

College Writing 1: This American Life

ENGL 42.101 Sec. 232, 242 3 credit hours Pasteur 4 12
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Bernadette Stockwell

Fall 2012, MF 2:00–3:15, 3:30–4:45 p.m.
Office hours: MF 12:45–1:45 Falmouth 301 C

Course goal—Student learn to write various types of essays and enjoy the writing process

Objective—Students write four different essays, produce a “show” for presentation to the class, as well as keep a Writer’s Journal which includes in-class writing assignments, reflections on classes, at least once per week, and collecting writing prompts. Students are also required to participate in Blackboard discussions based on weekly TAL listening assignments.

By the end of this course, students will be able to do the following

- Shape concise essays which include generalizations supported by specifics
- Write thoughtful, clearly, identifiable thesis statements
- Employ clear, concrete, specific, and appropriate language
- Compose standard, correct sentences, free of fragments
- Write organized paragraphs with clear transitions
- Create texts free of errors in capitalization, punctuation, usage, and spelling
- Use a variety of expository and persuasive organizational strategies
- Apply revision and editing strategies
- Develop the following research skills: (1) use library resources; (2) distinguish between primary and secondary sources; (3) appropriately use direct quotations, paraphrases, and summaries of secondary sources; and (4) correctly document those sources

Required textbooks: *Backpack Writing*, Lester Faigley
Townie, Andre Dubus, III

Writing I: This American Life (aka This UML Life) Making the ordinary EXTRA-ordinary!

How do we look at our world? How do we tell others about our world? How do others talk about their worlds? The stories may not seem all that interesting, but HOW we tell the stories can make any story interesting.

This course will look at various topics through the looking glass of the award winning radio and television program: *This American Life*. We will listen to radio broadcast, view clips of the Showtime series of the same name, and then emulating the methods and strategies of the segments, students will produce their own programs for presentation to the class.

In getting to that point, students will write 4 formal essays. These essays will be narrative, descriptive, interview, and informative. (The intention is that these types of essay will provide necessary skills in organization, content and language for other subsequent courses at UML.) Each essay will progress from outline (framework) and draft to final draft to revision. Revisions on two essays will require major changes, such that the two speak to different audiences, use a different voice, tense, and/ or style and therefore will appear to be quite different works.

Finally, students will work in groups to create their own *This UML Life* segment. The parameters for this assignment are wide open, but students must conference with the professor prior to, and during, production. Each student will earn his or her own grade based on accomplishment and participation. A final in class written evaluation will assess skills learned throughout course.

Month	Date	Topic *
September	7	Review syllabus, in class writing sample. Discuss course theme. <i>In class writing sample.</i>
	10, 14	Read <i>Indian Education</i> (handout provided in class) by Sherman Alexie
	17, 21	Interviews reflect BOTH the subject (interviewee) and the author Writing due: Twelve Part Narrative essay
	24, 28	View video John Smith . Following people with the same name from birth to death.
October	1, 5	The narrative: Parts of a story. Writing due: Interview with peer
	10, 12	View video. Discuss descriptive elements. Use the 5 senses.
	15, 19	"This is who I am—My Music, Myself, Me" Writing due: Reflective essay Will be collected for research
	22, 24	In class peer workshop, mentoring. Revise previous essays.
	29	Escape . In class writing essay. Prep for exit essay. Peer reviewed.
November	1	The speech is a concise essay that clearly defines where it's going and where it's been.
	5, 9	Writing due: Informative speech
	12, 16	Begin work on <i>This UML Life</i> . Brainstorm ideas, pitch story to group or class.
	19	Story board and/ or outline Thanksgiving break
	26, 30	Presentations in class Journals due
December	5, 7	Presentations in class
	10	What did we learn? What do we still want to know? How can we move forward?
* Readings from Townie will be assigned throughout the semester. Additional readings and assignment in Backpack Writing will also be announced.		
		Exit essay during final exam week.

Grading—50% of your final grade will be based on the 4 essays (12.5 points each). 10% of your grade is derived from quizzes on readings. 5% of your grade is based on your writing journal, which includes in-class writing. 5% derived from listening assignments and assigned homework. 20% of your final grade is based on your final presentation. Exit essay/ final exam 10%.

* Please see the rubrics at the end to understand the system I will use.

Deadlines—Essays must be handed in at the beginning of the class on the day that they are due. Late papers may NOT be accepted. Electronic submissions will NOT be accepted. Please plan accordingly.

Revisions—Please consider revising any and all of the four essays during the semester; however, each revision is due within two weeks of its return to you. You cannot revise your writing journal, final presentation or final evaluation. Revisions may be partial or complete in nature. I.e. if you receive your grade and choose to start over, you may do so OR you may choose to revise based on my comments and the rubric provided with each assessment.

Attendance—You are required to attend every class as much of the class is discussion. Please be on time. Tardiness disturbs the entire class. Three late arrivals are equal to one absence. Please be respectful of your classmates. If you miss a class, you are responsible for obtaining missed work and notes from a peer.

Format—Each of four process essays must be double-spaced in 12 point Times New Roman font with a one-inch margin all around. Pages must be numbered (upper right hand corner) with a header including your name and the essay's title (upper left hand corner) with a single spaced header on the first page only. This header must include your name, course title and number, instructor's name, essay type and title of the essay.

Format for essays—please use on ALL your papers

This information should be single-spaced and appear on the upper left hand corner of the first page of your essay.

Page numbers should appear in upper right hand corner.

Your name
 Date (the day that you hand in your work)
 Essay type (e.g. Narrative, descriptive, etc.)
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Title should appear centered and bold two lines below author information.

Subtitle, if you choose to use one, in italics

Body of essay should be doubled space. Always indent first line of each paragraph. Margins are 1” all around. Please print, staple and bring to class.

By using the rubric below, you can better understand how you will earn your grade. A different rubric will be provided BEFORE each assignment. A perfect score (10 points or 30 points) is reserved for ‘publishable quality.’ Sample essays and complete instructions will also be provided.

Title (10 points)	
Subtitle (10 points) USE RELATED QUOTATION	
12 distinct sections YES or NO (10 points)	
Titles for sections– creative and revealing (10 points)	
3 D’s used with variety in all sections (30 points total)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail (10 points) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description (10 points) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue (10 points) 	
Overall content (30 points)	
Final score:	

Grade conversion: Letter grade and numeric equivalent.

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

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!

The Centers for Learning and Academic Support Services provide many resources, including tutoring in writing: <http://class.uml.edu/>. In accordance with University policy and the ADA, I will provide accommodation for students with documented disabilities. If you have a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that their office has moved to NORTH campus, Cumnock Hall C6, phone: 978-934-4574, e-mail:Disability@uml.edu. This documentation is confidential.

Behavior policy: In this class, and in all classes at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, students are expected to exhibit professional and respectful behavior that is conducive to a mutually beneficial learning environment in the classroom. Examples of inappropriate behavior include: text messaging, listening to music, cell phone use (other than the campus alert system), late arrivals, early departures, use of laptops for other than class purposes, disrespectful comments or behavior, intentional disruptions, failure to follow faculty directives. Students in violation of these standards may be asked to leave class and/or be referred to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

Plagiarism policy: “Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty.... Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty.” Plagiarism includes directly copying a source without acknowledging that source, summarizing or paraphrasing someone’s ideas without acknowledging the source, or submitting a paper that has been written by someone else. We will work this semester on recognizing and avoiding plagiarism, and how to research and write responsibly. Students who accidentally lift wording or ideas from texts will work with me extensively to avoid such unintentional plagiarism. For a first instance of intentional academic dishonesty, the student will receive a zero on the assignment with no chance to make it up. For any subsequent instances, the student will be given a course grade of FX (non-deletable failure).