

English 42.111.202 MW 11am-12:15 pm PA 404  
English 42.111.203 MW 12:30 pm- 1:45 pm PA 404  
Office Hours: MW 9:50 a.m. - 10:50 a.m. and by Appt  
Office Location: FA 301

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## College Writing I ESL : Critical Thinking and Writing

### Course Description

CW I ESL is a discussion class and writing workshop. You will not be lectured to, but will instead work on each others' individual writing process in pairs or groups. We will analyze different concepts, essays, cultural and social phenomena, while conducting outside research and discussing prewriting, drafting, and revision. Your fellow students and I will evoke your critical thinking so that you consider arguments and your own ideas in a deeper, more creative, and complex way.

We will focus on writing that is in dialog with the ideas of others -- be those the authors of your readings, or your fellow students. The four expository genres you will master -- narrative analysis, reflection, argument analysis and the synthesis -- will prepare you to write effective research and argumentative essays in the future.

### Course Objectives

By the end of this semester you will be better able to:

- Distinguish between the uses and types of writing necessary to succeed in college and in your future careers.
- Improve your annotating, scanning, and reading skills for fluency and accuracy.
- Brainstorm, develop, organize and write essays with clearly expressed ideas informed by an astute sense of audience and purpose.
- Use explanation and examples effectively in your writing.
- Practice summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, and synthesizing skills.
- Begin to understand the process of research and the role of secondary sources.
- Learn how to recognize and work on your own grammatical and stylistic errors.
- Use revision successfully by producing multiple drafts that lead to well-crafted essays.

### Required Texts and Materials:

1. Spack, Ruth. *Guidelines: A Cross-Cultural Reading/Writing Text*. Third Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
2. Andre Dubus III. *Townie: A Memoir*. First Edition .W. W. Norton & Company, 2011.
3. Blackboard website. You will be required to submit most of your homework to the course website.

### Requirements:

1. **Essays.** You will write a total of 5 essays in this class. One will be a short diagnostic essay which you will write during the first day of class. This is not a graded assignment but a writing sample to ensure proper placement. You will also be responsible for four graded take-home essays (varying in length).

The formal papers should be typed, MLA formatted and double-spaced, with 1 inch margins, in font Times New Roman 10-12 pt, with indented paragraphs, and no lines inserted between them. A paper that fails to meet the length requirement may not receive a passing grade. The first two papers will be 3-4 pages long, while paper three will be 4-5 pages, and the last paper will be 5-6 pages long. The essays should be submitted in both hard copy and electronically to *Turnitin*. Papers unaccompanied by *Turnitin* submission will not be accepted.

The Essay Assignment Sheet will not only present the topic and the writing prompt, but will also contain the requirements for the paper. These will in turn constitute the grading rubrics. Your papers will be evaluated against the specific requirements listed in the assignment sheet.

**A rough draft** is required for each of the above assignments. Any assignment for which a rough draft is not submitted will automatically be dropped one portion of a grade point. ( A- to B+, i.e.) Also, make sure you include your full name on the first page (upper left corner) and page numbers on all pages of the paper ( upper right corner). You will be required to submit a hard copy to me and an electronic copy to Turnitin.

Avoid trying to “churn up” a paper in one sitting. It makes for a disorganized, often vague, essay with multiple style and content issues. Instead, plan to spend several time sessions working on each essay. Essays done in this way are considerably stronger than essays done in one sitting.

**3. Peer Editing Workshops.** Peer editing is the supportive critique of other students’ papers, based on a set of specific criteria and guided by worksheets prepared by me. It aims to help you focus on a particular aspect of writing. By closely and thoughtfully evaluating other students’ papers, your competence in evaluating your own work will increase. Because peer review is an important component of the class, you must bring a draft to class (or conference) on the day assigned. (failing to so will be considered missed homework). You are required to submit the draft reviewed in class (as well as your peer editing comment sheet and all prewriting exercises) along with your final paper. Also, since your participation is crucial for the success of the course as a whole, your thoughtful suggestions will count towards participation component of your final grade.

**4. Attendance and Participation** are mandatory. You are allowed two absences (no questions asked). For each unexcused absence thereafter\*, you will lose 2 points from your final grade (a total of 100 points possible; see Grading). Failure to attend class is not an excuse to come unprepared, so if you do miss a class, please make sure you check Blackboard or contact your classmates to find out about material covered or work due.

\*Absences for medical and/or family emergencies are the only ones that will be excused; proper documentation will be required.

**5. Oral Presentations (Culture Matters Show and Tell).** Presenting your ideas in a concise, clear and convincing manner is a skill that you will need in any career field. To this end, you will be responsible for one short oral presentation (around 5 min) that will take place in the second half of the semester. It aims to connect your personal experiences and ideas to the questions of cultural difference that we will explore in our readings, in your writing and through class discussions. You will bring an object, share a text (excerpt, poem, etc), or show us a short movie clip, music video, commercial etc. and then explain what are the underlying cultural value and significance behind them.

**6. Writing Journals/Homework Assignments.** The purpose of the journal assignments is to provide you with the opportunity to use written language informally to explore, develop and communicate ideas. The journal assignments involve thoughtful reflection on ideas from the readings.

*The journal writing guidelines* are on page 11 in your class textbook. Unless otherwise specified, all journal entries (as well as the rest of your homework assignments) are to be submitted to Blackboard. You will receive an end of the semester grade based on completion of the assignments and on demonstrating thoughtful engagement with the topic.

The same applies to the rest of your homework assignments: effort will be central to the grade you receive. In other words, I know when a student has genuinely tried to do their best and has encountered difficulties, and when she/he is simply going through the motions -- the latter will not be encouraged. Late homework will receive reduced credit and will only be accepted on class late, unless other arrangements have been discussed with me.

**7. Revision of Essays (optional).** You may revise up to two essays, provided that you have completed the drafting and workshop requirements for each essay assignment to the best of your ability. In other words, the revision should not be a do over, an extra opportunity to make up work you did not complete in the first place; it should allow you to improve your writing based on the feedback you have received from me and your peers. Therefore, you can not rewrite essays for which you have not submitted all the required homeworks and drafts.

Revision means seriously rethinking and reworking an essay; superficial “cosmetic” changes do not constitute a revision. *You are required to have a conference with me within two weeks of receiving the essay back* in order to receive credit for the revision. Come to the meeting prepared with notes on your intended revision and a list of questions for me. ***I will not accept revised essays that we have not discussed in conference.*** The final deadline for revisions is the end of the semester. Submit two copies: 1/a hard copy should be submitted together with the original version with my comments attached to it, and an electronic copy should be submitted to Turnitin.

Communication:

Please make sure you check your university email and Blackboard regularly since I might need to make announcements. You can also use email to ask questions and get help on your essays. Yet, please understand that I will not be able to read through full drafts over email (for that, feel free to make an appointment during office hours). Still, you can email me with specific questions, or with a paragraph or a thesis statement, and I will help you with it. I respond to email within 24 hours. All email received after 5:00 p.m. on Friday will be answered by the end of the day on Monday (I teach three classes on Monday, one after the other).

Grading:

Essays.....	70%
Essay 1:.....	12%
Essay 2.....	15%
Essay 3.....	20%
Essay 4.....	23%
Attendance and Participation(includes peer editing, group work, etc).....	10%
Homework assignments* and journaling.....	15%
Culture Matters Show and Tell.....	5%
Extra credit** .....	up to 5%

\* This includes readings, short writing assignments, summaries, drafts, conference preparedness, etc.

\*\*It is given for the completion of one or two short assignments related to attendance of an event in the Common Text Film Series. If you attend one event and submit the assignment on it, you will receive 2 points; if you attend two and submit two assignments, you will get a total of 5 extra points. The assignments should be completed within 5 days of the screening. The journaling grading criteria will apply here (see Journaling); you will only receive full credit for carefully thought through and well articulated responses to the films.

Your assignments will be assigned letter grades, but each letter grade will carry points proportional to the weight of the assignment relative to the other requirements in the course. Your final grade will consist of points on a scale from 1 to 100. The following ranges correspond to the letter grades that you will be assigned based on your performance: A: 100-94; A-: 93-90; B+: 89-87; B: 86-84; B-: 83-80; C+: 79-77; C: 76-74; C-:73-70; D+: 69-67; D: 66-64; F: 63-0)

Late Papers:

If you are sick, or an emergency arises, make sure that you e-mail me in advance of the due date and we will work something out. I will accommodate serious medical or family emergencies, but documentation will be required. That said, however, an absence is not an excuse for a late paper or a late rough draft. **An unexcused late paper will be penalized one third of a grade for each work day that it is late (ex. A to A-, etc).** No paper will be accepted if it is more than 10 business days late. (which is logical since an A paper that is late by more than 10 business days will receive an F). Failure to submit and assignment earns a grade of F with 0 points.

Punctuality and Preparedness

Every three “tardies” will count as an absence. Continual lateness will undoubtedly affect your awareness of what is going on in the class, as I make announcements in the beginning of each class. It will also affect your grade. Unless otherwise specified, all work is due at the beginning of the class on the day for which it is assigned.

### Course Schedule:

The schedule will be published in four segments, one at the end of each of the four essay assignment sheets that you will receive this semester. This process helps me avoid multiple revisions of the schedule and enables me to address most efficiently your learning needs as the semester progresses. You will receive the first assignment sheet during our next meeting, Monday, Sept 10.

### Use of Electronic Devices

It is only allowed for note-taking and web-enhanced learning purposes (i.e. consulting online dictionaries, browsing the databases for an in-class assignment, etc). While I will not continuously check on you, I reserve the right to publicly mock you if I suspect that you are having non-writing related fun online. On a more serious note, such behavior is really disruptive to me and your classmates and will not be tolerated.

### Plagiarism

We will work on proper citation format for a variety of secondary sources. Carefully review your Student Guide on the university policies concerning academic honesty and integrity. More information can be found here: [http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/academic\\_dishonesty.htm](http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/academic_dishonesty.htm)

That being said, any use of others' writing or thinking without giving them proper credit for their words and ideas is considered plagiarism. Similarly, the resubmission of your own previously produced work, for which you have already received credit in other courses or in high school, is considered a case of self-plagiarism which violates academic integrity. Both plagiarism and self-plagiarism will result in failing this course and a report to the Chair of the English Department and the Office of the Provost.

### **Resources:**

#### Accommodation of Disabilities

I will accommodate any needs you might have in relation to a disability. Please contact the Office of Disability Services and they will make the necessary arrangements with me. They are located in Cumnock Hall, Room C6, North Campus, 978-934-4574.

#### Tutoring (The Write Place):

You can get help at each and every stage of the writing process. UMass Lowell's well-prepared, specially trained peer tutors can provide one-on-one assistance on your papers. They do not proofread or write sections for you, but they can guide you and help you improve your writing.

Here is a list of tutoring locations:

O'Leary Library, Third Floor (SC) , or Southwick 321(NC); Fox Hall 1st Floor; ICC 8th Fl.

To make an appointment call: 978-934-2941 (South); 978-934-2936 (North)

#### Participation in an Assessment Study

This year, UML's First Year Writing Program (FYWP) is conducting research on our learning objectives for College Writing. The researchers believe the results of this study will provide critical insight into program efficacy, which will allow for enhanced teaching and learning. For that reason, the FYWP will collect an essay that you write this semester. Because we are looking at an essay already required for your class, this study does not mean any extra work for you, but your essay will provide crucial insight into how our courses work and how we can best serve you and future students at UML.

You should also know that our study will not affect your course grade or your academic record in any way. When it is time to collect your essay, if you agree to have your essay included in the research, you will be asked to make a copy of it for research purposes and your instructor will ask you to remove all the identifying information (your name, the section number, and the instructor's name) from the paper. Your instructor will then submit your anonymous essay to the researchers. You may choose to be excluded from the study by not submitting an extra copy of the essay with identifiers removed. Also, we cannot use samples from students who are not at least 18 years old. If, when the samples are collected, you are under 18 or you do not want to participate, please do not place your essay in the collection envelope.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact the FYWP at 978-934-4186. Thank you for your help!