

Writing 100 F **Writing From Slave Narratives**

Fall 2006

Professor: Dr. Kym Morrison

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Office Hours: Tues 3:30–4:30pm,

Wed. 10:30-11:30am,

and by appointment.

Office - Comenius 302

Course Description:

This course introduces you to college-level reading and writing. Its goals are to sharpen the critical reasoning skills you need for success in any academic discipline and to make the ways you express yourself more effective. Throughout the semester, you will work collaboratively in workshop settings and practice both oral and written communication. We will do this by focusing on one theme—slavery in the Americas. Slave narratives and testimonies will provide the basis from which you write an analytical essay and a thesis-defense research paper related to the slave experience. You also will write poetry and a narrative essay of a more personal nature. We will study these forms and learn the standards of clarity, precision, and style expected in each.

By the end of this course, you should

- * Understand writing as a way of thinking and demonstrate that in the act of writing a writer may construct new knowledge
- * Understand that success in writing lies in attention to the process as much as in the form of the final product and experience the power of collaboration as part of that process
- * Increase their ability to read critically and comprehensively and to synthesize ideas from sources with their own ideas
- * See how reading and talking about writing contribute to the development of writing abilities
- * Gain facility in writing in a variety of genres for a variety of audiences
- * Gain experience in using technology for research and writing and demonstrate competence in finding materials through research and in citing them in an academic style
- * Become aware of errors in grammar, usage, punctuation and spelling that may impede a reader's understanding and increase their facility in avoiding or correcting such errors
- * Be able to format a paper for an academic reader.

Some Important Differences between this Course and High-school English.

1. Expressions of your ideas, reasoned interpretations, and well-constructed argument are the most valuable elements of the course.
2. While form and standards are important, they should not limit meaningful communication.
3. You are responsible for your level of achievement.
4. Since you should have learned the basics of English grammar, we will review the more subtle points that add readability to your writing.

College Policies

A. Students with any physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability should privately contact me and Laurie Roth, Director of the Learning Center, to arrange the appropriate accommodation for full participation in the course. Ms. Roth can be reached at 610-861-1510 or by email, melmr01@moravian.edu. Please make these arrangements within the first few weeks of the course.

B. Moravian College expects its students and faculty to maintain a high level of academic honesty. Question of academic honesty and plagiarism are addressed in the Student Handbook under the “Academic Standards” section.

Required Texts:

Diane Hacker, *The Bedford Handbook*, 7th ed. (2006) (hereafter *Bedford*)

Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (hereafter *UTC*)

There are also several short documents available on the course BlackBoard site or that I will distribute. Reading assignments will be approximately eighty (80) pages per week. Students should be prepared to commit approximately seven (7) hours per week to this course in addition to the scheduled meeting times.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

5%	Poem and Presentation
10%	Participation
10%	Narrative Essay Portfolio
10%	Analytical Essay Portfolio
15%	Reading Journal
15%	Final Research Paper Portfolio
25%	Homework Assignments

Participation - This grade reflects your day-to-day comprehension of the information associated with the readings, lectures, and other course materials. It is also based on the quality of your debate, insight, and questioning, and your ability to respectfully allow others to do the same. Beyond these general characteristics, several additional components comprise this portion of your final grade. 1) You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading and do the in-class exercises. 2) With a class group, you will be asked to lead class conversation at several points during the semester. 3) You should meet with me at least twice during the semester to talk about your progress in the course. 4) You should visit Moravian’s Writing Center twice during the semester to seek writing advice from well-trained peers.

Narrative Essay - This essay should build upon your personal experience of a situation of that challenged you, but do not write about a trauma that you have not overcome. You could write, for example, about an athletic competition, a social situation, or a difficult life choice. Write with special attention to the details of the challenge before you mastered it. A description of the process through which you overcame the situation should build toward the paper’s climax. You should plan on a minimum of three pages.

Analytical Essay - This paper should be a critical review in which you weigh opposing scholarly views on a controversial aspect of slavery. You will assess the clarity, consistency, and completeness of the arguments in two self-selected journal articles. This should be a minimum of four pages.

Research Paper - This exercise will build on the preceding analytical essay to argue your own, informed position on one aspect of slavery. It should utilize a limited number of scholarly sources and slave narratives to support the point that you attempt to persuade the reader. You should submit a minimum of seven pages.

Reading Journal - You should keep a separate notebook in which you write your reactions to the assigned class readings. Each entry should be approximately two hand-written paragraphs. It should be dated at the beginning. You should briefly summarize the reading's contents. You should then mention what was new for you or what the reading caused you to think about more. On occasion, I will ask you to answer specific questions about the readings. I will collect your journal on three designated dates throughout the semester.

Homework - These assignments will be brief ones that allow for an incremental development of the major writing projects. We will have approximately twelve of these exercises throughout the semester. Peer editing of project drafts will be assigned as homework. These assignments will be graded simply as satisfactory or unsatisfactory based on the level of your effort.

Attendance Policy: Since success in the course is closely linked to comprehension of lectures and to the ideas you share in class, you should not plan to miss class. I will take attendance and count this toward your participation. **Also, I will lower your final grade by a letter grade for every three classes that you miss or for which you arrive late.** If you plan to arrive more than five minutes late to class, consider making other arrangements. Absence will be excused only with a note for the appropriate college administrator or recognized physician.

Also, as a courtesy, please turn off all personal communication devices during class meetings.

Submission Formats and Late Policy - All submissions should be typewritten, with one-inch margins on all sides. Most submissions should be double spaced, with the exception of poetry and the bibliographies. The font should be between 11 and 12 points. Your name, the course number, assignment number, and submission date should be typed in the upper left corner of the first page. After this header, one blank line should appear before the assignment title, which should be centered between the left and right margins. This title should be followed by one blank line before beginning the assignment. A hard copy of all submissions is required and electronic versions will be accepted only with my prior approval.

For the narrative essay, analytical essay, and the research paper, you should submit a portfolio that includes your complete drafts, the peer reviewer's comments, and your final drafts.

All papers are due at the beginning of class on their due dates. **Late assignments will not be accepted.**

Critical Course Dates:

I will post a detailed schedule on the course Blackboard site. However, please note the following critical dates. (All the homework assignments are not posted here)

Week 1

8/29 Introduction of Course Goals and Methods, Syllabus Review

8/31 Homework - Write a one-page description of the relationship between how you learned about slavery and what you think when you hear the word slavery. Concentrate on the details sufficient to carry your reader through your memory of learning about slavery and to generate a feeling of empathy with your opinion on the topic. Write honestly and don't feel that you have to write about an emotion that you don't have or a situation that you didn't live. Also, don't feel as if you must cover every educational experience that touched on slavery.

Readings - *UTC* Introduction, Preface and chapter 1; *Bedford* pp. 2-24.

Week 2

9/5 Readings - *UTC* chapters 2 and 3; *Bedford* section 59

Week 4

9/19 Poem due

9/21 Reading Journal Due

Week 5

9/28 Homework - Narrative Essay Draft

Week 6

10/5 Narrative Essay Portfolio Due

Week 7

10/10 **No Class, Fall Break**

10/12 Library Research Training Session, Submit Analytical Topic, Student Conferences Weds, Thurs, Fri.

Week 9

10/24 Reading Journal Due

Week 10

10/31 Homework - Analysis Essay Draft

Week 11

11/7 Analysis Paper Portfolio Due

Week 12

11/16 Homework - Research Paper Draft (first 5 pages)

Week 13

11/23 **Thanksgiving**

Week 14

11/30 Final Research Paper Portfolio Due

Week 15

12/5 Reading Journal Due

The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus with appropriate notification in class.