Fall 9-1-2004

**EVST 573.01: Environmental Writing**

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Purposes, Hopes, Faith: I believe EVST 573 can help you practice & improve your writing skills on environmental subjects for general audiences. I intend the course to inspire, challenge, hone, and encourage your writing, and also to challenge and broaden your reading. I hope we create a community of writers based in honesty, courtesy, commitment to craft, and similar enthusiasms--for good writing and a more thoughtful world. I have faith that you will write work that surprises and challenges yourself, your classmates, and me—work that might engage, enliven, & wake up a weary world.

Primary Writing: Two original essay drafts, a significant revision of one, and polished line-edits of both. Sign up for two dates on schedule (see reverse), one in each half of semester. Work brought in on these dates will be read by class during the week and discussed and returned the next class. I’ll make line-editing notes keyed to PSM; you then correct accordingly, consult with me as needed, and return line-edited version the following week. The significant revision of one essay can be turned in any time, but no later than Mon Dec 13. In most cases, both works read by class will be new and the major revision will be turned into me alone, but I’ll make exceptions, if you and I both believe the revision would be instructive for the class to reread. You may turn in an extra significant revision to me (i.e., you revise both your essays), but that’s for extra credit only, and in that case, the first revision must be in before Thanksgiving.

---Length: One essay in a shorter range (5-10 pgs, 1250-2500 wds) & one in a longer range (10-20 pgs, 2500-5000 wds). These ranges allow quite a variation among students in cumulative length of writing done in semester, but my experience is that each subject and approach seeks its own particular depth and length, and as always, quality trumps quantity.

---Format and Basics: double-spaced, double-sided, 12pt standard font, 1” margins, pages numbered. Proofread, and edit all work before turning it in. Talk to me if you need help with basic grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc. Vital as these are, they are not the emphasis of this course, and I expect that you have a good working knowledge of them already. As needed, I may ask you to attend sessions and/or work with me on composition basics outside regular class schedules.

Other Course Work & Requirements:

1) Read classmates’ work at least twice, make notes or questions in text, and write a short, signed, overall response—before class. I’ll review these from everyone and return them to the writer the next day. Unless you believe you’re a professional quality editor, please don’t line edit classmates’ works.

2) Read outside essays as assigned class to class. Write short responses, observations, & questions for discussion.

3) Write an “action” assignment, about an environmental concern, that aims for an immediate real-world audience; revise to print standards and mail to publication. Ideas include letters to the editor or opinion pieces in a newspaper or magazine, letters to elected officials, public comments on plans, sales, actions to an agency, corporation, or organization. Length will be as required by intended publication, but seldom be longer than 250-300 wds (1 pg). Draft with 3 copies is due in class Sept 15, with a revision then due to me Sept 22. I’ll return work asap, either ready to mail, or for more editing.

4) Write a response (2 pgs min) to a relevant essay of your choice from a current magazine or journal. These should focus in some way on form (approach, style, treatment, voice, conventions, tradition, mood, tone, etc.). Ex’s: discuss the relationship between aspects of the essay’s form and your own work, between form and content in the essay, between form and the essay’s effect on the reader, or a combination of any of these. Bring & present to class (<10 min) on Dec 8.

5) Attend Wild Mercy readings and write a brief 1 paragraph response to each. Dates TBA, if applicable.

Grading: I don’t assign letter grades to your essay writing; rather, I respond comprehensively, in class and in writing. I base course grades on my best assessment of the quality of your essay writing and revision and editing work, your completion of the action assignment and reading response, your contributions to the class and your classmates, your effort, and extra credit work, roughly in that order. Ask me at any time if you would like a tentative course letter grade.
EVST 573.1 / Fall 2004 / Course Schedule & Essay Draft Due Dates

All copies double-spaced, double-sided, 12pt font size, 1” margins all around, pages numbered

Sept 1: First class: Introduction, Syllabus Discussion, Scheduling, Questions, In-class Writing

Sept 8: Assigned Readings Discussion, In-class Wrtg, Discuss Action Assignment Draft due next week

SIGN ONCE IN EACH ROUND BELOW. (Everyone sign up for 1st round before starting 2nd.) RECORD THESE DATES. BRING 17 COPIES (TOTAL) TO CLASS ON THESE DATES.

1st Round:
Sept 15 ___________________ ___________________ ____________________

Action Assignment draft due in class from everyone (bring 3 copies).

Sept 22 ___________________ ___________________ ____________________

First workshop discussion of student work. Revised, edited AA draft due from everyone (1 copy).

Sept 29 ___________________ ___________________ ____________________
Oct 6 ___________________ ___________________ ____________________
Oct 13 ___________________ ___________________ ____________________

2nd Round:
Oct 20 ___________________ ___________________ ____________________
Oct 27 ___________________ ___________________ ____________________
Nov 3 (if there’s still a world) ___________________ ____________________
Nov 10 ___________________ ___________________ ____________________
Nov 17 ___________________ ___________________ ____________________

Dec 1: Last discussion of work turned in 11/17

Dec 8: Last class: Written response/analysis to outside selected essay due with short presentation.

Mon, Dec 13:--Noon: All significant revisions due.

Mon-Wed; Dec 13-16: Individual closing conferences scheduled as requested

Important UM Dates: 9/20--Last drop/Cyber 10/11--Last drop/No $$ back;
12/3--Last Withdraw 12/10--Last drop/grading change by petition

573 P/NP Policy: P = C or above