

English 15: Rhetoric and Composition

Fall 2010

Instructor: Mr. Paul Zajac

Office Location: S. Burrowes 227 G

Section: 26

Office Hours:

Classroom/Time: 107 E E West / MWF 12:20-1:10

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Course Description:

Development, skills, and expertise in reading and writing can never be separated; therefore, English 15 is an intensive, rhetorically based course in reading and writing. In this course, we will focus specifically on analyzing verbal and visual texts (our “reading”) as well as on producing and using such texts (our “writing” and speaking)—always in terms of traditional rhetorical principles.

Even if the term *rhetoric* isn’t familiar to you, the practice of rhetoric is. In fact, you bring a good deal of rhetorical skill to this class: you already know how to gauge the way you perceive and produce language according to the speaker, the intended audience, and the purpose. You may not always gauge perfectly, your perception may not always be accurate, and your production may not always be successful—but you often think to interpret and choose language in ways that are appropriate to the rhetorical situation. You already know how to use language to make knowledge.

The goal of English 15, then, is to help you build on what you already know how to do as you become a stronger, more confident, and more flexible reader and writer. You should become more attuned to your goals as a writer (as well as any other writer’s goals) in terms of any exigence (or reason) for writing about a particular topic in a particular way, the on-going conversation surrounding the topic, the appropriate delivery of your information, the rhetorical appeals at your disposal, and the needs and expectations of your audience. This course will help you not only to develop your rhetorical skills for writing successful college essays, but also to live better with language for the remainder of your professional, political, and social life.

Required Texts

- *The Norton Mix: Rhetoric and Composition: A Reader* (2010) by Norton Publishing Co. (ISBN 9780393158205) – MUST be obtained through the PSU bookstore
- *Writing and Revising: A Portable Guide*, (2009 MLA Update) by Kennedy, Kennedy, and Muth (ISBN 9780312623395)
- *Penn Statements* (Spring 2010 edition)

Recommended Text

- *A Writer’s Reference* (6th edition, 2009) by Hacker (ISBN 9780312593322)

Requirements

To pass this course you must complete the major assignments and the weekly assignments (reading selections and typed journals). You are also expected to attend all class meetings and to participate in draft workshops, in-class exercises, and classroom discussions. Papers must be handed in on time.

Grades

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| Paper 1 Personal Narrative (Memoir) | 10% | Due September 13 |
| Paper 2 Critical Review (Evaluation) | 15% | Due October 4 |
| Paper 3 Critical Analysis (Cause/Effect) | 15% | Due October 22 |
| Paper 4 Position Paper (Argument) | 15% | Due November 10 |
| Paper 5 Researched Proposal | 20% | Due December 6 |
| Journal | 10% | |
| Participation | 15% | |

Participation includes attendance, discussion, in-class writing, and group work.

Attendance

Your success and the success of this course depend on your active participation; therefore, your regular attendance is required. Your grade will be lowered for poor attendance, down to and including an “F.” Excused absences are certainly appropriate, and of course you should communicate with me about your absences as much as possible, preferably **in advance**. Be aware, though, that University policy (*Policies and Rules*, 42-27) states that a student whose absences are excessive “may run the risk of receiving a lower grade or a failing grade,” regardless of his or her performance in the class. You run that risk if you exceed three unexcused absences for a MWF class or two unexcused absences for a TR class.

If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the assignments, class notes, and course changes from a classmate—NOT from the professor. In addition, if you miss class on a day that written work is due, make arrangements to send that work along with a classmate. Emailed assignments **will not** be accepted under normal circumstances. In-class work cannot be made up.

Office Conferences

Although it is not required in this section, it is in your best interests to have *at least two* conferences with me this semester to discuss your written work (at any stage of the process). Also consider taking your ideas and your written work to the **Undergraduate Writing Center** (219 Boucke, 863-3240), where trained peer tutors will consult with writers about any piece of writing at any stage of the writing process, from rough idea to final draft. For more information about the writing center, use the following link:
(<http://www.psu.edu/dept/cew/writingcenter/UWC/index2>).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional act of using another person's words *or* ideas as your own without attribution. The departmental policy on plagiarism is available on-line at <<http://www.la.psu.edu/undergrad/integrity/studentpolicy/collegepolicy.htm>>. If you have any questions about plagiarism and its consequences, please ask. Plagiarism demonstrates contempt for ethical standards, your instructor, and your peers. If you are caught plagiarizing, you risk failing the course. You may also be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs, and this may result in probation, suspension, or expulsion for academic dishonesty. Although we will learn more about plagiarism and how to avoid it over the course of the semester, it is the student's responsibility from the outset to understand the university's policy.

Format

Choosing a format is a rhetorical decision—it's all about delivery. So keep in mind that your papers should be typed in 12 point font (either Times New Roman, Calibri, or Garamond), printed in dark ink, and double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Place your name, the date, and the instructor's name in the upper left-hand corner of the first page. Number all of the pages. Fasten the pages with a paper clip or a staple. **Place the paper in a folder, and also include earlier drafts and peer review activities in the folder.** As standard practice, every formal essay should have (1) a title, (2) an introduction, (3) a thesis statement, (4) well-developed and focused paragraphs that support, expand, and exemplify that thesis (topic sentences will help you achieve this goal), (5) transitional words or phrases that help guide your readers through your essay, and (6) a solid and interesting conclusion.

2010 Flu Protocols

In compliance with Pennsylvania Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control recommendations, 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.

Statement on Nondiscrimination

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff, or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University.

Note: The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. 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.

Course Schedule

*** The teacher reserves the right to make changes to this schedule (especially the reading assignments due on particular dates) within an appropriate amount of time

Key: PS: *Penn Statements* (Spring 2010 edition). **Norton:** *The Norton Mix: Rhetoric and Composition: A Reader* (2010). **Guide:** *Writing and Revising: A Portable Guide*, (2009 MLA Update) by Kennedy, Kennedy, and Muth

| Date | Day | Topic | Reading Due | Major Assignment Due |
|------|-----|--|--|---|
| 8/23 | M | Intro to Course | | |
| 8/25 | W | Rhetorical Situation | PDF for 8/25 | |
| 8/27 | F | Fitting Response; Introduce Paper 1 | PDF for 8/27 | |
| 8/30 | M | Unit One: Narrative and the Rhetorical Situation | <i>Norton:</i> p. 41-55 (Angelou “Graduation”) | |
| 9/1 | W | Unit One: Narrative | <i>Norton:</i> p. 31-40 (Orwell “Shooting an Elephant”) | <i>Proposal: Personal Narrative (or Memoir)</i> |
| 9/3 | F | Unit One: Peer Review Workshop | <i>PS:</i> 120-123, 127-132 (memoir) | |
| 9/6 | M | NO CLASS — LABOR DAY | | |
| 9/8 | W | Unit One: Grammar | <i>Guide:</i> 160-1 (A1), 166-173 (A4- B1) | 250 words of <i>Rough Draft</i> |
| 9/10 | F | Peer Review | | <i>Polished Draft: Personal Narrative (or Memoir)</i> |
| 9/13 | M | Unit Two | | <i>Final Draft: Personal Narrative (or Memoir)</i> |
| 9/15 | W | Unit Two: Evaluative Thesis Statements | <i>Guide:</i> 60-68 | |
| 9/17 | F | Unit Two: Categories and Criteria | <i>Norton:</i> 97-114 (Etzioni “The Fast Food Factories”; Shipley “How to Write the Perfect Email”) | |
| 9/20 | M | Unit Two: Evaluation, Classification, Division | <i>PS:</i> 81-85 (classification and division) and 39-44 (evaluation) | |
| 9/22 | W | Unit Two: Definition | PDF for 9/22 | |

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| 9/24 | F | Unit Two: Definition and Evaluation | <i>PS: 85-88, 66-69, and 74-78</i> | <i>Proposal: Critical Review/Evaluation</i> |
| 9/27 | M | Unit Two: Structuring Essays | <i>Guide: 85-89, 90-94</i> | |
| 9/29 | W | Unit Two | <i>Norton: 159-64 (Fraser “Why I Stopped Being a Vegetarian”)</i> | |
| 10/1 | F | Peer Review | | <i>Polished Draft: Critical Review/Evaluation</i> |
| 10/4 | M | Unit Three | | <i>Final Draft: Critical Review/Evaluation</i> |
| 10/6 | W | Unit Three: Analysis of Causes and/or Effects | PDF for 10/6 AND <i>Guide 130-2</i> | |
| 10/8 | F | Unit Three: Evaluating Possible Causes | <i>Norton: 148-158 (Gould “Sex, Drugs, Disasters...”)</i> | |
| 10/11 | M | Unit Three (Library Visit this Week) | <i>PS: 101-108 (cause and consequence)</i> | |
| 10/13 | W | Unit Three: Flex Day | | <i>Proposal: Critical Analysis/Cause and Effect</i> |
| 10/15 | F | Unit Three: Using Sources Properly and Avoiding Plagiarism | <i>Guide: 208-211</i> | |
| 10/18 | M | Unit Three: Grammar and the Rhetorical Effects of Essays | | |
| 10/20 | W | Peer Review | | <i>Polished Draft: Critical Analysis/Cause and Effect</i> |
| 10/22 | F | Unit Four | | <i>Final Draft: Critical Analysis/Cause and Effect</i> |
| 10/25 | M | Unit Four: Taking a Position | <i>Norton: 15-30 (Orwell “Politics and the English Language”)</i> | |
| 10/27 | W | Unit Four: Elements of an Argument | PDF for 10/27 | |
| 10/29 | F | Unit Four: Types of Evidence | <i>Guide: 30-40</i> AND <i>PS: 36-38</i> | |
| 11/1 | M | Unit Four | <i>Norton: 56-66 (Quamen “The White Tigers of Cincinnati”)</i> | <i>Proposal: Position Paper</i> |
| 11/3 | W | Unit Four: Tips for Writing Arguments | <i>Guide: 190-202</i> | |
| 11/5 | F | Unit Four: Satire as Argument | <i>Norton: 180-190 (Swift “A Modest Proposal”)</i> | |
| 11/8 | M | Peer Review | | <i>Polished Draft: Position Paper</i> |
| 11/10 | W | Unit Five | | <i>Final Draft: Position Paper</i> |
| 11/12 | F | Unit Five: Examples of Researched Writing | <i>Norton: 191-209 (Tuchman “This is the End of the World”)</i> | |

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| 11/15 | M | Unit Five: Sources and Citations | | |
| 11/17 | W | Unit Five: Research | <i>Norton: 165-179 (Schlosser “Why McDonald’s...”)</i> | |
| 11/29 | F | Unit Five: Researching Problems and Proposing Solutions | <i>PS: 19-22, 51-58</i> | <i>Proposal: Researched Proposal</i> |
| 11/22 to 11/26 | | THANKSGIVING BREAK — NO CLASSES | | |
| 11/29 | M | Unit Five | <i>Norton: 83-91 (Carson “The Obligation to Endure”)</i> | |
| 12/1 | W | Unit Five: Questions on Research, Presentations, and Final Papers | | |
| 12/3 | F | Peer Review | | <i>Polished Draft: Researched Proposal</i> |
| 12/6 | M | Oral Presentations | | <i>Final Draft: Researched Proposal</i> |
| 12/8 | W | Oral Presentations | | |
| 12/10 | F | Oral Presentations | | |