

CAMOSUN COLLEGE - COURSE OUTLINE - WINTER 2003
ENGLISH 250 (02)

ADVANCED ENGLISH COMPOSITION

Instructor: Christine Kirchner
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Office Hours: Monday, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- or by appointment.

Class Meets: Tuesday and Thursday, 10:00 a.m. – 11:20 a.m. in Ewing 346.

Course Description: This course offers practice in writing in a variety of prose forms, with emphasis upon the expository essay. Stress is placed on developing the student's ability to order and structure material into its most effective form. Finished assignments total 5000-5500 words* and will be written over the semester.

* This is the *total* of assignments; maximum individual assignment is 750-1000 words.

Texts: Required

Gillian Thomas, *Words in Common*.
Jan Rehner, *Practical Strategies for Critical Thinking*.

Recommended

Muriel Harris and Joan Pilz, *Prentice Hall Canada Reference Guide to Grammar and Usage* or similar MLA guide
Any good dictionary (Gage's Canadian, Webster's, Oxford)

Course Objectives: Starting with the assumption that students are familiar with the basics of college writing, this course will provide more depth and experience in the various ways language can be used. The focus is on the production of a variety of modes of writing, working towards a "professional" portfolio. There are several primary objectives:

- to develop critical reading and thinking skills.
- to investigate different modes of writing and adjust style and content to suit the various modes of writing.
- to consider the role of the audience in the development of style and content.
- to pay attention to readability and interest in the production of writing: to produce writing that is intended to be read by a general audience.

Evaluation will be based on the following:

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| • Diagnostic Essay | 0% |
| • Two Reading / Learning Logs @ 10% each | 20% |
| • Three Draft Essays @ 10% each | 30% |
| • Portfolio of Writing | 50% |

Brief description of assignments (complete instructions will be given over the term):

Diagnostic Essay. Value: 0% Due: Thursday, January 16.

This is a very short essay (500 – 750 words), written in response to a quote given in class on the first day. You will be given a fairly detailed evaluation which will help point out your strengths and weaknesses.

Two Journals: Reading / Learning Logs. Value 10% each (Total = 20%) Due: Thursday, February 20 and Tuesday, April 8.

These will reflect your “homework” and also will be a measure of class participation. You will write ten of these out of the fourteen weeks of the class, reflecting on your responses to the reading assignments, class discussions, and new discoveries you make (that’s my hope, anyway!).

Three Draft Essays. Value 10% each (Total = 30%) Due: Varies--please refer to the class schedule.

As we discuss styles and forms of non-fiction writing, everyone will be asked to experiment with short writing assignments. Eventually you will present five of these in your final portfolio. The draft essays are your opportunity to get criticism and advice before handing in a finished product. It is expected that these will be complete essays, and will be graded as such, but they are to be considered part of a “work in progress.” Corrected drafts can be submitted in your portfolio.

Portfolio. Value 10% each (Total = 50%) Due: Monday, April 14 (in my office, Fisher 110, by 5:30 p.m.).

It is my intention that you will leave the class with a collection of polished, finished essays in a variety of genres. You will write five, your choice out of the forms we will be discussing: personal memoir, personal opinion, informal criticism, formal criticism, humour, and reportage. You will have had feedback on all of these before your final submission, either from me, if you choose to use your drafts again, or from your peers in our in-class workshops.

Peer Editing: Peer editing sessions are compulsory; students will bring three copies of a more-or-less finished work for peer review and comments. A summary of the peer editing will be handed in with every formal assignment. Work handed in without a peer editing report will be penalized.

Participation: Active participation in workshops, discussions, and in-class writing sessions is a requirement of this course. Not all daily work will be graded, but, on the assumption that all writing needs an audience, students are expected to share their writing with others in small groups or with the class. The instructor reserves the right to refuse work from students who fail to appear in class on a regular basis.

Grades:

A+	=	95-100%	B-	=	70-74%
A	=	90-94%	C+	=	65-69%
A-	=	85-89%	C	=	60-64%
B+	=	80-84%	D	=	50-59%
B	=	75-79%	F	=	Below 50%
			I	=	Incomplete, must be negotiated

All papers will be given a letter grade, and a numerical grade (out of 15, 20, etc.) to reflect the value in the year's work. The mark will be based on organization, quality of ideas and support, style, and grammar, according to the following criteria:

A Range (85-100%) Superior level of achievement. A paper worth consulting.

- exceptional insight into the material or topic
- detailed, significant discussion
- effective organization for paper's purpose
- fluent, error-free expression.

B Range (70-84%) High level of achievement. A paper worth keeping.

- competent treatment of material or topic but less originality or perception than for A
- full but not so detailed discussion as for A
- organization contributing to sense but remaining standard and conventional
- expression free of common errors.

C+ Range (65-69%) More than satisfactory level of achievement. A paper worth doing.

- sound content, reasonably well organized
- clear but somewhat mechanical organization
- expression generally free of errors that confuse sense. May display content at the B or even A level but with more than one or two serious mechanical errors.

C Range (60-64%) Sufficient level of achievement to proceed with the next level. A readable paper.

- acceptable but commonplace content adequately supported
- mechanical but generally coherent organization
- adequate but sometimes confusing expression.

D (50-59%) Minimum level of achievement for which credit is granted. A paper worth rewriting.

- limited or misleading content with inadequate or inappropriate support
- incomplete or confusing organization
- inappropriate or awkward style
- frequent errors in expression that confuse sense so much that the readers are required to clarify the sense for the writer as they read.

F (Below 50%) Minimum level not achieved. A paper worth discarding.

- inadequate or inaccurate content
- incoherent organization
- many errors in expression that cause the readers to give up in disgust
- basically, no apparent effort made in the paper at all.

Notes:

- i. Borderline grades may be adjusted up or down at the discretion of the instructor, based on student effort and participation.
- ii. Late submissions, without prior negotiated extensions, will be penalized 10% per class day up to a maximum of five week days, after which they will not be accepted.
- iii. At least 80% attendance is expected for the successful completion of the course. The instructor may refuse to accept work from a student who seems to be spending more time at home than in class.
- iv. Plagiarism will result in an automatic F grade for the work involved.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

NOTES:

- i. Your ongoing “homework” is to keep up with the reading and to be thinking about the mode of writing that we are discussing : personal, argumentative, etc. About every two or three weeks, you will bring a piece of writing in for “peer editing,” and you will hand in finished copies of three (excepting the “reportage” paper) during the term for “instructor editing.” Five revised writing pieces will be submitted for your portfolio.
- ii. All readings are from Words in Common unless otherwise noted.
- iii. Assignment dates in **BOLD** are for all students; dates in *ITALICS* are due dates for your choice of essays.

Tues., Jan. 7 Course Introduction.

Thurs., Jan. 9 CRITICAL READING
 “Introduction” Practical Strategies in Critical Thinking (PS) pp. 1-2.
 “Applying Context as a Reading Strategy” PS pp. 3-7.
 “The Orchard Walls” PS pp. 7-21.

Tues., Jan. 14 FIRST PRINCIPLES
 “How to Write With Style” pp. 28-31.

 ABOUT WRITING
 “The Rabbits Who Caused All the Trouble” PS pp. 67-8.
 “Learning to Formulate and Apply Questions” PS pp. 99-102.
 “The Zebra Storyteller” PS pp. 102-12.

Thurs., Jan. 16 GENERATING IDEAS
 “Generating Ideas” PS pp. 129-30.
 “Writing As an Act of Hope” PS pp. 130-44.

Diagnostic Essay Due (0%)

Tues., Jan. 21 AUTOBIOGRAPHY
 “Lost in Translation” pp. 48-55.
 “Nine Beginnings” pp. 23-7.

Thurs., Jan. 23 PERSONAL WITH A POINT
 “Mediations on Meditation” pp. 19-22.

Tues., Jan. 28 **Personal: Descriptive/Narrative Peer Edit**

Thurs., Jan. 30 “Nom de Plume” pp. 69-80.

Tues., Feb. 4 “We’re Losing the Plot” pp. 265-7.

Personal 1 Essay Due (10%)

Thurs., Feb. 6 **Personal-with-a-point Peer Edit**

Tues., Feb. 11 ARGUMENT
 “One Small Step for Genkind” pp. 83-92.

Thurs., Feb. 13	NO CLASS. READING BREAK. COLLEGE CLOSED.
Tues., Feb. 18	"Are Children's Books Racist and Sexist?" <u>PS</u> pp. 73-84. <i>Personal 2 Essay Due (10%)</i>
Thurs., Feb. 20	Argument Peer Edit Journal 1 (10%) Due
Tues., Feb. 25	ISSUE ANALYSIS "Culture clash: Should parents be able to select their child's sex?" handout. "Pornography" pp. 188-92.
Thurs., Feb. 27	"Digital Diploma Mills" pp. 352-61. <i>Argument Essay Due (10%)</i>
Tues., Mar. 4	Issue Analysis Peer Edit
Thurs., Mar. 6	COMMENTARY: REVIEW AND CRITICISM Selected Reviews: handouts
Tues., Mar. 11	Selected Reviews: handouts <i>Issue Analysis Essay Due (10%)</i>
Thurs., Mar. 13	"Desire on Domino Island" <u>PS</u> pp. 115-28.
Tues., Mar. 18	Review Peer Edit
Thurs., Mar. 20	"The Orchard Walls" (revisited) <u>PS</u> pp. 7-18. "Reading Strategy Sheets for Fiction and Nonfiction" <u>PS</u> pp. 53-60. <i>Review Essay Due (10%)</i>
Tues., Mar. 25	Criticism Peer Edit
Thurs., Mar. 27	REPORTAGE "Ten Internet Myths" pp. 392-5.
Tues., Apr. 1	"Compromising Partnerships" pp. 236-42.
Thurs., Apr. 3	Reportage Peer Edit
Tues., Apr. 8	Journal 2 (10%) Due.
Thurs., Apr. 10	Wrap up.
* Mon., Apr. 14	Portfolio (50%) is due in my office, Fisher 110, by 5:30 p.m. (There will be <u>no extensions.</u>)