

English 100 Lab Syllabus
Fall 2006
Department of Literature and Languages
Texas A&M University-Commerce

Required Textbook and Materials

Rhetorical Grammar: Grammatical Choices, Rhetorical Effects, 5th ed. By Martha Kolln

Student ID/Copy card

A lined notebook to use as a Dialogue Journal

Dear Student,

Welcome to the fall 2006 English Writing Studio/Lab 100 program. This semester should prove to be a vigorous, exciting, and rewarding chapter in your academic career here at Texas A&M-Commerce. According to Stephen North (an important scholar in composition studies), "Writing is hard, and it takes a long time." Writing is a struggle for all writers, not just inexperienced ones. Moreover, it is for this reason that a learning space like this Writing Group is available to you. Through constant reflection and conversation about writing and who you are as a writer, we will do everything we can to support the work you are doing in English 100 classroom.

ENGLISH 100 COURSE OBJECTIVES:

You should leave English 100 at the end of the semester having developed these skills:

- An ability to critically analyze texts through exploratory writing and talking
- Strategies for translating these explorations into effective academic prose for a particular rhetorical context
- An understanding of the importance of using multiple drafts to manage the complexities of writing
- An ability to shape essays and frame arguments in effective and convincing ways for particular audiences and particular purposes
- An understanding and appreciation for the many methods and purposes of revision
- An effective writing process that is flexible enough to address different writing situations and individualized enough to draw on what we already know well
- An ability to read critically from both your own texts and texts of others, in ways most appropriate for rhetorical contexts like those most often required of college-level writers
- A working understanding of MLA format and an awareness of the contextual importance of documentation styles in general

As your writing group tutor, along with the other members of your writing group, I will help you to navigate and implement the above objectives. In class, we will discuss your readings, explore your writing assignments within the context of the readings, and develop strategies for revision and active reading. For 100 minutes a week, you will work with me and the other members of your lab group to help guide and gather feedback regarding our reading and writing assignments.

DIALOGUE JOURNALS:

You will need to bring to lab a notebook or binder to record your observations, thoughts, favorite and/or thought provoking quotes, and ideas based on your English Writing 100 course readings and writings. You will also respond to prompts and class discussions. Although keeping a dialogue journal is one of the obligations of this course, your journal is also your friend, a medium that will allow you to be creative and not worry about grammatical issues. In fact, I encourage you to embellish and be creative in your journal, especially if it helps generate ideas for writing assignments. However, please note that “pretty or artistic” looking journals will not take the place of clear, concise, organized, and thoughtful writing. Nevertheless, your journal should serve as a wellspring of ideas for your growth as a writer and for your Final Reflections assignment. Your journal will make you more conscious of your writing/reading processes so you can analyze what works best for you and why. At midterm, you will be summarizing key points raised in this journal and presenting them to me. This presentation will offer us an excellent opportunity to speak more directly about your writing processes and your work as a writer. You will also keep a journal in your English 100 class and you may use the same journal for both classes.

YOUR ENGLISH LAB 100 IS NOT AN OPTIONAL COURSE and your work in the lab will affect your grade in English 100. Use this inevitability to your advantage. The more you put into this Writing Group, the more you will get out of it. The reverse is true as well. The less you put in, the less you get out. Your English 100 grade will reflect your level of commitment.

YOUR ENGLISH WRITING GROUPS are feedback sessions in which you share a draft with another reader and they offer their responses to it as readers. We will engage in many peer review sessions, and you will be expected to contribute as enthusiastically, knowledgeably, and productively as possible to any and all class, pair, and writing group discussions. The Writing Group will encourage and foster productive relationships among writers by developing habits of reflection and effective methods for “re-seeing” the work of others in order to revise your own work and help them to do the same with the work they produce and review.

REGULAR FEEDBACK

You will be responding regularly, rigorously, and diplomatically to the work of the other members of your Writing Group (work-shopping), and they will be doing the same for you. This means that it is imperative that you come prepared to lab with papers for workshopping. You will use this feedback as fodder for deep revision of your major essays for English 100. You will also use this feedback to develop revisions of your major essays as you prepare your final portfolio.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR CRITICAL REFLECTIONS.

This culminating project is actually your final writing assignment for English 100. In it, you will be expected to describe your writing and reading processes, including how these processes have changed this semester. You will be expected to quote from your assigned readings and your Dialogue Journal extensively, and you will include these reflections in your final portfolio. Your writing group will support the development and deep revision of this essay at various stages throughout the semester.

ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING A PRODUCTIVE WRITING COMMUNITY

- Please note that this is a Studio/Writing Group, and participation from each member is required not only for ensuring your critical writing/reading skills, but is necessary to build trust among a community of writers
- If you cannot avoid an absence, please notify me by e-mail or phone before class. You may also time stamp and leave a note in my mailbox in the main office
- If you missed classed, you missed work, therefore, it is your responsibility to make up missed class assignments
- Establish contacts in your Studio/Writing Group for updates on missed assignments
- Excessive tardiness is disruptive, disrespectful, and non-productive, and therefore unacceptable
- Since we are establishing a community of writers that will depend on each other to contribute to discussions and engage with one another in meaningful ways about the subject at hand, it is vital that all students come prepared to each meeting with writing assignments, handouts, books, journal, etc.
- It is essential that you write regularly in your dialogue journal, fulfill all reading assignments, and employ active reading notations in your book so you can refer to passages and evidence readily.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS CENTER

You are required to make six visits to the Writing Center throughout the semester. Failure to do so will result in a reduction of your overall grade.

The Communication Skills Center is an indispensable and effective tool. Students needing help generating ideas, or assessing other concerns during any phase of the writing process are strongly encouraged to seek help with the tutors in the Writing Center (WC).

ATTENDANCE POLICY

If you miss regularly scheduled Studio Workshops your will fall behind and not fulfill your obligation to the Writing Group. You are allowed two excused absences; all subsequent absences will lower your final course grade.

TARDINESS POLICY

If students arrive one minute late after the scheduled class time, they are considered late. If students are more than ten minutes late, they will be counted as absent. Excessive tardiness will result in the lowering of your final course grade.

GRADES

Participation 10%
 Dialogue Journals 15%
 Midterm Conference 10%
 Writing Center Visits 30%
 Final Reflections 20%
 Presentations 15%

PLAGIARISM POLICY

In *Transition to College Writing* (2001), Keith Hjortshoj explains plagiarism this way: “derived from the Latin word kidnapping, plagiarism is the theft of someone else’s ‘brainchild’—that person’s language, ideas, or research—and the origin of the word conveys the seriousness of such offenses in the view of college teachers and administrators. The reason is that words, ideas, and research are the main forms of currency in academic life. Because they represent the ‘intellectual property’ with which scholars have built their careers, using that property without permission or credit is a form of larceny. Teachers also assume that the writing and other work students turn in is the product of their own effort, and because grades (another form of academic currency) are based on that work, ‘borrowing’ language and ideas from someone else constitutes cheating” (172).

Sometimes plagiarism is unintentional because students are not completely sure what constitutes plagiarism. Students should know that to submit papers they purchased from a commercial service or another student is unacceptable. However, students may also unintentionally misuse sources in a manner that may be considered plagiarism. The WPA defines plagiarism as “occur[ing] in an instructional setting when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.” Admittedly, there are instances where it is very hard to tell what may be considered common knowledge and what is not. Therefore, the “deliberate” use may be difficult for teachers and administrators to discern. It is for this reason that even when plagiarism is unintentional, you may still be held accountable. If you have any questions at all about how to handle a source and want to avoid crossing that line, even if you are only working with portions of sources written by others, talk to me and/or consult the tutors in the Writing Center. I feel that one of our jobs in English 100 is to help you determine the best ways to avoid any suspicious acts that could be interpreted as “plagiarism.”

OFFICIAL DEPARTMENT POLICY

“Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion.”
(Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b [1,2,3])

ADDITIONAL OFFICIAL STATEMENTS

Student Conduct: all students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. In addition, you are requested to turn off your cell phones before entering the classroom. Common courtesy says you do not receive or answer calls during class. If there is an emergency that requires you to leave your phone on, talk to me about it beforehand and switch the phone to vibrate to keep class disruption minimal. Instant/text messaging is off limits.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT

Students requesting accommodations for disabilities must go through the Academic Support Committee. For more information, please contact the Director of Disability Resources and Services, Halladay Student Services Building, Room 303D, 903.886.5835.

*Week 2**September 4-8*

- Answer the Writing Profile Questionnaire in your Dialogue Journal (DJ).

*Week 3**September 11-15*

- Begin *Phase I* of Field Research Project. We will meet in the library to begin *Phase I* of your research project by going over what is expected of you, divide into groups and assign tasks, and develop a plan of what you are to do with your library time.
- Writing Center visit #1 due by Friday the 15th

*Week 4**September 18-22*

- Dialogue Journal
- Continue Field Research Project *Phase I*

*Week 5**September 25-29*

- Dialogue Journal
- Begin Field Research Project *Phase II*
- Turn in handout-you will receive feedback from me and be allowed to make revisions
- WCV #2 due by Friday the 29th

*Week 6**October 2-6*

- Dialogue Journal
- Field Research Project presentations

*Week 7**October 9-13*

- Dialogue Journal
- This week we will set aside conference time to discuss your progress thus far-your performance, grades, dialogue journal, and any concerns you may have about how things are going in class.
- Next week mid-term grades are due, so it is very important that you attend your individual conference time with me to ensure your academic progress
- WCV #3 due Friday 13th

*Week 8 Mid-term**October 16-20*

- Begin work on Critical/Final Reflections. Your first draft for panel review is due on November 10. In class, we will discuss at length the details of this assignment and the many options available to you for generation ideas for your Critical Reflections
- Write in DJ

*Week 9**October 23-27*

- Workshop papers
- WCV #4 due Friday 3rd

*Week 10**October 30 –November 3*

- Workshop papers

*Week 11**November 6-10*

- First draft of Critical/Final Reflections (CR) due on the 10th
- *Please use a paperclip and not a staple, as we will be making copies of these drafts.

*Week 12**November 13-17*

- This week we will discuss the panel feedback your received on your Final Reflections and begin revisions
- WCV #5 due Friday 17th

*Week 13**November 20-24*

- *Thanksgiving break-Have a wonderful Thanksgiving vacation*

*Week 14**November 27-December 1*

- Continue revising your Critical Reflections. Throughout the last few weeks you should have be actively revising your Critical Reflections paper by utilizing the feedback you received from the panel, tutors in the WC, peer-review, and me. Please note that the your final FR is due on December 1st
- Important reminder-Please remember to make two copies of your FR, one copy for your lab instructor and one copy for your portfolio
- WCV #6 due Friday 1st

*Week 15**December 4-8*

- No lab meetings this week. Please use this time to work in the Writing Center (WC) to fine tune all your work. Again, I cannot stress enough how important a resource the WC is for students to enhance their Writing Skills

*Week 16**December 11-15*

- This is Finals Week—no lab meetings
- The WC is closed this week