English Composition

Fall Semester - Room: A&S 351B - Course: ENGL 1101

Tues. & Thurs. 2:00-3:15 PM

**Instructor**: T.J. Sandella

**Office Hours**: A&S 153 Tues. 3:00-3:30, Thurs. 1:45-3:30P.M. and by appointment

**Contact Information**: E-mail – thomas.sandella@gcsu.edu, Mailbox: in the MFA office - A&S 329

**Required Texts**: Eschholz, Paul and Alfred Rosa, eds. *Models for Writers: Short Essays for Composition*. 11th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012. Print.

ISBN-13: 978-0-312-55201-5

Hacker, Diana and Nancy Sommers. *A Pocket Style Manual*. 6th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012. Print. ISBN-13: 978-0-312-54254-2

Other assigned texts that the instructor will provide

**Course Description & Goals:** The course catalog says English 1101 is "a composition course focusing on skills required for effective writing in a variety of contexts, with emphasis on the personal essay and also including introductory use of a variety of research skills."To that end, this course focuses on those elements that make clear, compelling, and original writing, in addition to stressing the importance of writing as a process. To write insightfully, you must think critically—so this course will also focus intensely on critical thinking. Not only will you be critiquing your own work, but the writing of your peers and outside authors. The purpose of assigned readings is to provide you with examples of the types of essays you will be writing (see below), as well as to serve as tools for you to fine-tune your analytical skills.

**Assignments & Grading**

Personal Narrative (3-4 pgs.) 100 pts. A: 625-563

Persuasive Paper (4 pgs.) 100 pts. B: 562-500

Cultural Analysis (4 pgs.) 100 pts. C: 499-438

Research Paper (6-8 pgs.) 125 pts. D: 437-375

Art as Catalyst Paper/Presentation (2 pgs.) 50 pts. F: 374-0

Response papers (1 pg./5 pts. each) 50 pts.

Participation/in-class writing/quizzes 100 pts.

 625 pts.

(Note: Grades are non-negotiable)

**Participation:** Though there will be some lecturing in this course, it largely depends on your active and intelligent involvement. This means that you should come to class prepared to discuss/converse/debate assigned readings and drafts. Please notice that participation is a relatively large percentage of your grade. To ensure that you are actively reading, I will give pop-quizzes on assigned essays from time to time. In addition, we will begin most classes by doing some informal writing to strengthen specific writing skills. Informal writing and daily participation will be graded on a check plus/check/check minus scale. An excess of check minuses (three or more) will result in a lower participation grade. If you are attentive and contribute, you will receive at least a check. Lesser forms of attentiveness/effort will receive check minuses. It should be easy for you to achieve all of your participation points. Losing them can add up and *will* affect your.

**Response Papers**: To help you organize your thoughts and come to each class prepared to discuss the assigned readings, a one-page response paper will be due for most readings. We will discuss what should be addressed in these papers in more depth during class. These need not be as polished or as formal as your big papers, but they should demonstrate intellectual effort to receive full credit. We’ll talk more about this.

**Peer Review:** In this class we are not only focused on how to write, but also how to read; in particular, we are concerned with what questions we should ask ourselves as we approach an essay. To become better writers and readers is to become better thinkers. To that end, you will be putting your reading skills to task on each other’s essays in addition to outside authors’ work. On peer review days, you will organize yourselves into groups of four or five and take turns passing out your work (this means you should bring in four or five copies of your essay). Each student will read his/her essay aloud while the others follow along—making notes—and then each member of the group will give the student constructive, spoken, and written feedback on his/her work. Please be fair, thoughtful, and honest in your feedback, but not honest to the point of cruelty.

**Art as Catalyst Paper/Presentation:** Why do we read? Why do we write? I like to think we do these things to better understand ourselves, each other, and the world we live in. And if they don’t bring us any closer to “truth,” at least they give us a more acute awareness of life’s mysteries. I like to think we do these things because they’re important, because they inspire us to be better, kinder, and more thoughtful individuals, whatever that means. I’m inspired by poems and stories. But I’m also inspired by movies and paintings and songs and good food and a beautiful woman and a certain look my dog gives me sometimes like he’s trying really hard to understand me. Everyone will have an assigned day to bring some form of art to present to the class (in addition to a two-page paper to be turned in to me). In turn, the class will use the piece of art as a catalyst for some informal writing, and then we’ll discuss what we’ve written as a class (we’ll talk more about this later).

**Attendance**: Daily attendance is mandatory. Each student is allowed a total of three absences. After that, each absence will lower the student’s participation grade by ten points (roughly equivalent to a full letter grade).

This course functions as a process. In this process you will learn to write more effectively by participating in an evolution of steps (reading, writing, analyzing, synthesizing, and critiquing). If you miss a step (a class) then your understanding of the process will undoubtedly begin to crumble. Absences can only hurt your grade, so use them wisely. Please e-mail me if you don't know exactly what you missed/should be working on. Barring extreme circumstances, I reserve the right to fail any student who misses six or more classes.

**Tardiness:** Come to class on time every day. Two tardies = one absence. If you know that you're going to arrive late or leave early and you have a legitimate reason to do so, please notify me ahead of time.

**Revision**: One of the things I want to stress this semester is that writing is a process. A major component of that process is revision—therefore, students are strongly encouraged (but not required) to revise any two of the first three papers. These revisions must be turned in within one week of when papers are returned; once submitted, the revised grade will be averaged with the original to make the final grade. (Note: Submitting a revision does not guarantee a higher grade—especially if the revision is a lazy or sloppy effort.) This should be a serious and focused re-working of your previously submitted paper.

**Late work**: Papers are to be typed (double-spaced and in the proper MLA format), stapled, and turned in at the start of class on the due date. Late papers—including those submitted after class or turned in halfway through class on the due date—will be docked five points for every day they're late. Do not e-mail me papers. I recommend printing them at least a day before the due-date to avoid printer malfunctions, lost files, etc. These are not suitable excuses for late work. I will not accept late writing exercises/responses.

**Page requirements:** When I say four pages, I mean four, not three-and-a-quarter or three-and-a-half. Same goes for five, six, or seven pages. It's nearly impossible to achieve an A on a paper if you don't meet these requirements. (Note: Intentionally or accidentally narrowing your margins will be viewed as an act of academic dishonesty and will adversely affect your grade.)

**Caveat:** Put your cell-phone on silent and put it away. If I see it out, you will be told to leave. Except for in-class writing, all laptops are to remain closed.

**Academic Honesty:** According to GCSU’s Honor Code:

Plagiarism is defined as presenting as one's own work the words or ideas of an author or fellow student. Students should document quotes through quotation marks and footnotes or other accepted citation methods. Ignorance of these rules concerning plagiarism is not an excuse. When in doubt, students should seek clarification from the professor who made the assignment.

If you plagiarize in an essay, you will fail that essay. At my discretion, you may also fail the course. The university has a procedure for handling cases of plagiarism. You can read all about it in the GCSU *Undergraduate Catalog*. I reserve the right to have you submit your papers to TurnItIn (we’ll talk).

**Religious Observance Policy:** Students are permitted to miss class in observance of religious holidays and other activities observed by a religious group of which the student is a member without academic penalty. Exercising of one’s rights under this policy is subject to the GC Honor Code. Students who miss class in observance of a religious holiday or event are required to make up the coursework missed as a result from the absence. The nature of the make-up assignments and the deadline for completion of such assignments are at the sole discretion of the instructor. Failure to follow the prescribed procedures voids all student rights under this policy.

**Assistance for Student Needs Related to Disability:** If you have a disability as described by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, you may be eligible to receive accommodations to assist in programmatic and physical accessibility. Disability Services, a unit of the GCSU Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity, can assist you in formulating a reasonable accommodation plan and in providing support in developing appropriate accommodations to ensure equal access to all GCSU programs and facilities. Course requirements will not be waived, but accommodations may assist you in meeting the requirements. For documentation requirements and for additional information, we recommend that you contact Disability Services located in Maxwell Student Union at 478-445-5931 or 478-445-4233.

**Student Opinion Surveys statement**: Given the technological sophistication of Georgia College students, the student opinion survey is being delivered through an online process. Your constructive feedback plays an indispensable role in shaping quality education at Georgia College. All responses are completely confidential and your name is not stored with your responses in any way. In addition, instructors will not see any results of the opinion survey until after final grades are submitted to the University. An invitation to complete the online opinion survey is distributed to students near the end of the semester. Your participation in this very important process is greatly appreciated.

**Fire Drills:** Fire drills will be conducted annually. In the event of a fire alarm, students will exit the building in a quick and orderly manner through the nearest hallway exit. Learn the floor plan and exits of the building. Do not use elevators. If you encounter heavy smoke, crawl on the floor so as to gain fresh air. Assist disabled persons and others if possible without endangering your own life. Assemble for a head count on the front lawn of main campus or other designated assembly area.

**Writing Center:** The GCSU Writing Center is a great resource. The staff is friendly and extremely helpful, and 15 or 20 minutes with any one of them can transform your essay. The Writing Center is located in Lanier 209 and open Monday through Friday, 9 am – 4 pm. While no extra credit will be offered, I encourage you to visit regularly. For more information, call (478)-445-3370 or visit online at: http://www.gcsu.edu/acad\_affairs/coll\_artsci/eng/writing/

**Tentative Schedule (Subject to Change)**

**Week 1**

**8/14:** Introductions; review syllabus

HW: Collect course materials; read p. 7-19 in MFW; read DFW’s Commencement Address (handout/first response paper); print and bring in Anne Lamott’s “Shitty First Drafts” (http://www.orcutt.net/othercontent/sfds.pdf)

**8/16:** Art as Catalyst example & sign up; discuss DFW & MFW; Lamott’s essay; reading & writing analytically; what is a thesis?; what questions should we ask ourselves when we read?

HW: Read 20-42 in MFW; read Cheryl Strayed’s “The Love of My Life” (handout)

**Week 2**

**8/21:** Discuss personal narrative and first paper assignment; discuss Strayed’s essay; brainstorming exercise for paper

HW: Read Chapter 14, 57-72, 145-150 in MFW

**8/23:** Discuss readings; introduce rubric; write introductions

HW: Read Michael Cox’s “Visitor” (handout); read 81-98 in MFW

**Week 3:**

**8/28:** Discuss readings

HW: Complete the 1st draft of your narrative and bring in copies

**8/30: 1st draft of narrative due (4 copies)** – peer review

HW: Work on essays

**Week 4:**

**9/4:** One-on-one feedback; in-class revision

**9/6:** One-on-one feedback; in-class revision (bring laptops/notepad)

HW: Complete final draft of personal narrative

**Week 5:**

**9/11: Final draft of narrative due**;introduce personal persuasive essay (pp. xliv-xlvi in *Remix*); Zach Wahls’s speech (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSQQK2Vuf9Q) Jill Taylor TED talk (ted.com)

HW: Read Chapter 21 in MFW

**9/13:** Discuss revision and readings; brainstorm five controversial/unique opinions that you hold

HW: Read Chapter 15 and 73-77 in MFW

**Week 6:**

**9/18:** Discuss readings; work on introductions

HW: Read Thomas Lynch’s “The Undertaking” (handout)

**9/20:** Discuss reading

HW: Complete the 1st draft of your personal persuasive essay and print copies

**Week 7:**

**9/25:** **1st draft of persuasive paper due (4 copies)** – peer review

HW: Work on essays

**9/27:** One-on-one feedback; in-class revision (bring laptops/notepad)

HW: Work on essays

**Week 8**

**10/2**: One-on-one feedback; in-class revision (bring laptops/notepad)

HW: Finish Essays

**10/4:Final draft of persuasive paper due**;introduce cultural criticism (Bell Hooks videos); begin *Visioneers*

HW: Read Chapter 4 & 5 in MFW

**Week 9**

**10/9:** FALL BREAK—NO CLASS

**10/11:** Discuss film, readings, and paper topics

HW: read Chapter 16 in MFW

**Week 10**

**10/16:** Discuss readings; *Visioneers* rd. 2

**10/18:** Visioneers rd. 2 (cont.)

HW: Complete 1st draft of cultural criticism paper and print copies

**Week 11**

**10/23: 1st draft of cultural criticism paper due (4 copies)** – peer review

HW: Work on essays

**10/25:** One-on-one feedback; in-class revision (bring laptops/notepad)

HW: Complete final draft

**Week 12**

**10/30: Final draft of cultural criticism paper due**; introduce research paper

HW: read David Foster Wallace’s “Consider the Lobster” (handout)

**11/1:** Discuss readings; MLA review

HW: Write down five questions you might want to answer in your research paper; read Chapter 10 in MFW

**Week 13**

**11/6:** Library day (research); locate five potential sources; conference sign-up

HW: Decide which question you want to answer

**11/8:** Library day (orientation); locate three more sources; conference sign-up

HW: Read Chapter 5 in W&R; formulate thesis & sketch an outline of research paper

**Week 14**

**11/13 & 11/15**: Conferences—thesis & outline due

HW: Finish first 3-4 pages of research paper

**Week 15**

**11/20: First 3-4 pages of research paper due (4 copies)** – peer review

HW: Work on essays

**11/22:** THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS

**Week 16**

**11/27:** One-on-one feedback; in-class writing (bring laptops/notepads)

HW: Complete 1st draft of Research paper

**11/29:** One-on-one feedback; in-class writing (bring laptops/notepads)

HW: Complete final draft of research paper

**Week 17: 12/4: Final draft of research paper due**