

Advanced English Composition
Professor: Gord Sellar

Spring 2007

Class Description:

This course the most advanced-level of writing course offered to students within the Department of English Language and Culture. It is assumed that all students taking this course have successfully completed courses in English Composition at the Elementary and Intermediate levels, or are able to demonstrate equivalent competency in terms of writing ability.

Course Content:

The content of the course will be tailored to the needs of the particular group of students. However, this course will proceed as follows:

- a quick review of academic citation requirements and necessary word processing skills for work with English texts
- a few basic essay formats
- a brief review of informal logic and approaches to written argumentation
- model structure studies and assimilation
- many collaborative writing projects integrating group planning, research, and editing on assigned or student-designated topics
- rewriting, revision, and proofreading techniques

Course Objectives:

The purpose of the course is enable students to write thoughtful, interesting, and organized texts -- essays or otherwise -- in English at an advanced level, and equip them with the tools to continue improving their English writing on their own after the course's end (should they wish to do so).

Special consideration will be given to academic writing and collaborative writing, and students will be expected to assimilate a number of standard "forms" or "structures" for use in their own projects, as well as learn how to work cooperatively in the composition and editing process.

Class Activities:

Lectures, composition practice, group blog, group preparations and discussion, and occasional readings of students' own work to the class for critique.

Assessment:

- 10% - In-class participation
- 30% - Assignments & Homework
- 25% - Participation in Group Blog
- 15% - Midterm Project
- 20% - Final Writing Project

Textbook:

None. Although we will use no textbook in this course, photocopies and online resources will be used, and students must complete any assigned readings in a timely manner.

My contact information:

Office: N223

Office Phone: 02-2164-4459

Email: mistergord@gmail.com

Class Website: <http://gordsclass.com>

Course Outline:

The following is somewhat vague and subject to changes at any time, but it should give you an idea of what I'm planning for you. As you can see, the course is separated into 4 larger sections, and each of those sections will involve a writing project completed with a partner, or a group. Your midterm and final writing projects, on the other hand, will be completed individually, though of course help, criticism, and proofreading by classmates is not only acceptable: it's a great idea. Therefore some time will be provided to allow for editing, proofreading, and other help. In addition, Open Workshops beginning in Week 5 will allow students to have their (anonymous) work analyzed by their peers in terms of style, structure, grammar, content, argumentation, clarity, and so forth.

Week 1: Intro & Preparations

SECTION 1: STRUCTURES & COMMUNICATION

Week 2: Description 1: The Telling Detail and The Big Picture

Week 3: Description 2: The Group Project (The Leaflet)

Week 4: Description 3: The Descriptive Essay (collaborative w/ a partner, due week 5)

SECTION 2: PURPOSE

Week 5: Process 1: Consider Your Purpose & Audience / Open Workshop

Week 6: Process 2: Explain It To The Alien, Part 1 (writing) / Open Workshop

Week 7: Process 3: Explain It To The Alien, Part 2 (proofreading & critique, due end of week 7) / Open Workshop

Week 8 (EXAM WEEK): Midterm Writing Project Due (combining the two: structure & purpose)

SECTION 3: CONVINCING YOUR READER

Week 9: Argumentation 1: Logical Flow / Open Workshop

Week 10: Argumentation 2: Supporting Your Claims / Open Workshop

Week 11: Argumentation 3: Responding To Competing Claims / Open Workshop

Week 12: Argumentation 4: The Political Column (working with a partner, due beginning of week 13) / Open Workshop

SECTION 4: MATTERING

Week 13: Writing With Passion 1: Choosing your subject / Open Workshop

Week 14: Writing With Passion 2: Choosing Your Words / Open Workshop

Week 15: Writing With Passion 3: The Most Important Thing You'll Ever Write (due end of the week) / Open Workshop

Week 16 (FINAL EXAM WEEK): Final Writing Project due