

English 250
Advanced Composition
Winter 2004

Instructor: Thom Bland

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Office hours: Monday 11:30-14:30 Tuesday 10:00-12:30 Wednesday 11:30-14:30 Thursday
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Electronic Version of Outline and other links:

<http://webct.camosun.bc.ca>

Texts: *Inside Language: A Canadian Language Reader*, Jennifer MacLennan and John Moffat

A novel or non-fiction work selected from the list provided.

The College Style Sheet, Furberg and Hopkins, 5th Edition

Calendar 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 students' ability to order and structure material into its most effective form. Finished assignments **total** 5000-5500 words and will be written almost weekly over the semester.

Course Objectives: In this course, you will be asked to read almost as often as you will be asked to write. The two acts are inextricably connected, and working on one skill will help you with the other. The readings will also provide you with content--ideas etc. Of course, the main thrust of English 250 is writing, and you will do a great deal of that and approach it from a variety of perspectives.

Evaluation: Your evaluation is based upon THIRTEEN items:

Jan 13	Framework of Essay #1	2
Jan 20	Draft of Essay #1	6
Jan 29	Essay #1	20
Feb 03	Framework of Essay #2	2
Feb 10	Draft of Essay #2	6
Feb 19	Essay #2	25
Mar 2	Framework of Essay #3	2
March 16	Draft of Essay #3	6
March 25	Essay #3	25
April 01	Framework of Essay #4	2
April 08	Draft of Essay #4	6
Exam Week	Essay #4 (Final Exam, In-Class Format)	30
Various	Individual Seminars and participation	<u>20</u>

TOTAL 152

NOTE: IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PASS THIS COURSE WITHOUT HANDING IN ALL ASSIGNMENTS.

Due Dates: All work is due on the dates specified. 10% will be deducted for **EACH** of the first two days a paper is late. (Total = -20%) After this period, the work will not be accepted.

Essay Format: Please follow the examples and advice presented in the *College Style Guide* or other MLA style guide; do not submit work in folders. For the first point, see <http://webster.commnet.edu/mla/index.shtml> This is a wonderful guide to MLA style.

Attendance: It is impossible to pass this course without at least 80% attendance.

Plagiarism: This is putting someone else's writings (or ideas) into your work and not saying where you got these materials. You thereby imply that the other person's work is your own. This is a serious offence and will be dealt with accordingly.

Evaluation Guide: As you can see, this does not match the College's grading system. However, I hope it will give you a general idea about my expectations and show you how these translate into rough grade equivalencies.

- F Lack of clear expression makes failure automatic. Subject being discussed is obviously not understood or is obviously inaccurately presented.
- D Several errors in spelling, punctuation, or difficult language expressions. Subject not thoroughly discussed and/or thoroughly understood.
- C Occasional weakness in expression. The basic material is obviously understood, but the sentences are unvaried and simple.
- C+ Very few mechanical errors. The basic material is understood. Some attempt at sentence variety and original expression. Not much creative imagination is involved in trying to put the subject into a new light.
- B Virtually no errors in expression are present; that is, all is very clear. Subject is thoroughly studied and understood. Some degree of originality is involved in the unified fashion.
- A The kind of work that might be expected at the next level up. Complete and clear understanding with a high degree of originality. Logical, clear development; no mechanical errors.

My Philosophy: your academic well being is one of my responsibilities. If you have ANY academic problems during your studies at Camosun College, come and see me. If I cannot help you myself, I will direct you to people who can.

Camosun College's Percentages and Letter Grade Equivalents:

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	0 - 49

A Few Notes About Your Journal: Although this does not have a point value, it is an important element in the development of your ideas and writing skills. Perhaps the best place to start is to say what the journal is not. It is **not** a set of class notes, a record of homework assignments, or a diary of your personal activities. It is a collection of your reactions to the essays and other works you will read for this class. It is a place to explore your questions and ideas without the worry of proper form etc. Regular use of your journal will help you get more from your classes and supply helpful ideas for your essays. Get into the habit of writing in your journal daily and write about the material on the reading list BEFORE and AFTER you come to class. For an excellent guide to the sorts of things that should be in your journal, read pages x, xi, and xii in your text. I will collect these journals on a regular basis—not necessarily weekly. Please have your journal ready for submission on the first day of class each week; if I take them in that week, I will read them and then return them during the second class of the same week

Seminar and Editing Guidelines

Editing:

When you write anything for this class you should have at least **TWO EDITORS** ; these people **MUST** be from your English 250 class. They will examine your work in close detail. You should indicate that they have examined your writing by putting **THEIR INITIALS** on the bottom of the last page of your finished essay. As an editor, you are not meant to say just "nice things" about your classmate's work. Neither are you expected to say purely negative things. Your comments should be as constructive as possible. I will be going over editing techniques in the early part of the course.

Editors should try not to get too upset if the writer chooses to ignore their helpful advice. It is, after all, the writer's creation and therefore in his or her hands. I hope this editing will get you to examine other people's work with a critical eye, looking for such things as the development of ideas, grammar, usage and transitions. Writing, as you know, is a highly complex act with an array of individual differences. However, the amount of time you have for each writing assignment is fixed so you should learn to pace yourself to the course requirements early in the semester. For example, as you may see from the above dates, your work must go through three distinct phases with three specific dates:

1. For the "**framework**" date you should bring a fully developed outline to the editing class. This outline should specify thesis, modes of development, support used, paragraphing etc. I will collect these documents at the end of the editing session, and you will be able to pick them up outside my office the next day or in the next class.
2. For the "**draft**" dates, you should bring a fully developed essay to the editing class. Here editors should comment on the entire essay, noting everything from surface errors to problems with the logical development of ideas. I will collect these documents at the end of the editing session, and you will be able to pick them up in the next class.
3. As you may have guessed, this is the date for the submission of your **finished, polished essay**

Note that these editing sessions have a total value of **32 POINTS**. Missing them will have a significant impact on your final grade for this course.

Seminar:

You will be assigned a seminar topic on the first day of class. The seminar is meant to generate discussion from the rest of the class. You may choose to do this in a number of ways. Generally speaking, the seminar should look at such things as the content of the piece (what the writer is writing about) and the writer's techniques (how he or she goes about putting the piece together). For the latter you should look at such things as a writer's presentation, logical development, rhetorical design, construct of arguments and transitions. This term the pieces you read will all be from professional writers. Of course, this does not mean that they are, by definition, perfect.

You should arrive at the seminar with a favourite passage or two. These can be passages that don't work or that work particularly well or that stand out for some other reason. What the rest of the class will expect from you is that you have thought about the piece in some depth. You may expect the same of the rest of the class. See me for any help you might need. By the way, you will most likely want to use some of this material for one or two of your essays.

Reading List for Essay Four—Choose ONE.

Behind the Scenes at the Museum, Kate Atkinson
True History of the Kelly Gang, Peter Carey
White Teeth, Zadie Smith
Autograph Man, Zadie Smith
The Peppered Moth, Margaret Drabble
The Horses Mouth, Joyce Cary
After Rain, William Trevor
Paddy Clark, Ha Ha Ha, Roddy Doyle
The Son of the Circus, John Irving
Family Matters, Rohinton Mistry
Shakespeare's Dog, Leon Rooke
River Town: Two Years on the Yangtze, Peter Hessler
The Concubine's Children, Denise Chong
The God of Small Things, Arundhati Roy
Into Thin Air, Jon Krakauer.

Things That Must Not Be Forgotten, Michael David Kwan.
South: The Endurance Expedition, Ernest Shackleton
The Imaginary Indian, Daniel Francis.
No Great Mischief Alistair MacLeod.
A Gesture of Life, Chang-rae Lee
Larry's Party by Carol Shields
White Noise Don DeLillo
The Shipping News, Annie Proulx
Snow Falling on Cedars, David Guterson
Red Azalea Anchee Min
Angela's Ashes Frank McCourt
'Tis Frank McCourt
Life and Death in Shanghai, Nien Cheng
A Hundred Years of Solitude Marques

I will add to this list as the semester progresses.

A final note:

You should collect EVERYTHING you write for this course, including research documents and outside sources, and save them in some sort of file folder. I may ask to see this folder to clarify your progress as a writer or to assess my evaluation of your writing. This may be a little more "order" than you are used to but it is necessary. Thanks.

Reading List Tentative

Hyakawa 9
macLennan 37
Booth 314
Fry, 33
Shoveller 57 Kostash 62
Orkin 79 and Davidson
Tannen 180
Wente 190
Lutz 267
Nash 220
Rushdie and Jonas 217--215
Lakoff in library
Orwell, 204
Bosmajian in library
English in library
Berger(library)