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WRIT 095.07: Developmental Writing

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WRIT 095 Developmental Writing

Instructor: Matthew Kaler
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Class Dates and Location: This 15-week course runs from August 26-December 4. The class meets Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 9:10-10:00 pm at the Missoula College in AD 13. Students will be responsible for completing course assignments online through Moodle or by submission in class.

Office Hours: You can schedule an appointment with me in class or by email to meet in person. I will respond to emails within a 48 hour period, Monday-Friday.

The Course:

WRIT 095 is a college-level course designed to introduce you to the kinds of reading, writing, and thinking you will be doing in the academic setting of the university. Course content will help you build on the competence you bring from your experience as a reader, writer, learner, and language-user in other settings and will support your development as a writer as you locate yourself in the university community. Discussions and writing assignments provide practice in the sorts of reading and writing you will encounter not only in disciplines across the campus but also in both business and civic communities.

The Work:

A composition course is unlike most of the classes you will take while at the University of Montana. In other classes, there will be a specific amount of well-defined material to be covered, and, often, lecturing is the common mode for distributing that information. Although your instructor will give you information and guide you as you develop effective writing strategies and practices, **becoming a better writer does not happen from listening to lectures. Your writing will improve as you commit time to the readings and assignments and time to writing multiple drafts in a variety of genres.** Along with developing rhetorical knowledge, writing strategies, and practices so that you can express your ideas clearly and effectively, you will come to see writing as a way of learning. All of this means that you will need to dedicate considerable time and effort to your work, both in the classroom and at home.

About writing:

- Writing is a process that helps people discover their ideas and understandings as well as convey them to others. All aspects of that process will be important elements of your writing for this course--from brainstorming and making quick jottings of ideas to preparing final, edited papers
- Writing and reading in a variety of genres allow for practice in the sorts of thinking, reading, and writing necessary in academic, business, and civic communities
- Writing, reading, speaking, and listening are complementary activities

WRIT 095 Outcomes:

The outcomes describe what students should strive to acquire by the end of the semester. *These outcomes are adapted from those established by the Council of Writing Program Administrators in 2000.*

By the end of WRIT 095, students should begin to:

Rhetorical Knowledge:

- Produce focused writing that is developed and persuasive
- Understand the needs of different audiences
- Understand the place of writing – its value as currency -in academic, professional, and civic communities

Critical Thinking:

- Engage in inquiry and writing as ways of learning
- Understand the collaborative and social aspects of learning
- Identify and reflect on their own literacy practices and develop self-reflection to assess writing

Reading:

- Build multiple reading strategies to observe, analyze, and synthesize texts
- Develop strategies to read their own texts and analyze their rhetorical choices

Writing:

- Acquire strategies to draft and shape written texts, including development and organization
- Employ invention and informal writing to help generate and explore ideas
- Use strategies to edit texts
- Control conventions of spelling, grammar, and punctuation

Required work for the semester will include:

Three Formal Writing Assignments (I also refer to these as “Essays” or “Papers”):

- Writing a literacy narrative
- Analyzing a text – final draft 800 to 1,000 words
- Writing an evaluation – final draft 800 to 1,000 words

Other ongoing work for the course will involve:

- Assigned reading materials
- Informal writing/journal responses and exploratory essays
 - These will be done in class and at home for the next class (and typed when specified), and students may be asked to share in these informal writings and observations
- Small group and class participation
- Writing workshops (details during class)
- A writing portfolio

You will have an opportunity to revise essays after receiving comments and suggestions from classmates and the instructor.

Course texts and materials:

- *The Norton Field Guide to Writing*, Richard Bullock, 3rd ed., W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Journal and other general writing materials
- Materials for a writing portfolio or optional e-portfolio

Attendance Policy

You are allotted 3 “free”/“unexcused” absences: you do not need permission, and I don’t need an explanation. Use these three wisely. More than three absences will compromise your grade.

4th “unexcused” absence: final grade drops one letter grade; 5th absence: final grade drops two letter grades, and so on. More than 6 “unexcused” absences will result in failure.

Why the policy? Without attending class, you cannot participate as a member of a learning community, and you cannot be a writer and collaborator with your peers. Participation includes taking part in class discussions, asking questions, and contributing to the classroom experience. Of course, this includes doing the required reading and writing assignments.

Excused Absences

What warrants an excused absence? A death in the family, a court or legal issue (for example: jury duty, parole meeting, court date, incarceration), an appointment for public benefits or entitlements that cannot be scheduled at any other time, or a severe health issue. What is a severe health issue? Being contagious (with flu or pink eye, for example), an incident that requires a visit to the emergency room or hospitalization, or having a medical condition requiring an immediate appointment that cannot be scheduled at any other day/time. Upon returning to class, the student must show documentation regarding

the exact date of the absence (except in the case of family death). Absences due to a severe health issue can be excused only if, upon returning, the student brings a signed note from his or her attending health care provider (physician or RN, not a member of the secretarial staff) stating that the student was ill the day of the absence and sought medical attention. The note must include: the exact date of class missed and the actual signature of the attending physician or RN and his/her contact information.

How to be absent

If you must be absent for a class, email one of your classmates, (even if you don't know them very well) asking him/her to pick up missed handouts, announcements and homework assignments. Also ask if you can copy his/her notes. **You are responsible for all missed material and the homework assigned during your absence.** You may make an appointment with me to go over notes that you got from a classmate to see if they are complete. Unless we have previously agreed to some other arrangement, all assignments are due on the announced due dates regardless of your class presence.

Registration Issues

If you miss the first two class meetings (and haven't communicated with me in advance about extenuating circumstances), you need to drop the course on Cyberbear and enroll another semester. The reason for this policy is that important groundwork for the semester is put in place in the first couple of class meetings, and students without that foundational framework are better served by taking the course when they can give it the attention it deserves. Note: Important dates can be found on Cyberbear.

Required Technology - Campus E-mail Accounts and Moodle:

Please activate your campus e-mail account right away. Every student is issued a university e-mail account, and there is no cost. Go to any technology help desk on campus for assistance on either campus. (You will need to activate your email before you can access Moodle).

This course requires essential computer skills so that you can access email and negotiate Moodle. Early in the semester, UM offers a number of Moodle workshops. If you are unfamiliar with Moodle or if you have limited computer experience, please attend these workshops. You will be expected to work with computers for appropriate class assignments, and most correspondences will be conducted via email/Moodle. Most class materials and instructions will be posted in Moodle. With the exception of some initial explanations during our first classes, please do not expect extra time in class for any learning curve you might face with technology. Likewise, please do not expect any extensions on due dates for an assignment because of any technical difficulties you have not conquered. Backup all work.

Requirements of Course

All of the three Formal Writing Assignments below must be submitted in a Portfolio to pass the course:

- * **Three** Essays, edited and polished submitted in a **Final Portfolio**
- * "As Is" Drafts (and any revisions) of each of the Three Formal Writing Assignments
- * Thoughtful, active, and responsible participation and citizenship, including discussion, preparation for class by reading all assigned materials, in workshops, and informal writing.

Portfolio Evaluation

You will turn in "As Is" drafts of all essays/projects when required on assigned dates, and you will receive feedback from me, but not final grades on individual papers. Third drafts will receive an "As Is" grade; this evaluation weighs the effort given and workshop participation on early drafts where applicable. A Final Portfolio of your work will be submitted at the end of the semester for which you receive a final grade. The portfolio should include all previous "As Is" drafts. This type of evaluation gives you the opportunity to revise your essays until you submit your portfolio at the end of the semester.

Grading

Project	Percentage
Portfolio	75%
➤ Paper #1	25%
➤ Paper #2	25%
➤ Paper #3	25%

Participation/
Informal Writing: 25%

Drafts are evaluated on both Process (revision, meeting draft deadlines, participating in workshops) and Product (grammar, fluency, quality of writing).

Grading Scale:

94-100 A	87-89 B+	77-79 C+
93-90 A-	86-83 B	76-73 C
	82-80 B-	72-70 C-

Final Grade

I encourage you to talk with me at any time to better understand my comments or to discuss your overall progress and success in the class. Success in this class depends on:

- Meeting all the requirements
- The quality of your written, electronic, and oral work
- Your willingness to enter into the spirit of inquiry, which includes intelligent and appropriate contributions to the class discussions, engagement with topics and lessons, and quality effort on your projects.

Please note: There is no credit applied to attendance. Students are expected to attend all class meetings and complete all assignments for courses in which they are enrolled. [Academic Policies and Procedures](#)

Late Paper Policy - Formal Writing Assignments turned in after their due date will be deducted **one full letter grade**, from the Final Draft grade, per class day until received. Essays turned in more than four days late will be given an “F”. I also reserve the right not to accept any late Essay after its due date.

Late Paper Extensions

Extensions on assignment due dates will only be granted for good reason (I reserve the right to determine this) **and** if you contact me prior to the due date. No extensions will be granted if you fail to communicate with me prior to the assignment due date.

Late Work

If you miss a draft deadline, you’ve missed a crucial chance for feedback on your work. If you aren’t ready with a response to a group member’s draft, you’re letting down someone who is counting on you for help. If you aren’t prepared for class, you limit your own voice and contributions to the class and community of writers and readers. For all these reasons, *late work is unacceptable*. Deadlines are not negotiable after you’ve missed them.

Informal Writing Assignments

These writings usually deal with a reading assignment, other media, or class discussion. Informal writing must be submitted in class or as email attachments. We will regularly share these in class, so be sure to write things you are comfortable discussing with others.

Civility Clause

You must abide by the rules for academic conduct described in the [Student Conduct Code](#). I will tolerate neither disruptive language nor disruptive behavior. Disruptive language includes, but is not limited to, violent and/or belligerent and/or insulting remarks, including sexist, racist, homophobic or anti-ethnic slurs, bigotry, and disparaging commentary, either spoken or written (offensive slang is included in this category).

While I do not disagree that you each have a right to your own opinions, inflammatory language founded in ignorance or hate is unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately.

Disruptive behavior includes whispering or talking when another member of the class is speaking or engaged in relevant conversation (remember that I am a member of this class as well). This classroom functions on the premise of respect, and you will be asked to leave the classroom and a formal process of Student Conduct Code violation will be pursued, if you violate any part of this statement on civility.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

Communication: I am available to speak with you and answer questions after class, by scheduled appointment in person (or via Skype), and through email. By University policy, all email communication must be conducted to my UM email account through your UM email account. I will only communicate with registered members of this course.

I am available to discuss any problems or needs for accommodation, but you need to come and talk to me beforehand. That includes letting me know if you have children or any obligations outside of class that will affect your presence in the class.

Course Accommodations Statement (DSS): Students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodations in this course. To request course modifications, please contact me as soon as possible. I will work with you and Disability Services in the accommodation process. For more information, visit the Disability Services website (<http://life.umt.edu/dss/>) or call 406.243.2243.

Contact UOnline if you have questions about or problems with any of our online course materials or your UM email account. UOnline Technical Support: 406-243-4999, UMONline-help@umontana.edu

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty: All work submitted for this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented according to MLA formatting standards. (We will discuss these and learn how to use them together.) In cases where plagiarism has been clearly established, the award of an F for the final course grade is the standard practice. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

Disclaimer

Please be advised that I reserve the right to change and/or modify any of the aforementioned points within this Syllabus, details of the Papers and Projects, Important Due Dates, and the course Weekly Plans. If I do, I will verbally announce any changes in class as well as post them to Moodle immediately.