

Zone of Proximal Development



ENG 1302: US Written Argument and Research COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2013

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

COURSE INFORMATION

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 in a public forum called The Celebration of Student Writing.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will be able to identify features of ethical research practices.
- Students will be able to evaluate subject position and how it can affect research findings.
- Students will be able to identify conventions of research and citation in academic texts.
- Students will be able to articulate features of academic research writing.

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbooks and Materials Required:

Adkins, Tabetha. *Ethnographic Inquires in Writing*. Southlake, Texas: Fountainhead Press, 2010. 978-59871-435-7

Sunstein, Bonnie Stone and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater. *FieldWorking: Reading and Writing Research*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006. 978-0-312-43841-8

Digital dropbox 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

Video capabilities and video editing software (Most cell phones today contain the video aspect and come with a USB cord that will download your videos onto your computer. There are also free trails available of video editing software.

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/interviewQuestions.aspx>

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=3r0PGbfhHIo>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

Grading Policy	
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You determine your grade. Nothing is mandatory. Only participate in those activities for which you want credit. I give credit for work turned in on time. I give full-credit for excellent work turned in on time. Each assignment will have a corresponding grading criteria, for example in the discussion portion of your grade, you can earn up to 5 points per week through your reflection post and your responses to others. If you would like full-credit for your work:

- 1) Participate in the discussion groups (or the Burkeian Parlor)
- 2) Plan a digitally friendly ethnographic study
- 3) Turn in (on time) writing assignments, your final ethnographic research portfolio with correlating essay
- 4) Participate in the Celebration of Student Writing, either virtually or physically.

Keep in mind that discussions in the Burkeian Parlor are graded.

On Grading and Assignments: As you can see in the breakdown of your grade, you will be doing a considerable amount of writing in order to complete your ethnography (and in turn, the course). Therefore, we will extensively evaluate your own writing as well as your colleagues' writings. The tool that we will use to collect, analyze, and present your research—the process by which we conduct it, the methods we use to analyze the findings, and the text we write to present that research is called—**ethnography**. Ethnography, according to Bonnie Stone Sustein and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater, is "the study of people in cultures" and "the text that is written based on that study." You will want to turn in papers that reflect your best effort in order to earn the best grade possible. If you are unhappy with the grade that you earn on a writing assignment, you have the opportunity to revise your paper, providing that you do the following:

- 1) Work through the comments/suggestions for revision on your paper.
- 2) Submit both drafts (the draft with comments and the one that you revised) to the Writing Center (available in person and online) and work with a tutor on the revised draft to get further comments on your paper.
- 3) Use the Writing Center tutor's comments to continue to revise your paper.
- 4) When you resubmit your paper, be sure to turn in all drafts, so I can see where/how you made changes on your paper.

In addition, you should plan on turning in **all** assignments on time, which means that you must have your major assignments submitted to the correct eCollege assignment basket (in the Dropbox) by midnight of the date that it is due. Knowing the nature of the Internet, technical difficulties, and other unforeseen circumstances, I do have a grace period of up to 365.25 minutes. However, if you consistently turn in assignments during the grace period and not on time, I reserve the right to retract said grace period and act pedantically.

On Late Work:

As a rule, I do accept late work.

Please Note: If you do not turn in all of the major assignments (including participation in the Celebration of Student Writing and submitting your final portfolio), you will not pass the course.

How Course Grade is Determined:

Informal Writing Assignments and Participation (10%): This category includes discussion board and peer reviews.

Research Portfolio (15%): In your research portfolio you'll include your drafts from the semester, informed consent forms, informal writing assignments, double sided observation notes, reflexive writing, research artifacts, and anything else that help create an accurate portrayal of the research you conducted this semester.

Major Writing Assignments (WAs):

All writing assignments are to be typed, printed out, and brought to class on the assigned due date. Margins all around should be 1-inch, and the font should be Times New Roman 12 point.

Writing Assignment 1- Research Framework and Methodology (10%): Using Chapter One from

EIIW, explain your theory of the concept of “literacy.” What is literacy? How do you know a “literacy event” when you see it? How will you go about looking for literacy in its “natural habitat” or in context? Think of this essay as the framework you are creating for your study. (length: 3-5 pages) Note: an alternate assignment is available if you wish to use video.

Writing Assignment 2- 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. 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 explain what you anticipate you will learn about literacy in this site. (length: 3-5 pages)

Writing Assignment 3- Informed Consent and Code of Ethics (5%): 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. (length: 5 pages, including informed consent.)

Writing Assignment 4- 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. (length: 4-6 pages.)

Annotated Bibliography (10%): Since good ethnographic research involves both fieldwork and traditional library research, you will need to gather sources that inform what you learn in your fieldwork. These sources should be books, peer reviewed journal articles, and other relevant sources approved by your instructor. Since the research you’re doing is scholarly, you will only use scholarly sources to support your claims. (That means no *Wikipedia* or Dictionary entries, for example.) You must annotate **ten items**.

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 WA1, WA3, WA4, and the annotated bibliography will all be part of this essay. (length: 15-18 pages)

Celebration of Student Writing (10%): **Friday, May 3 from 2-4 PM in the Field House.** The Celebration of Student Writing is an event held every semester where students enrolled in ENG 1302 demonstrate and show-off what they learned in their research projects. You should create some kind of display with artifacts, visual elements, and information about what you learned in your research. The “celebration” will look like a science fair with rows of tables and projects displayed. **Your participation in this event is mandatory. You may attend personally or virtually.** If you plan to attend personally, arrive approximately 20 minutes early to set up. If you plan to

attend virtually, create a 7-10 minute video that can be up/downloaded from the Internet. I will present a video with the video guideline information later in the semester.

Grading Scale

90-100	A
89-80	B
79-70	C
69-60	D
59 and below	F

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 a computer with a word processing program and a printer (assignments must be typed and printed)
- Digital video and/or camera capabilities and video/photo editing software (Most cell phones today contain the video aspect and come with a USB cord that will download your videos onto your computer. There are also free trails available of video/photo editing software.

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 dwhite8@leomail.tamuc.edu. Also, each instructor in the department of literature and languages is required to keep at least three office hours per course per week. Please contact me with any questions you may have: dwhite8@leomail.tamuc.edu or you may call between 9AM-9PM, 580-775-4989. For fewer interruptions 9AM-2:30PM

When you email me, you may expect a response within 24 hours Mondays through Thursdays. Questions posted on Fridays through Sundays will be responded to on Mondays.

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@tamu-commerce.edu. See grievance procedures here:

<http://web.tamuccommerce.edu/academics/colleges/humanitiesSocialSciencesArts/departments/literatureLanguages/firstYearWriting/informationForStudents.aspx>

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES
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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.

The Writing Center is located in the Hall of Languages, Room 103 (903-886-5280) and online at

<http://web.tamuccommerce.edu/academics/colleges/artsSciences/departments/literatureLanguages/writingCenter/>

Attendance Policy:

For classes that meet twice/week, students may miss up to four times without penalty.

After the fifth absence, the student's final grade will drop by one letter. After the seventh absence, the student cannot pass the course.

For classes that meet three times/week, students may miss up to six times without penalty.

After the seventh absence, the student's final grade will drop by one letter. After the ninth absence, the student cannot pass the course.

There is no such thing as "partial attendance"—students are either present for the entire course or they are absent.

Excessive tardiness can be penalized as an absence.

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.

At first glance the above policies would appear not to pertain to online classes; however, they do. How do you perceive these policies relevant to our online class? How do online classes differ in their approach to instruction than traditional classes? How are they similar? Why did you choose the online format as opposed to attending face-to-face classes? Note: this is your first set of discussion questions.

Burkeian Parlor: or more commonly known as “Discussion Board” **is where you will “attend” most of your classes.** Once upon a time in a time management session when I was an undergrad, the “success coach” (known by another name long ago) gave me some great advice, “For every hour you are in class, plan 3 hours of study as a general weekly guideline, and 5-7 hours for major projects or exams.” So, for you mathematicians, how many hours per week should you spend online and preparing for this class? How many hours should you plan for editing and revision of your final project?

Assignments are set and I will plan revision and Burkeian Parlor sessions according to the suggested time scale. If at any time you are feeling overwhelmed or that the time allotment does not correspond with the above guidelines, let me know. I would like for EVERYONE to finish this class, and finish well.

Writing Center

The Writing Center (or the “Communication Skills 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/artsSciences/departments/literatureLanguages/writingCenter/>

Yes, I know that the *Writing Center* is in the syllabus twice. That’s how important it is.

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

The calendar is subject to change. It is your responsibility to keep up with modifications to the schedule. A more detailed calendar and assignments are available online in your eCollege.

Ethnographic Inquires in Writing = EIIW
FieldWorking = FW

Week 1: *EIIW* chapter one

Week 2: WA1 Draft Due, “Literacy Practices” by Barton & Hamilton
FW 1-24

Week 3: WA1 due

“Literacy in Three Metaphors” by Sylvia Scribner in *EIIW*

“Literacy, Opportunity, and Economic Change” by Deborah Brandt in *EIIW*

Week 4: Beginning of the term conferences:

FW 25-64

Introduction to Chapter three in *EIIW*

Week 5: WA 2 Draft due

FW Chapter 68-109

“The Belmont Report” in *EIIW*

Week 6: WA 2 due

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

“Ethnographic Research Ethics and Amish Values” by Tabetha Adkins in *EIIW*

Week 7:

Introduction to Chapter four of *EIIW*

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

FW 176-217

Week 8: Midterm Conferences

No reading, no posting due

Week 9: “Blinded By the Letter” by Wysocki & Johnson-Eiola in *EIIW*

WA3 due

Week 10: Annotated Bibliography working draft due: at least 3 annotations for bibliography due and identify 2 or more possible resources

“Introduction” by Bronwyn T. Williams

FW 127-154

Week 11: Annotated Bibliography due

FW Chapter 8

Week 12: One-on-one conferences

Week 13: First working draft of final Ethnographic Essay due on discussion board

Read over students examples, Chapter 5 in *EIIW*

Week 14: Second working draft of final Ethnographic Essay due on discussion board

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

Week 15: Prepare Research Portfolio for Presentation (Celebration of Student Writing); Peer review final papers

Celebration of Student Writing: Friday, May 3 from 2-4 PM in the Field House

Final Draft of Ethnographic Essay Due May 3

Research Portfolio due May 3