Writing 100A Introduction to Rhetoric:
Argument and Persuasion
Spring 2010

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Content and approach

As its title is meant to suggest, this section will focus on writing that tries to make readers believe what the writer believes about something that is open to dispute. For the most part, you will be writing *academic* arguments. These depend for success on the three elements of classical rhetoric: *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* -- that is, the kind of "person" created in the reader's mind through the writing; the kinds of emotional appeals the writing aims at that reader; and the language and logic of the writing.

In addition to the outcomes listed in the Guidelines for Writing 100 document, here are the learning outcomes I see as specific to WRIT100A:

- analyze the rhetorical strategies in writing done by yourself and others
- demonstrate competence in the use of rhetorical templates
- produce four pieces of argumentative/persuasive writing
- assemble a portfolio of your semester's work

Four writing projects will be developed through your individual work in and out of class and through small group workshops in class. All of these projects will use information from published sources and document that information in formal academic style. At least one will involve locating and using source material through library research. Portfolios are semester-long projects in which you will collect writing, select what is best and most profitably revised in the way of that writing and reflect on what that writing means in terms of your academic development.

Many of our class meetings will be workshops, in which you will be both giver and receiver of advice about writing. In workshops, writers will help other writers. This approach should gain you greater awareness and control over your own writing, greater sensitivity to writing problems and their solutions, and a heightened sense of the power of the writing process.

Responsibility and attendance

For the workshops and discussions to benefit you, your regular and prompt attendance is crucial. Please be in your seat with your day's work in front of you ready to start at 8:55 a.m. each day. You are responsible for all material assigned or covered in any class you miss, whether the absence is excused or not. Whenever possible, contact me in advance if you are going to miss class.

Grades and requirements

To try to keep the attention on your writing, I prefer to use a grade contract for WRIT100. This means that a minimum semester grade is achieved by doing all assigned work in the class and doing it on time. It also means that I will not assign letter grades to any of your work – until the end of the semester. In order to earn at least a B for the semester you must:

1. Post to the class blog, as assigned.
2. Complete, on time, all tutorials and exercises from *The Bedford Handbook*, 8th ed., and its Website
3. Complete, on time, all assigned exercises from *They Say / I Say*
4. Complete, on time, all (4) **essay projects.** Each of these projects will include, at a minimum
   ➢ some prewriting committed to paper
   ➢ a first or rough draft of an essay
   ➢ at least two significantly and substantively (or deeply or globally) revised drafts, one of which is to be prepared "clean" for editing
   ➢ a neat and correctly formatted final draft
   ➢ a piece of reflective writing
   ➢ some further writing in response to your final draft reader's evaluation.

(The preliminary drafts in each project will normally be accompanied by notes and reviewers' comments. All components of each project must be ready at the beginning of class as assigned. *)

5. Participate actively and constructively in class discussions.
6. Participate actively and constructively in small-group workshop sessions.
7. Have at least one reviewing session with a Writing Center tutor.
8. Attend a bibliographic instruction session in Reeves Library.
9. Satisfactorily complete, on time, a research exercise.
10. Earn at least a B- on the final portfolio.
11. Miss no more than 3 class meetings, unexcused, and no more than 5 total, excused and unexcused. ("Excused" means your absence from class is accounted for in writing by a responsible authority.) Each unexcused absences beyond 3 will cost your semester grade 1/3 letter.

* Each writing project will be evaluated quantitatively in terms of the following point system:

"Prewriting" or experimenting:	5 points each	Final drafts:	10 points
First drafts:	10 points points each copy	Workshop participation:	10 points each
Revision plans:	10 points for first, 5 points for each successive plan	Absence from any workshop:	-5 points each
		Lateness with any assigned	
Revised drafts:	10 points for first, 5 points for each successive draft	writing prior to final drafts:	-2 points/day
		Lateness with any final draft:	-3 points/day
Clean-for-editing drafts:	5 points for each copy	Voluntary Writing Center visits:	5 points each

To remain eligible for a B, your point total for each project must be at least 90% of the base total for the project. The base total is what everyone should have if they have done, on time, all assignments and participated in all workshops for a project.

Higher or lower semester grades will result from special excellence or marked deficiencies in attention to the writing process or in attendance. You must keep up with all your assignments in order to remain eligible for a B; you will become ineligible the **first** time you miss an assignment, complete it

unsatisfactorily, or turn in an assignment late without prior approval from me. If that happens, I will negotiate a new contract with you.

Books

Graff, Gerald, Cathy Berkenstein, and Russel Durst. *They Say / I Say with readings*. New York: Norton, 2006. (*TS/IS* in assignment schedule)
Hacker, Diana, and Nancy Sommers. *The Bedford Handbook for Writers*, 9th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010. (*BH* in assignment schedule)

Other materials

I encourage you to do your written work on a computer; the campuswide network has word processing applications that you may access from various sites on campus, and anyone who wishes a short demonstration session may arrange one with me. If you do work in the electronic environment, of course, store your work on a diskette, cd, or flashdrive or in your own folder on the X drive on the campus network. I discourage the use of personal laptops in class; we will use paper for all class workshop days.

Clean-for-editing drafts and final drafts of all essays are to be typed or printed out from an electronic word-processing application. I prefer to have a copy of all final drafts filed electronically as Word documents.

I maintain a website that includes blog space for WRIT100A. I will routinely post assignment details on this site as well.

Your teacher's role and responsibility

The Guidelines document mentions that the primary role of all WRIT100 teachers is or should be that of facilitator. That is certainly the way I see myself in this class: I am here mostly to help you write better, to help you write – and think – in ways that will prove helpful to you as you move on in your college career. That is one reason for my approach of deferred grades, contract grading, portfolios, and reflective writing. Ultimately, I cannot avoid the role of "judge" or grade-giver, but I see that as an official role in the academic world, nothing more. I want to help you improve. If you think you are a "weak writer," I want to help you gain confidence; if you think of yourself as a "strong writer," I want to help you get even stronger. This course is structured for student success. The rest is up to you.

Assignment schedule (**Boldface** indicates assigned work due)

Week I   Course introduction
M 1/18 - F 1/22   **Questionnaires**; **"biopoem"; post to class blog**
                        BH pp. xxv-xxxiii ("How to Use This Book and Its Web Site");
                                BH **Tutorials 1, 2 & 4**
                        TS/IS Preface, Introduction, **Exercises** (pp. 13-14)

Week II   *TS/IS* Chapters 1-3, **Exercises** (pp. 26-27, 38, & 47)
M 1/25 – F 1/29   *TS/IS* Chapters 4-7, **Exercises** (pp. 62, 71-72, 86-87, & 97)
                        TS/IS Chapters 8-10, **Exercises** (pp. 113-14, 122, & 131-32)

Week III   *TS/IS* Chapters 11-12
M 2/1 - F 2/5   *TS/IS* pp. 150-52, 211-12, 305-07, 392-93 – Preview of readings
                        TBA: *TS/IS* Chapter 13, 14, 15, or 16 readings

Week IV   *BH* Sections 1-3
M 2/8 - F 2/12   **Workshops**

Week V   **Workshop**
M 2/15– F 2/19   **FIRST WRITING PROJECT FOLDER DUE**
                        Sign-up for midterm conferences

Week VI   **Questionnaires; Midterm conferences** (Monday-Thursday) [1]
M 2/22 - F 2/26   TBA: *TS/IS* Chapter 13, 14, 15, or 16 readings
(midterm)

Week VII   **Workshops**
M 3/1 - F 3/5

Spring break
Sa 3/6 – Su 3/14

Week VIII   **Workshop**
M 3/15 - F 3/19   **SECOND WRITING PROJECT FOLDER DUE**[2]

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[1] Conferences will take place in Zinzendorf 304; class will not meet Monday 22 February or Wednesday, 24 February.

[2] Approximately half the class will be assigned a Writing Center session for work on a draft in this project.

Week IX M 3/22 - F 3/26	TBA: *TS/IS* Chapter 13, 14, 15, or 16 readings **Workshops**
Week X M 3/29 - R 4/1	**Workshop** **THIRD ESSAY PROJECT FOLDER DUE[3]**
Week XI T 4/6 - F 4/9	Propose topics for fourth essay project *BH* Sections 50 & 51: academic research; **exercises in evaluating sources;** **Reeves Library online research tutorial** Reeves Library bibliographic instruction session
Week XII M 4/12 - F 4/16	*BH* Section 52 and **exercises in avoiding plagiarism** *BH* Sections 54-58: research and documentation Compiling sources for fourth essay project
Week XIII M 4/19 – F 4/23	**Workshops** Sign-up for portfolio conferences
Week XIV M 4/26 – F 4/30	**FOURTH ESSAY PROJECT FOLDER DUE** **Portfolio conferences** (Tuesday - Thursday)[4] Course evaluations
Final exams M 5/3 – Sa 3/8	**FINAL PORTFOLIOS DUE[5]**

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[3] Approximately half the class will be assigned a Writing Center session for work on a draft in this project.

[4] Conferences will take place in Zinzendorf 304; class will not meet Wednesday, 28 April.

[5] Each student's final portfolio will be due one week from the date of his/her portfolio conference, i.e. Tuesday, 4 May; Wednesday, 5 May; or Thursday, 6 May.