Dr. Sheldon Walcher
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REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Ballenger, Bruce. *The Curious Writer*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2011.
- Regular access to the internet to download files from Blackboard, and to post blog assignments
- A notebook and folder that are used only for this class
- Money on your Green Print card for printing course materials

THE "STRETCH" COMPOSITION PROGRAM

The "Stretch" Program is a two-semester sequence of classes linked through a common instructor—for both semesters, students usually have the same teacher, work with the same group of students, and often even have the same classroom. We designed this program to help build a real <u>writing community</u>, as everyone has an entire year to work together to develop critical writing and reading strategies that will be crucial throughout their academic careers. Upon completion of the first semester of WRTG 101, students will receive a traditional letter grade. However, because we want to place emphasis on continuity between the two semesters, students will conference with instructors at the beginning of the spring semester to discuss their grades from the fall semester and the role their previous essays will play in the ENG 101S section of the course. In addition, the students' final portfolios will include revisions of their work from both semesters.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Stretch Composition aims to introduce students to the strategies, tools and resources necessary to becoming successful communicators in a wide range of academic, professional, and public settings. Four assumptions are fundamental to this work:

1) writing is a form of social interaction. Thus, successful writers must not only consider their audiences and the contexts in which they write, but the personal, social and political implications of writing (or not writing) more generally;

2) the organization of modern society requires that people inhabit and move among several discourse communities every day. Because each discourse community has its own rules and assumptions (often unstated) about what can be said, by whom, when, and how, becoming an effective communicator means learning to recognize, analyze, and negotiate the differing expectations of these communities;

3) writing and thinking are intimately connected activities. Becoming a successful communicator means not only learning how to think carefully *through* writing, but to reflect critically *about* writing, both one's own and the work of others. Thus, honest self-reflection and a thorough understanding of what it means to truly revise are essential aspects of learning to write effectively;

4) genres are types of writing that have emerged over time to address recurring situations. Each genre has particular features, conventions and structures for organizing and presenting information. Being an effective writer requires not only learning how to analyze one's rhetorical situation and use such conventional forms strategically, but evaluating the costs and benefits of violating such conventions, and when desired, how to go about doing so.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Roosevelt University's Composition Program has identified specific learning outcomes for each of its first-year writing courses. At the completion of ENG 101, students will be able to:

- See that writing is a form of social interaction
- Analyze rhetorical situations and make effective choices based on audience and context
- Responsibly synthesize material from a variety of sources
- Make claims and support them with appropriate evidence
- Use writing to critically explore, explain, evaluate and reflect on their experiences and those of others
- Understand and effectively use a range of genres/forms
- Use convention of expression appropriate to situation and audience
- Effectively revise and provide substantive feedback to others on their writing
- Articulate a revision strategy based on an understanding of their own writing processes
- Recognize the importance of technology in research, writing, and other forms of social interaction

TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

A number of reading and writing projects for this class will be done electronically, so you will need regular access to a computer that has internet capabilities in order to complete much of the required work for this course this semester. This does not mean I expect you to be an expert computer user, nor to have any special skills beyond the basic ability to surf the internet, upload and download files, and send and receive email. Indeed, we will spend time in class discussing everything else you might need to know in order to complete online assignments, so please don't be nervous or overly concerned if you don't have a lot of experience working with different forms of technology.

> *ONLINE READINGS*
> In addition to readings in the assigned textbook, most of the required resources and materials for this class will be posted to our Blackboard site. You can log into the online component of this course by first going to http://roosevelt.blackboard.com/webapps/login/ , and then following the log-in instructions. You will need to have your Roosevelt ID number and password (the same information you use to register for classes.) If you have any questions or run into difficulty accessing the Blackboard material for this course, please call the Help Desk at 312-341-4357.

> *COMPUTER LABS*
> Information Technology Services (ITS) at Roosevelt provides a range of technology-enhanced teaching and learning spaces for students, including open computer labs, which are available for walk-in use (Monday – Saturday). These labs have computers equipped with a range of multimedia, web development, and audio/video and image editing software. For more information and configuration details, please visit http://www.roosevelt.edu/ITS/labs.aspx.

> *PRINTING*
> As of Fall 2008, Roosevelt University requires the use of GreenPrint on a campus-wide basis for all printing and copying needs. Students printing from the library or from a computer lab will need a print card, available in vending machines throughout the building. Each page printed or copied costs 10 cents. For more information on GreenPrint services and availability, visit http://www.roosevelt.edu/ITS/labs/greenprint.aspx.

REQUIREMENTS

In order to pass <u>both</u> semesters of our Stretch composition program, you must satisfactorily complete <u>all</u> of the following:

- complete all **six major writing projects**, each to be submitted in a folder with any rough drafts, workshop notes and/or supporting research materials relevant to the project;
- complete the **Final Revision** and **Portfolio/Self-Evaluation Projects**, to be submitted at the end of the fall and spring semesters (in lieu of final exams);
- submit ten of the twelve required **writing sketches** required throughout the year;
- prepare and lead class discussion as part of a **facilitation group** at least once over the course of each semester (see Course Schedule for more details);
- complete all **reading assignments** and **blog posts**; actively **participate in class discussions** and workshops, and **maintain regular classroom attendance**;
- meet with your instructor for all required individual conferences;
- utilize Roosevelt's Writing Center, library, and Academic Success Center (as directed by instructor).

COURSE POLICIES

GRADES

Writing and thinking are complex processes that take time to develop. Thus, your overall grade for the first semester of this program is as dependent on how much your writing improves over the course of the semester, your demonstrated commitment to learning and support of your peers, the careful completion of homework and class assignments, and your own assessment of your strengths and progress, as any strict calculation of paper grades. Indeed, much of your final grade for this course will be determined by your participation in the writing community we are creating. In addition, remember that the papers you write for this section of the course will be revisited in the spring semester of ENG 101S. We will talk individually about your fall semester grades, so you will know exactly where you stand starting your spring semester. The following should serve as only a guide to how grading for the first semester of this class will be approached:

FALL SEMESTER

Paper One: Personal Essay/Photo Essay Project (15 pts)
A brief paper (750-1000 words) in which you will use a photograph, picture, or some other visual aid to help you explore some problematic or significant experience in your life in a way that is meaningful for someone else.

Paper Two: Review Project (15 pts)
A paper (1000-1500 words) in which you will evaluate a restaurant, film, book, game, or some other item or form of popular entertainment for an audience, using criteria that are reasonable and appropriate for the context and thing you are evaluating.

Paper Three: Critical Argument (15 pts)
A paper (1000-1500 words) in which you will show your ability to summarize, analyze, and synthesize various readings from class with your own in order to make a persuasive claim about a specific social issue.

Self-Evaluation/Revision Project (15 pts)
> One of the three projects, systematically and thoroughly revised; as well as completion of the first-semester, self-evaluation assignment.

Weekly Blog Assignments/Writing Sketches (10 pts)
> *Blog Entries* are short (300-500 words) writing assignments related to material covered in readings and class discussions that you will post online. *Writing Sketches* are brief (300-500 words) drafts of your most promising materials that will need to print and bring to class for response and feedback. Although required, individual entries will not be graded.

Class Participation (30 pts)
> Your contributions to class-discussions; your work as part of a facilitation group; participation in peer review workshops; quizzes; Writing and Speaking Center attendance; etc.

Note: For program assessment purposes, some final portfolios may be randomly selected for institutional review at the conclusion of the spring semester. In such cases, portfolios will be collected anonymously from among all available sections of Expanded Composition I. This review is intended solely to improve the quality of the curriculum, and will not affect your grade in any way.

PREPARATION

In addition to completing reading and writing assignments, preparing for class means being ready to discuss and intelligently question issues raised by the material. This does not mean, however, that you must *master* the material. On the contrary, it is perfectly reasonable that you may be confused by some readings the first time we encounter them. But in such cases you should be prepared to discuss what you specifically found puzzling, aggravating, thought-provoking, engaging or difficult about the assignment. In other words, if you feel you have nothing to *state* about a piece of writing, actively develop a list of *questions about it*. Remember, much of your grade in this course will be determined by how much you improve, so there's really no such thing as a stupid question, provided that you ask it in the spirit of honest inquiry.

ATTENDANCE

The framework of this course – with its emphasis on class discussion and group work – demands that you attend class regularly. Failure to complete in-class work, such as peer reviews, in-class writing assignments, and group meetings will result in the lowering of your grade. Indeed, no in-class activities (including quizzes) may be made up due to tardiness or absence, and students who accumulate more than three unexcused absences over the course of the semester will automatically have their final grades lowered. More than six absences in a semester will result in your failing the course.

LATE WORK

Late work will only be accepted if you can demonstrate that you have encountered a valid obstacle before the deadline (i.e., that you've been working on the project in good faith, but have run into some problems). If you feel you may be unable to complete an assignment on time, you should contact me as soon as possible, but no later than two days before the due date. After reviewing all the work you've done on the assignment, we will set a new deadline together. In all other cases, late work will automatically be docked one letter grade per day past the deadline, beginning the day the assignment was due.

Note: Unless specified otherwise, no papers submitted electronically will be accepted, and work magically appearing in my mailbox without a prior agreement with me will also be considered late.

PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Unless specifically told otherwise, the use of portable electronic devices (such as cell-phones, MP3 players, laptops, etc.) is prohibited in class, and such devices should be turned off and placed in your bag and/or out of sight under your desk.

PLAGIARISM

All members of the academic community at Roosevelt University are expected to take responsibility for academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism – the willful copying/presenting of another person's work as if it were your own – and other forms of cheating are unacceptable. The penalties for such behavior can include being failed for the course and in some cases even expulsion from the university. If you have any doubts as to what constitutes plagiarism, please review this comprehensive article on plagiarism: http://www.roosevelt.edu/Provost/InfoForFaculty/AcademicIntegrity.aspx. You can also come talk to me.

ADA NOTICE

Roosevelt University is committed to providing equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you feel you may need accommodations in this or any class, please contact the Office of Disabled Student Services at (312) 341-3810, or nlitke@roosevelt.edu as soon as possible.

THE WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center is a free program available to all students, staff and faculty at Roosevelt University. It offers one-on-one assistance with any kind of writing project, at any stage of the writing process, including: help decoding an assignment, finding a topic, strengthening a thesis, sorting evidence, understanding grammar rules, developing ideas, reading a difficult passage, or utilizing instructor comments. Rather than serving as a proofreading or editing service, the tutors work with writers to help them learn to revise and edit their own work. To schedule an online appointment you can reach the Writing Center by calling 312-341-2206, or online at: http://www.roosevelt.edu/CAS/Programs/LIT/WritingCenter.aspx.