

A CUSTOM PUBLICATION

The Mercury Reader

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English 1010 Syllabus

Texts: Ramage, John D. and John C. Bean. *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Writing*, Boston, Allyn and Bacon.

English 1010 Mercury Reader

Course Description

Writing belongs to everyone. We all write in response to situations that call upon us to put our thoughts and feelings into words. Writing takes place in many different settings and for many different purposes. When we choose to respond to a situation in writing, our response must grow out of our analysis of the situation to be most successful. We can then construct a writing task for ourselves that is most appropriate for the situation. To be effective, responding to the call to write means thinking through several crucial factors, such as our purpose, our readers and the relationship we want to establish with them, the appropriate voice or tone of our writing and the relationship of our writing to the larger social and cultural context.

For this course we will focus on developing critical thinking and analytical skills and apply those to our daily lives. We will develop greater understanding of how the rhetorical situation shapes our purposes for writing, the evidence we use and the stylistic choices we make. We will also emphasize the writing process, including invention, peer response and revision and that process will involve problematizing the cultural situation and rhetorical assessment.

Course Goals

The following represent the English Department's goals for English 1010. Students will be able to:

• Recognize yourself as a thinker who can productively formulate your ideas.

- Develop greater awareness of the variety of purposes, audiences and outcomes for which people write.
- Use various strategies to manage your own writing process (generating ideas, writing, revising).
- Receive/seek/use many different kinds of feedback on your writing and provide feedback for others' writing.
- Write with greater awareness, confidence, control and flexibility.

Technology

The Allyn and Bacon Web Site provides continuously updated resources for reading, writing, and research practice and simulates search activities for finding and evaluating information from the World Wide Web. The address is http://www.abacon.com.

Philosophy

The Classroom as Community

We will become a community of thinkers, readers, writers, and learners engaged in a mutual endeavor that we hope will be interesting and profitable for you. The work of this course is best done together, with every member of the community fully present and participating. I would like to offer the following as guidelines for such a community: Come prepared; don't miss class casually; respect one another's opinions by responding to them intelligently; read one another's work carefully, with as much thought and input as you would like your own work read.

Much of the work will be done in small groups, to make discussion and the work load manageable. Therefore, the work of the class cannot be done as well if everyone is not present. Working in groups benefits each member of the group. The more fully participating you are as an individual member of the group, the more profitable the group will be for you. We will discuss the readings from our text in groups and also comment on drafts of essays in progress.

Major Assignments

The major assignments for the course will include an Analyzing Images Essay, Strong Response Essay, and an Exploratory Essay.

You will also write preliminary writing assignments and a reflective self-evaluation.

Conferences

This course is designed to give you opportunities to learn in several different ways, by participating in small groups, by participating in conversation within the larger classroom community, and by working individually. Students often don't take advantage of another way to learn, working one-on-one with their instructor. This kind of work is especially important in classes such as this one, where individual work with your instructor can provide you with specific direct help on issues that concern you in your writing. Therefore, we will plan time for you to meet with us to discuss your writing for the course before your writing is graded.

Course Activities and Practices

Because writing is a drafting, re-drafting process, your essays will be graded with that process in mind. You will have opportunity to rework each document, have responses from both classmates and your instructors and have individual conferences with us, all before having your documents evaluated for a grade. Your achievement in the course depends heavily on your own motivation and sense of responsibility as well as upon your writing skills. With serious attention to writing, frequent uses of conferences, attention to classmates' and our responses to your writing, and wise use of time, you should be able to do quite well. Without consistent effort, however, you may encounter some difficulty. We will read your

drafts as often as you like and will make suggestions for improvement. We do, however, request that you have your peers read your draft first, during peer workshopping, revise, using their suggestions, and then ask us for further guidance.

Peer workshopping is an important element of a writing class; therefore, please be prepared for workshopping on the day specified by posting a draft of your essay. We will check preparation on workshopping days. If you miss a workshopping day, please make it up by asking your classmates to read your draft outside of class time. You need suggestions from at least two peers for each peer group missed. Documents that have not been workshopped through peer evaluation will not be accepted. We expect your work to be turned in on time. If you have problems arise during the semester which will keep you from fully participating in the course, please let us know early on, and we will work with you. All three portfolios must be turned in for you to receive credit for this course.

Accommodation for Disabilities

If you need accommodation for disabilities, please talk to us. You can also contact the Disability Resource Center, CC 230, 957-4659.

Participation

The framework of the course--with emphasis on class participation and peer response--demands that you attend class regularly. Failure to complete in-class work, such as peer responses, participation in reading discussions, active participation in small work, and so forth, will result in the lowering of your grade. Your final grade may be lowered up to one full grade if you miss more than 10% of the course.

Writing Center

SLCC's Writing Center is multi-functional. In addition to computers for class use, the Writing Center also offers an advising program

where you have the opportunity to discuss your work with a peer tutor or faculty writing advisor. The intent of the Writing Center advisor is to help you think about your writing process by sharing their impressions of your materials, offering revision strategies, discussing different ways to approach an assignment, as well as to provide another reader and voice for you. The Writing Center is not simply a place to go to get a paper "fixed" or "corrected." Be prepared with questions for your advisor. Ask yourself what you want to work on, whether it's understanding an assignment, having an advisor give you his/her impressions of a passage you've written, or to talk about "what you want to say." Advisors are available to help you with any writing assignment for any class you take. You can sign up for an appointment in the Writing Center in AD 218 at the Redwood Campus, the Learning Center at the South City Campus or the Annex at Sandy. You can also call 957-4893 to sign up for an appointment at Redwood.

You may also send a draft to an advisor through e-mail. The address is ET@englab.slcc.edu. Be sure to include questions and concerns you may have and a copy of the writing assignment.

Grading Contract Proposal

The idea of the grading contract is similar to that of a job evaluation. To receive a certain grade your overall performance is evaluated. You are graded over the long term rather than in short, discrete pieces. We propose that the following criteria be used for assigning grades. We will discuss this as a class and determine whether or not these criteria are reasonable and agreeable to the class. The assumption here is that everyone starts in excellent (A) standing and that your work in class is your effort to maintain that excellent standing. Consequently, the criteria for an A are set out explicitly, with grades below an A due to performances that fall somewhat, to considerably, short of those criteria.

To achieve an A in the class you must:

• prepare fully for every class-have all reading done, writing

accomplished, and be generally prepared to help the class or your group engage with the material for the day.

- participate actively in class—listen attentively to what others are saying (not just the teacher), respond respectfully to others' ideas, be willing to offer your own suggestions on a regular basis, and inform the teacher or class of hindrances to participation.
- turn in all assignments at the appropriate time (exceptions can be negotiated as they arise, but must involve good reasoning and be discussed in a timely fashion).
- exhibit "A" level reading and produce "A" level writing in your journal, exploratory writings and formal assignments. What determines "A" level will be negotiated through assignments, handouts and feedback from the teacher—in other words, we will develop a shared understanding of "A" level works as the semester proceeds.
- miss no more than two classes (extreme exceptions can be dealt with on an individual basis).
- Be on time routinely—we will tell you if tardiness is becoming a problem.

To achieve a B, you will generally need to meet the criteria or an A, but with some inconsistencies. This inconsistency could happen in any area, but generally it shows up as not being prepared for every class (not having the reading done, not handing in assignments on time), writing projects that don't meet all the assignment criteria, sporadic participation in class, or attendance and tardiness problems. The key here is that you are generally meeting the criteria for an A, but occasionally or in a particular area you are not.

To achieve a C, those inconsistencies would need to become more of a norm rather than an exception. Any of the inconsistencies listed above that become the typical way that you interact in class—writing that continually misses assignment criteria, little to know participation in class discussions, routinely late writing assignments, etc.--would result in a C grade.

We assume no one is striving for a D or an E since neither grade is

acceptable on your transcript. Quite obviously you have to be consistently failing to meet the criteria (or ignoring them all together) to receive any of these grades. If at any time you are in danger of receiving one of these grades, we will ask you to talk with us to try to avoid that end.

Self-Reflective Essay

Write a detailed self-reflective essay discussing the process you went through to produce the final drafts of your documents. What do you think is important about the work contained in your portfolio? What have you learned about the writing process and the writing of this particular assignment?

The purpose of the portfolios is for you to offer a display of your learning and writing processes. Therefore, the portfolios should reflect a thinking/writing process as it took place over time. As instructors we value process, as much as product. Therefore, the grade for the portfolios will account for both.

Your portfolios, then, are in part arguments. They should attempt to persuade us that you have a developing understanding of the processes by which effective writing is produced. Therefore, think about what you should include in your portfolios, and how best to label and arrange its contents. Also, keep in mind that the reflective essay plays a role in making your argument. Therefore, think about the kinds of specific evidence you might include that will help you shape the kind of reading of the portfolios we assume you desire.

Preface: In the preface introduce the contents of the portfolio and make any statement about what you would like us to look for and how you would like us to think of your portfolio. This can be brief.

Respond to the following questions:

1. Discuss your learning in the course thus far in relation to the writing concepts presented in the chapters. How did you use those

concepts as you planned and drafted your writing?

- 2. Share decisions you made as you wrote in response to all of the invention exercises (choosing a topic, interview questions, planning, arranging, etc.) and why you made those decisions. How did you prepare yourself to write your document? How are your drafts different from each other? Describe revisions you made in the final draft and why you made those decisions.
- 3. Discuss how the documents you read in the text and also the documents from other sources increased your understanding of how to write your assignment.
- 4. Describe the feedback you received from your peers that enabled you to revise. What did you do in your group to elicit response from your peers and also to help them revise? How are your drafts different from each other? Describe revisions you made in the final draft and why you made those decisions.
- 5. Who is your document written for? What do you want your readers to understand about your topic? What kind of relationship do you think you will establish or maintain with your readers? Why? What specific decisions did you make as a writer to enable you to establish or maintain the relationship you desire?

1010 Suggested Reading and Writing Schedule

Preparatory Information

- Week 1 Introduction to course, students, instructor, syllabus.
 Discuss Chapter 1; brief writing project, p. 17-18.
 Discuss Chapter 2; brief writing project, p. 37.
- Week 2 Discuss Chapter 3; brief writing project, p. 52.
 Discuss Chapter 4; bring magazines to class for discussion.
 Discuss Chapters 17 and 20.

Chapter 18 contains helpful information specific to writing strategies.

Portfolio One—Strong Response; introduction to major writing assignment.

Portfolio One-Strong Response

Week 3 Discuss Chapter 5; brief writing project, p. 81. Discuss Chapter 6 Peer Review

Week 4 Discuss Strong Response Readings—Mercury Reader, Allyn and Bacon Guide to Writing

Practice writing Summary and Strong Response for readings in the text.

Discuss Portfolio One major assignment Choose news article for major Portfolio One assignment

Week 5 Peer Review--Portfolio One Strong Response draft one Peer Review draft two and self-reflective essay; consultation with instructor.

Writing Center advisors are also available to discuss your writing.

Portfolio One DUE--Final draft and self-reflective essay Discuss Portfolio Two major assignment

Portfolio Two—Analyzing Images

Week 6 Discuss Chapter 10; brief writing project, p. 217. Image analysis

Week 7 Discuss Image Analysis Readings—Mercury Reader and Allyn and Bacon Guide to Writing.

Practice Analysis

Week 8 Continue discussion of image analysis (movie, media).

Portfolio Two Analyzing Images peer review draft one

Week 9 Peer review draft two and self-reflective essay; consultation with instructor.

Writing Center advisors are also available to discuss your writing.

Final draft and self-reflective essay

Portfolio Three—Solution Essay

1 70

Week 10 Introduction to major assignment.

Discuss Chapter 8; brief writing project, p. 167 Brainstorming for topic—magazines and news articles Discuss research log, p. 188-189

Week 11 Discuss Chapter 15

Brief writing assignment, p. 362

Discuss Evaluation Readings—Mercury Reader, Allyn and Bacon Guide to Writing

Three research log entries DUE: newspaper, magazines, statistics

Week 12 Two Research Log entires DUE: interview, document of choice

Discuss Chapter 16

Discuss Solution Readings—Mercury Reader, Allyn and Bacon Guide to Writing

Week 13 Discuss Chapter 22

Portfolio Three Proposing Solution draft one due for peer review.

Peer Review draft two and self-reflective essay.

Writing Center advisors are also available to discuss your writing.

Week 14 Consultation with instructor
Whole Class—Round Robin Read

Week 15 Final Draft of Proposal DUE Self-Reflective Essay DUE Summation Activities Portfolio Three DUE