day. Come prepared to work with LWC.

**Nov. 30: Final draft #4.**

Dec. 5: Discuss portfolios.

Dec. 7: In-class work day on portfolios.

**TBA (finals week): Final portfolio.**

#### Final note

I look forward to working with all of you this semester and helping *everyone* become a better writer. Be sure to let me know if you have any questions or if there is any way I can help you more.