



**ENG 1302: Written Argument and Research
COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2014**

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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. The Celebration will be held Friday, May 8 from 10-12 for MWF sections, 12-2 for TR sections in the Student Center conference rooms A, B, and C.

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

Three-ring binder 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

Optional Texts:

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

<http://web.tamuc.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:

Late Papers

I will accept late papers up to one week after the original deadline. All late papers will be automatically marked down by one letter grade, but it's better than receiving a zero for a major assignment. After one week, papers will no longer be accepted. If you have extenuating circumstances, please come talk to me **in advance** about deadline extensions. I am generous with extensions, but they cannot be granted after the fact out of fairness to the rest of the class, so don't be afraid to ask!

Paper Revisions

We will have in-class writing workshops for peer review of all papers before they are due. Additionally, you will have the opportunity to revise any submitted WA if you feel that it will benefit you either as a writer or in terms of your grade. You will have one week after papers are returned to submit revisions. The final paper cannot be revised in this manner, but we will do extensive revisions beforehand. Revised papers can make up to full credit regardless of the original grade.

How Course Grade is Determined:

Note: Unless specifically told otherwise, you will submit all papers in correct MLA format. See <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/> for current MLA guidelines. ALL papers must be submitted in hardcopy; email submissions are not accepted unless there are extenuating circumstances.

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. 3-5 pages.

Writing Assignment 2- Research Proposal (5%): 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. 2-3 pages.

Writing Assignment 3- 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. 5-7 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. 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**.

Informal Writing Assignments and Participation (10%): This category includes in-class writing assignments, informal writing assignments, homework writing assignments, etc.

Celebration of Student Writing (10%): Friday, May 2 from noon until 2:00PM 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. Plan to arrive approximately 20 minutes early to set up.

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. 15-18 pages.

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.

Peer Review

For each WA, we will do an in-class peer review session. You are required to bring a rough draft of your paper to the class session a week before the deadline, as indicated on the calendar. Peer review will work as follows: at the start of class, you’ll swap your paper one person over and I’ll set a timer. You’ll read the paper you’ve received and make written notes on that paper, giving constructive feedback. (We will go over in detail how to do this in a kind, beneficial way.) When the timer goes off, you’ll make summarizing notes and pass the paper on to the next person. We’ll continue with this until class time runs out, or until everyone has received substantial feedback.

Use the week after peer review to consider the notes and revise your paper with the ones you feel are useful. You **are not** obligated to change anything based off the feedback, but pay attention for patterns of what works, what could work better, etc. Often others will see strengths in your writing that you overlooked, or gaps that you missed. Peer review counts toward your participation grade and while mandatory, is generally a positive, helpful experience.

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)

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 your instructor with any questions you may have. Your instructor's communication preference is e-mail, and her address is: smiller18@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.

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.

See grievance procedures here:

<http://web.tamuc.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.tamuc.edu/academics/colleges/humanitiesSocialSciencesArts/departments/literatureLanguages/writingCenter/default.aspx>

*Attendance Policy***Attendance Policy**

You must attend class regularly in order to benefit from in-class discussions; attendance is mandatory. That being said, I understand that life happens, and will allow students six absences without penalty. At the seventh absence, the overall course grade will be dropped by one letter. After ninth absences, it is not possible to pass the course. The university does not recognize any absence as “excused” except for sanctioned university events, so please save your four “skips” for emergencies and illness.

Tardiness demonstrates a lack of respect for our learning community, and is frowned upon. If you arrive after roll has been called, you must speak with me after class to discuss changing your marked absence to a tardy. Otherwise it will be marked as an absence. This is your responsibility. Excessive tardiness may be counted as an absence. If you accumulate excessive absences early in the semester, you should meet with me or consider dropping the course. I will take extenuating circumstances into account, but you must make individual arrangements with me. In-class assignments cannot be made up if missed. If you need to leave class early, please inform me beforehand as a matter of courtesy.

Participation and Conduct Policy

We are creating a writing community, and as such, the full participation of all members is essential. A key part of community is trust, and trust cannot be earned without civility. In this class we will treat each other, and each other’s ideas and writing, with respect and kindness. Debate is a normal and healthy part of academic exploration, but we want to foster a supportive, helpful atmosphere. Please bear this in mind at all times.

This class is a “safe zone” to discuss new concepts and information. Slurs, hate speech, and hostility will not be tolerated.

Cell phones/laptops/etc

All phones **must** be set to “silent” and kept in your bag or purse during class sessions. Texting, messaging, emailing, etc. during class will result in points being taken from your participation grade. You will be asked to leave for the day if you talk on the phone in class, zero tolerance. If you are waiting for an emergency phone call, please inform me at the start of class and step outside if it comes in.

You may use laptops for notes, though I reserve the right to ask you to put it away if you’re on Facebook, etc. Discourse communities are built on respect; please show your classmates and myself this respect by devoting your full attention to class sessions. The internet will still be there, I promise.

Conferences

Twice during the semester, we will have individual conferences. You’ll schedule an appointment with me during the two designated weeks, and we’ll have a brief face to face chat about how you’re doing in the class, any concerns you have, things you want from the class, etc. These conferences are meant to help me help you – please come prepared to discuss anything that’s not clear or that you’d like to work on. Both conferences are mandatory and count toward your participation grade.

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:

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 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

1/13-1/17: *EIIW* chapter one

1/20-1/24: “Literacy Practices” by Barton & Hamilton
FW 1-24

1/27-1/31: “Literacy in Three Metaphors” by Sylvia Scribner in *EIIW*
“Literacy, Opportunity, and Economic Change” by Deborah Brandt in *EIIW*

2/3-2/7: *FW* 25-64
Introduction to Chapter three in *EIIW*
WA1 due

2/10-2/14 Beginning of semester conferences

2/17-2/21 : *FW* Chapter 68-109
“The Belmont Report” in *EIIW*
WA 2 due

2/24-2/28: “Seduction and Betrayal” by Thomas Newkirk in *EIIW*
“Ethnographic Research Ethics and Amish Values” by Tabetha Adkins in *EIIW*
WA 3 due

3/3-3/7: Midterm Conferences

Spring Break!

3/17-3/21: “Introduction to Chapter four of *EIIW*
“Reading Rites and Sports” by Jabari Mahiri in *EIIW*
FW 176-217
WA4 due

3/24-3/28:
Blinded By the Letter” by Wysocki & Johnson-Eiola in *EIIW* “Introduction” by Bronwyn T. Williams

3/31-4/4: *FW* 127-154
3 annotations for bibliography due

4/7-4/11: *FW* Chapter 8
Annotated Bibliography due

4/14-4/18: “Becoming Literate” by Andrea R. Fishman in *EIIW*
Read over students examples, Chapter 5 in *EIIW*
Draft of final Ethnographic Essay due

4/21-4/25: One-on-one conferences
University closes at 12:00 on Wednesday- no classes after 12 on Wednesday this week.

4/28-5/2: Prepare Research Portfolio for Presentation (Celebration of Student Writing); Peer review final papers

Celebration of Student Writing: Friday, May 8 from noon until 2PM in Student Center, Conferences A, B, and C. 10-12 for MWF classes, 12-2 for TR classes.

Final copy of Ethnographic Essay Due: TBD
Portfolio due: TBD