**English 1101**

**Fall 2011**

**Course Information:**ENGL 1101-09 CRN: 80190 (TR 12:30-13:45, A&S 150)

**Instructor:** Stephan McCormick

**Office Hours:** AS 1-53, TR 11:00-12:00, and by appointment.

**Contact Information:** Phone: (404) 461-9821; email: Stephan.McCormick@gcsu.edu

**Required Materials:***Remix*, Miller, Bedford/St. Martin’s, ISBN, 978-0312476687

*Easy Writer*, Lunsford, Bedford/St. Martin’s, ISBN, 978-0312594596

*Writing and Revising,* Kennedy

Every class: reading journal, blank paper, and something to write with

*Easy Writer* is your reference for matters of format and  correctness. *Writing and Revision* is your reference for matters of style. They will also provide you with guidelines and instruction on  the spirit and mechanics of using and citing sources accurately in your  work. We will use the MLA in-text citation system in this course. It is essential that you also have ready access to a good current college dictionary.

**Course Description & Goals:**This course is an introduction to writing prose for a public and academic audience—specifically, prose that is both critical and personal, that features your ideas, your perspective, and your voice to engage readers.  The focus of our reading and your writing will be American popular  culture, broadly defined. That is, you will write **essays**that critically engage elements and aspects of contemporary American  popular culture and that do so via a vivid personal voice and presence. In the coming weeks we will read a number of pieces that address current  issues in popular culture. These readings will address a great many subjects from the contemporary world to launch and elaborate an argument  or position or refined observation. And you yourselves will write a great deal, attending always to the ways your purpose in writing, your intended audience, and your writing process shape what and how you write.

You will write essays at once critical and marked with personal voice and perspective, offer them in class workshops for response and suggestions, and then revise and edit your own work. Frequent writing and revision, class workshops, and discussion of assigned reading will constitute our work together  throughout the semester.

Another writing teacher once wrote, "Writing emerges from writing." That is to say, we become capable writers both by writing ourselves and by reading  and reflecting on the writing others have done. Reading what other  writers have written, along with the frequent practice of writing, is  what inspires us to write and helps us have something to say. We will,  then, do a great deal of reading as well as writing as we strive to  understand better what is at stake when we set ourselves to the task of  writing.

**Grades:**Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Final Portfolio: 80%

Participation:    20%

**Notes**: All essays much be in 12pt Times New Roman font, double spaced, with 1-inch margins. Any deviations from this standard style will result in grade-crushingly severe penalties.

Failure to complete any of the essays to be included in your portfolio will result in failing this course.

**Course Requirements:**Writing successfully depends to a great degree upon your ability to read with scrupulous care, attention, and insight. Careful reading of all assigned material, including workshop submissions by students in the  class, will be one of the foundations of your work for the course. You will be expected to have completed all assigned reading on the day a text is discussed in class and to prepare for class workshops by reading carefully and attentively the work other class members have submitted and writing a response to the writer which you will give to him or her at the conclusion of the workshop. Occasional brief and informal in-class writing will help you stay disciplined about getting the reading done on time. In addition, there will be a couple of occasions over the semester for you to make brief oral presentations to the class, both formal and informal.

To help you engage more deeply with the reading you do, you will keep a reader's notebook—a  place for you to write informally to explore the reading, raise questions, follow up on implications, record your responses. Most of the notebook writing will be done outside class, but our occasional in-class writing will also be part of your notebook. The purpose of the notebook is to use writing as a way to engage more deeply with the reading, to prepare you for class discussion, and to generate ideas for further writing. I will collect the notebooks at random, a few at a time, so please always bring your notebook to class with you. A handout that explains the process of keeping the notebook in greater detail is available on GeorgiaVIEW.

In addition to responses to the reading, I ask that you attend at least one public reading or other relevant event on campus or in Milledgeville and write a response/review of it.  I'll announce events I think are appropriate; you are encouraged to do the same. If there is an event you would like to attend and you aren't sure whether it will be appropriate for this purpose, ask me.

We will be covering the four major essay genres: narrative, descriptive, expository, and argumentative. There will be one directed assignment when all of you will be working on a similar essay topic; in addition, you must submit three other essays of approximately 5-6 typed pages each. Within the parameters of an assignment, you will be free to choose what you want to write about**.** I will, of course, be happy to help you find a subject if you need that help. **It is a good idea to discuss your thesis with me before starting your essay in earnest.** All of your essays will be discussed in class workshops with other members of the class; you will also meet with me from time to time in individual or small-group conferences to discuss revision possibilities.

Additionally, each student will participate in one group presentation, to be graded on the normal A-F scale.

**Workshops:**One of the primary texts for the course will be the writing all of you do and what all of us have to say about that writing. We will spend a good bit of time in class workshops, learning from and responding to the writing done by members of the class. Your purpose in those workshops will be to support each other's writing efforts by offering careful and thoughtful responses as readers, pointing out the writer's successes and offering constructive suggestions for improving the work. What you submit to the workshops will be understood to be work in progress; you will use the responses of readers (including me) to revise, refine, and polish selected pieces of your writing before submitting a final version to be graded.

**Technical Details:** All essays much be in 12pt Times New Roman font, double spaced, with 1-inch margins. Any deviations from this standard style will result in grade-crushingly severe penalties.

**Grading**: I will evaluate your work by responding as carefully and thoughtfully as I can to all the writing you do for the class, but I will not grade individual pieces of writing. At the end of the semester, you will submit to me a portfolio containing all the writing you have done for the course, including at least 20 pages of revised and polished essays and your reader's notebook, so that I can assign you a grade for the course. In deciding on semester grades, I will consider the overall quality of all the written work you submit in your portfolio, the degree and consistency of your effort throughout the semester, the success you demonstrate in revising your work, how actively you participated in class discussion and activities and the quality of your classroom contributions, and how well you served as a reader and responder for other writers in the class. I will of course be happy to talk with you at any time about your work and your progress in the course, and I promise to let you know at once if I think your performance has fallen  to the level of a C or below. Passing the course with a C or better will allow you to join English 1102.

**All required work (assignments and assigned revisions, notebook and  in-class writing, reading assignments) must be completed satisfactorily  in order to receive a passing grade for the course.**

**Attendance/Participation:**Your responsibility in the class is to be not only a writer, but also a reader and responder for other members of the class community. It is essential, then, that you attend class faithfully and come to each class fully prepared to participate in discussions of assigned reading and in writing workshops. Lateness for class, if extreme or chronic, will be counted as an absence. Sleeping during class, using your phone, or opening a computer unless I have asked you to, we be counted as an absence. You must notify me as soon as possible when a real and serious emergency keeps you from attending class. More than **three**unexcused absences will result in your course grade being lowered; **more than five**will result in your being withdrawn from the course. Missing class on a day when you have work up for workshop discussion will count as two absences.

**Revision:** You must show me revisions of at least **two**essays before our portfolios are due. Revisions must be submitted within 10 calendar days of receiving the original graded essay, and **must reflect serious effort—i.e. a major rethinking or reorganization of the essay**, and not a series of quick fixes to simple errors, or responses to my specific comments.  The grade of the revised essay will be averaged with that of the original; however, merely submitting a revision does not guarantee a grade improvement.  This policy is restricted to essays #1, #2 and #3.

**Late Work:**Except in rare cases of emergency, all late essays will incur a grade deduction of **10% (one full letter grade) per school day**.  At the start of class on the assigned due date, all essays are to be turned in typed, double-spaced, and stapled.  Essays submitted via e-mail **will not be accepted**.  **Late work is not eligible for revision.** **Also:**Essays falling short of an assignment’s specified page range will suffer a substantial penalty.

**Tentative Class Schedule**

Note: everything below is subject to change; “HW” means what is due for **the following class**

**(T)8/16:**Intro to the course;review syllabus

HW: Gladwell, Malcom. "Brain Candy."

Klosterman, Chuck. "Campus Confidential."

Gallagher, Hugh. "College Essay."

**(R)8/18:**Discuss composition, college,fundamentals of effective writing

HW: David Foster Wallace, Kenyon College Commencement Address;

Writing Assignment: *What do I pay attention to?*

**(T)8/23:**Intro to Personal Narrative: *Purpose*and *Emotional Involvement*; writing exercise

HW: ReMix, Introduction for Students, xxxi-liii and "Identity" chapter, 3-37, 53-83.

**(R)8/25: Library Day**

**(T)8/30:**Personal Narrative:Discussion, *Vivid Language*

HW: Sedaris: “Guy Walks Into a Bar Car”; Sanders: “Under the Influence”

**(R)9/1:** Personal Narrative:Discussion, *Focus* and *Structure*

HW: Sedaris, “Six to Eight Black Men”; Jane Churchon, “The Dead Book”  
Complete first block of your essay, bring **four** printed copies for next class

**(T)9/6:** Workshops, in-class writing and revising

HW: Complete 1st draft of Personal Narrative, bring **four** printed copies for next time

**(R)9/8: \*\*\*1st draft due\*\*\*,**Workshops cont.

HW: Steven Pinker, “My Genome, My Self”

**(T)9/13:**Descriptive/Commentary Essay: Introduction

HW: Complete Personal Narrative;

**(R)9/15: \*\*\*Final Draft of Personal Narrative due\*\*\***,Writing Thematically: Scenes from *This American Life*

HW: *Remix*: Hostetler, p. 139; Udovich, p.149; Brooks, p. 184

**(T)9/20:** Descriptive/Commentary discussion

HW: Klosterman, “What Happens When People Stop Being Polite”; Doyle” “The Greatest Nature Essay Ever”

**(R)9/22:**Discussion, in-class brainstorming; “Food, Inc.”

HW: *Remix:*Pollan, “In Defense of Food”;

**(T)9/27:** “Food, Inc.” cont.

HW: Orlean, “The American Male, Age Ten” complete first block of Social Commentary/Descriptive essay; WR, 108-114

**(R)9/29:**Supplemental sources

HW: Complete 1st draft, bring printed copies

**(T)10/4: \*\*\*1st draft of Descriptive/Social Commentary Essay due\*\*\*,**Workshops

**(R)10/6:**Complete workshops, in-class revisions

HW: Complete Descriptive/Social Commentary Essay

**(T)10/11: Fall Break, no class**

**(R)10/13: \*\*\*Descriptive/Commentary Essay due\*\*\***Intro to Persuasive/Expository Essay

HW: Hedges, “War is a Force that Gives us Meaning”; Kennedy, “Logos, Ethos, Pathos”

**(T)10/18:**Expository/Persuasive Essay

HW: Knapp, “Add Cake, Subtract Self-Esteem”; David Brooks, “People Like Us” (handouts)

**(R)10/20:**Persuasive and rhetorical techniques

HW: David Foster Wallace, “Consider the Lobster,” (Group Assignment)

**(T)10/25:**Group Exercise

HW: E.O. Wilson, “Apocalypse Now”; *Remix*: Sullivan, “The He Hormone” (p. 38); complete first block of Persuasive Essay, bring to class

**(R)10/27:**TEDs

HW: Complete 1st draft, bring printed copies

**(T)11/1: \*\*\*1st draft of Expository Essay due\*\*\*** Workshops

HW: Messenger: “The Cocktail Renaissance”

**(R)11/3:**In-class revisions

**(R)11/3: \*\*\*Expository/Persuasive Essay due\*\*\*** Intro to Research Paper, theses, evidence & crafting an effective essay

HW: Singer: What Should A Billionaire Give—And What Should You?

**(T)11/8:**Discuss group Assignment

HW: Final Group Assignment

**(R)11/10:**Research Day

HW: Block out research paper; bring in at least 10 pieces of evidence, sources cited

**(T)11/15:**Research Day

HW: Complete 1st  draft, bring printed copies

**(R)11/17: \*\*\*1st draft of Research Paper due\*\*\*,**group critiques; conferences begin

**(T)11/22:**TEDs

**(R)11/24: Thanksgiving, no class**

**(T)11/29:**In-class revisions;

**(R)12/1: \*\*\*Final draft of Research Paper due\*\*\***, final class meeting

**(R)12/8 Final Exam [class does not meet]**

**Note:** Portions of this syllabus have been adapted from MIT OPENCOURSEWARE under the Creative Commons License.

**English 1101**

**The Reader's Notebook**

Part of your work for the semester will be to **read** all the material assigned as carefully and attentively as you can and to **write** informally about the reading you do. I will expect about half a page or so of written response to each reading selection. If you want to respond to two or three selections in one notebook entry because they are related in subject matter or style, your entry should be correspondingly longer. I expect your responses to be passages of prose and not just notes and jottings alone (though it is fine to do those jottings in addition to the prose entries, if you want). I expect them also to be informal, speculative, reflective of careful reading, and written in a spirit of questioning and exploration. You should feel free to use your notebook to raise questions, record observations, react as you feel moved to do, change your mind, reflect on or react to class discussions, note connections you see with other texts, both those assigned for the course and other things you've read, films or television or ads you've seen, things you've observed, and so on.

Each notebook entry must be headed with a full bibliographic citation of the piece you are responding to. (On handouts, I will provide the necessary publishing information.) Also, when you quote directly or refer to something in the text, you should cite the page of the source in parentheses (the MLA in-text citation style).

The criterion for a successful notebook is this question: Does what I have written adequately represent my experience of reading and thinking about what I have read?

In addition to responding to the assigned reading, I ask that you attend a reading, lecture, or other event relevant to our course topic and write a review/response in your notebook. I'll announce some events I think appropriate from time to time; you should feel free to do so as well. If there is an event you want to attend and you're not sure it would be appropriate, just check with me.

Your notebook entries should be typed. Keeping your responses on a disk as well is a good way to make sure a lost notebook doesn't present serious problems at the end of the semester, but always print out a hard copy and have it available for me to collect when I call for your notebook. And please keep your notebook writing separate from all the handouts, class notes, and other writing for the course.

I will collect notebooks for a quick review regularly but randomly; please **bring your notebook with you to each class meeting.**

My hope is that keeping the notebook will deepen and enrich both the reading and writing you'll do in the weeks ahead, and that it will help you in your efforts to further develop your abilities as a reader and writer, both in school and out.