

Composition for American Academic Communication II
ESL 015
Section 004
Fall 2009
Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:45 am – 11:00 am
103 Rackley

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Office Hours: Wednesday 2:30-4:00pm and by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome! This is a composition course for intermediate/advanced level non-native speakers of English. You will become familiar with the various stages in the process of writing and develop strategies for reading and writing various models of American academic discourse. Overall, you will be able to use what you have learned in this course to successfully participate in academic reading and writing tasks throughout their university experience in the United States.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

You will participate in a variety of reading and writing tasks that will enable you to:

- Identify how writers convey their purpose for a particular audience in readings
- Identify and evaluate methods of argument, persuasion and evidence used by others and implement them in your own writing
- Identify and evaluate how language shapes a writer's credibility and persuasive appeals
- Enhance your ability to organize and develop ideas in a coherent and unified way
- Revise and reshape your writing to improve ideas, organization, language use, vocabulary and mechanics
- Identify and correct structural and grammatical errors within your written texts
- Select sources, take notes and cite sources to support ideas
- Use the library to conduct library research
- Become better readers and writers in preparation for their college career

REQUIRED TEXTS

The Blair Reader by L. G. Kirszner and S. R. Mandell (6th edition) – ISBN: 978-0132308694

Keys for Writers by A. Raimes (5th edition) -- ISBN: 978-0495799672

EVALUATION

Course requirements will be graded and weighted as follows:

Formal Writing Assignments

First Paper	10%
Second Paper	15%
Third Paper	25%
Annotated Bibliography	5%

Participatory and communicative Assignments

Blogs	10%
Quizzes or short responses	10%
Attendance & Participation	15%
Leading Discussion	10%

Formal Writing Assignments: There are four major writing assignments. For the first paper, you will summarize and critique a text and a movie. The second paper is a contrast/compare essay in which you will need to find articles or essays from the book, library—preferably one related to the summary and critique essay—and write about the similarities and differences in the arguments of the two to three texts that you selected. Prior to this assignment, you will complete an annotated bibliography. For details, read below. For the final assignment, you will write an argumentative essay using at least three scholarly articles as support—preferably two of which you found in the library and my have written about previously. You must complete all assignments in order to pass the course.

Annotated Bibliography: The purpose of the annotated bibliography is to give the reader (yourself or another scholar) information about the content, quality, and usefulness of the material related to a specific research topic. For this assignment, you will need to locate three scholarly articles or books on your topic, read your material, and annotate each source. We will discuss these assignments in depth as the semester progresses.

Drafts will be handed-in and/or you may participate in a variety of writing conferences and in-class or online revising activities. These activities will be figured into the final grade for each paper.

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is required, and you will be expected to participate spiritedly. University policy (Policies and Rules, 42-27) states: A student whose absences are excessive “may run the risk of receiving a lower grade or a failing grade,” whether some of those absences are considered “excused” or not. An excused absence is an absence necessitated by university sponsored activities—athletics, field trips, holidays, etc. All excused absences must be documented. You must notify me in advance if you will not be attending class. You get three absences per semester for this class, after which I drop your final grade. Please use them at your discretion. Let me be perfectly clear, you get three absences, which includes every possible reason for being absent. Furthermore, your participation grade and your quiz grades are affected by excessive absences.

Tardiness (being late to class) will not be tolerated: three “tardies” will count as one absence, so please come to class on time.

Participation can be in the form of group, class, response to blogs of other students, or peer discussions or activities. In regard to response to blogs, every two weeks, you are expected to post one comment to one of your peers. In the following round, you will do the same thing except to another student. In general, discussions should reflect your effort and active engagement with the text and the topic of the class/activity/or blog.

Special Circumstances affecting attendance policies: According to Fall 2009 Flu Protocols “students should NOT attend class or any public gatherings while ill with influenza. Students with flu symptoms will be asked to leave campus if possible and to return home during recovery. The illness and self-isolation period will usually be about a week. It is very important that individuals avoid spreading the flu to others.” For health-related questions you can email Dr. Margaret Spear, director, University Health Services, at uhsinfo@sa.psu.edu.

Quizzes or Short Responses: The purpose of quizzes and short responses is to check to see if you've been keeping up with the reading. Consequently, in quizzes, questions will only be on significantly elements of the text that anyone who has completed the reading could reasonably remember. For instance, I may ask you the name of a character that played a major role in the plot. The questions would be from 2 to 3 general simple questions.

Short Responses, on the other hand, are few sentences about the reading. You will be answering the following questions about the reading: what you like, do not like, and what is your reasoning behind it. Include a passage or a sentence that supports your argument. Short responses must be typed and brought to class during the time of the reading.

Blogs: This is an informal assignment. Every other week, you will post a blog online. It could be about anything that happened to you that week – in or out of class. It can be a response to a reading from class or to an incident that happened to you. Occasionally, I will ask you to reflect or respond to a particular topic or question. Make sure you have each blog posted by Friday at

5pm during the week its due and I will respond to them shortly afterward. Of course, you can post the blog any time during the two weeks period.

Leading Discussion: Each student will present discussion questions to the class on one occasion. On your assigned day, you will prepare 2-3 discussion questions for the class on the reading. These questions should be emailed through ANGEL to everyone by 9:00pm the night before class. In class, you will moderate discussion of your questions and lead class for part of the day.

Extra Credits: Students may elect to earn extra credit by participating in other activities during the semester. Such activities include writing a page single-space response to an event in which the student attended such as the Career Fair or Open Day at the Library. These events will be identified by the instructor. If there are other events, please consult your instructor before writing the response for approval.

University Grading Scale:

93-100 A
90-92 A-
87-89 B+
83-86 B
80-82 B-
77-79 C+
70-76 C
60-69 D
< 60 F

Online Resources: In addition to the required texts used in class, there will be four websites that will be used throughout the semester. These websites are:

- ANGEL: www.cms.psu.edu
- Turn It In: <http://turnitin.psu.edu>
- Webmail: <https://webmail.psu.edu/>
- Blogs: <http://blogs.psu.edu/>
- Gmail: www.gmail.com

ANGEL is a service provided through Penn State that will contain course materials, drop boxes for homework assignments, and grades. *Turn It In*, on the other hand, provides a structure for online submission of essays. You will submit your major assignments—the essays—to me through this website where they will be checked for plagiarism. If you have any trouble in terms of using this website, do not hesitate to inform me about it. The third website is *Webmail*, which is Penn State's email. I will be sending emails frequently. Thus, check your Webmail and ANGEL email frequently. You may choose to forward your ANGEL emails to Webmail as well. If you are interested in doing so, please let me know. *Blogs* is another website that we will be using. In this website, you will be able to free write, share some of your experiences with us, and

as the site states, “allow you to accept comments on your posts to create conversations with your readers”. The final website is Gmail, which will be used for peer review activities. In addition, I will demonstrate in class how to use all of these websites.

OTHER POLICIES

Makeup Policy/Late Work: Quizzes may be made up only if, in the instructor’s judgment, there is a strong justification for your having missed them (oversleeping, forgetting the reading, etc. are not strong justifications). Assignments submitted late will be penalized half of a letter grade (approx. 5 points) for every day past the due date (2 days late max) unless there are extenuating circumstances, in the instructor’s judgment, there is a strong justification for lateness (severe illness, a death in the family, etc.) or an extension has been granted by me prior to the due date of the assignment.

The Writing Center: If you would like someone to read your drafts and help you with your thoughts, you will want to make an appointment with a tutor in The Writing Center at 865-1841, 219 Boucke Building. <http://www.psu.edu/dept/cew/writingcenter/writingc.htm>

Q & A

If you have any questions about an assignment or a concept covered in class, please ask. Outside of class time, you can send me an e-mail message, come see me during my office hours, or schedule an appointment to meet with me. Communication with the instructor is a key element to having a successful semester!

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the appropriation of passages, either word for word or in substance, from the writings of another and the incorporations of those passages as one’s own in written work offered for credit. It is always assumed that the written work for credit is the student’s own unless proper acknowledgment is given the original author by the use of quotation marks and footnotes or other explanatory inserts. This includes the copying of notes, short assignments, and homework, or the unchanged use of the essential ideas or conclusions of such work, as well as the footnoted use of any and all other sources of ideas and phrases. Students may free themselves from uncertainties in the matter of plagiarism by following the general rules listed below:

1. **Direct quotation.** When the exact words of an authority consulted are used, every quoted word must be placed within quotations marks and each quoted passage must have attached to it a footnote reference.
2. **Indirect quotation.** When summarizing or paraphrasing the words of an authority consulted, give an exact footnote reference to each passage which is summarized. Introduce all summaries by such phrases as “According to...,” or “As...suggests.”

3. **General acknowledgment of indebtedness.** When general use is made of the thoughts, ideas, or information to be found in another person's work, always attach a reference number and footnote to the place in your paper where indebtedness occurs; if indebtedness occurs in several successive paragraphs, state that fact in the footnotes.
4. **Footnote form.** Every footnote reference must identify the source used and give the page on which the borrowed material may be found (see the Harbrace Handbook).
5. **Bibliography.** Append to each piece of written work submitted a complete list of all authorities (books, periodicals, encyclopedias, etc.) which have been consulted, even if no specific reference is made to them in the paper itself.

See the following websites:

What is Plagiarism?: <http://tlt.its.psu.edu/plagiarism/tutorial/definition>

Common Excuses: <http://tlt.its.psu.edu/plagiarism/tutorial/excuses>

Online Tutorial: <http://tlt.its.psu.edu/plagiarism/tutorial/intro>

Penn State's Academic Integrity Policy: "Penn State defines academic integrity as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts (Faculty Senate Policy 49-20). Dishonesty of any kind cannot be tolerated. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University's Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction."

Penn State's Educational Access Policy: "The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell the instructor as soon as possible."

All members of the Penn State faculty are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodation" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility rests with informing me at the beginning of the semester and in providing me with authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. For information, contact Penn State's Office of Student Disabilities Services (ODS). Any

“unofficial” or “informal” requests for accommodations (i.e., those not recorded by ODS) cannot be honored.

If you have a disability that might influence your performance in this course, you must inform me in writing (e-mail is fine) no later than September 10, 2009, and you must officially register at ODS. By week 5 of the term, you would need to present a current accommodation verification letter from ODS to me before accommodations can be made. For additional information, contact the ODS at <http://www.equity.psu.edu/ods/> . Questions about disability access can be referred to Jennifer Morris at jxm2@psu.edu or (814) 863-5538

Thus, please do not hesitate to contact me. Students with disabilities will be fully accommodated in this course. You can get an accommodation or assistance depending on your needs. Such assistance or accommodation range for extending the time spent on quizzes to having class notes prepared for you.

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