

**WR100B: Transitions From Youth
Fall, 2007**

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Office Hours: M, W, F 2pm – 2:45pm Monday 10am – 11am Thursday 3pm – 4pm		Class Location : PPHAC 302

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Many of the psychological themes, principles, and theories related to growing up in American are unique to adolescents in the beginning of the twenty-first century; while other issues pertaining to transitions from youth span across generations. With an intense focus on critical thinking, self-reflection, and writing, this course will explore both new and classic issues involved in the movement from adolescence to adulthood. Novels, short stories, films and research will be the stimuli for writing personal reactions, descriptive and persuasive essays, synthesizing multiple perspectives around issues, comparisons between viewpoints and theoretical frameworks, and analyses of contemporary issues confronting adolescence.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

See yellow supplement for standard WR100 student learning outcomes, and commit to achieving these.

BUT ALSO TO GAIN:

1. Understanding and insight into youth development, personal identity and adjustment.
2. Understanding and insight into the general threats and opportunities posed to the youth of contemporary America.
3. Personal insight into our own individual dynamics and potential regarding our growth & transition.
4. Appreciation of both science and literature as sources of such insight as mentioned above.
5. A sense of power in being an active, committed part of a learning community.
6. ***A life long love of, and commitment to questioning, thinking, learning and writing.***

Required Readings/Texts:

Anderson, M. T. (2004). *Feed*. Candlewick Publishers.

Hacker, D. (2001). *The Bedford handbook*. 5th ed. Boston: Bedford Books.
(Referred to in syllabus as BH)

Hosseini, K. (2003). *The kite runner*. New York, NY: Riverhead Books.

King, S. (2000). *On writing*. New York: Pocket Books.

Strunk, W. (2006). *The elements of style*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications.
(originally published in 1920 by Harcourt, Brace, and Company).

Walls, J. (2005). *The Glass Castle*. New York, NY: Scribner Books.

There will also be handouts and articles distributed in class and/or placed on Reserve in Reeves Library.

Additional Materials / Requirements

- 1) Notebook for writing activities
- 2) A binder for your final writing portfolio
- 3) Register for the course on Blackboard

Course Assignments:

WRITING EXERCISES / DRILLS (10%): In your notebook, you will maintain entries for the following:

PreWriting Journal Entries: Some of these will be done in-class; others will be assigned for outside of class. They are different forms of handwritten responses to various prompts, and will often be encouraged to be done in a stream of conscience or free-writing manner.

Reflective Writing: Often you will be asked to reflect on your work (i.e., post-writing) to appreciate and get a sense of the decisions you made, the areas your writing is particularly strong, and to have a sense of where you struggle as a writer.

Writing Drills: These are your responses to the BH exercises that will be assigned.

Many of you may wish to do exercises in other areas beyond those assigned if you feel it would improve an area of your writing

BE SURE TO DATE AND LABEL EACH ENTRY CLEARLY, DESCRIPTIVELY AND CONSISTENTLY!!! See Policy #2 below – Organization & Format of Writing Assignments.

PAPER ASSIGNMENTS – The final grade of each paper will be aggregated with slightly different weights to account for **60%** of your grade.

There will be a number of individual writing assignments. Specific guidelines for each will be handed out separately in class and discussed. See Policy #2 below (ORGANIZED WRITING ASSIGNMENTS) about what each paper should have. The number of reviews and research papers are set; however, the number of essays we will complete will remain variable depending upon the needs and progress we make collectively and individually. The length guidelines below will give you the acceptable range to work with (one double spaced page with one inch margins includes approximately 300 words). Guidelines for each assignment may be more specific regarding length. Some assignments will be handed in once as a final drafts; while others will involve single or multiple formal revisions. Your own style of writing should involve iteration and revision done independently and in a stylistic manner that works well for you.

Three Book reviews (800 – 1200 words) – Walls, Anderson, and Hosseini

One Film Review (800 – 1200 words)

One Research Paper (5-7 pages)

Two Descriptive Essays (300 – 600 words)

Two Persuasive Essays (600 – 1000 words)

One Analytical Essay (800 – 1500 words)

CONFERENCES, CLASS PARTICIPATION, PRESENTATIONS (15%) – You will need to be prepared for each class and for any one-on one conference we schedule together. Periodically, you will be asked to make a presentation, sometimes formal, sometimes semi-formal. Also, PLEASE commit to the active learning policy below as it factors into this grade portion. In addition, this grade will be impacted by excessive absences.

FINAL PORTFOLIO (15%) – The final task of the semester will be to choose samples of various writing pieces from your wealth of writing. You will complete a cover letter that will address a number of questions about the writings you chose. The letter will justify the choices and discuss how the choices and the portfolio holistically reflects your improvement and development as a writer. Additional guidelines for structuring the portfolio and cover letter will be discussed and shared in class. Your failure to properly submit a portfolio may impact upon the final grades of your individual writing papers as well.

Course Policies:

1) **ACTIVE LEARNING** - Active learning involves questioning the text and lecture material, contributing to discussion, sharing ideas and alternative perspectives, and being GENEROUS with your constructive criticism of peer's work (better you suggest it, than me!). As a prerequisite to the active learning that will take place in the classroom, please arrive to class prepared by having read the assigned chapter(s), and completing the assignments. Class participation is expected and highly encouraged. This is the best strategy for achieving many of the objectives laid out for the course. Those who commit themselves to such active learning are scholars.

Because good writing doesn't occur in a vacuum, it is essential that, as a class, we engage in the kind of discussion that will help us to actively process what we have read--to draw out and informally express our ideas and beliefs, and then to more formally express these ideas and beliefs in our writing. Toward these ends, your reading assignments must prompt you to read the text thoughtfully and thoroughly.

2) **ORGANIZATION AND FORMAT OF WRITING ASSIGNMENTS** –. Each assignment MUST have four things clearly indicated at the top of the first page: 1) a descriptive title, 2) your name, 3) the due date for that assignment (and, if late, the date submitted in parentheses); 4) a brief description of the written product in terms of the writing process (e.g., journal entry, freewriting, second draft, final version, etc.). *If this information is not at the top of the writing assignment – it will not be accepted.*

ALL drafts and final products/versions of papers and short writing assignments MUST be typed, double spaced with one-inch margins around.

THE WRITING FORMAT FOR THE COURSE IS APA, **NOT** MLA. BE SURE TO USE THE BEDFORD GUIDELINES FOR APA STYLE WHEN CITING AND REFERENCING WORKS.

3) **LATE ASSIGNMENTS** - Assignments may be handed in up to two days late (points deducted from the grade each day late). When handing in an assignment late please indicate the amount of days late on the front cover along with your signature – **without this late assignments will be considered incomplete (I)**. Assignments may not be handed in after the third day late. Please, do not ask me to deviate from this policy. If you must miss class, drop off the assignment earlier, send it with a classmate, e-mail or fax it to me (861-1577). In other words, there should be no valid excuse for a late assignment. I encourage you not to procrastinate, and be sure to use your file on the student X: drive and back up your work!

4) **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY** - Academic integrity is a core value of the college and is expected. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. It is **my contractual agreement** with the college that I am to report all **suspected** cases of plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism is the intentional misrepresentation of someone else's work as your own. This includes transcribing sentences or paragraphs belonging to another author directly from another written source and suggesting they are your own words, quoting

directly from a published work without giving the author credit (i.e. proper citation), using or "borrowing" another student's work, buying a paper from a professional service, etc. The policy of the department is that the student must keep all note cards and rough drafts until given a grade for that course!!! Again, be sure to back up computer disks. Evidence of plagiarism and cheating will be dealt with in accordance with the college policy on academic honesty. Copies are available from the departmental secretary and can be found in your student handbook.

5) **ATTENDANCE** - Class attendance is expected. Excessive absences will impact directly on both your class participation and final grade.

Relevant Quotes:

Education is what remains after you've forgotten everything you ever learned in school.

---*Albert Einstein*

There has been more information produced in the last 30 years than during the previous 5,000 . . . A weekday edition of The New York Times contains more information than the average person was likely to come across in a lifetime during 17th-century England.

---*Richard Saul Wurman, Information Anxiety*

Time it was, and what a time it was, it was! A time of innocence. A time of confidences.

Long ago it must be – I have a photograph. Preserve your memories. They're all that's left of you.

--- *Simon & Garfunkle, Bookends*

Writing is like slow-motion thinking, with the possibility of re-plays . . . the writer finds that he/she is not only composing words, he/she is composing his/her experience.

--*John F. Butler, On Teaching Composition*

When I sat down to write a letter I didn't have time to write a short one, so I wrote a long one instead.

--*Mark Twain*

Despite all my rage, I am still just a rat in a cage.

--*Smashing Pumpkins. Bullet with Butterfly Wings*

Are you on fire From the years, What would you give for your kid fears

--*The Indigo Girls, Kid Fears*

I became what I am today at the age of twelve, on a frigid overcast day in the winter of 1975.

--*the voice of Amir, by Khaled Hosseini from The Kite Runner*

. . . It became clear that to Mom, holding on to land was not so much an investment strategy as it was an article of faith, a revealed truth as deeply felt and incontestable to her as Catholicism.

--*Jeannette Walls, The Glass Castle*

It was like that time I threw you into the sulfur spring to teach you to swim . . . You might have been convinced you were going to drown, but I knew you'd do just fine.

-- *voice of Rex Walls, by Jeannette Walls in The Glass Castle*

DATE	TOPIC	REQUIRED READINGS / ASSIGNMENTS*
Monday 8/27	Introduction and Course Organization Overview	
Wednesday 8/29	Student Presentations	Syllabus; Bedford pp. 2 – 29; 521-524
Friday 8/31	Think Tank Exercise	Hard Copy of first descriptive essay dropped off in my bottom silver mailbox along with potential research topics
Monday 9/3	LABOR DAY – No Class	
Wednesday 9/5	Student Presentations & Think Tank (cont'd)	Bedford pp. xxi –xxix (How to Use This Book& its Web Site) Bedford pp. 30 - 71 King – his three Forwards
<i>Thurs. 9/6 7PM:</i>	<i>Bill Ayers Lecture</i>	
	<i>“Free Minds, Free People: Teaching and Learning in a New Age”.</i>	
Friday 9/7	Life Long Learning as part of our Personal Identity	Book Review of Walls’ <i>The Glass Castle</i> (2 copies)
Monday 9/10	The Psychology of Adolescence	King’s CV pp. 17 – 107; handouts
Wednesday 9/12	Adolescence (cont’d)	
Friday 9/14	Writing as a Process	King’s And Furthermore . . . I & II, pp. 271-288
Monday 9/17	Introduction to the Persuasive Essay	Second Descriptive Essay
<i>Tues. 9/18</i>	<i>Mark Harris Lecture “Alternative Green Burials”</i>	
Wednesday 9/19	Process & Toolbox: Paragraphs and Revision Strategies	King’s Toolbox pp. 111 – 128; Bedford pp. 72-100
Friday 9/21	(cont’d)	
Monday 9/24	Process & Toolbox: Sentences and Vocabulary	King’s Toolbox pp. 129-137; Bedford, pp. 136-202
Wednesday 9/26	(cont’d)	First Persuasive Essay

Friday 9/28	Research Topics discussed	Bedford pp. 524 - 562
Monday 10/1	Library Tutorial in Reeves Library	
Wednesday 10/3	Speeches on Adolescence & Youth	Book Review – Anderson’s <i>Feed</i>
Monday 10/8	FALL BREAK	
Wednesday 10/10	Speeches on Adolescence & Youth	
Friday 10/12	Writing and Attitude	King’s On Writing, pp. 141 - 249
WEEK OF Monday 10/15	INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES	Constructive work on Bedford Parts IV & V
WEEK OF Monday 10/22	Analytical Essays	First Analytical Essay (Compare & Contrast)
WEEK OF Monday 10/29	And Contemporary Issues (cont’d)	
Monday 11/5	Film Reviews	Film Review Paper
Wednesday 11/7	and	
Friday 11/9	“Growing Up” in films	
Monday 11/12	Cultural Issues in Adolescence	Book Review Hosseini’s <i>The Kite Runner</i>
Wednesday 11/14	Peer Workshop	
Friday 11/16	Coping and Adjustment	
Monday 11/19	Preparing for Second Conference	Research Paper Due
Wednesday 11/21	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Friday 11/23	(cont’d)	

WEEK OF Monday 11/26	SECOND INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES	Constructive work with Bedford Second Persuasive Essay
WEEK OF Monday 12/3	Preparation of Writing Portfolios and Research Presentations	King pp. 253 - 270
Monday 12/10	Final Portfolio Due; Closure and Wrap Up	

* Assignments and readings subject to change based on the discretion of the instructor.