Creating a More Thoughtful You

Instructor: Allison Palumbo
Email: allisonpalumbo@weber.edu
Office: TBA
Office hrs: TBA

Teaching Philosophy:
“It’s my job to nurture the writer in every student, while at the same time making it clear that writing is a craft, which can be learned by anyone willing to work at it.”
Burton Hatlen, Writing in Progress

That quote perfectly captures my purpose as a teacher in the world of language. Writing is for everyone, and my goal is to prove that to you, my student. I think it is important for everyone to be able to express his or herself clearly in writing. If you can analyze your thoughts and ideas well enough to get them down on paper in a manner that can be understood by most readers, that means that you are a good thinker. There aren’t many good thinkers anymore; I want to do what I can to change that. I want my class to challenge and inspire you to want to learn how to think, write, and read, so you will take that important step toward accepting responsibility for your learning that will motivate you to use the tools I will teach. I will help you learn the more concrete foundations for writing clearly, so you might come to see writing as a craft, not an ethereal talent, that can be improved through a process of revision.

When you finish my class, you may not be a great writer, but you will know how to analyze your thoughts, how to read critically, how to read and use outside sources in your writing, and you will, ideally, leave ready and able to write well. I also want you to leave more confident as a writer, so you can learn to be proud of your writing. I am here to support you in both your writing failures and triumphs, since both are necessary to refining your thoughts in order to craft a successful paper.

Course Overview: This course aims to help you improve your writing skills in all areas: discovering what you have to say, improving fluency and rhetorical sophistication, and applying research to enhance your writing. You will devise purposes and structures for several papers, practice critical reading and response, write sustained exploratory journals, and learn new writing techniques. My instruction emphasizes the connection between writing, reading, and critical thinking;

Required Texts:
- A World of Ideas: Essential Readings for College Writers, seventh ed. by Lee A. Jacobus
- A Writer’s Reference, fifth ed. by Diana Hacker

COURSE POLICIES

Student Participation: Students are expected to be active participants in the classroom community. I expect thoughtful and responsible participation and citizenship from each student. This class relies heavily on discussion based on assigned readings and journals, so students need to give thoughtful, reasoned responses to the readings and come to class on time and prepared.

Attendance and Tardies: In this class, you will not have a midterm or a final. Thus, your success in this class is not based on exam performance. Instead, your success will be based on in-class participation as well as satisfactory completion of assigned readings, journals, and papers. This is why attendance is mandatory. You may have three absences without penalty. After that, one full letter grade will be deducted from your final grade for each additional absence. Missing your scheduled individual conference will count as two absences. Obviously, I feel it is important to your success in the class, and if I can spare the time to meet with you, you can spare it to meet with me. I keep strict attendance, and I recommend you don’t test me on this. You should inform me, ahead of time when possible, about why
you miss class, so we can discuss the lesson and homework you will miss—it is your responsibility to find out what lessons and homework you will miss in advance. Save your absences for when you get sick (and you will) or for family emergencies. I am also as strict about tardies as I am about absences. Each tardy will count as half an absence.

**Students with Disabilities:** Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can also arrange to provide course materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary.

**Student Behavior:** This class is a forum for the creation and exploration of ideas. I encourage intellectual freedom, and you should expect to hear some ideas that you don’t agree with. There will likely be debates, lively discussions, and even some arguments. I welcome open expression. However, I will not tolerate disrespectful attitudes in class. This includes the use of disruptive language or behavior. Disruptive language includes, but is not limited to, violent, belligerent or insulting remarks, including racist, sexist, 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 the use of cellphones (which includes text messaging), pagers, or any other form of electronic communication during the class session. Disruptive behavior also includes doing homework for this class or any other class while in class as well as whispering or talking when another member of the class is speaking or engaged in relevant conversation (do not forget that I am a member of this class).

Classrooms function on the premise of respect, and you will be asked to leave the classroom and counted absent if you violate any part of this statement on civility. Remember that your signature at the end of this course information sheet indicates that you have read and understood this policy.

**ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING**

1. Three papers, edited and polished.
2. 20 informal exploratory journals, 1-2 pages (250 word minimum) graded S/U
4. 5 in-class writings or pop quizzes

**Writing Assignments:** All formal written assignments must be turned in to me in order to pass the course. Papers are graded on editing, organization, thoughtfulness, audience-awareness, and research (when applicable). All other written and oral work will be graded on meaning or content and appropriateness to the assignment. ALL FORMAL PAPERS MUST BE COMPLETED TO EARN A PASSING GRADE IN THIS COURSE.

All papers must be typed (the page minimums are based on typed texts with 1-inch margins, about 250 words per page). All your written work must have your name at the top of the first page, with page numbers on all following pages.

**Late papers:** All work must be turned in during class on the due date. I do not accept late work (journals or papers). I do not accept work by email. I do not accept computer meltdown, printer problems, or any other mechanical failures as acceptable excuses. It is up to you to back up all of your work and keep copies of each draft. By late, I mean anytime after I have collected papers in class.
Journals: Journals provide a forum for self-expression. If your journal fits the assignment, is between 1-2 pages long, and if you turn it in on time, you will receive full credit. I do not give credit for journals that do not fulfill the assignment, that are too short, and that are turned in late. Journals must be typed and double-spaced (no spirals or covers, please). Journals should be thoughtful and show the depth of your thinking process; you might tell stories to illustrate your ideas, you might end up contradicting yourself, you might write things you aren’t certain are true or not—these are a few ways you can "explore" in your journals. We will regularly share journals in class, so be sure to write things you are confident of talking about with others.

Pop-Quizzes: There will be a few times, throughout the semester, when you will have a pop quiz (at my discretion). Quiz questions will generally come from the section on “questions for critical reading” found at the end of each assigned reading, but not always, so take good notes on all of the readings assigned. There are no make-ups for either the in-class writings or the pop quizzes. If you are absent, you will receive a zero.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the attempt to claim another person’s work as your own, and any instances of plagiarism will result in the failure of this course. The WSU Code defines plagiarism as “the unacknowledged (uncited) use of any other person or group’s ideas or work” (Section 6-22, part IV, subsection D). Any attempt to claim credit for another’s work, in whole or in part, is a violation of this policy and is regarded by the Composition Program as a serious offense.

EVALUATION OF WORK

| Paper One: 15% | In-class writing or quizzes: 15% |
| Paper Two: 20% | Journals: 15% |
| Paper Three: 30% | Participation: 5% |

A = 94% and above
A- = 90% and above
B+ = 87% and above
B = 84% and above
B- = 80% and above
C+ = 77% and above

C = 74% and above
C- = 70% and above
D+ = 67% and above
D = 64% and above
D- = 60% and above
E = 0 -59%

Above Average Work: A, A-, B+, B
Strong. You reflect in an enthusiastic, engaged way to the assigned reading, specifically about what you think is most compelling or intriguing. You pay close attention to the details of the assignment. Your thinking and style are interesting to read. Your writing proves you’ve read for accuracy and understanding. The quotations you select and your paraphrasing or explanations that follow prove you do not distort or misrepresent the other writer's intentions or meaning. You are very selective about any language or passages you quote, and you respond to the quotations you’ve selected with your careful reflections, summary, and your own thoughtful details and questions. You show how skilled you are at responding in an intelligent way and how skilled you are at asking complex questions, rather than just simple ones.

Passing Work: C+, C
Average. It’s obvious that you are somewhat engaged with the reading and the assignment, but it’s verging on ho-hum work because your writing and reflection demonstrate that you didn't read to get a good understanding or appreciation of the tone, style, or content in the assigned reading. Your writing sounds “canned,” perhaps full of truisms and clichés, or it is too vague. You show signs of "name-dropping." This means you’ve only skimmed the surface of another writers’ ideas. It indicates that you
read hastily or at the last minute. You are not very selective about the language you quote. Your selections seem haphazard. You are being too vague and general in your approach, not concrete enough. You shy away from fully discussing what parts of the reading really grab your attention. You seem afraid of complexity. Instead of bringing up questions and specific problems that will make issues surrounding the assigned reading more complicated, you oversimplify things in terms such as good vs. bad, black vs. white, etc. Your prose may have careless errors that demonstrate you didn’t take the time to proofread and spell-check.

**Failing Work: C- and below**
Your assignment doesn’t follow the instructions or it contains mechanical errors you need to learn how to correct. Your writing might sound too much like our textbook’s summary of a particular essay, indicating that you didn’t even read the actual essay itself. It’s obvious that your reading, thinking, and writing were hasty, and that you need to allot yourself more time so you can read the assignment thoroughly and respond intelligently. It appears that you completed the assignment at the last minute or that you did not comprehend what you read. Your assignment is full of bullshit, padding, or ranting and you’re trying to bluff your way through.

**E and UW grades:** If you stop attending any college class without officially withdrawing, you receive a “UW” (Unofficial Withdrawal) for the class. A grade of “UW” has the same effect on your GPA as a grade of “E” and can sometimes have even worse effects when it undermines scholarships or financial aid you receive. A grade of “E” is a failing mark and equals a numerical value of “0” on your transcript.

**1010 and 2010 Grades:** The university requires a grade of C (not C-) to pass both 1010 and 2010. In other words, a C- is not a passing grade. You must pass 1010 with a C or better grade to be enrolled in 2010.

**USEFUL INFORMATION**

**Student Privacy:** I respect your privacy, and I will not share your personal information with any other student or instructor. For your information, instructors are prohibited by federal law (FERPA) from discussing, revealing, or publicizing student grades to anyone other than the student. Any grade received by a student may only be discussed with the student. Grades may not be posted in a public place, nor may they be discussed in any open fashion.

**Writing Center:** The Writing Center in the Student Services Building, room 261, offers one-on-one help for students with their writing, whether they need help with a writing problem or just want to do better on their writing assignments. However, the Writing Center tutors do not provide editing services, nor will they write your papers for you. Services are offered on a walk-in basis or online at [http://departments.weber.edu/writingcenter/](http://departments.weber.edu/writingcenter/)
I, ______________________, hereby state that I have received, read, and understand the course policy sheet for Allison Palumbo’s 2010 class taught in the spring semester of 2006.

__________________________ (Signature)

_______________________ (Date)
Tentative Weekly Syllabus—English 2010
(Subject to change at instructor’s discretion)

WEEK ONE

Mon. Jan. 9
Brief course overview: expectations, requirements, etc.
Hand out course policy sheet
Fill out student information cards
Homework
  Review course policies

Wed. Jan. 11
Discuss questions concerning course policies
Hand in signed policy agreement
Homework
  Read Jacobus: pp. xi-xii
  Write journal 1: What is the importance of education?

Fri. Jan. 13
Discuss reading and journal responses
Introduce reading as a dialogue/annotation
Homework
  Read Jacobus: pp. 1-11
  Write journal 2: What is critical reading? How does it relate to writing?
  Read Jacobus: Education section intro., pp. 226-229
  Read Jacobus: Frederick Douglass, pp. 263-278—practice annotation
  Write journal 3: Did annotating improve your comprehension and retention of the reading—why
  or why not? How did Douglass’ notion of education compare to your own, as expressed in
  journal 1? Bring a copy of two pages of annotated text to class on Wednesday

WEEK TWO

Mon. Jan. 16
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—No Class

Wed. Jan. 18
Discuss reading and journal responses
Continue textual dialogue/annotation discussion with example
Group work
Homework
  Read Jacobus: Maria Montessori, pp. 281-295
  Write journal 4: What similarities did Montessori’s essay share with Douglass’ essay? What
  differences? Explain one point, in particular, from her essay that intrigued you (whether you
  agree or disagree).

Fri. Jan. 20
Discuss reading and journal responses
Critical thinking introduction
  What does it mean to read critically?
  What are the processes?
  How can critical reading be used as a skill for everyday life?
Homework
Read Jacobus: Mind section intro., pp. 438-440
Read Jacobus: Carl Jung, pp. 483-497 (for Monday’s activity)

WEEK THREE
Mon. Jan. 23
In-class activity: “Reading Difficult Passages”
Discuss reading

Wed. Jan. 25
Discuss levels of making meaning
  Connection between interpretation/analysis/critical thinking
In-class activity: “Analyze me”
Homework
  Write journal 5: Analyze yourself. How do you feel about stereotypes? What stereotypes do you think people might attribute to you? Why? Do you conform to these notions or defy them? How?

Fri. Jan. 27
Discuss journal responses
Discuss bias and its effect on critical thinking and reading
  What is the difference between an idea and a belief?
  Where do our ideas and beliefs come from and how are they formed?
  Why is it important to know what we think and why we think it?
  How can bias be useful? Problematic?
In-class activity: “Lunch”
Homework
  Read Jacobus: pp. 833-852

WEEK FOUR
Mon. Jan. 30
Discuss reading
  Asking questions as a way to generate topics
  What is rhetoric?
  What are the methods of development?
Introduce Paper One/hand out guidelines
Homework
Read Jacobus: Rene Descartes, pp. 457-466
  Write journal 6: What are the main ideas of this essay? What are the overarching themes into which those main ideas can be divided?

Wed. Feb. 1
Writing Center presentation
Discuss reading and journal responses
Discuss creating a successful thesis
In-class activity: Group Close-Reading from Descartes essay

Fri. Feb. 3
Meet at the Library, room 138
Homework
  Read Jacobus: Sigmund Freud, pp. 469-482 (if you keep annotations separate from the text, make
sure to bring them on Monday)  
Complete library exercise for participation credit

WEEK FIVE

Mon. Feb. 6  
Hand out style guidelines  
Hand in library exercise  
Brainstorming: from your annotations, create five questions about the essay. Then, generate three questions that relate to larger social/historical circumstances or issues.  
In-class writing: free-write on one of three questions  
Homework:  
  - Read Jacobus: Justice section intro., pp.114-117  
  - Read Jacobus: Martin Luther King, Jr., pp. 171-194

Wed. Feb. 8  
Answer final questions about Paper One  
Discuss rhetorical techniques  
  - Does form affect function or vice versa?  
  - Why is it necessary to have a variety of techniques?  
In-class writing: Suggestions for Writing, #1, p. 190—a brief letter protesting an injustice

Fri. Feb. 10  
**Paper One Due**  
Discuss first paper experience—application of journals/readings/previous experiences

WEEK SIX

Mon. Feb. 13  
Introduce Paper Two/hand out guidelines  
Discuss/hand out “Writing a Thesis Statement”  
In-class activity: What’s wrong with these theses?  
Homework  
  - Read Jacobus: Henry David Thoreau, pp. 133-160  
  - Write journal 7: Answer question #3 from the Suggestions for Writing, p. 157

Wed. Feb. 15  
Discuss correct MLA procedures, works cited, common problems  
Sign up for conferences------------------------make conference sign-up sheet  
Homework  
  - Read Hacker pp. 329-340 & pp. 370-377 (familiarize yourself with the pages inbetween on documenting sources, but don’t worry about absorbing it all immediately)

Fri. Feb. 17  
Correct sample bibliography and citation mistakes------------------------bring Hacker  
Preparing for conferences  
Homework  
  - Read Jacobus: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, pp. 161-170  
  - Write journal 8: Make a comparison between the presence and execution of tyranny in Stanton’s and King, Jr.’s essays. Do you see more similarities or contrasts? How do you think the abolition/civil right’s movement correlates to the various women’s movements?
WEEK SEVEN

Mon. Feb. 20
President’s Day—No Class

Wed. Feb. 22
Individual Conferences—No Class

Fri. Feb. 24
Individual Conferences—No Class

WEEK EIGHT

Mon. Feb. 27
Discuss plagiarism
In-class activity: Plagiarism exercise
Homework
   Read Jacobus: Ethics & Morality intro., pp.628-631
   Read Jacobus: Aristotle, pp. 649-670
   Write journal 9: Paraphrasing practice—pick three paragraphs from the essay and (write the original above and the paraphrase below)

Wed. Mar. 1
Discuss writing abstracts
Do sample abstract
Group activity: write an abstract for Nietzsche’s essay
Homework
   Read Jacobus: Iris Murdoch, pp. 713-728
   Write journal 10: abstract for your Paper Two topic (minimum half page)

Fri. Mar. 3
Library Research Day
Homework
   Read Jacobus: Friedrich Nietzsche, pp. 697-712
   Write journal 11: answer three of the questions for critical reading from Nietzsche’s essay.

WEEK NINE

Mon. Mar. 6
Group activity: Design your own moral universe
Homework
   Write journal 12: describe your moral universe. What was the general response from your group/class members? Why do you think they responded as they did?

Wed. Mar. 8
Discuss reading and journal responses
In-class activity: My Ten Commandments

Fri. Mar. 10
**Paper Two Due**
Response to readings/journals/activities on Ethics & Morality
SPRING BREAK
Mon. Mar. 13 through Fri. Mar. 17
Spring Break—No Classes

WEEK TEN
Mon. Mar. 20
Introduce Paper Three
Discuss making an effective argument
Hand out Rottenberg “Understanding Argument” pp. 1-24
Refer to “Writing Thesis Statement” handout for argumentative theses
In-class activity: #1 & #2 from handout, p. 23
Homework
Read “Understanding Argument”
Write journal 13: answer #5 from reading, p. 23

Wed. Mar. 22
Continue effective argument discussion
Hand out “The Classical Argument”
Discuss introductions, conclusions, and methods of development
Homework
Read Jacobus: Feminism section intro., pp. 740-743
Read Jacobus: bell hooks, pp. 821-833
Write journal 14: Decide on the premise (thesis) for hooks’ essay and write your argument for or against it, whichever you feel strongest about.

Fri. Mar. 24
In-class writing: Using the same premise you chose for the previous journal, write a response arguing the opposite of your original position (to hand in with journal 13). Then, divide into groups based on choice and come up with shared points of agreement.
Homework:
Read Jacobus: Simone de Beauvoir, pp. 781-795
Write journal 15: answer #7 in Connections, p. 832

WEEK ELEVEN
Mon. Mar. 27
Ideological discussions

Wed. Mar. 29
Introduce logical fallacies
Why would I introduce this after recent class activities?
Sign up for presentations
Hand out reading and guidelines
Homework
Read handout

Fri. Mar. 31
In-class activity: Alternative perspectives—the logic of the illogical
WEEK TWELVE

Mon. Apr. 3
Presentations

Wed. Apr. 5
Presentations

Fri. Apr. 7
Presentations

WEEK THIRTEEN

Mon. Apr. 10
Handout logical fallacy quick list
In-class activity: Logical Fallacy Exercise
Homework
Write journal 16: rewrite Nietzsche’s quote from the in-class activity in your own words to explain what it means to you. Then answer whether or not you think it is ethical to present an ethical, moral, and just argument through logical fallacies. Bring a copy of an editorial or letter to the editor, ad, or article (can be found in print or online) in which you find at least one logical fallacy to class on Friday.

Wed. Apr. 12
Discuss journal responses
Group activity: review editorials to pinpoint logical fallacies

Fri. Apr. 14
Hand out Rottenberg “Researching Argumentative Papers” 394-430
Discuss research techniques:
Note taking, writing an outline, preparing quotes
Homework
Read handout
Write journal 17: abstract for your Paper Three topic (minimum half page)

WEEK FOURTEEN

Mon. Apr. 17
Library Research Day
Homework
Write journal 18: sample bibliography of five sources (of at least three different types)

Wed. Apr. 19
In-class writing: TBA
Group work

Fri. Apr. 21
In-class activity: “Convince Me”
Homework
Write journal 19: outline
WEEK FIFTEEN—Dead Week

Mon. Apr. 24
Pop Quiz-6

Wed. Apr. 26
In-class activity: Self-evaluation (journal 20)

Fri. Apr. 28
Paper Three Due
TBA