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English 103

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Lynn Shelly, ENGL 103, Fall 2006

Accelerated Academic Writing - English 103

CRN 86551/86546/86547 - Sections 006/001/002

407 ARM/302 HOD/415 ARM - MWF 10:30/1:30/2:30

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Introduction

College, for many students, means freedom. Freedom to go your own way, to chart your own course. Most of you will find that it's liberating not to be spoon-fed in your classes. Your professors, most of them anyway, will want to hear your interpretation of things and not just a regurgitation of what's in the book. In fact, many of them will say they want you to question what you read; they want you to experiment with new ideas and to seek out original ways to put things together.

This is not to say that there are no restrictions; it would be foolish to claim that. In this class for instance, I do hope that in both your writing and in class discussions you will try out new ideas, ideas that might be different from mine, different from those of your classmates. I also hope that you will read the texts for our course critically, determining for yourself what is useful and what is not. I hope you will discard worn out formulas for writing that get in your way and try out new strategies, new ways to do things.

On the other hand, you won't have total freedom. You will be expected to frame your questions and criticisms in responsible ways. You will be expected to explain your reasoning clearly and provide a basis for what you say. You will be required to credit your sources according to standard practice and to follow the grammatical and mechanical rules for standard written English.

As students in Accelerated Academic Writing, your challenge is to take full advantage of the freedoms while not ignoring the boundaries. On the one hand, you should write for yourself, exploring issues that matter to you, examining them in depth, drawing on experiences and observations that may indeed be personal and distinct. On the other hand, you also should be aware that you write for others. You don't necessarily have to persuade them, but you do need to earn their respect. Ideally, these two impulses, to write for yourself and to write for others, will work together. As you passionately pursue your own ideas, you will impress your readers; as you clarify and substantiate your assertions for readers, you may also be able to deepen your thinking.

Policies

Most of the policies for this course, including criteria for evaluation of student work, are articulated for you in the guide to Accelerated Academic Writing available in the campus book store. What follows are a few revisions and clarifications.

Major Essays: The four major essay assignments for your section are somewhat different from those described in the guide, though the basic topic and the evaluation rubrics are the same. The assignment sheets I will provide for each of the major essays will model a critical inquiry approach, inviting you to add to, modify and refine your ideas as you progress through the semester. If, after assignment 1, you would like to propose a related topic of your own in place of a particular assignment, please come and see me.

Short Assignments and Reflective Writings: The course guide refers to these as “informal writing.” Your short assignments will differ from those in the guide. Most will be designed to assist you in preparing your next major essay. Portions of your short assignment writings may be incorporated in your major essays. Your reflective writing assignments will also differ from those in the guide.

I do not accept written work via email.

Discussion of Student Writing: With every major paper and short assignment that you submit to me, please turn in an extra copy for my files. These files will serve as a resource throughout the semester when I need examples of student writing to illustrate particular concepts. If your work is used in class, it will not have your name on it; in fact, I prefer that you not identify yourself as the writer. If you are unable to sign the release form allowing me to use examples of your writing in class, then you should enroll for

a different section.

Error Checklist: To help you improve your ability to proofread and edit, I require that you keep an error checklist that you will submit with each major paper and with your portfolio. On the list, you will record the mistakes that you have made in your previous papers and short assignments (I will mark the errors you need to record with a check). Be sure to refer to your list when you are checking over subsequent papers so that you do not repeat mistakes. More details on how to create and maintain your checklist will follow.

Peer Workshops: For each major paper, there will be a peer workshop in class. In order to participate, you should have a completed draft. Missing peer workshops or coming to workshops unprepared will have serious consequences in terms of your participation grade. If you miss a peer workshop, you must get feedback from the Writing Center or from two members of your class before revising.

Revision: Revision of major essays is included in the schedule of assignments, but you may submit additional revisions (for the purpose of receiving additional feedback) with permission throughout the semester. Schedule a conference with me to discuss your revision plans and obtain permission. Everyone should revise for the portfolio review at the end of the semester. Short assignments cannot be revised.

Grades: Your portfolio represents 60% of your grade, short assignments 20%, participation 10% and research logs 10%.

Portfolios: Your portfolio will include all drafts of major essays that have been reviewed (by me or by a peer) as well as revisions. I

consider your early drafts to be just as important as the final drafts in representing your progress as a writer. Do not wait until the final portfolio to give serious attention to your writing.

Portfolio Grades:

Superior portfolios demonstrate critical thinking as well as excellent rhetorical decision-making skills. Drafts at this level are exceptionally thoughtful and well-developed, offering new perspectives on complex issues. Final drafts demonstrate an ability to make use of feedback from peers and from the instructor in such a way that allows the writer both to deepen his or her thinking and to engage readers more effectively. Drafts and revisions, as well as work on the checklist, demonstrate that the writer has mastered the conventions of standard written English and knows how to effectively integrate as well as properly cite appropriate source material. Reflective pieces show that the writer can discuss his or her own writing in thoughtful and productive ways.

Strong portfolios demonstrate purposefulness in the development of ideas and in rhetorical decision-making. Drafts at this level are thoughtful, though they might not offer new perspectives. Final drafts demonstrate an ability to make use of feedback from peers and from the instructor in such a way as to develop ideas more fully and engage readers more effectively. Drafts and revisions, along with the checklist, show that the writer understands the conventions of standard written English and knows how to integrate as well as cite appropriate source material. Reflective pieces show that the writer can discuss his or her own writing in productive ways.

Satisfactory portfolios meet basic requirements, demonstrating

an ability to develop ideas and to do so relatively clearly and coherently. Drafts at this level may exhibit weaknesses which the writer was able to eliminate, for the most part, after feedback from peers and the instructor. The drafts and revisions, along with the checklist, show a developing mastery of the conventions of standard written English and a developing ability to integrate and cite appropriate source materials. Reflective pieces primarily summarize comments from peers and the instructor.

Weak portfolios do not fully meet basic requirements. Drafts may be under-developed or frequently lacking in clarity or coherence. Revisions show little or ineffective use of feedback from peers and the instructor. The checklist may not have been regularly maintained or may be incomplete, while drafts and revisions show limited mastery of the conventions of standard written English and a limited understanding of how to integrate and cite appropriate source material. Reflective pieces do not sufficiently account for the student's written work for the course.

Unacceptable portfolios do not meet requirements, exhibiting pervasive problems in developing ideas clearly and coherently. Drafts or revisions may be missing from the portfolio or may be incomplete. The checklist is missing, incomplete or was not regularly maintained; drafts and revisions demonstrate little mastery of the conventions of standard written English or integrating and citing source material. A portfolio is also unacceptable if it does not represent the writer's own original work. Reflective work may be missing or incomplete.

Getting Help: I encourage you to talk about your work with your classmates and friends and to make use of the services of the

Writing Center. Listen actively to others' suggestions and make sure you understand not only what they are advising but why. Because the line between original work (work that represents the writer's own ability to compose, revise and edit) and unoriginal work can sometimes be fuzzy, I ask that you do not allow anyone other than your instructor to make editorial changes to your work. If you are holding the pen, then the result is more likely to be writing that you can call your own.

Texts

Brady, Laura, ed. *English 103: Accelerated Academic Writing*. Plymouth, MI: Hayden McNeil, 2007.

Cohen, Samuel, ed. *50 Essays: A Portable Anthology*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004.

Lunsford, Andrea. *The Everyday Writer*. 3rd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2005.

Additional Materials and Resources

Electronic Reserve (username: dadisman password: 245)

Aronowitz, Stanley. *The Knowledge Factory: Dismantling the Corporate University and Creating True Higher Learning*. Boston, MA: Beacon P, 2000. 1-9.

WVU library's 103 webpage (<http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/english103/>)

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