English Composition

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

Mon. & Wed. 2:00-3:15 PM

**Instructor**: T.J. Sandella

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

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

**Required Texts**: Latterell, Catherine G., ed. *Remix: Reading and Composing Culture*. 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford-St. Martins, 2010. ISBN-13: 978-0-312-47668-7

Kennedy, X. J., Dorothy M. Kennedy, and Marcia F. Muth. *Writing and Revising with 2009 MLA and 2010 APA Updates*. Boston: Bedford-St. Martin's, 2011. ISBN-13: 978-0-312-67950-7

Lunsford, Andrea A. *EasyWriter with 2009 and 2010 APA Updates*. 4th ed. Boston: Bedford-St. Martin's, 2009. ISBN-13: 978-0-312-65031-5

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: 600-540

Persuasive Paper (4-5 pgs.) 100 pts. B: 539-480

Cultural Analysis (4-5 pgs.) 100 pts. C: 479-420

Research Paper (6-8 pgs.) 125 pts. D: 419-360

Debate Presentation (1-2 pgs.) 20 pts. F: 360-

Response papers (1 pg./5 pts. each) 55 pts.

Participation/in-class writing/quizzes 100 pts.

600 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 certain classes by doing some informal writing to strengthen specific writing skills. Three points will be awarded every class for participation, and you should have something intelligent to add each day. If you are attentive and contribute, you will receive the full three points. Lesser forms of attentiveness will receive less credit. It should be easy for you to achieve all of your participation points. Losing them can add up and *will* affect your. The remainder of your participation points will come from quizzes and your involvement in informal writing.

**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.

**Debate Presentation:** We will have a formal “debate” of sorts in response to two of the more controversial essays. Half of the class will be responsible for each essay, which will further be broken up into two groups. Each group will argue in defense or refutation of the author. Groups will be assigned three weeks in advance, and each member should have a specific aspect of the article (meaning different from other group members) to focus on for the presentation. 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 that 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.

**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.

**Plagiarism:** 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).

**Disabilities:** Please let me know if there is anything I can do to accommodate a learning disability. If you have any further concerns, access: http://www.gcsu.edu/disability/studentpolicies.htm

**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. The full policy and prescribed procedures are found at: http://info.gcsu.edu/intranet/acad\_affairs/ReligousObservancePolicy.doc

**Student Opinion Surveys:** 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. For more information on other emergencies, please visit http://www.gcsu.edu/emergency/actionplanmain.htm

**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**

**8/15:** Introductions; review syllabus

HW: Collect course materials; read p. 20 & p. 30 in W&R; read Anne Lamott’s “Shitty First Drafts” (http://www.orcutt.net/othercontent/sfds.pdf) and answer the questions at the bottom of the page; read Lucy Grealy’s “Masks” in *Remix* (pp. 66-72)

**8/17:** Discuss Lamott’s essay; reading & writing analytically; what is a thesis?; what questions should we ask ourselves when we read? (apply to Grealy’s essay)

HW: Read pp. xxxi-xlii and xlix-lviii in *Remix*; read Cheryl Strayed’s “The Love of My Life” (handout)

**Week 2**

**8/22:** In class writing (smile exercise); discuss personal narrative and first paper assignment; discuss Strayed’s essay; brainstorming exercise for paper

HW: Read Michael Cox’s “Visitor” (handout); read pp. 54-59 and 69-74 in W&R

**8/24:** Discuss readings; introduce rubric; discuss and narrow paper topics

HW: Read Charles Bowden’s “Torch Song” (handout); read Chapter 6 and pp. 110-111 in W&R

**Week 3:**

**8/29:** Discuss readings; in-class writing (introduction—focusing on pp. 90-93)

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

**8/31: 1st draft of narrative due (4 copies)** – peer review; assign first debate groups

HW: Work on essays

**Week 4:**

**9/5:** LABOR DAY—NO CLASS

**9/7:** One-on-one feedback; in-class revision (bring laptops/notepad)

HW: Complete final draft of personal narrative

**Week 5:**

**9/12: 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) Robinson’s TED talk (ted.com) or radiolab.org “Who Am I”; answer questions in class

HW: Read Michael Pollan’s “In Defense of Food” in *Remix* (p. 539), read Chapter 8 and Chapter 10 in W&R

**9/14:** Discuss revision and readings; brainstorm five controversial/unique opinions that you hold

HW: Read Scott Sanders’s “Looking at Women” in *Remix* (p. 382) and Kathleen Norris’s “Celibate Passion” (handout); decide on paper topic

**Week 6:**

**9/19:** Debate presentations; discuss readings and paper topics

HW: Read Thomas Lynch’s “The Undertaking” (handout) and Laura Kipnis’s “Against Love” in *Remix* (p. 362)

**9/21:** Discuss readings

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

**Week 7:**

**9/26:** **1st draft of persuasive paper due (4 copies)** – peer review

HW: Work on essays

**9/28:** One-on-one feedback; in-class revision (bring laptops/notepad); assign second debate groups

HW: Complete final draft

**Week 8**

**10/3**: **Final draft of persuasive paper due**;introduce cultural criticism (Bell Hooks videos); begin *Visioneers*

HW: read Peter Rojas’s “Bootleg Culture” in *Remix* (p. 469)

**10/5:** Discuss reading; finish *Visioneers*; discuss cultural criticism paper

HW: brainstorm paper topics; read Bernard Cooper’s “Burl” (handout) and Tony Earley’s “Somehow Form a Family” (handout)

**Week 9**

**10/10:** FALL BREAK—NO CLASS

**10/12:** Discuss readings and paper topics

HW: read Rebecca Traister’s “Hit Her, Baby, One More Time” (p. 431) and Steve Johnson’s “Everything Bad Is Good for You: Games” in *Remix* (p. 459)

**Week 10**

**10/17:** Debate presentations; discuss readings; *Visioneers* rd. 2

**10/19:** Visioneers rd. 2 (cont.)

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

**Week 11**

**10/24: 1st draft of cultural criticism paper due (4 copies)** – peer review

HW: Work on essays

**10/26:** One-on-one feedback; in-class revision (bring laptops/notepad)

HW: Complete final draft

**Week 12**

**10/31: Final draft of cultural criticism paper due**; introduce research paper; revisit research paper from *Remix*

HW: read David Foster Wallace’s “Consider the Lobster” (handout); read Chapter 11 in W&R

**11/2:** Discuss readings; MLA review

HW: Write down five questions you might want to answer in your research paper; complete online library tutorial & print quiz results

**Week 13**

**11/7:** Library day (research); locate five potential sources; conference sign-up

HW: Decide which question you want to answer

**11/9:** 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**

**11/14 & 11/16**: No class (Conferences—thesis & outline due)

HW: Finish first 3-4 pages of research paper

**Week 15**

**11/21: First 3-4 pages of research paper due (4 copies)** – peer review

HW: Work on essays

**11/23:** THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS

**Week 16**

**11/28:** One-on-one feedback; in-class writing (bring laptops/notepads)

HW: Complete 1st draft of Research paper

**11/30: 1st draft of research paper due (4 copies)** – peer review

HW: Complete final draft of research paper

**Week 17: 12/5: Final draft of research paper due**