

ENG 1302: Written Argument and Research
COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall, 2012

Instructor: Prof. J. Davis
Office Location: HL 126
Office Hours: T/R: 10:30-11; 1:45 pm – 3:15 pm
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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbooks and Materials Required:

Adkins, Tabetha. *Ethnographic Inquires in Writing*. Southlake, Texas: Fountainhead Press, 2010.

Sunstein, Bonnie Stone and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater. *FieldWorking: Reading and Writing Research*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006.

Bradded folder that will serve as your Research Portfolio (see below)

Thumb 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

Recommended Text:

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Seventh Edition; The Modern Language Association of America, 2009. Or

Writing at Texas A&M University-Commerce. First Edition; Fountainhead Press, 2011.

Optional Texts:

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

<http://web.tamu-commerce.edu/academics/colleges/humanitiesSocialSciencesArts/departments/literatureLanguages/firstYearWriting/default.aspx>

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 projects 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 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 library research to help you create a more informative and informed research project. You'll finish the semester by presenting your findings in a public forum called The Celebration of Student Writing.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete ENG 1302 will:

1. understand the use of primary and secondary sources within a focused, academic argument
2. understand context and how audience and context affect a writer's rhetorical choices
3. gain 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. demonstrate 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. show an ability to report research findings in writing (via a well-researched and articulated essay) and in person (via a poster presentation at the end of the semester—Celebration of Student Writing)

6. use academic databases to find information for research writing
7. differentiate between ethical and unethical research practices
8. compose an MLA-correct annotated bibliography.
9. correctly use MLA citation style.
10. complete a long research paper relying on multiple kinds of sources to support claims
11. understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.
12. explain the research process in an articulate way

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

Grading

Your grade for this course will be determined by a number of factors. You must complete the assignments and submit them on time. **I do not accept late work. All assignments must be submitted to pass.** Do a good job with these; make good use of the feedback provided (by your instructor, by your classmates during peer review, by tutors in the writing center) and revise effectively; keep up with the readings, involve yourself in all the in-class discussions. You are allowed and encouraged to revise any of the writing assignments 1, 2, 4, 5 or 6 for a maximum of an additional 10 points. Revisions are due the class period after the essay is returned.

How Course Grade is Determined

Writing Assignment 1- Fixed and Variable Influences (10%) (length: 2½ pages). In this essay, you will consider the influences on you that you will manage throughout your ethnography, so that the biases that you hold do not make your paper unfair. **Use the discussion in class.**

Writing Assignment 2- Research Proposal (5%) (length: 3 pages): In this essay, you will explain which subgroup you will study, why you find this group interesting and how you came to choose this group. Your proposal will also describe your plan about accomplishing your ethnography. You will supply specific plans about your research—where your group is located, how often you will visit, which types of people you will interview, what you expect to find in this research.

You will find specific local answers from the observations and visits, but you will also do online library research. In this essay, you will also describe the broad issues that you wish to understand through the research from the journal articles that you will read. These would be wide issues from a broad perspective. The broad issues you research will not be issues that are

answered by your interviewees in the group you study.

In addition, include some connection you might know or expect between the group of people in your ethnography and their literacy, their writing or their specialized expertise or vocabulary.

For all three of these components, also use the discussion in class.

Writing Assignment 3- Preparing for final paper (5%) - *Informed Consent and Code of Ethics*: Research ethics are a combination of many ingredients from respect for the subject to correct citing of sources to giving credit for all ideas that are borrowed to using only credible, thoroughly reliable, sources. Writing should be aimed at giving a fair representation of the studied group.

2%: Creation of a permission contract between you and your subjects that your research participants will read and sign. (1 page).

3%: Addressing the Code of Ethics you followed in your own research in your final paper. This assignment will be part of your final paper and I will grade it there. You may find information in *EIIW* and *FW* to assist you with this project and **use the discussion in class**. (length: 1 page)

Writing Assignment 4- Ethnographic Setting Essay (10%): In this essay, you will show 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 I (your instructor) feel that I have been there myself. This essay will eventually become part of your final ethnographic essay. (length: 4 pages.)

Writing Assignments 5 & 6: Annotated Bibliography: Good ethnographic research involves both fieldwork and traditional library research. Since the research you are doing is scholarly, you will only use scholarly sources to support your claims. You will find articles in scholarly journals **only** that inform what you learn in your fieldwork. These sources will be peer-reviewed, journal articles from the online library at TAMU-Commerce. *The New York Times* (also found in the online library) is the only other acceptable source approved by your instructor. (That means no *Wikipedia* or Dictionary entries, for example.)

By the finish of writing assignments 5 and 6, you must annotate **ten articles**. See more information on annotating in class. See *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, Seventh Edition or examples in *Writing at Texas A&M University-Commerce* from English 1301 or http://www.tabethaadkins.com/annotated_bibs.html

In each annotated bibliography, writers will show the journal article citation information and two additional paragraphs. Paragraph 1 will summarize the main points of the article. Paragraph 2 should describe the way it will help the final paper.

Writing Assignment 5: Annotated Bibliography (10%): 3 journal articles required with the required paragraphs annotating their contents and help.

Writing Assignment 6: Annotated Bibliography (10%): 10 required

Assignment 7: Class Involvement: Informal Writing Assignments and Participation (15%): This category includes in-class writing assignments, informal writing assignments, homework writing assignments, online database practice assignments, quizzes, participation in discussion, attention in class discussion. **Quizzes cannot be made up.**

Assignment 8: Celebration of Student Writing (10%): December 7 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 NOON in the Sam Rayburn Student Center in Conference Rooms A, B, and C. The Celebration of Student Writing is an event held every semester in which students enrolled in ENG 1302 demonstrate what they learned in their research projects. This meeting's demonstrations resemble a science fair with rows of tables and projects displayed. You should create a display that causes excitement using artifacts, visual elements, and any information from your research. Your participation in this event is mandatory.

Assignment 9: Final Ethnographic Essay (15%): 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 WA1, Code of Ethics, WA3 and the annotated bibliography will all be part of this essay. (length: 10 pages + works cited pages)

Assignment 10: Research Portfolio (10%): In your research portfolio you will include all writing assignments **with teacher comments marked** from the semester, all daily class assignments, informal writing assignments, ethnographic, double-sided observation notes, informer consent forms, class notes, first two pages of each journal article and anything else that helps create an accurate portrayal of the research conducted this semester.

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 (everyday)
- Regular internet access (additional readings available online)
- Access to e-college
- Access to a computer with a word processing program and a printer (assignments must be typed and printed)
- A stapler

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 me with any questions you may have. My email address and office address are at the beginning of this syllabus.

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. Tabettha Adkins. The three of us will meet about your complaint. To request a meeting for discussion, Dr. Adkins' e-mail address is Tabettha_Adkins@tamu-commerce.edu.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course 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) **Start** 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.

The Writing Center is located in the Hall of Languages, Room 103 (903-886-5280) and online at <http://web.tamu-commerce.edu/academics/colleges/artsSciences/departments/literatureLanguages/writingCenter/>

Attendance Policy

Come to class every class meeting. I take attendance every class. If you must miss class, email me before you return to class so you will be caught up. If you miss more than four class meetings, your final grade for the course will be lowered by one letter grade. If you

miss more than six class meetings, you will receive a failing grade. **If you come in late, it is your responsibility to stop after class to be sure that I have changed you from absent to tardy.** Scheduled conferences which might replace a class count as class meeting when counting attendance. Three tardies count as an absence.

Other policies

Excessive tardiness can be penalized as an absence.

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

Appropriate Classroom Behavior

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a mature and respectful manner toward the instructor as well as other students. An orderly and cooperative classroom environment is essential for optimum learning to take place. In order to maintain an environment in which learning can take place the following behaviors are expected to be observed:

- Do not talk during the lesson.
- **Cell phones and beepers must be turned off and put away. No texting** during class. If you are texting or playing electronic games, you will be asked to leave and counted absent.
- Limit leaving class.
- Use class time wisely.
- Stay awake during class.
- If arriving late to class, enter the classroom quietly. **It is up to you to check with me after class to make sure that I changed absent to tardy in the gradebook..**
- Please, do the right thing to contribute to a learning atmosphere.

Academic Honesty

The official departmental policy: “Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. 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

Students with Disabilities:

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

Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.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

Week 1:

T: Attend; Intro to e-college.

R: General discussion: syllabus; Celebration of Student Writing; for next class: read *FW* 1- 14; skip Box 1 on pgs. 6-7. Write a list of 3 talking points from the reading that you find interesting and why.

Week 2:

T: Discuss reading. For next class, read *FW* **Box 18, 203-208 and EIIW 158-165 This reading is wrong---fix this**. Discuss MLA conventions.

R: Discuss reading and biases; do subgroup exercise. Discuss academic writing (thesis statement, organization, etc.). **WA1 due on Tuesday.**

Week 3:

T: **WA1 due.** Discuss karaoke singers, *FW* pg 7. For next class, read *FW* 25-44. Pick which of the factors on page 42-44 is most important and write 3 reasons why, so that you can defend your position in class.

R: Discuss reading. For next class, read *FW* 16-19; 44-56. Note for class 3 items in the reading that you find interesting and why.

Week 4:

T: **WA1 returned! Revisions due on Thursday.** Discuss reading. Discuss WA2. For next class, read *FW* 58-59, 76-78, 84-86.

R: Discuss ethics of research. **WA3 due Thursday.**

Week 5:

T: **WA2 due.** Do description exercise. For next class, read *FW* 182-194. Note 2 places that are particularly good descriptions. Bring one example of good description to class. Discuss WA4. **WA4 due in 2 weeks.**

R: **WA3 due.** Discuss quotes and paraphrases.

Week 6: Conferences; bring WA1 to conference.

Week 7:

T: **WA4 due;** Discuss Online database search

R: Discuss Quote/Paraphrase and online database search; for next class, bring article with quote and paraphrase examples, as directed in class.

Week 8:

T: **Quote/paraphrase exercise due.** Class discussion about TAMU online database. Online database scavenger hunt explained.

R: More about online database. **Online database scavenger hunt due.**

Week 9:

T: WA4 returned. **Revisions due on Thursday.** Online database; see examples of annotated bibliographies.

R: Ethnography discussions.

Week 10:

T: **WA5 due.**

R: Ethnography discussions.

Week 11:

T: **WA5 returned. Revisions due on Thursday.**

R: Ethnography discussions.

Week 12:

T: WA 6 due

R: Ethnography discussions

Week 13:

T: Discussion final paper.

R: Thanksgiving!!!!

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Week 14:

T: WA6 returned. Revisions due on Thursday.

R: Discussion about Academic writing and ethnography. Final questions about final paper.

Week 15:

R: Portfolio Due; Final copy of Ethnographic Essay Due – Thursday, November 29

Week 16: Celebration of Student Writing: Friday, December 7, 10:00 AM - 12:00 NOON -
in Sam Rayburn Student Center, Conference Rooms A, B, C.

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Room 132

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Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Tutoring sessions available:

Hall of Languages, First floor - Writing Center

Additional reading selections will be selected from this list.

“Becoming Literate” by Andrea R. Fishman in *EIIW*

“Blinded By the Letter” by Wysocki & Johnson-Eiola in *EIIW*

“Seduction and Betrayal” by Thomas Newkirk in *EIIW*

“Becoming Literate” by Andrea R. Fishman in *EIIW*

“Reading Rites and Sports” by Jabari Mahiri in *EIIW*