

English 42.111

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College Writing I ESOL : Critical Thinking and Writing

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 one's 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 one's own grammatical and stylistic errors.
- Use revision successfully by producing multiple drafts that lead to well-crafted essays.

Course Description

CW I ESOL is a discussion class and writing workshop wherein we will work on each student's individual writing process in a group. 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.

Texts:

Required:

Spack, Ruth. *Guidelines: A Cross-Cultural Reading/Writing Text*. Third Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Satrapi, Marjane. *Persepolis*. Reprint Edition . Pantheon Books, 2004.

Requirements:

1. **Essays.** You will be responsible for four graded take-home essays (varying in length). They 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.
2. **A rough draft** is required for each of the above assignments. These will be either brought to class, to be evaluated by your peers, or presented to me during conference. 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 do so will affect your homework grade negatively). 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, your final grade will be dropped one portion of a grade point. 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. Medical and/or family emergency leaves may require documentation.
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 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.
7. **Guidelines for Writing a Journal Entry 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.

8. **Individual conferences.** I will meet with you individually to discuss your drafts for the last two of the four papers. These are required meetings. Missing a conference counts as an absence for this class. Come on time, with the assigned homework, and be prepared to work one-on-one to revise drafts, get help with your research, discuss your papers or work on future assignments.

Conference Feedback. While I do my best to help you with your drafts and give constructive feedback, please keep in mind the following. Firstly, it is extremely difficult to comment extensively on papers that I have had very limited time to read -- due to time constraints I read the papers during our meetings. I will give you as detailed feedback as I possibly can, but there is a limit to what is realistically possible in that regard. Secondly, it is still your paper and your responsibility to improve it; the extent to which you are able to revise the paper productively is not really anything I can control or influence. Finally, remember that I have to both help you improve your papers -- be encouraging and specific -- and evaluate your work objectively. As a result, my dual role as a coach, when I meet you in conference, and a “judge”, when I grade your papers, can be perceived as contradictory. I am asking you to distinguish between the two so that you can benefit most from this class.

Communication:

Please make sure you check your email as well as 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. You can send me 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 on Monday.

Grading:

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

* This includes your diagnostic essay, readings, short writing assignments, summaries, drafts, conference preparedness, etc.

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 emergencies. 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 an 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.

Plagiarism

Any use of others’ writing or thinking without giving them proper credit for their words and ideas is considered plagiarism and will result in failing the course and a report to the Chair of the English Department and the Office of the Provost. We will work on proper citation format for a variety of secondary sources. Carefully review your Student Guide on the school policies concerning academic honesty and integrity. More information can be found here:

http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/academic_dishonesty.htm

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)