

College Writing II: “Chronicle of a Campus”

42.102 - 301

Fall 2014

Professor Thomas Hersey

Office Hours: MW - 11:00 to 11:30, and by appointment

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Office Locations - O’Leary 456, and Lydon 301

Texts and Contexts - Course Goals & Overview

College Writing II is a workshop course that thoroughly explores the academic research writing process, with an emphasis on entering into academic conversation. Building on the skills acquired in College Writing I, students will learn to write extensively with source material. Key skills addressed include finding, assessing, and integrating primary and secondary sources, and using proper documentation to ensure academic integrity. Students will produce analytical writing throughout the semester, including a minimum of four formal, researched essays.

Honors Course Purpose and Outcomes

In College Writing II, we study and practice academic research writing. Students will apply their rhetorical knowledge in the context of academic research through regular informal and formal writing. Students will generate and pursue complex theses through purpose-driven, process-based writing that engages audiences and integrates research. In this workshop course, writers will develop effective research habits and become familiar with the standards of academic research writing. Students will exit with an awareness of their strengths and weaknesses as writers and researchers; successful completion of this course will prepare students to meet the writing challenges they will encounter throughout their academic careers and beyond. Building upon the skills acquired in College Writing I, students completing College Writing II will produce four formal, researched essays during the course of the semester, enacting the following learning outcome goals:

- Generating research topics, ideas, questions, and problems
- Locating, evaluating, and analyzing primary and secondary sources of information
- Using the writing process, including feedback from others, to compose substantive researched essays for an academic audience
- Integrating and synthesizing thoughts meaningfully with the words and ideas of others, while foregrounding personal position within the academic conversation
- Recognizing different citation styles, based on discipline, and employing appropriate systems of documentation accurately
- Practicing academic integrity

Course Design & Approach

One of the primary purposes of this course is to provide you with a solid foundation in the art and science of research and scholarship, and to do so in as comprehensive a manner as possible during our time together. In support of this objective, I have chosen a conceptual approach that will provide you with an opportunity to enter the conversation of research with the aid of current, relevant inquiries, set against the background of perennial academic concerns and themes. As ours is an **Honors** section, we will be coordinating our research activities in keeping with the high standards set by the university. Through close collaboration, careful planning, and innovative research design, we will create an anthology of thematically related essays, to be presented to the Honors Program at semester's end. I am truly looking forward to working with you on this great endeavor!

All of the work that we do together will be fully explored through daily journal entries and exercises. By engaging in this important activity, you will be able to learn about relevant themes, become familiar with important research skills, and examine your personal impressions of the course materials. In this regard, I will post messages on the course wiki to *initiate* discussion, and to provide you with a forum to explore new ideas. Here I will include some thoughts about each of the assigned readings, class discussions, and the films that we will explore together. I will also include daily guidelines for your journal entries in keeping with our progress in class. Please feel free to *initiate* your own discussion threads. Just be sure that your subject headings are clear, that your ideas are not redundant, and that all entries are course related. Also, please initiate new discussion threads from the appropriate wiki pages, as to do otherwise would become very confusing. For example, if you would like to address a theme from *Chronicle of a Summer*, you would do so by navigating directly from the wiki page where this particular work is first encountered and addressed. I recommend that you explore concepts and themes as they arise in class, as this will help your writing, both within your journals and ultimately in your various research activities. New ideas will be introduced each week, so your opportunities for discussion will be many!

Course Schedule

The schedule for the weekly assignments and portfolio work will be published in four modules, one at the beginning of each of the four portfolio assignments that you will receive this semester. This process helps me avoid multiple revisions of the schedule, and enables me to address your learning needs as the semester progresses more efficiently. It also allows for interesting developments garnered through collaborative effort. Each section will be developed interactively on the course wiki throughout the semester, and assignments will develop accordingly. As this is a research workshop, we should benefit from this open-ended approach, as this format will allow us to achieve a proper balance of structure and improvisation throughout the semester as new ideas arise.

Notes, Discussions, & Assignments

On some class days, certain students will be assigned to take notes for the class, and asked to post these on the collaborative lecture notes page of this wiki site. All students are asked to visit these class notes often, and to edit and review the work of their classmates. Please remember that these lecture notes pages should be an objective repository of information derived from my lectures and class discussions. Wikis proper are not meant for discussion. The discussion threads are the place to express individual opinions and beliefs, and the proper outlet for voicing questions and concerns.

All assignments can be found by date on the course wiki.

Important: All students are required to complete a first-day writing sample before moving on to the course work proper. If you miss the first day for any reason, please see me about this immediately.

Grading, Class Etiquette, & Attendance Policy

I. Students' grades will be determined by the quality of their portfolio work (75%), and their participation in class discussions and projects (25%). Coming to class is crucial. **Failing to attend class regularly will likely result in a failing grade.** More than two absences will result in a lowered participation grade; five absences will result in a zero for participation and your final grade will be lowered one whole grade; **more than five absences will automatically result in an 'F' for the course.**

II. Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis, and to be prepared to participate in the day's activities. If you know that you are going to be absent, you should notify me ahead of time, either in person, or via my UMass Lowell email, so that you can keep up with the work. When you miss class, it is your responsibility to stay caught up. In other words, it is your responsibility to get the assignments, class notes, and course changes from a classmate if you miss any class. It is also your responsibility to both keep track of and complete the missing work. In-class work cannot be made up; if you miss class on the day a written assignment is due, please make arrangements to send it along with a classmate.

Student-athletes are expected to attend all scheduled classes unless excused by the instructor for regularly scheduled athletic competition. Class may not be missed for practice, conditioning, meetings, or other non-competitive reasons.

III. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss all of the assigned readings and films, and to act in a respectful manner to others. Please do not leave phones on, or leave class without first asking for permission, as acting otherwise is extremely disruptive. In addition, students who do not bring required materials, who are not prepared, who text or play with electronic devices, or who show up significantly late (more than 10 minutes) will be considered absent for the day.

IV.

College Writing II is one of the courses that participates in the Starfish retention program at UMass Lowell. Please be on the lookout for e-mail messages about your attendance, your work, or your participation in this course, and be sure to come speak with me if unsure of why you have received a message.

Communication

Please be sure to check both your university email and our course website regularly for updates and announcements. You can also use e-mail to ask for assistance. I will not be able to read through full portfolio assignment drafts over e-mail, but you are welcome to e-mail me with specific questions, to which I will respond via e-mail, and perhaps set up an appointment to speak in office hours as necessary. I usually respond to e-mail within 24 hours. All e-mail received after 5:00 p.m. on Friday will be answered by the end of the day on Monday.

In addition to attending required one-on-one conferences with me during the semester, I have deliberately designed our course in a way which makes it impossible for you to not communicate with me every week. In addition, my approach to teaching is grounded in the belief that students are responsible adults, who need to take initiative in this regard. Please take advantage of this opportunity, and apply what you learn from this approach to your other classes. As you are devoting a great deal of time, effort, and financial resources to your education, you should demand nothing less.

Portfolio Work

Your work in this class will be assessed using a portfolio grading system. Rather than receiving grades on individual papers (or drafts of papers) throughout the term, you will receive a letter grade at the end of each of the four sections of the course, and a final grade for your complete and revised work at semester's end. This grade, which will *necessarily* reflect your attendance, homework, class participation, and formal essay writing ability, will give you a sense of your work in its entirety in a manner which will allow you to assess your own progression as a writer, and to adapt your efforts accordingly. You will be encouraged to revise your work to improve your grades, but must do so according to the following guidelines:

- The portfolio work for the first section of the course must be revised no later than the due date for the portfolio work for section two.
- The portfolio work for the second section of the course must be revised no later than the due date for the portfolio work for section three.
- Likewise, the portfolio work for the third section of the course must be revised no later than the due date for the portfolio work for section four.
- The portfolio work for the fourth section of the course can be revised if there is time, but students are encouraged to turn their work in early to be accommodating.
- Finals cannot be revised, but here too, I will be more than willing to look at your work ahead of time.

This method gives you the opportunity to be graded *after* you have received feedback and provides you with plenty of incentive and opportunity to revise your work. The grade for each portfolio will be determined on the basis of a set of criteria specific to that assignment. You will always find these on the assignment sheet and posted on the course wiki. Honor grades (A, A-, B+) *are reserved for outstanding work and outstanding effort on each portfolio assignment*. In order to succeed in this course, you *must turn in work on time and attend every class*.

Numerical equivalence for letter grades:

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

Required Texts for Reading

- *UMass Lowell Custom Edition of A Writer's Reference 7th edition*, Hacker & Sommers
- Additional handouts in pdf form on the wiki

Required Texts for Viewing

- *Chronicle of a Summer*, Morin and Rouch
- Additional clips on the wiki

Credit Hour Statement

This is a 3 credit course, as defined by federal regulation. You should expect to complete 6 hours of out of class work each week for approximately 15 weeks, for a total of 90 hours outside-of-class work.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is **absolutely unacceptable** and will result in immediate **failure of the course**. In a nutshell, any use of others' writing or thinking without giving them proper credit for their words and ideas is considered plagiarism; even if you have only used a sentence without providing proper credit.

Similarly, the resubmission of your own previously produced work, for which you have already received credit in other courses or in high school, is considered a case of self-plagiarism which violates academic integrity. Both plagiarism and self-plagiarism will result in failing this course and a report to the Chair of the English Department and the Office of the Provost. For additional information on the University policy, see <https://www.uml.edu/Catalog/Undergraduate/Policies/Academic-Integrity.aspx>

Accommodations

In accordance with University policy and the ADA, I will happily accommodate students with documented disabilities confirmed by the Office of Disability Services (Cumnock Hall C6, 978-934-4574). If you have a documented disability that will necessitate academic accommodations, please notify me in the first week of classes so that we might make appropriate arrangements. If you will miss class due to religious observances or other protected activities, please see me in advance so that we can plan for any changes to due dates, etc.

