

Writing & Rhetoric I: Creative Composition

Section # 130 | Time: MWF 12:55-1:50pm | Room: Ellis 108

Section #186 | Time: MWF 2:00-2:55pm | Room: Ellis 108

Instructor: Micah McCrary

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Office: Ellis 302

Office hours: TR 1:30-4:30pm by appointment.

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Introduction

Welcome to English 1510 – Writing & Rhetoric I: Creative Composition. Students in this workshop-style course will conduct research on subjects of their own interests, the end result being a long-form, exploratory essay. This course emphasizes creative and academic writing at once, and students' writing will simultaneously privilege idea and execution. A final essay will resemble work of both a scholarly and creative nature, for a mixed, public audience. We will look at scholarly texts to help seat ourselves within research that explores the theories espousing a blend of the creative and the academic, as well as contemporary texts that execute the kind of sustained research, writing, and thinking students will be expected to perform. We will explore an alternative approach to composition by using a traditional approach to creative writing, relying heavily on peer review and collaborative learning as aspects of writing and revision.

Required Materials

Eula Biss. *On Immunity: An Inoculation*. ISBN 978-1555977207

Creative Composition: Inspiration and Techniques for Writing Instruction. Eds. Danita Berg & Lori A. May. ISBN 978-1783093625

ENG 1510 Course Pack (Purchase at The Little Professor, 65 S. Court St.)

Composition notebook

Texts on Blackboard

All homework or projects submitted online must be Microsoft Word compatible, in .doc or .docx format. Word can be purchased for a reduced cost through the Bobcat Depot in Baker Center. Additionally, be sure to *save your work often*, on a flash drive **and** through an online storage system like **OU's Box** (<http://box.ohio.edu>), Dropbox, or Google Drive. It's likely that, at some point in your academic career, you will lose a flash drive or your computer will crash, so it's best to have back-ups of your coursework. Keep all of your returned coursework throughout the semester, together in one place (such as a folder or binder). (Additionally, this class will use Box for the submission and retrieval of all major projects. Students are to keep track of their submitted files *and* any digital feedback.)

Coursework

As stated in the course description, the work done in this class will result in *one research essay, approximately 15-25 pages in length*. This essay will be completed in *three stages*, however, then combined into a single draft at the end of the semester. These stages are as follows:

Stage 1: Personal Inquiry Draft (approx. 5 pages)

Stage 2: Research Draft (approx. 5 pages)

Stage 3: Argument Draft (approx. 5 pages)

Final: Full draft of exploratory essay w/ reflective cover letter (15-25 pages)

Reading & Research Journal

In your composition notebooks, you will also periodically update your *Reading & Research Journal* for this class, which will include your own thoughts, responses to course readings, and any independent research you have done for your own essays. These journals will **not** be read by the instructor, but will be collected every two weeks to keep track of your participation in this course.

The Learning Contract

In this course, I want to help you focus on and improve your writing, rather than have you merely work for a grade. So, rather than assign individual grades to major or minor writing assignments, the use of a Learning Contract shifts the focus toward your learning and progress. The comments I provide on your projects are intended to improve your writing, rather than justify a grade, and the Learning Contract should ease student anxiety by putting **you** in charge of your success.

Consequently, grades in this class will not be based in a letter or number system, but on the following:

✓+ = Exceeds expectations

✓ = Meets expectations

✓- = Suggested revision

If you receive a ✓- on an assignment, a revision **is suggested but not required**. You should note, however, that while at the end of the semester a rash of check-minuses will not lower your grade, it *may* affect my decision to raise it above the Contract B to a B+, A-, or A.

Feedback

My comments in this class will be *formative*, which means I will ask questions, identify areas for further development, and challenge/provoke your thinking rather than simply tell you what I want you to “fix” or “correct” in your writing. I want to help you grow as a writer, not encourage you to conform to what you think I want.

I will address global issues (thoughtfulness, comprehensiveness, and content) more often than I will address local (spelling, grammar, and punctuation) ones, so *be very sure to proofread* your assignments before turning them in. The idea behind this method of evaluation is that, with time and attention, your self-editing skills will improve as you learn to comb through your own texts with these problems and patterns in mind. Coupled with a better understanding of your own writing and revision processes, you will grow more comfortable navigating various writing situations.

Course Outcomes

Students in this class should:

- Enter the conversations and communities of writers, developing an awareness of reading and writing as an active production of meaning in conversations through texts.
- Be introduced to research as an ongoing process of knowledge production through conversation.
- Analyze and use *genre* to examine and discover generic features, relating those features to rhetorical practices in specific writing communities.
- Reflect on writing technologies through discussion of the ways writing is always mediated by these technologies.
- Practice Process, Reflection, and Revision by re-thinking at various points in the writing process in order

to revise texts.

- Explore identity in writing by determining how authors negotiate (and perform) identity and difference.
- Through the workshop model, practice providing and receiving feedback on writing assignments.

Blackboard (Bb)

Be sure to check Blackboard *and* your OU e-mail account for announcements, readings, and other important course materials. You can also use Bb to collect and collaborate with/e-mail other students. We will use Bb often, so familiarize yourself with the site.

Course Policies

- **E-mail:** I use e-mail to communicate important information about the class. You are responsible for checking your school account **daily**.
- **Community Writing:** Our class will function as a community of writers, which means your peers *will* read and critique your work. Please only submit work you are comfortable sharing.
- **Typed work:** All out-of-class work must be typed and properly formatted (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font).
- **Complete drafts:** Peer review drafts must be complete and ready for classmates' feedback on the assigned dates in order to receive credit.
- **Late Assignments:** I **will not** accept late assignments.
- **Class Culture:** Everyone in our class, myself included, must remain civil and courteous at all times. We will often have the opportunity to share our opinions and beliefs, **but no racist, sexist, heterosexist, ableist, or any other negative communication harmful to an individual or group will be tolerated**. Whether something is offensive or not will be determined by the people whom it might offend and/or their advocates.

Attendance Policy

Attendance at all classes is expected. Missing more than two class sessions will adversely affect your grade, and missing a peer review day, without advance notice, will count as not one but two absences. (See the Learning Contract for specifics.)

Technology Policy

When necessary, laptop computers and tablets will be allowed for use in the classroom. Cell phones must be **put away and silent** for the duration of class—I don't want to see or hear them.

Plagiarism

Cheating, whether by fraud (claiming another's ideas or work as your own) or fabrication (making up or falsifying information), will result in a course grade of F and possibly a report to the OU Office of Community Standards. You are at all times responsible for handling sources ethically by acknowledging the author and source of directly borrowed ideas and language in your writing.

Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism is defined by the Ohio University Student handbook as a Code A offense (10); this means:

[a] student found to have violated any of the following regulations will be subject to a maximum sanction of expulsion, or any sanction not less than a reprimand. . . . Plagiarism involves the presentation of some other person's work as if it were the work of the presenter. A faculty member has the authority to grant a failing grade . . . as well as referring the case to the director of judiciaries.

Academic Misconduct Information: <http://www.ohio.edu/communitystandards/academic/students.cfm>

Please, if you are not sure how to avoid plagiarizing, either see me and/or a Writing Center tutor.

Student Writing Center (SWC)

When writing your papers, you should consider taking advantage of the Student Writing Center (SWC). Regardless of your writing ability, you will benefit from discussing your paper and your ideas with a trained Writing Center tutor.

The SWC is located in Alden Library on the 2nd floor, and provides free scheduled and walk-in face-to-face appointments, as well as online appointments. Tutors can assist with any stage of the writing process, from understanding the assignment to looking at a near-completed draft. You can get help with developing your thesis or main idea, organizing or developing your content, working through tricky grammatical issues, or any other writing concerns. Visit <http://www.ohio.edu/writing/> to learn more.

Classroom Accessibility

Let me know as soon as possible if you need an accommodation to work successfully in this class. This classroom strives for full accessibility, and it is not necessary for you to have an official accommodation letter from Disability Services to request changes to the classroom that will better serve your needs as a student, although you are encouraged to explore the possible supports they can offer if you are a student with a disability or learning difference. If you *do* have a letter from Disability Services, please let me know. I encourage everyone to suggest any improvements for our learning environment.

Self-Advocacy

Self-advocates do not wait for someone else to speak for them; instead, they identify problems in the classroom environment and engage productively with other members of the classroom to solve these problems. Actively work with the instructor and your classmates to identify barriers to your full participation in the classroom by becoming a self-advocate.

**Your continued enrollment in this course constitutes your acceptance and understanding of the policies outlined in the syllabus above and in all attached OU or English Department policies, and your commitment to adhere to all policies and employ your best efforts to accomplishing course objectives and outcomes.

ENG 1510: Tentative Schedule, MWF Spring 2016

(Assignments are subject to change.)

(Bb = Blackboard)

Week	Date	Objective(s)	Reading (Complete before class)	Assignments (Complete before class)
1	1.11	Intro to course; group syllabus review; distribute Learning Contracts; Q&A	N/A	N/A
	1.13	Assign workshop schedule; response guidelines; assign poetry exercise & distribute poetry packet (on Box)	Landrum-Geyer, "On Essaying"; Lopate, "The Essay, an Exercise in Doubt," "Introduction"	N/A
	1.15	Assign personal inquiry drafts; distribute response guide	Burnett, "Eat Your Spinach!"; Gee, "Literacy, Discourse, and Linguistics: An Introduction"	N/A
2	1.18	MLK Jr. Day – NO CLASS	:)	:)
	1.20	Assign prose exercise	Bourelle, "Writing to Discover"; Straub, "Responding"	Response #1 (to Landrum-Geyer or Burnett or Gee) due
	1.22		Kerivan, "Grammar and Creativity in Composition"	Poetry exercise due; Gee worksheet due
3	1.25	Begin workshopping personal inquiry drafts; begin reading Biss; workshop two essays	Biss p. 1-22; Huber & Opidee, "Teaching the Exploratory Essay"	Response #2 (to Bourelle or Kerivan or Huber & Opidee) due
	1.27	Workshop two essays	Biss p. 23-32	N/A
	1.29	Workshop three essays	Student essays	N/A
4	2.1	Workshop two essays	Biss p. 33-54; McCallum-Smith, "On Risk and Personal Belief" (Bb)	Prose exercise due
	2.3	Workshop two essays	Biss p. 55-66	N/A
	2.5	Workshop three essays	Student essays	N/A
5	2.8	Assign research drafts; workshop two essays	Holdstein & Aquiline ch. 4; Biss p. 67-88; Burke, "Mistrust, Metaphor, and Medicine"	N/A
	2.10	Workshop two essays	Biss p. 89-97	N/A
	2.12	Workshop three essays	Student essays	N/A
6	2.15	Workshop two essays; distribute sample annotation	Holdstein & Aquiline ch. 5; Biss p. 98-117; Groopman, "There's No Way Out of It!" (Bb)	Reading & Research Journals due
	2.17	Workshop two essays	Driscoll, "Introduction to Primary Research"	N/A
	2.19	Workshop three essays	Student essays	Letter packet #1 due
7	2.22	Begin workshopping research drafts; workshop two essays	Biss p. 118-138; Holdstein & Aquiline ch. 7; "Eula Biss Interviewed" (Bb)	Revised personal inquiry draft due for instructor (on Box); annotation of secondary source due
	2.24	Workshop two essays	Biss p. 139-152	N/A
	2.26	Workshop three essays	Student essays	N/A
8	2.29	Spring Break – NO CLASS	:)	:)

	3.2	Spring Break – NO CLASS	:)	:)
	3.4	Spring Break – NO CLASS	:)	:)
9	3.7	Assign argument drafts; workshop two essays	Student essays	Reading & Research Journals due
	3.9	Workshop two essays	Biss p. 153-163; Jolliffe ch. 9 (Bb)	N/A
	3.11	Workshop three essays	Student essays	N/A
10	3.14	Workshop two essays	Biss endnotes p. 165-175; Leahy, “In It for the Long Haul”	Annotation of secondary source due
	3.16	Workshop two essays	Biss endnotes p. 176-189	TBD
	3.18	Workshop three essays	Student essays	TBD
11	3.21	Begin workshoping argument drafts; workshop two essays	Greene, “Argument as Conversation”	Reading & Research Journals due; letter packet #2 due
	3.23	Workshop two essays	Student essays	Response #3 (Biss) due
	3.25	Workshop three essays	“	TBD
12	3.28	Workshop two essays	“	Revised research draft due for instructor (on Box); annotation of secondary source due
	3.30	Workshop two essays	“	Response #4 (Greene) due
	4.1	Workshop three essays	“	TBD
13	4.4	Workshop two essays; introduce cover letters	“	Reading & Research Journals due
	4.6	Workshop two essays	“	TBD
	4.8	Workshop three essays	“	TBD
14	4.11	Workshop two essays	“	TBD
	4.13	Workshop two essays	“	TBD
	4.15	Workshop three essays	“	TBD
15	4.18	Workshop two essays	“	TBD
	4.20	Workshop two essays	“	TBD
	4.22	Peer Review Day	“	TBD
Exam				Full exploratory essay (w/ reflective cover letter) due for instructor (on Box)