

## English 102: Composition and Rhetoric

Spring 2013 / Section 27 / Armstrong 123 / 12:30-1:20 pm

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**Office:** Colson Hall 330

**Office Hours:** M/W 10:30-11:20 or by appointment

(strongly recommended)

### **About this Course:**

Back in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, writer Hector Crèvecoeur was the first person to refer to America as a melting pot. Ever since then, definitions of what America is and who Americans are have been up for debate. For instance: what makes America unique, what does it mean to be patriotic, what do Americans look like or act like? Or, what does it mean to think like an American, what do we mean when we use the phrase “American values,” how do Americans view other countries or think about world issues, and when we think of “America” do we picture a small town, a suburban community, or an inner city street? Questions like these will be our focus this semester, as we pursue both the broad theme “America the Melting Pot.” Along the way, we will also consider current “American” debates about race, social class, gender, and belief. We will look at how scholars, journalists, public figures, and even pop culture “texts” make arguments about America and shape “American” discussions. As an example, we might look at how the American icon, Disney, portrayed race in its most recent animated film, *The Princess and the Frog*. Or we might consider how portrayals of Appalachian stereotypes spark debates about poverty in America.



Of course you'll be paying a good deal of attention to your writing this semester, too. You'll take part in the *process* of writing (drafting, peer-editing, revising) and the *process* of research (finding sources, evaluating sources, paraphrasing, quoting, and citing). We will also discuss helpful writing tips like topic sentences, organizational methods, sentence structures, and introduction and conclusion strategies. All of these will help you make your writing clearer, your arguments stronger (in all kinds of forms, not just writing), and your thoughts on American issues more exciting.

Please keep in mind that much of what you do this semester (as well as the grade you earn) will depend on how much **you invest yourself** in the course, work to improve your writing, and participate in our classroom community. YOU must be the one to take initiative. I promise you'll be better for it.

### **Required Texts and Items:**

- Lunsford, Andrea. *Easy Writer* (Custom for WVU). 6<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009. Print.
- Lunsford, Andrea A. and John J. Ruszkiewicz. *Everything's an Argument*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010. Print. (Available at WVU Bookstore for about \$46 or Amazon has it for about \$39; just be sure you get the plain 5<sup>th</sup> edition, NOT the 5<sup>th</sup> edition with readings)
- Undergraduate Writing Committee, ed. *Joining Academic Conversations: English 102*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Plymouth, Michigan: Hayden-McNeil, 2010. Print.
- Additional Materials:
  - One folder, dedicated to this course, where you keep all drafts of your written work, in order
  - Jump drive to save your work in ALL ITS DRAFTS

### **Attendance:** (English Department Policy for English 102)

Your regular attendance is required, and your grade may be lowered for poor attendance, down to and including “F.” You are permitted **three** absences. A fourth absence will result in a full grade reduction for

the final course grade (A to a B, B to a C, etc.). With a fifth absence, you will fail the course. These numbers include all absences for whatever reason. **If you miss a class, YOU must take responsibility to get the handouts from eCampus and contact me for any course materials or info you may have missed.**

**Lateness and Professional Etiquette:**

You need to come to class on time, so we can get started with the material and so you don't miss handouts, instructions, or quiz questions. **If you come in after class starts, you need to check in with me after class to be sure I mark you as present.** Lateness is reflected on your Participation/ Professional Etiquette grade, with -2 points for **each** lateness; extreme or habitual lateness can count as a full absence. At any point during the semester, you can ask me what your attendance record is.

**As for Professional Etiquette, I ask that you:**

- Participate in class, do not distract your classmates, and are physically and mentally engaged in our discussions and day-to-day work;
- Come on time and prepared with your materials (you need to bring your book to class and will want to take notes from the discussion);
- Respect your instructor and classmates by silencing your cell phones and iPods before class begins (as opposed to setting phones to vibrate, which everyone can still hear). **Students who text, check messages, or listen to iPods in class will be asked to bring their device to the front of the classroom for the remainder of class. If it happens again in a future class period, you will be asked to leave and take an absence.** Do. Not. Text. In. My. Class.

**For Email Etiquette:**

- When communicating via email (at school, at work, etc.) it is important to practice professional, courteous writing. Do so by honoring the conventions of the genre. Your emails should have an address (i.e. hi, hello, dear, etc. and the addressee's first name) and a signature (i.e. thank you, regards, etc. and your name), and be written using full sentences and proper grammar (not text-speak). Communicating with your professors via email is professional correspondence, and treating it as such will only serve to help your cause.

**Work Policies:**

**LATE WORK:**

I do not accept late work, and deadlines are not negotiable after you have missed them. I will drop your lowest Short Write grade, so one miss won't compromise your overall Short Write grade. But overall, if you are not prepared for class, you have let your classmates down and missed an opportunity to engage fully in class time. If you are facing a major crisis with a deadline, talk to me at least 48 hours in advance. Extensions are rare, but occasionally granted under the most special of circumstances. Each assignment is due at the beginning of the class period. It is good practice to always make sure that your printer has ink and that you back up your work frequently (to a disk, jump drive or simply by emailing it to yourself). Special allowances are NOT made for circumstances involving technology. Late papers (the three major assignments) will be docked **one letter grade for each day they are late**. Please note that this **docked grade WILL CARRY OVER TO THE FINAL PORTFOLIO**.

**WORK IF ABSENT:**

It is your responsibility to email me if you miss a class and get caught up on what we covered. Handouts will be available on e-Campus, listed by date. It is also your responsibility to keep track of and complete the missing work by the next time you come to class. For example, if you miss a Monday class and there was a Short Write due that day, then you can bring your Short Write to class on Wednesday (if that's the next time you come to class), in addition to anything that's already due on Wednesday. Please

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DO NOT email me Short Writes if you miss class, and if you were in class and forgot your Short Write, you cannot make it up.

- One exception to this policy: If you miss class on the day one of the three Major Assignments are due, make arrangements to send it along with a classmate or somehow get it to my mailbox at the main office in Colson Hall.

### **Written Assignments:**

**Keep track of ALL WRITTEN WORK.** This class is focused on *writing as a process*, so you will need your drafts for major assignments and the final portfolio work. I recommend you save your work (in all its draft stages) on a jump drive by clearly labeling it (Image Analysis\_Draft 1, Image Analysis\_Draft 2, Image Analysis\_Final-for-Now Draft, etc) or email it to yourself with clear labels. Computers do crash on occasion, and you also don't want to save over an earlier draft and lose your work.

### **Format for Written Work:**

- Papers should be **double-spaced, with 1 inch margins, 12 point font, Times New Roman**.
- All assignments exceeding 1 page **MUST BE STAPLED. If it is not stapled, I will not accept the work** (staplers are available at the dollar store for a buck— a good investment).

### **The Three Major Writing Assignments:**

You will have three major writing assignments including the Image Analysis, the Documentary Analysis, and the Informed Argument Paper. Each of these assignments will focus on the very broad theme, “America the Melting Pot.” We will workshop your essays via peer review and go over specific concerns in our conference times. More details for the individual essay assignments will be given to you in separate handouts.

### **Short Writes:**

These writings will be in response to the prompts I give you in advance—often in response to a reading that is due the same day. I ask that SWs be 1 full page single-spaced, and if the SW is an inappropriate length you will not receive full credit. **Please DO NOT EMAIL YOUR SWs TO ME.** Instead, have them **PRINTED OUT AND WITH YOU IN CLASS**, since we will often be using them for activities that day. Grading scale for Short Writes will be 3, 2, 1, or 0 (meaning: superior, good, poor, and unacceptable) and I will drop your lowest grade.

### **Grades:**

Class Participation & Etiquette:	10%
Short Writes (will drop the lowest grade):	20%
Major Writing Assignments:	
Image Analysis	20%
Documentary Analysis	20%
Informed Argument Paper	30%

### **Appointments & Conferences:**

Feel free to make appointments with me to read and review drafts, discuss ideas for assignments, and so on. Prior to major assignment due dates, there will also be opportunities to sign up for writing conferences with me; these meetings will be informal discussions about your progress and concerns and will last about 10 minutes.

### **Writing Center:**

You should all make it a point to go to the WC this semester. There you can get feedback, work through ideas or concepts and fine-tune your writing; it is also a great place to find info on writing techniques, proper citation, and suggestions. Make an appointment or stop by, but be sure not to wait till the last minute or you run the risk of not being able to get an appointment. For hours or to schedule an appointment, contact:

Website: [http://english.wvu.edu/centers\\_and\\_projects/wcenter](http://english.wvu.edu/centers_and_projects/wcenter)

Phone #: For an appointment, call 304-293-5788

Location: Ground Level of Colson Hall, G02

**Disability Services:**

If you are a student with a documented disability who will require accommodations in this course, please register with the WVU Office of Disability Services, located at G-30 in the Mountainlair (Phone: (304) 293-6700 Voice/TDD: (304) 293-7740 and email: access2@mail.wvu.edu) for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs. Students who are already registered with the ODS and wish to receive accommodations in this course are strongly encouraged to share their Accommodation Letter with me in a timely manner.

**Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:**

Don't plagiarize. Even partially. We have ways of finding you out and plagiarism can turn a nice, compassionate teacher into your worst enemy. Plus, if you do plagiarize you run the risk of failing the project or even this course. Plagiarism and dishonesty includes taking work from other students and representing it as your own, taking whole papers/ parts of papers or research from any other source (website, magazine, paper-writing services, etc.) and representing them as your own work, or even handing in a paper for one class that you already handed in for another class. These practices are never acceptable under any set of circumstances. The full description of the WVU English Department's plagiarism policy is located in the *JAC*, page xiii. Here is an excerpt: Plagiarism is defined as, "material that has been knowingly obtained or copied in whole or in part, from the work of others... including (but not limited to) another's individual academic composition" (*JAC* xiii). Further, "Academic dishonesty involves representing as your own work any part of work done by another; (and) submitting the same paper or substantially similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without the written approval and consent of all instructors concerned" (xiii).