

English 150, Sec. W01, M01: Advanced Freshman Writing (3 Credits) Spring 2021

Instructor: Jason Siegel

Office: 322

Office Hours: TuTh 11:00 am-12:00 pm

email: jsiegel@uwsp.edu

Time and Place

TuThF 10:00- 10:50 am

Room: Virtual Classroom

Contacting me

Please feel free to contact me whenever you have any questions about course materials or policies. You will probably find it most useful to meet with me over Zoom during my office hours (You don't even have to make an appointment!), but for minor questions you can send me an email and I will get back to you within 24 hours. If you'd like to meet with me over Zoom but cannot make it to my regular office hours, we can schedule a meeting time that will work for both of us.

Course Description

English 150 is an advanced composition course. Its main purposes are to prepare you for the demands of reading and research-based writing at the college level, and to provide you with critical reading tools that will make you a more sophisticated thinker. Writing is both a way of learning and of communicating, and this course will teach you to evaluate the ideas of others and to construct arguments on topics that interest you through original research. You will also learn to go through each step of the writing process from choosing a topic to developing a research proposal, conducting research, generating a thesis, drafting an essay, and revising it. This will help you turn an interesting idea into an enjoyable and persuasive piece of writing.

The point of all this is not simply to make you a better reader and writer, but to give you the critical skills you will need to navigate a world in which people constantly assail you with verbal messages in an attempt to get you to see the world the way they want you to.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

By the time you complete this course you should be able to...

1. Explore an idea from many perspectives to get a better understanding of issues surrounding it
2. Synthesize information, clearly express your thoughts, and both analyze and evaluate arguments by thinking critically about your own writing and the ideas of others
3. Recognize common rhetorical strategies, analyze and evaluate their persuasiveness, and use them effectively in your own writing by considering audience, purpose, context, and genre

4. Go through each stage of the research process to produce original arguments by finding, evaluating, and citing sources in MLA style
5. Constructively criticize the writing of others and apply others' feedback to your own writing
6. Employ elements of structure, style, and genre to express your ideas more effectively
7. Use proper grammar, punctuation, syntax, and word choice to enhance your credibility and express your ideas clearly
8. Evaluate your own development as a writer, identify areas in which you need to improve, and develop strategies to effect that improvement
9. Develop a deeper and more nuanced understanding of topics that matter to you, so you can reach informed and intelligent conclusions

Texts and Materials. You'll need to purchase the following course materials:

- *The Seagull Reader: Essays, Second Edition* (available at the Campus Bookstore)
- *Eating Animals* (available at the Campus Bookstore)
- *The Little Seagull Handbook* (available at the Campus Bookstore)
- a notebook for taking notes in class and drafting paper ideas
- a folder for collecting your work

Course Requirements/Grades

Portfolio 1: 20%

Portfolio 2: 25%

Portfolio 3: 30%

Class Participation: 25%

Grading Scale: A+=98-100; A=93-97; A-=90-92; B+=87-89; B=83-86; B-=80-82; C+=77-79; C=73-76; C-=70-72; D+=67-69; D=63-66; D-=60-62; F=0-59

Attendance/Participation

Due to the public danger caused by COVID-19, your physical presence in class is not required. For each class session, you will have the option to attend class synchronously by joining the Zoom meeting for the class session during the scheduled class time, or to watch a recording of the class session on your own time and post comments in the “Discussions” section of the Canvas site for the course. I will post a recording of each class session in the “Zoom” section of the Canvas site, and there will be a forum for each class session labeled by the date of the class in the “Discussions” section. By joining class synchronously and taking part in discussion or by watching the recording and posting a two-paragraph comment about any topics discussed in class to the Canvas site, you will earn full participation credit for the day. If you do not join the class AND do not post comments online, you will get a zero for the day. In other words, synchronous attendance is not required, but participation is absolutely required.

The reason for this is that English 150 is a seminar-like, discussion-based course, so your presence (either physical or virtual) matters for your own learning, as well as for the contributions you can make to the learning of others. Therefore, you need to take part one way or another in every single meeting. However, because I realize there are times when you must miss class or cannot complete the online alternative due to illness, a family emergency, or other pressing matters, you will be allowed two free unexcused “absences” without penalty. If you know you have to miss class, send me an email ahead of time whenever possible. The final course grade will be lowered for each additional “absence” beyond the first 2 “absences” (An A will become an A-, an A- will become a B+, and so on). An “absence” beyond 5 unexcused absences (not counting the two free “absences”) will result in a student failing the course. To clarify, you will be marked absent only if you do not come to class AND you do not post comments in the “discussions” section of the Canvas site. If you do one or the other, you will be marked “present.”

Obviously, I will take into account *extraordinary* reasons for an absence such as a severe accident or illness, a family emergency or death, a recognized religious holiday, or jury duty. Just let me know!

Discussion

Because the success of our seminar largely depends on your active participation, you are expected to talk and/or ask questions on a regular basis. This means you have to keep up with the reading so that you will actually have something to say. You are also expected to treat me and your fellow students with respect and to comport yourself like an adult. You are free to disagree with any comments you might hear in class and to express your own views, but do so in a respectful, non-combative manner. For example, you might say, “Jason makes a good point, but Foer’s statement on page 5 seems to contradict what Jason just said.” I realize that speaking up during class is easier for some than others, so I am glad to help out if you are having trouble entering the conversation. Just talk to me after class or drop me an email. You can also gain participation credit for posting comments in the online discussion forums, if you are more comfortable with that.

Face Coverings and Social Distancing:

- At all UW-Stevens Point campus locations, the wearing of face coverings is mandatory in all buildings, including classrooms, laboratories, studios, and other instructional spaces. Any student with a condition that impacts their use of a face covering should contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center to discuss accommodations in classes. Please note that unless everyone is wearing a face covering, in-person classes cannot take place. This is university policy and not up to the discretion of individual instructors. Failure to adhere to this requirement could result in formal withdrawal from the course.
- Please monitor your own health each day using this screening tool. If you are not feeling well or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, do not come to class; email your instructor and contact Student Health Service (715-346-4646).
- As with any type of absence, students are expected to communicate their need to be absent and complete the course requirements as outlined in the syllabus.
- Maintain a minimum of 6 feet of physical distance from others whenever possible.
- Do not congregate in groups before or after class; stagger your arrival and departure from the classroom, lab, or meeting room.
- Wash your hands or use appropriate hand sanitizer regularly and avoid touching your face.
- Please maintain these same healthy practices outside the classroom.

Coursework

The only way to learn to write is to practice, so this course will require you to write constantly. The course will be divided into three units, each of which will require you to write a short essay that you will then build upon to produce a longer essay. Each essay will go through multiple drafts, and your various drafts will be collected in a portfolio due at the end of the unit.

Late Work

You will do a lot of writing and revising in this course and a lot of work with your peers, which means that all work must be submitted to the “Assignments” section of the Canvas course site by 11:59 pm on the due date. If a paper or draft is turned in late, the overall grade for that paper assignment will be reduced by a letter grade (i.e. A to A-) for every calendar day that the paper or draft is late. If something comes up that prevents you from turning in a draft or paper on time, just let me know, and we will make arrangements so that you can complete the assignments in a timely manner and receive credit for your work.

Peer Review

You will meet with a peer group online through the Canvas site to receive and provide feedback on various drafts. This will give you a chance to get input from different readers, and responding to your classmates' papers will sharpen your own critical ability, which should help you revise your own drafts. Failure to participate in a peer review activity will lower your course grade.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism, or taking credit for words or ideas not your own, is a serious offence and will lead to dire consequences. The penalty for plagiarism ranges from failing the course to expulsion from the university. See the *Student Rights and Regulations* handbook for more information about plagiarism and its consequences. If I think you have plagiarized, I will meet with you and refer your name to a disciplinary committee responsible for overseeing the investigation of academic crimes. Except for acknowledged quotations, all of your work is to be written in your own words. You may not copy from a book, another student's paper, a webpage, or any other source.