

ENG155: DAILY THEMES

Professor Finlayson: Palmer 317; 843-3293; finlayson@rhodes.edu

Class: Thursday 1-2:30pm; Palmer 203

Office hours: Mon 10-12pm; Wed 1-2pm & by appt

The New Yorker; Everything's an Argument, Lunsford, Ruskiewicz, Walters

COURSE DESCRIPTION. English 155 is an alternative to English 151 offered to outstanding and committed first-year writers. Like 151, Daily Themes focuses on the ability to read and think critically, to employ discussion and writing as a means of exploring and refining ideas, and to express those ideas in effective prose. Students will meet as a group once a week and individually with the professor once a week. Students will turn in 5 one-page themes each week, and the daily themes will be the basis for two longer papers, including an expository essay at mid term and a research paper at the end of the semester.

Week 1	Th, Jan 16:	Information class.
Week 2	Th, Jan 23:	<i>The New Yorker</i> <i>Everything's an Argument</i> . Ch 9: Definition
Week 3	Th, Jan 30:	<i>The New Yorker</i> <i>EA</i> . Ch 5: Arguments of Value
Week 4	Th, Feb 6:	<i>The New Yorker</i> <i>EA</i> . Ch 14: Figurative Language and Argument
Week 5	Th, Feb 13:	<i>The New Yorker</i> <i>EA</i> . Ch 7: Fact and Reason
Week 6	Th, Feb 20:	<i>The New Yorker</i> <i>EA</i> . Ch 4: Arguments from the Heart
Week 7	Th, Feb 27:	In-class WORKSHOP of mid-term essay.
Week 8	Th, Mar 6 :	<i>The New Yorker</i> ; Mid-term essay due <i>EA</i> . Ch 5: Arguments of Character
Week 9	Th, Mar 13:	No class. SPRING BREAK
Week 10	Th, Mar 20:	<i>The New Yorker</i> <i>EA</i> . Ch 13: Humorous Arguments
Week 11	Th, Mar 27:	<i>The New Yorker</i> <i>EA</i> . Ch 11: Causal Arguments
Week 12	Th, Apr 3:	<i>The New Yorker</i> <i>EA</i> . Ch 10: Evaluations
Week 13	Th, Apr 10:	<i>The New Yorker</i> ; Research Questions due early <i>this week</i> . <i>EA</i> . Ch 18: What Counts as Evidence
Week 14	Th, Apr 17:	No Class. Easter Break.
Week 15	Th, Apr 24:	Research proposal due this week <i>EA</i> . Chs 20-22: plagiarism/sources
Week 16	Th, May 1:	Last Class. In-class WORKSHOP for research paper (final draft due Monday, May 5).

ENG 155 POLICIES. PROFESSOR FINLAYSON

WRITING. You will write five 1-page, double-spaced papers each week. If you'd like to *occasionally* (up to 5x) combine 2-3 days of writing into one 2-3-page essay, that's fine. However, keep in mind that the goal is for you to write on a daily basis. There are 80 potential writing days during this semester; however, you are granted 30 "skips" to accommodate both holidays and the larger writing projects. By the end of the semester, you should have approximately 50 one-page daily themes, a 5-page mid-term essay, a one 8-page final research paper. Please try to use your skips for #3 and 5 themes only (see below).

You may leave each day's paper (hard copy) outside my office in the folder "155 IN" at any time or deposit a Word document file in my faculty "in-box" on the academic volume; I will comment on the papers and put them in the folder "155 OUT" or reply by email to electronic files as soon as possible. Your themes are due by midnight each day. Twice during the semester, you will use one or more of your daily themes to produce a longer, argumentative paper, one of which will be researched and will include a list of works cited. Each week, the subjects of your daily themes should be inspired by several things: *The New Yorker*; your personal, social, and academic experience here at Rhodes; and the sample assignments, each of which is meant to exercise a particular writing skill. Occasionally, I will substitute a specific topic for one of the responses. Otherwise, here's what you'll be writing, in any order:

1. NY1: Critique of the assigned *New Yorker* reading #1.
2. NY2: Response (topical or critical) to the assigned *New Yorker* reading #2
3. NY3: 2nd theme (topical or critical) on one of the assigned *NY* readings.
4. EA: Open theme applying rhetorical strategies from that week's *Everything's an Argument* reading.
5. SA: Sample assignment (you may repeat the "letter to the editor" as often as you like), including open theme.

Although Daily Themes fosters a more unrestricted writing environment than other writing courses, you should always have a specific point to your writing. You can consider it a thesis, a rhetorical goal, or even just an analytical focus. In any case, your themes should produce ideas that are well-developed and supported. Avoid simply meandering aimlessly through a random thought. To help with your writing strategies, I have assigned readings from the book *Everything's an Argument* and ask that you apply this reading ("argument of value," for example) to a theme each week.

Your writing should be typed with approximately *300 words per page* (i.e. Times Roman 12; 1" margins), double-spaced. Proofread your papers for typos and grammar errors. Reckless errors will affect your Daily Themes grade. Whenever you document a source, please use the MLA format. For electronically submitted themes, please title your file as follows: lastnametheme#; for example: finlayson32. On the top of each theme, you *must* include your name, a title, the date, the week, theme #1-50, and type: *NY1-3, EA, SA1-30*. For example: Rebecca Finlayson; Week 1, January 16; Theme 1: NY1; Title of my theme

CONFERENCES AND CLASS MEETINGS. Because our class gathers only once each week, it is your responsibility to meet with me and/or with one of the tutors in the Writing Center for help and/or discussion every week. In your conference with me, we'll discuss both your upcoming writing and the work you've already submitted. The goal of these conferences is to find ways of developing your writing through planning, organizing, documenting, revising, and so on, rather than to correct grammar or mechanics. We will meet as a group once each week on Thursday to discuss the reading and your writing. Please be prepared to have your themes read in class by your peers as we'll occasionally hold workshops and readings. If you have a theme that you'd like kept confidential, please indicate this on the theme itself (otherwise, it may appear in class).

GRADING POLICY. Your grade will be based largely on your efforts throughout the semester to write thoughtful and consistent daily themes. Although I won't grade each essay individually, I will be assessing your development and improvement from week to week, which will result in 60% of your final grade. For the first couple of weeks of the semester, I will only comment on your themes. Henceforth, I'll comment and assign you a check/minus/plus so that you can begin to gauge your progress.

You are granted four free "skips" for written daily themes; after that, your grade will suffer. Your two longer papers will receive formal grades (10% for the mid-term paper; 20% for the research paper). Because of the limited class time, participation and attendance are imperative. 10% of your final grade will be based on your level of discussion in class, your thoughtful peer reviews in workshop, and your commitment to productive conferences with me and the WC tutors. Because we only meet once each week, I expect perfect attendance. In the event of an emergency, please contact me as soon as possible (beforehand would be best). If you miss more than one class, your grade will drop by an entire letter grade (A becomes B and so on) for each day missed; if you miss more than three classes, you will fail the course. Please be on time. If you are absent or late, it is your responsibility to find out from a classmate what you missed.

HONOR CODE. All of your work for this course must adhere to the Rhodes honor code. If you are ever unsure if you might be violating the code, please contact me or another professor to find out.