

English 101-006, Composition Spring 2006

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Course Information

Texts:

Feldman, Ann M., Ellen McManus, and Nancy Downs. *In Context: Reading and Writing in Cultural Conversations*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Longman, 2005.

Hacker, Diana. *A Pocket Style Manual* (Spiral-bound). 4th ed. New York, NY: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003.

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Course Description:

The primary focus of this course is on integrating reading, writing, and critical thinking. Not only will you do more reading and writing than you did in high school or possibly in other college courses, but the texts we will be reading and discussing are on a level that you may or may not be accustomed to. You may need to, and I encourage you to, *re-read* the texts several times in the light of class discussions and with an eye on integrating and linking the ideas and arguments—let one essay or concept inform your understanding of other essays and concepts even if the essays and ideas initially appear remote. You should also study the readings as examples of successful writing, noting how authors construct paragraphs, evaluate concepts, solve problems, and build arguments (and noting how these conventions differ in writing from different historical periods, cultures, and disciplines). The papers and essays you write will typically be *argumentative* and *expository* or explanatory in nature—they should exhibit a thorough understanding of the text(s) and reflection upon the text(s). The essays will be written through a process of drafts, allowing you time to invent ideas, work with them, clarify them, and present them to an audience. I will be primarily interested in how you engage, understand, and interpret the texts we read, how well you integrate other texts into this understanding, and how well you convey that understanding in writing.

In addition to reading, writing, and thinking, your active participation in discussing the texts and your writing is required. I place a great deal of importance on dialogue. There will be class discussions, small group discussions, peer reviewing sessions to help you write and rewrite your essays, and individual conferences with me. In general, the course sees reading and writing as communal, rather than simply solitary, activities. Not only do I expect you to prepare well before coming to class and to conferences, but also you have to exhibit that preparation verbally. The more actively you participate,

the more you will benefit from what the course offers. In short, do the reading diligently, meet deadlines for the writing assignments, and speak up in class. The course is designed to improve your reading and writing skills and sharpen your ability to deal with difficult texts and concepts in a critical/analytical way. This will not happen without active participation on your part.

Course Goals:

- To use strategies that focus on writing as a communicative process, to include invention, drafting, revision, and editing (to introduce writing as a process of invention, arrangement, and revision).
- To recognize and write within different rhetorical situations (to analyze texts via rhetorical concepts like audience, purpose, occasion, organization, and style).
- To read non-fiction critically, especially in terms of quality of evidence and logic (to emphasize "close readings" of texts and the generation of clear, substantial writing from these readings).
- To write essays that employ various organizational techniques, including thesis, supporting evidence, logic, and documentation (to increase your ability to write a well-organized essay around and specific thesis).
- To give and receive useful criticism of your writing from both teachers and peers to promote effective revision (to increase [grammatical] clarity and usage).
- To use email, word processing, and online research/library databases (to introduce library/research basics).

Technology Goals:

The following information technology (IT) skills will be addressed in 101. By the end of the course, students will have to demonstrate the ability to do each of the following skills in each area.

Email:

- Set up email account on gmu.edu
- Forward email from a gmu.edu account to another email account, if applicable
- Send messages
- Reply to messages
- Send, receive, and open attachments

Word Processing:

- Create, save, and retrieve a document
- Format a document (to include page numbers and reference pages)
- Revise a document (add/delete/reorder text)
- Print a document

Research:

- Articulate an information need
- Set up researchable questions
- Determine keywords based on these questions
- Understand the basic structure of databases (records and fields)

- Search online databases Expanded Academic ASAP, Periodical Abstracts, and the Library Catalogue in the GMU Library system by using the Boolean operator AND, truncation, and phrase
- Retrieve electronically available sources from these databases
- Evaluate web sources and other databases for credibility and reliability.

Assignments:

Your grade for the class will be based on three Summary/Response papers, two 3-4 page Essays, one 5-6 page Essay, one Essay Exam, and on class/group Participation, including non-graded writing assignments you do in direct response to the readings (B5s, ORs), any in-class writing (freewriting, answering questions, writing paragraphs, etc.), group work, class discussion, peer reviews of each other's essays, and teacher conferences.

- B5 - 5 questions to answer in response to an essay, can be handwritten, counts toward participation
- SR - Summary/Response paper, one typed page, single-spaced, summarize argument from an essay and respond to the essay
- OR - Open Response, at least 350 words that situate you in relation to an issue, genre open, counts toward participation
- E1 - 3-4 double-spaced pages on the issue of authenticity, at least 3 sources (1 media, 2 print)
- E2 - 3-4 double-spaced pages on the issue of maintaining or designing space, at least 4 sources (1 media, 1 web, 2 print)
- E3 - 5-6 double-spaced pages on an issue surrounding work or globalization, at least 7 sources (2 web, 1 book, 4 articles)

Grades:

The breakdown of percentages for the above assignments is as follows:

Essay 1	15 %
Essay 2	25 %
Essay 3	30 %
Summaries	15 %
Essay Exam	5 %
Participation	10 %

	100 %

Students in English 101 receive a final grade of A+ (4.0), A (4.0), A- (3.67), B+ (3.33), B (3.0), B- (2.67), C+ (2.33), C (2.0), or NC (no credit); students must get a C (2.0) or better to complete the 101 requirement and must achieve a 2.0 for an acceptable semester. A grade of NC reflects the philosophy that learning to write in an academic setting is a developmental process and that some students may require more time in this development. Since this grade does not appear on the students' transcripts or affect the students' Grade Point Averages, students are not penalized for requiring additional time to meet the course requirements. Because of the NC option in 101, no Incomplete (IN) will be given.

****Important notice: You should keep all assignments until after you receive your final grade for the semester in the event that there is any discrepancy.****

In 101, students receive a midterm letter grade based on the work of the first seven weeks of the course. The purpose of this grade is to help students find out how well they are doing in the first half of the course in order to make any adjustments necessary for success in the course as a whole. Instructors calculate letter grades based on the completed course assignments as weighted on the syllabus through the seventh week. The work in the second half of the semester may be weighted more heavily, and so the midterm grade is not meant to predict the final course grade. Students may view their grades online at [Patriot Web](#).

Rewrite Policy:

You will be allowed to re-write any of the first two essays or three SRs within one week after receiving a formal grade and I will take the higher of the two grades. You will not receive a higher grade by changing the grammar and addressing a few of my comments. It must be a wholesale revision. You must be able to write the final research paper without revision to pass the course.

Late Papers:

It is also my policy to accept NO late assignments. Should you have a problem with this policy you may come to speak with me, but have adequate arguments prepared. Hint: a plea is NOT an argument.

Attendance:

Because everything we discuss builds on previous class periods, and the class relies heavily on group discussion, attendance is extremely important. Consequently, attendance will count as part of your participation grade. If you come in late and do not get on the roll, it counts as an absence. (It will be your responsibility to see that you are on the roll). If you stop coming to class, it will be your responsibility to drop.

Office Hours:

I will have office hours MW 3:00-4:30 in Robinson A 405D. If you need to speak to me and cannot make these times, then ask me to schedule a time that is convenient for both of us. I also check my e-mail several times daily, so this will be the best way to contact me in a hurry if you have a question or problem, especially about what is due the next day. Phone calls will be much less reliable than email.

Plagiarism and Collusion:

Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another source without giving that source credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or end notes; a simple listing of books, articles, and websites is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting. Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions to this include factual information that can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research, (what has been

called common knowledge). What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious; what is common knowledge for one audience may not be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being "reader friendly." In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will not be guilty of plagiarism. See the [GMU Honor Code](#) for more details on plagiarism and its consequences.

Specific Needs:

If you require accommodation based on a disability, I would like to meet with you privately after class on the first or second day to be sure you are properly accommodated. If you need a faculty contact sheet, call the Disability Resource Center at 703-993-2474.

Syllabus

This is a tentative schedule by week and day, for assignments, readings, and activities. Tentative means I can vary it as much as seems appropriate. However, plan on sticking very close to this outline especially on major due dates. I will post all revisions/additions of/to the syllabus on this web page. The updated web version will always override the print and PDF versions.

Essay Project due dates:

- 1 - week 6, W Mar 1
- 2 - week 10, M Apr 3
- 3 - week 15, Finals Week

Week 1: Introductions

M (Jan 23) - Introduction to course/syllabus: homework-read Chapter 1 (IC 5-17)

W (Jan 25) - Introduction to 4 perspectives: homework-pick a cultural practice you participate in or are interested in and break it down into the 4 ways of seeing—write 50 words or so on each, a one-page, single-spaced bulleted list is fine. Be prepared to discuss.

Week 2: Reading Process

M (Jan 30) - Discuss practices and perspectives: homework-read Chapter 2 (IC 18-28)

W (Feb 1) - Discuss reading as a process: homework-read Chapter 2 (IC 29-38)

Week 3: Writing Process

M (Feb 6) - Discuss Writing Process, in class writing (on your own process): homework-read [Semiotics](#) web site, come to class with two questions about the site and two contemporary examples of the principles discussed in the site.

W (Feb 8) - Discuss the process of writing about culture; discuss [B5s](#): homework-read Boyd (IC 58-66), write B5.1

Week 4: Section 1: Reading-Authenticity, Writing-Invention

M (Feb 13) - B5.1 due; discuss representation (audience/purpose); discuss SRs: homework-read Spiegler (IC 104-14), write SR.1

W (Feb 15) - SR.1 due; discuss marketing; discuss ORs: homework-read The Case (IC 132-36), Harrington (IC 138-39), Negativland (IC 147-53), Negativland (IC 158-59), RTMark (IC 164-65), write OR.1

Week 5:

M (Feb 20) - OR.1 due; discuss copyright: homework—skim the articles in all three sections of IC part II and think about which topic/issue you might write about (your assignment will be to build an argument, response, or essay out of the additional sources in the section).

W (Feb 22) - Essay 1 assignment, discuss invention: homework-read Genre glossary (IC), write full draft of Essay 1 (come to class with one thing you learned about the genre of choice)

Week 6:

M (Feb 27) - Draft due; briefly discuss genre, peer review drafts: homework- look over the list, and skim Clarity (PSM 1-22) and MLA style (PSM 127-154), revise/edit final draft of Essay 1 (come to class with one thing you learned about clarity/style)

W (Mar 1) - Essay 1 due: briefly discuss clarity/style, discuss arrangement: homework-read Tuan (IC 177-89), write B5.2

Week 7: Section 2: Reading-Place, Writing-Arrangement

M (Mar 6) - B5.2 due; discuss nature/culture: homework-read Rybczynski (IC 207-18), write SR.2

W (Mar 8) - SR.2 due; discuss design: homework-read The Case (IC 263-68), Yerkes (IC 275-77), Cisneros (IC280-82), Babbitt (IC 283-84), write OR.2

Spring Break March 13 - 17

Week 8:

M (Mar 20) - OR.2 due; discuss preservation/culture: homework- skim the articles in all three sections of IC part III and think about which topic/issue you might write about.

W (Mar 22) - No Class: homework- read Essay 2 assignment, assessing online sources, and Genre glossary (IC), (come to class with 1 online source for your paper and one thing you learned about the genre of choice).

Week 9:

M (Mar 27) - Discuss genre, online sources, and do invention work for the essay: homework- skim Grammar (PSM 23-62) and Punctuation (PSM 63-86), write full draft of Essay 2 (come to class with one thing you learned about grammar/punctuation)

W (Mar 29) - Draft due; briefly discuss grammar, peer review drafts: homework-finish Essay 2

Week 10: Section 3: Reading-Economy, Writing-Argument, Research Papers

M (Apr 3) - Essay 2 due; discuss argument: homework-read Meredith (IC 472-84), write B5.3

W (Apr 5) - B5.3 due; discuss education/jobs: homework-read Wright/Kaplan debates (IC 423-34), write SR.3 (summarize each side of the debate and then respond), keep an eye out for work related articles in the Post/Times online (skim the TOCs you get in your inbox)

Week 11:

M (Apr 10) - SR.3 due; discuss globalization: homework- bring in an article from the Post or Times online on a work or economy related topic

W (Apr 12) - Discuss argumentation (groups): homework-read The Case (IC 525-31), Goozner (IC 532-35), Bernstein (IC 536-38), Hassett (IC 550-55), write OR.3

Week 12:

M (Apr 17) - OR.3 due; discuss temporary work: homework- read writing essay exams

W (Apr 19) - in class Essay Exam: homework- skim the articles in all three sections of IC part V and think about which topic/issue you might write about. Genre glossary (IC), (come to class with one thing you learned about the genre of choice)

Week 13:

M (Apr 24) - Essay 3 assignment, discuss genre, invention-thesis day: homework-read Research (PSM 100-11) and MLA (PSM 112-126)

W (Apr 26) - do library assignment (meet in computer classroom), sign up for teacher conferences, do teacher evals

Week 14: Teacher Conferences

M (May 1) - teacher conferences: homework--continue research and drafting

W (May 3) - teacher conferences: homework--continue research and drafting

Week 15: Finals Week

Final papers due _____