

English 1010

Fall 2014

Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 a.m.
Elizabeth Hall Rm. 218

Instructor: Dr. Judy Elsley
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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday: 9:00 – 10:25 a.m.
(and by appointment)

To Buy:

Writers Inc: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning Written and compiled by Sebranek, Meyer and Kemper.

Freshman Composition Handbook: a packet of material from the WSU Bookstore. Check that the packet says “Dr. Judy Elsley” and “Fall 2014” on the cover.

Class Purpose:

We aim to become competent and confident writers in this class. You will work towards this goal by putting together a portfolio of four finished essays by the end of the semester.

The Portfolio

What is a portfolio? It’s a folder of your best work. You put together a collection of **four** finished essays to show who you are, what interests you, and what you can do with writing. In order to do your best work, you will write several drafts of each essay you want to include in your portfolio.

Please note that we will be writing essays, not stories or research papers. An essay is a particular kind of writing that is organized and developed around a central idea, or thesis. We will spend a lot of time this semester working on that thesis and its development.

Your finished portfolio will include the following:

- A. Four completed essays.
- B. Evidence of the process that led you to each of the finished essays.
I will not accept an essay without backup material to show where you started and how you got to that finished product. If there’s no paper trail, I become suspicious and start wondering who wrote the paper.
- C. Evidence that you received and responded to feedback in the writing process.
You can show this by including marked up drafts that you shared with your group.
- D. A letter to accompany each finished essay, describing what skills you learned through the writing process

F. Any handouts you've received in class.

You choose the topics you want to write about. This is not a research writing class, like English 2010, so I encourage you to write about the subject you know best--your own experience.

Class Organization:

On Tuesdays, we'll learn to become better writers through a variety of class activities. Thursdays will be workshop days. You'll bring a draft of your essay to class to read your group for feedback.

The Writing Process:

The writing process works like this:

1. You write a rough draft of an essay outside of class.
2. You bring it to class, read it to your writing group, and receive feedback.
3. You rewrite the essay based on the feedback you receive.
4. You hand it in to me for more feedback.

You can show me a piece of writing as many times as you like, and I will continue to give you feedback without putting a grade on it until both you and I are satisfied. However, I will not read your writing unless you have gone through steps 1, 2, and 3. Please don't ask me to do the work of your group. Each time you hand in a draft, please also include the last version I marked up, and any feedback from your group since the last time I read your work.

Final Essay Grades:

When you request a final grade for a paper, you're letting me know you've finished that particular essay. There's no rewriting after I've put a grade on your paper. You can always find out what grade the essay *would* receive--just ask me when you give me your weekly draft. You can then decide if you want to stop there or keep rewriting for a higher grade. It's a good idea to hold off claiming final grades until you put the whole portfolio together at the end of the semester so you can keep your options open. However, you will want to know how you're doing, so keep asking me what grade you'd get so you can tell how much more you need to do.

Each finished essay is worth **15% of the grade**, for a grand total of **60%** of the final grade.

Please note: You can't pass this class unless you do all four papers.

Peer Feedback:

Your classmates will ask you to provide feedback on writing they are working on. This activity is an important part of the class because it provides you an opportunity to hear others' writing and help them improve it--a skill that can then be applied to your own writing. You will also have the chance to benefit from the comments and suggestions of your classmates. I will teach you how to respond to other people's writing in an honest and kind way, and I will expect you to take an active part in giving group feedback.

Weekly Drafts:

As a way to show me that you are indeed writing outside of class and bringing drafts to your group, you will earn **15% of your grade** by handing in a piece of work to me each week that you have already brought to your group and then rewritten. As there are 14 weeks to hand in weekly drafts, your grade will work like this:

14 weekly drafts: A
13 weekly drafts: A-
12 weekly drafts: B+ and so on

I'm always willing to give you feedback on more than one draft a week, but you can't get credit for a week you missed by handing two drafts in the next week. You will only get credit if you show substantial change from the last draft I saw of that particular piece of writing, so hand in the old draft I marked up along with the new one so I can see the changes.

Attendance:

Absence hurts the life and vitality of your group, and effects your own performance. You will lose points if you're not in class.

3 absences A
4 absences A-
5 absences B+ and so on

You have two "freebies." Your freebies are intended to cover such emergencies as the day you were sick, the day the baby sitter didn't make it, the day the sun was shining and you just had go skiing, or the day your car broke down. After your freebies, every absence counts against you in terms of your attendance and participation grade, regardless of the reason for not attending class, so spend your freebies carefully. *Attendance is worth 10% of your grade.*

Read-Aloud Paper:

You will be asked to present one paper to the rest of the class. The Read-Aloud paper is a work-in-progress that you read to the class. The class will then have the opportunity to comment or ask questions. I know it sounds scary, but we will learn to give each other helpful and supportive comments, and we won't embarrass anyone. You'll find it's really interesting to hear what other people in the class choose to write about, and it's satisfying to share your own work, especially when you know we will be an appreciative audience. I will give you examples of this type of paper in class. *Read-Aloud paper: 5% of your grade.*

Good Writing Presentation:

Due: Tuesday, November 18th

Good writers tend to be avid readers. We learn about writing by reading. You'll read one book of your choice and respond to it on paper. There's more information in the packet about this assignment. *Reading assignment: 5% of your grade.*

Expedition Week

Fifteen weeks is a looonngg time to be in class, and we'll need a break. **November 22nd** (Thanksgiving week) will be Expedition Week. I'll send you out of the class on to do something fun and different with your writing. We'll share the results on **Tuesday, November 29th**. You'll find more detailed information about this assignment in your *Freshman Composition Handbook*. *Writing and oral presentation during Expedition Week will earn you 5% of your grade.*

Office Hours

Holding office hours is an important part of my commitment to the class. This is a time when you can get individual attention from me, and I think you'll be surprised by how much we can do in 10 or 15 minutes. This semester, you will find me in my office the hour after our class:

Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 – 10:30 am EH 426

I realize those times don't work for everyone, so I'm always willing to make an appointment with you. E-mail me, or talk with me in class if you want to set up an appointment outside regular office hours. Try to give me a few days' notice. It's easy to make contact with me. Just look at the top of this syllabus for my phone number and e-mail address.

This is what I will do for you in office hours: I will sit down with you and ask you to read your paper out loud so bring a copy with you. We'll stop every now and again to talk about your work. Our aim is to help you develop stronger, clearer, more powerful writing.

This is what I won't do for you: Please don't drop off a paper and ask me to proofread it for you. If you want my feedback, I will always expect you to be present with your paper, willing to read it out loud and talk about it.

Mid-term and End of Term Conferences:

You will meet with me for an individual conference twice during the semester. At mid-term, I will cancel class for the week of **October 21st and 23rd** (week 9) in order to talk with each of you about your work. You will receive a full week's attendance credit if you attend your 20 minute conference prepared. At the end of the semester, you'll meet with me again on **December 2nd and 4th** (week 10) to talk through your finished portfolio. These meetings will take the place of a mid-term and a final exam. You'll find more detailed information about these two meetings in your *Freshman Composition Handbook*.

Student Ethics:

All students are expected to fulfill the rights and responsibilities outlined in the WSU Student Code. Because an important part of being a college student is academic honesty, it is the expectation in this course that you will complete all academic work without resort to cheating, plagiarism, lying and/or bribery. The WSU Student Code includes a more extensive list of prohibited behaviors; you should familiarize yourself with all aspects of the Code. Students who commit infractions of the WSU Student Code will be dealt with according to procedures outlined in the code. Penalties could include receiving a failing grade for this course, being suspended from school, and the like.

Your Grade:

Portfolio of four finished paper, and back-up materials: (Each paper is worth 15% of your final grade. You can't pass this class without completing all four papers.)	60%
1 Read-Aloud paper read to the class :	5%
1 piece of good writing presented to the class:	5%
Expedition Week:	5%
Attendance, class participation, and feedback:	10%
Weekly drafts (14 total):	15%
Total:	100%

Class Expectations:

I expect you to:

- * attend class regularly;
- * come to class on time;
- * do the work conscientiously;
- * take part in class discussions and group work;
- * come to your two conferences prepared;

If you have difficulty meeting any of these expectations, please talk to me. When you don't show up in class, I don't know if you're sick, you dropped the class, or just took off to play unless you tell me

In exchange, you can expect me to:

- * attend class regularly;
- * come to class on time;
- * mark up your work and return it to you within a week of receiving it;
- * discuss any changes to the class syllabus with you before implementing them.