ENG 1302: Written Argument and Research
COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer II 2012

Instructor: Michelle Onley Pirkle
Office Location: Hall of Languages 233
Office Hours: Mon/Wed 10:50-11:10; Tues/Thurs 10:50-12:00 or by appointment
Office Phone: (903) 886-5262
Office Fax: (903) 886-5980
University Email Address: mspirkle@gmail.com
Class Web Site: 13024u.wikispaces.com

PLEASE NOTE: This is a common syllabus used by all graduate students teaching sections of this course.

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbooks and Materials Required:


Folder or binder that will serve as your Research Portfolio (see below)

Flash drive or other means (dropbox.com account, for example) of storing digital versions of the essays and other written material you generate (always, always keep a backup of everything you turn in!)

A valid, working email address that you check everyday (your school email address)

Optional Texts:

Resources for Ethnographic Research (asking good interview questions, professional associations’ codes of ethics, etc.)

http://tabethaadkins.com/ethnography_resources.html

The Celebration of Student Writing at Eastern Michigan University
http://www.emich.edu/english/fycomp/celebration/index.htm

Some of our past Celebrations:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cMWkdAzGYvw
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3r0PGbfhHlo
Course Description:

This course is all about conducting research. In the writing program at Texas A&M University Commerce, we believe that students learn to do research best by conducting research products of their own design but with some focus and help of their instructors. Therefore, in this class you will conduct ethnographic research projects in which you will “go out into the field” in efforts to learn something about reading and writing in contexts or in its “natural habitat.” You will then become more informed about these findings by comparing what you’ve learned with scholarship conducted by professional researchers and conducting further “library research” to help you create a more informative research report. You’ll finish the semester by presenting your findings during The Celebration Presentations!

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete ENG 1302 will have:

1. an understanding and ability to make use of primary and secondary sources within a focused, academic argument

2. an awareness of context and how audience and context affect a writer’s rhetorical choices

3. the rhetorical flexibility necessary to negotiate a variety of academic tasks (research, interviews, close reading) leading to a sustained argument that is convincing, informative, and well-researched

4. an awareness of context and how our own subject positions as writers might affect our findings—and how to work through potential biases toward more effective arguments

5. an ability to effectively report research findings in writing (via a well-researched and articulated essay) and in person (via a presentation at the end of the semester—Celebration Presentation)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

Grading:

You are encouraged to revise your essays before turning them in as a part of your final portfolio. When I grade your assignments, I will provide suggestions for revision. The Writing Center and your peers can also be excellent resources for such information. Please don’t wait until the end of the semester to begin your revisions—you will not have much time to work on them while you are completing your ethnography and preparing for your Celebration of Student Writing presentation.

How Course Grade is Determined:

Writing Assignment 1- Research Proposal (10%): In this short essay, you should explain to your instructor where you’re going to do your research, what you will be looking for and at in that research site, and why this site is appropriate for your research (using an outline provided on
our web site). In interest of conducting ethical research, explain your connection to this site (i.e. you eat lunch there often, you know someone who works there, etc.). You should also define what literacy means to you and explain what you anticipate you will learn about literacy at this site. (2-3 pages)

**Writing Assignment 2: Informed Consent and Code of Ethics (10%):** Using *The Belmont Report* as a frame work and the Codes of Ethics developed by professional organizations like The Modern Language Association, The American Anthropological Association, The Association of Internet Researchers, or The American Folklore Society, create a Code of Ethics you will follow in your own research. You may also find information in *EIIW* and *FW* to assist you with this project. Once you have created your Code of Ethics, you will also need to create an Informed Consent form that your research participants will read and sign. Remember that your research participants are the audience for this text, so you’ll want to create an informed consent sheet that makes sense to them but also follows the guidelines and expectations of your instructor. (4-6 pages including consent form)

**Writing Assignment 3- Ethnographic Setting Essay (10%):** In this essay, you will show off your ability to use descriptive language to “paint a picture with words.” Your goal is to describe your research site so thoroughly and completely that readers feel they have been there themselves. This essay will eventually become part of your final ethnographic essay. (3-4 pages)

**Informal Writing Assignments and Participation (30%):** This category includes in-class discussion, writing assignments (interviews), informal writing assignments, homework writing assignments, group activities, etc. Your participation in discussion and group activities is vital to the success of this class. We will all profit from the diversity of perspectives and ideas!

**Celebration Presentation (10%):** The Celebration Presentations will take place in our classroom the last week of class. You will be required to make a short verbal introduction, a video or PowerPoint presentation and then conduct a brief Q&A. Each presentation should not take more than a total of 5 minutes. All presentations will be recorded.

**Final Ethnographic Essay (20%):** A final essay detailing the results of your study, what your findings mean in relation to the field of literacy studies, etc. Look to chapters four and five in *EIIW* for what this project should *look like*. Keep in mind that other essays you’ve composed this semester including WA 2, WA 3 and WA 4 will all be part of this essay (perhaps some small PORTION of WA 1). (10-15 pages) Your essay will be part of a portfolio (folder) which includes your double sided observation notes, interviews, reflexive writing, research artifacts, and anything else that help create an accurate portrayal of the research you conducted this semester.

**Research Portfolio (10%):** Your research portfolio will include all of your WA drafts from the semester, including any revised drafts. You will email your research portfolio to me at the end of the semester.

Your grade is determined by the following breakdown of assignments:

- Writing Assignment 1 10%  
  *A: 100-90*
- Writing Assignment 2 10%  
  *B: 89-80*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Assignment 3</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>C: 79-70</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final Ethnography</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>D: 69-60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Portfolio</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>F: 59 or below</td>
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<tr>
<td>Celebration Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation (In-Class Assignments, etc)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

- Flash drive or other means (dropbox.com account, for example) of storing digital versions of the essays and other written material you generate (always, always keep a backup of everything you turn in!)
- A valid, working email address that you check often (every day)
- Regular internet access (additional readings available online)
- Access to a computer with a word processing program and a printer (assignments must be typed and printed)

**ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

Some supplementary texts for this course exist exclusively online, so you must have Internet access to read and/or view these texts.

**COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

Please contact you instructor with any questions you may have. Your instructor’s communication preference is e-mail, and her address is: mspirkle@gmail.com. Also, each instructor in the department of literature and languages is required to keep at least three office hours per course per week.

Grievance Procedure:

If you have concerns about the class or about me as an instructor, please speak to me about those concerns. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of our conversation, the next person in the chain of command is the Director of the Writing Program, Dr. Tabetha Adkins. Her e-mail address is tabetha.adkins@tamuc.edu.

**COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

Course Specific Procedures:

*Writing Center*

The Writing Center offers writers free, one-on-one assistance. We welcome all writers, majors, and disciplines—undergraduate and graduate students alike. In fact, we work from the premise that all writers, no matter their ability level, benefit from the feedback of knowledgeable readers. The Writing Center staff is trained to provide writers with just this
service. In short, we are here to help you help yourself. In order to ensure the most effective session possible, we offer visitors the following suggestions: (1) Get started on your writing project early, and visit the Writing Center at least one day before your final draft is due. You will need time to work with the ideas and suggestions generated in your tutorial sessions. (2) Bring a written copy of your assignment, any relevant readings, and one or two specific questions or concerns you would like to discuss with us.

We are located in the Hall of Languages, Room 103 (903-886-5280) and online at http://web.tamu-commerce.edu/academics/colleges/humanitiesSocialSciencesArts/departments/literatureLanguages/writingCenter/default.aspx

Attendance Policy

Since our class meets twice a week, you may miss up to two (2) times without penalty. After the third absence, your final grade will drop by one letter. After the fifth absence, the student cannot pass the course.

Three tardies=one absence. Please arrive for our class on time. Coming in late not only means that you are missing important information/discussion and showing disrespect for your professor—it distracts your fellow students who have put in the necessary effort to arrive on time.

The university has no policy for “excused absences” except for university sanctioned events, so please save your absences for illness, court appearances, child care arrangements, and other situations when you must miss class.

Academic Honesty

The official departmental policy: “Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonestly. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b [1,2,3])

If you ever have any questions about a particular use of a source, always ask your instructor. They want you to avoid plagiarism, too, so they will help you do so whenever and wherever they can. Do what you can to take advantage of this support—to look innocent in addition to being innocent when it comes to charges of plagiarism.

Students guilty of academic dishonesty of plagiarism can expect to fail the assignment in question or the entire course depending on the nature of the incident.

On University-Sanctioned Activities

To accommodate students who participate in university-sanctioned activities, the First-Year Composition Program offers sections of this course at various times of the day and week. If you think that this course may conflict with a university-sanctioned activity in which you are involved—athletics, etc.—please see your instructor after class on the first day.
University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu
Student Disability Resources & Services

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Ethnographic Inquires in Writing = EIIW

FieldWorking = FW

Schedule subject to change (probably will change).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>In-Class Work</th>
<th>Homework</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/9</td>
<td>Icebreaker; Introduction to Class (syllabus); First Day Writing Activity—What kind of writer are you?</td>
<td>Bring an object to class which represents “literacy” to you. Read EIIW pp. 1-18.</td>
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<td>7/10</td>
<td>TRIO presentation; Literacy presentations and discussion of reading; Introduce Proposal (WA 1); Quick visit to Writing Center</td>
<td>Read EIIW pp.19-33 and FW pp. 111-2; Begin choosing a Field Site;</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/11</td>
<td>In-Class Writing Assignment on Subjective/Fixed position (FW pp. 111-5); Discussion of reading; Literacy In-Class Writing Activity; Literacy debate</td>
<td>FW pp. 74-6; Get permission for site choice; PROPOSAL (WA 1) due THURSDAY (JULY 12). Bring copy of syllabus to be signed by July 12 for extra credit (if included in ethnography folder)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/12</td>
<td>Meet in the Student Center. Field Notes discussion and practice (FW pp. 78-9); Discuss proposals individually (for authorization)</td>
<td>First Site Visit; FIELD NOTES due MONDAY (JULY 16); Read FW pp. 1-8 and 55-65.</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/16</td>
<td>Discussion of Reading; In-Class Reading &amp; Writing Activity (FW pp 10-14 &amp; 15); Discussion of findings from 1st site visit (Field Notes).</td>
<td>Read FW pp. 86-9, 119-24</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/17</td>
<td>Discussion of Reading; In-Class Writing (FW p. 88); In-Class Reading (FW p. 103-10) &amp; Activity;</td>
<td>Read EIIW pp. 117-139</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>7/18</td>
<td>Introduce WA 2 (Ethics Code &amp; Informed Consent)</td>
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<td>7/19</td>
<td>Discussion of Reading; Code of Ethics activity (LAB) (use FW pp. 121-2)</td>
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<td>Rough Draft of Code of Ethics/Informed Consent (WA 2) due THURSDAY (July 19); 2nd Site Visit; FINAL DRAFT of Code of Ethics/Informed Consent (WA 2) due MONDAY/TUESDAY (July 23/24).</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>7/23</td>
<td>CONFERENCES (NO regular class meeting)</td>
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<td>7/24</td>
<td>CONFERENCES (NO regular class meeting)</td>
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<td>7/25</td>
<td>Discussion of reading; Showing vs. Telling discussion &amp; activity; Garden writing activity (depending on weather); Introduce WA 3</td>
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<td>7/26</td>
<td>Discussion of reading; Interviewing and being interviewed; In-class interviewing activity (object—FW pp. 222-5)</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>7/30</td>
<td>Discussion of annotated bibliographies; Peer Edit Descriptive Essay.</td>
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<td>7/31</td>
<td>Discuss storyboarding; In-class Storyboarding Activity; Movie Maker tutorial (Computer LAB).</td>
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<td>8/1</td>
<td>Discuss Portfolio guidelines; Peer Review Ethnography</td>
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<td>8/2</td>
<td>Work in computer lab on Presentation. Peer Review Presentation.</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>8/6</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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<td>8/7</td>
<td>Celebration Presentations (DAY 1); ETHNOGRAPHY due in CLASS</td>
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<td>8/8</td>
<td>Celebration Presentations (DAY 2); PORTFOLIO due TODAY by 5:00 pm (email)</td>
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<td>8/9</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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The Celebration Presentation serves as your Final Exam. Congratulations on finishing the semester!