

University Writing

Writ1301 – Spring 2008

Section 17-9:05-9:55 MWF, 321 Appleby

Section 23-10:10-11:00 MWF, 204 Appleby

Instructor's Name: Jerry Shannon

Office Phone: 612-625-7867

Office: 138E Wesbrook Hall

Email: shann039@umn.edu

Office hours: 11:30-1:30 Mondays; 9:30-11 Tuesdays; 1-2 Thursdays

Course blog: <http://blog.lib.umn.edu/shann039/1301spring08>

Overview:

The main goal of University Writing (or 1301) is to develop the writing skills you will be expected to use during your time here at the U. You will become more familiar with the many, many resources for research available to you through the U of M Libraries and strengthen your ability to evaluate the sources you find in your research. We will talk about how to integrate sources into your paper, including MLA citation. Perhaps most importantly, you will learn how to structure and support an essay that thoughtfully covers several points for a clear audience and purpose.

Every section of 1301 asks students to focus on a particular theme. For this course, that theme is food and the role that it plays in our society, our economy, and our personal identities. This is a topic that both encourages a broad range of approaches and one with which you all have decades of experience. You'll work on four main papers this semester. Your first paper will be a critical response to a piece we've read in class. This will help us talk about formal style, as well as integrating and citing outside sources in your writing. The second paper will be based on your research into a place where food plays an important role, which will help us talk about the kind of critical thinking and analysis expected of you here. The third project will involve more extensive use of library research—looking further into an issue or question related to your second project. Lastly, in your fourth project, you and your classmates will engage in a research-fueled debate about a food-related issue of your choosing.

Through these assignments, you'll get experience with a range of research methods and forms of writing. You'll work both individually and in groups throughout the course. Through this process, my hope is that you get a sense of the broad range of genres covered by the term "college research essay" and some skills that will help you navigate the writing assignments in your future classes.

Course objectives:

Students in this course will, by the end of the semester:

1. create a research paper that **convincingly argues a point**, using credible evidence and effective writing.
2. use a **variety of researching techniques**, such as library research, using online resources, and primary research, to find sources relevant to their writing.
3. successfully **integrate** others' thoughts and research in their writing, using introductory statements, paraphrase, quotation, and summary to tie in others' ideas and research.
4. improve their **critical reading ability** by evaluating the pieces they read for their authority, purpose, credibility, and relevance.

STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWLEDGE OF ALL POLICIES CONTAINED IN THIS SYLLABUS.

5. strengthen their writing by **revising** the content and organization of their pieces.
6. improve their ability to give specific and thoughtful **feedback** to their classmates.
7. use the **MLA system of citation** appropriately to give credit to their sources.
8. improve their use of formal English **grammar and style**.
9. broaden their understanding of **the role food plays in our society**.

Texts:

Our texts this semester will be a series of articles and book chapters. They are almost exclusively posted on an online system called E-Reserve. You will be able to access these pieces through WebVista, and can either view them online or print them out from there. All writing courses also use a style handbook, *The Longman Writer's Companion* (4th Edition), which includes information on citing, grammar, and other such matters. I recommend it particularly for help with citing sources, but we will not use it extensively in this course. That text is available at the university bookstore.

Grading:

I will use a points system to determine your final grade. Since our assignments and course schedule may change, I cannot tell you exactly how many total points will be available this semester, but it should be around 600. Here are the values of many of the assignments you will complete this semester:

- Comments on classmates' drafts: **5 points**
- Reading discussions and other short in class assignments: **10 points**
- Drafts of papers: **15 points**
- First three papers: **100 points**
- Final group project: **75 points**
- Final portfolio: **50 points** (drafts worth 5 points)

Your final grade will be determined by adding up all points for the semester and using the following scale (with pluses and minuses being used for the top/bottom 2% of each range). In rare cases, a student's final grade may be different than stated on this scale, based on my discretion.

A=100%-90% B=89%-80% C=79%-70% D=69%-60%

The grading policy in this course conforms to CLA guidelines. Therefore a "C" is equivalent to basic fulfillment of requirements; to achieve a grade higher than a "C" a student must perform beyond the basic requirements. Please keep the following scale and criteria in mind:

A--Achievement outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements

B--Achievement significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements

C--Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect

D--Achievement worthy of credit, even though it fails to meet course requirements fully

F--Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either: (1) completed but at a level of achievement not worthy of credit; or (2) was not completed, and there was no

agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an "I."

Incompletes

A grade of incomplete ("I") is given only in a genuine emergency, and generally only for work which is due during the last two weeks of the course. The student must make arrangements with the instructor for an incomplete before the last day of class.

Paper requirements:

All your paper assignments this semester will require at least one draft before the final assignment. On the day a draft is due, you need to have a piece that is capable of receiving substantive feedback—generally at least *three-quarters* of the final required length. Drafts that are short or seem to be too quickly written will be penalized. You will be responsible for posting these drafts on WebVista (see below), thus they should be typed.

The final draft of each major essay should also be typed and follow the standards set by the Modern Language Association (MLA). Sources should also be cited according to MLA guidelines. Your style handbook describes MLA style in detail. The Resources section of WebVista also includes information on MLA style and a few sample papers.

You will not receive many tests or quizzes in this class. However, your papers should demonstrate that you have paid attention to any skills or ideas that have been addressed in class discussion (citing is one example). This makes it important for you to pay attention to the work we do in class and to apply the things we address to your writing.

WebVista and other technology

Several aspects of our course will utilize an Internet based program called WebVista. To access that and many other features of your U of M account, click on the MyU link on the U of M homepage (www.umn.edu) and then click on the "My Courses" tab. Through WebVista, you can check and turn in assignments, post and read discussion messages, and take quizzes. I will also post a link there to our wiki project, which we will talk about later in the semester. We will talk about how to use all these tools in class. To make sure Vista works correctly on your computer, go to the "My WebCT" page and click on "Check Browser" in the upper right hand corner.

This course will also make use of several other forms of technology. If you feel chills at the click of a mouse or haven't heard of a blog, do not worry too much. Almost all students pick it up quickly. However, you should all be aware that this course will involve your extensive use of computers. Students can use the University's public computer labs, including the ones in Walter and McGrath Libraries. No fee is charged, except to use lab printers. Students may also use one of the 16 Macs in the Center for Writing in 15 Nicholson. University Technology Training Center <http://uttc.umn.edu/training/> schedules regular training sessions. Students who think that computer access will present a serious difficulty should talk to me immediately.

Revision:

You will be required to share drafts of your papers with other students in the class. Much of our

in-class revision will happen in small revision groups with two or three other classmates. You will be required to offer substantial feedback to your classmates on these drafts. However, I will also often ask for a volunteer to share his or her drafts with our whole class. Those who share their drafts in this way will receive **five extra points** on their draft (for a total of up to 20).

Late Work:

All assignments are due on the date assigned. You will be penalized **five points** if the assignment is turned in late. Unless you have made special arrangements with me, all assignments must be turned in to me by **one week** after their due date. I ***will not*** accept any assignments after this deadline. One exception to this policy is feedback on classmates' drafts, which will NOT receive credit after the due date. The best way to turn in late work is to email it to me or drop it by my office.

Attendance:

Regular attendance is essential to this course. Therefore, after **three unexcused absences**, you will be penalized **ten points** for each additional absence. Excused absences include jury duty, military service, religious observances, and participation in officially scheduled university student organization events (e.g., inter-collegiate athletics, ROTC, school sports events; see the CLA policy at <http://www.cla.umn.edu/cgep/3.html>). Excused absences do NOT include illness, family emergencies, vacations, transportation problems, or employment. The three allowed absences are intended to cover these situations. In case of an excused absence, you must notify me of your excuse preferably before you miss class, but no later than 24 hours after the absence. You are also expected to attend class for the entire length of the class period. If you are substantially or habitually late, your tardiness may be counted as an absence.

If you are unable to attend class on a certain day, it is your responsibility to find out what you may have missed by contacting other students in the class. No excuses will be accepted for late or missed assignments for this reason. I will post major assignments and other handouts on WebVista for your convenience.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism means using the words or ideas of another without acknowledgement. Essentially, it means presenting the work or words of someone else as your own. The Student Conduct Code defines plagiarism along with other forms of scholastic dishonesty in this way: "Scholastic Dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis."

Plagiarism is a serious offense anywhere, but especially so in a college environment. We will work together as a class to learn how to properly use outside sources in your work. Papers that *unintentionally* plagiarize sources will result in **up to a 15 point deduction**. If I find any *deliberate* attempt to copy another's work in an informal assignment (including drafts), you will receive

no credit for that assignment and **your grade will be lowered by up to one full letter grade**. A deliberate act of plagiarism in the final draft of an essay (or a second instance of plagiarism in any assignment) will result in a student *failing the course*. For more information, see: <http://writing.umn.edu/tww/plagiarism/index.htm>

Communication

Ways to contact me are listed at the beginning of this syllabus. An email is answered usually within one business day, often sooner. I try to return phone calls within the same time frame.

I will also be posting reminders and information about our course to our course blog, listed on with my contact information. *You are responsible for checking this blog regularly!* I assume that you will have read information posted 48 hours in advance of class. I will ask you to sign up to have these postings sent to your university email, which will make this more convenient. But it is always safe to check just before class, just in case there are any last minute reminders that will save you later trouble.

Getting Help and Conferences:

Conferences are a great way for you to feel more comfortable with the class, with me, and with your writing. You are required to attend **two** such conferences this semester, during both the second and third writing units. I will grade your preparedness for each conference time out of **10 points**. Each missed conference (without prior notification) will be counted as a late assignment.

You can also receive personal or online writing assistance through the Center for Writing, housed in several places throughout campus. You can receive **five points extra credit** for each of your first two consultations with them. Just write up a short (1/2-full page) summary of what you covered with the consultant and the changes you plan to make as a result. More information on the Center for Writing is available on their website (writing.umn.edu)—just click on “Student Writing Support.”

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability condition (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, systemic, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations should contact me and Disability Services (626-1333) at the beginning of the semester.

Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota Student Conduct Code governs all activities in the University, including this course. Students who engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment for others may be subject to disciplinary action under the Code. This includes any behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities. Students responsible for such behavior may be asked to cancel their registration (or have their registration canceled).

Course Schedule

Week 1 (Jan. 22-25)

Wednesday: Introduction to the course; Meet one another

Friday: Discuss the day's readings; Go over first essay assignment-What to read for

Read: "The Hidden Cost of Cheap Chicken" — Be sure to post about these before class time in the "Reading Discussions" topic.

Week 2 (Jan. 28-Feb. 1)

Monday: Discuss reading; Citing Sources

Read: "The Pleasures of Eating" and "Can't Stomach It"

Wednesday: Discuss reading; Integrating outside sources

Read: "Cereals: Sweet and Supposedly Healthy"

Friday: Discuss reading; Working on your first draft; Sample paper in class

Read: "Shitty First Drafts"

Week 3 (Feb. 4-8)

Monday: Workshop drafts as a whole class; Work on style

Due: 1st draft of response paper — post on WebVista

Wednesday: Revision groups — time to work in class

Due: Revision comments for your classmates — must include in-text comments and a substantial end note focused on the assignment's course objectives

Friday: Talk about food and identity — themes for your research projects; Watch video on revision process in class.

Week 4 (Feb. 11-15)

Monday: Workshop drafts as a whole class; Revisit citing and style

Due: 2nd draft of response paper — post on WebVista

Wednesday: Revision groups and time to revise in class.

Due: Revision comments for your classmates

Friday: Brainstorming for observation project; Discuss primary research techniques

Read: "Stepping In and Stepping Out" and "Polaroids"

Week 5 (Feb. 18-22)

Monday: Debrief first paper; Talk about background research and web resources

Due: Final draft of response paper

Wednesday: Practice observation on campus and discuss — Box 6 of *FieldWorking*

Read: "Learning How to Look"

Friday: Discuss what scholarly observation looks like

Read: "Fulton St. Fish Market" and "Home to McDonalds"

Week 6 (Feb. 25-29)

No classes this week — time to conference with me and do your observations. You should have come to your conference having already done one observation session/interview.

Week 7 (March 3-7)

Monday: Revisit formal style; Talk about organizing your draft

Wednesday: Workshop drafts as a whole class; Grammar and style

Due: Draft of essay two (submit on WebVista)

Friday: Revision groups; Time to work and revise

Due: Revision comments for your classmates

Week 8 (March 10-14)

Monday: Go over drafts one more time for style; Brainstorm and develop research questions for essay three

Wednesday: Debrief essay two; Using online library research tools

Due: Final draft of essay two

Friday: Evaluating sources; Reading scholarly sources

Read: "I'll Take Chop Suey"

---Spring Break---

Week 9 (March 24-28)

Monday: Share topics and research thus far; Go over expectations of a Literature Review

Wednesday: *Meet at Wilson library*—tour and do research.

Friday: No meeting—conferences and time to research.

Week 10 (March 31-April 4)

Monday: No meeting—conferences and time to research.

Wednesday: Workshop research thus far—go over those in class; Prewriting for the draft

Due: Preliminary bibliography

Friday: Workshop draft as a whole class; Review citing and source integration.

Due: 1st draft of essay three (posted on WebVista)

Week 11 (April 7-11)

Monday: Revision groups and time to revise

Due: Comments on your classmates' drafts

Wednesday: No class—Time to revise and conferences

Friday: Workshop draft as a whole class; Use TurnItIn.com to check for plagiarism

Due: 2nd draft of essay three (posted on WebVista)

Week 12 (April 14-18)

Monday: Revision groups; Begin brainstorming for the Food Fight Project

Wednesday: Finalize debate groups and issues; Time to begin brainstorming

Friday: Debrief essay three; Group work time

Due: Final draft of the research project—must also submit a copy to TurnItIn.com and submit copies of print sources

Week 13 (April 21-25)

Monday: Group work time-Talk about good position papers and review argumentation strategies

Read: Sample position paper-TBA

Wednesday: Group work time-should have a preliminary bibliography done by this date

Friday: Group work time

Read: Sample response paper-TBA

Week 14 (April 28-May 2)

Monday: Work on response papers

Due: Position papers—posted on WebVista **by classtime!!!**

Wednesday: Talk about portfolio assignment; Time to work on response papers

Due: Response papers—24 hours before your group debate time on WebVista

Friday: In class debate—first two topics

Read: Position papers for the presenting groups—post questions on WebVista before class time for each group

Week 15 (May 5-9)

Monday: In class debate—second two topics

Read: Position papers for the presenting groups—post questions on WebVista before class time for each group

Due: Individual reflections for first two groups

Wednesday: Time to work on the portfolio

Due: Individual reflections for second two groups

Friday: Review the course; Treats and movie?

Due: Final course portfolio