

Fakes, Frauds, and Forgeries

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When we read a novel or watch a movie, we recognize that no matter how "real" the story seems, it's a manmade work of fiction. But how do we interpret fictions presented as fact? This introduction to college writing and argument explores a variety of fakes, frauds, and forgeries, including con artists, circus sideshows, photographs of fairies, blackface minstrels, and writers working under assumed identities. Some of our subjects—like counterfeit money—have joined the real world without being seen, while others—like artists who adopt alternate personas—raise questions about the very nature of "the real." Our course material, which spans some three-hundred years of history, won't provide us with a comprehensive history of fakers, but it will help us investigate issues of authenticity, identity, authorship, performance, and that trusty old standby, reality. In addition to a final research project, you will write three shorter essays related to the course material and work to improve your own rhetoric and style. In your prose, you'll practice a smooth presentation that helps you take down your mark. Successful academic argument shares some of the skills of the confidence man.

This course emphasizes:

- **Argument construction** (Each essay must have a clear claim, supported by strong sub-claims and analysis of evidence, with cited quotations and paraphrases of evidence)
- **Style** (transitions, word choice, tone, figurative language, sentence structure)
- Learning to **analyze** and **critically evaluate** ideas, arguments, and points of view
- **Asking questions** of texts and objects
- **Applying** course material to solve new problems you frame yourself
- **Finding and using resources** to solve answer questions and to solve problems
- **Thoroughness** (All work will be carefully conceived, cited, and proofread)

TEXTS

Joseph Williams' *Style* (978-0205605354), Caryl Phillips's *Dancing in the Dark* (978-1400079834), James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-colored Man* (978-0809000326), and essays and short stories on reserve in Barrett Library

ASSIGNMENTS

Your final grade is comprised of the following assignments:

ESSAYS - 60%

Essay assignments and guidelines are handed out at the beginning of the semester. You are responsible for knowing and following the guidelines for each essay.

QUIZZES AND ASSIGNMENTS - 20%

- **Quizzes:** Many class periods will open with a brief quiz designed to determine if you are prepared to discuss the reading assigned for that day. Success in quizzes requires reading *well*—not skimming—and taking notes.
- **Homework:** You will complete occasional homework assignments, many reviewing on William's *Style*. Other assignments will require preparation of discussion questions of

handouts based on reading assignments. Some homework assignments will simply be an emailed response to the professor.

- **Research Assignment:** This exercise requires thorough exploration of the library's resources in preparation for your final research paper.

GROUP WRITING ASSIGNMENT – 10%

Working in a group, you will negotiate, revise, and discuss writing quality with your group. The finished product will be a short, polished essay that reflects the best of all the writers in the group.

CLASS PARTICIPATION – 10%

The final 10% of your grade depends upon my evaluation of your class participation and investment in this course. You will not automatically receive these points—you must earn them. I expect you to carefully complete homework assignments thoroughly prepare to discuss each reading assignments, and for you to actively and frequently participate in class discussion.

MEETING WITH THE PROFESSOR

At some point in the semester, everyone is required to meet with me about an essay other than the one work-shopped in class. It's important to me that I spend work with each of you individually during the semester. Please make use of my office hours to discuss essay drafts or simply to brainstorm for ideas and approaches. Failure to meet this requirement will result in a failing participation grade.

ABSENCES

The nature of skills course like ENG151 (unlike a content course) requires that you be in class, where you will see and practice those skills. In our class, I grant you two "free/excused" absences regardless of cause. Please use these skips wisely: plan ahead. Each absence beyond the first two results in a .1 point deduction from your final grade. Any student who falls asleep in class or sends and receives text messages in class will be counted as absent for that class.

If you will miss class on the day a paper is due, please leave it outside my office door no later than 8 am that day, otherwise it will be considered late. If you physically miss more than six classes, you will fail the course. These policies are consistent with most other English courses.

Note: you are responsible for finding out from a classmate what happened in class the day you were absent or late. Each day it will be your responsibility to sign the attendance notebook. If your signature is not there for a particular day, you will be counted absent. If you are late, you will need to find the notebook, sign it, and document your tardiness.

EMAIL POLICY

Emailing a professor is like emailing your boss. Take the opportunity and impress her. As an English professor, I do not appreciate emails without a salutation. Emails with egregious typos, grammatical and punctuation mistakes, and no capital letters appear disrespectful are not worth my time to read. Simply put, I will not respond to sloppy emails. Write accordingly.

HONOR CODE

Enrollment in this class constitutes your acceptance of the Rhodes College Honor Code and the Department of English Expectations and Policies.

ENGL 151: Fakes, Frauds, and Forgeries

All texts not purchased for class are available on reserve in Barrett Library

Wk 1	Th, Aug 27:	Introduction. The Daily Show, The Onion, George Psalmanazar.
Wk 2	M, Aug 31: Tu, Sept 1: Th, Sept 3:	7 pm FILM <i>This is Spinal Tap</i> in Library, Barrett 034 (in basement) Williams, "Introduction", Ch. 1-2 . Discussion of <i>This is Spinal Tap</i> . Introduction to Claims. Williams 3. Spinal Tap response DUE.
Wk 3	Tu, Sept 8: Th, Sept 10:	James Weldon Johnson's <u>Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man</u> Johnson cont. Williams 4. Essay guideline discussion. Bring <u>MLA Handbook</u> to class
Wk 4	Tu, Sept 15 Th, Sept 17:	Workshop Paper 1 (drafts due Mon, Sept. 14 @ noon). Paper 1 due. Introduction to Problem Statements.
Wk 5	Tu, Sept 22: Th, Sept 24:	Paul Collins "The Clever Dullard" (on reserve) Lawrence Weschler on artist J.S.G. Boggs, parts 1 & 2 (on reserve)
Wk 6	Sun, Sept 27 Tu, Sept 29: Th, Oct 1:	5:00 Film Orson Welles' <i>F for Fake</i> in Barrett 034 Discussion of <i>F for Fake</i> . Problem Statement due (Bring 3 copies to class for workshop. Williams 5.
Wk 7	Tu, Oct 6: Th, Oct 8:	Workshop Paper 2 (drafts due Mon, Oct. 5 at noon). Paper 2 due. Meet in Barrett 035 to discuss research paper
Wk 8	Tu, Oct 13: Th, Oct 15:	John. F. Kasson's <u>Amusing the Million</u> pp.11-28, 57-86. Group writing assignment assigned today Research assignment due. Williams 6 and 7.
Wk 9	Tu, Oct 20: Th, Oct 22: Fri, Oct 23:	FALL RECESS: NO CLASS Houdini. Plagiarism discussion <u>MLA Handbook</u> 3.9.1-3.9.2, 3.9.5-3.9.8. Group Assignment due.
Wk 10	Tu, Oct 27: Th, Oct 29:	Annotated Bibliography Due.
Wk 11	Tu, Nov 3: Th, Nov 5:	Problem Statement due. Figurative language discussion. Workshop Paper 3 (drafts due Monday, Mar 30 at noon).
Wk 12	Tu, Nov 10: Th, Nov 12:	Paper 3 due. Research presentations. Caryl Phillip's <u>Dancing in the Dark</u> part 1
Wk 13	Tu, Nov 17: Th, Nov 19:	<u>Dancing in the Dark</u> part 2 <u>Dancing in the Dark</u> part 3. All about Conclusions
Wk 14	Tu, Nov 24: Th, Nov 26:	NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Recess
Wk 15	Mon, Nov 30: Tu, Dec 1: Th, Dec 3	6 pm Film Spike Lee's <i>Bamboozled</i> in Barrett 034 Discussion of <i>Bamboozled</i> . Williams 8&9. Problem Statement due.
Wk 16	Tu Dec 8 Mon, Dec 7	Workshop Paper 4 (drafts due Monday, Apr 27 at noon). LAST CLASS. Final Paper DUE in EPL's box.

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

A college course is more than simply a set of assignments; it is an intellectual process, one which requires active engagement from beginning to end in order to achieve its intended results. With this in mind, the Department of English has formulated a number of expectations and the policies that support them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to the syllabus for a particular course, you should address them to the instructor.

Attendance: The success of a course depends to a significant extent upon the presence of students alert and prepared to address the subject under discussion. Unavoidable absences should be discussed with the instructor, ideally before they occur. Excessive absences will result in a lowering of grade, in some cases to an F.

Deadlines: Writing assignments, tests, etc., are carefully scheduled as stages toward the fulfillment of the course's goals and cannot be indefinitely deferred without frustrating those goals. Brief extensions for good reasons may be permissible with the instructor's prior approval; otherwise, late assignments will be penalized and may result in their not being accepted for credit.

Submission of all work: All major assignments are integral to the goals of the course. Failure to complete any major assignment will result in a grade of F for the course.

Intellectual honesty: All work is assumed to be the student's own and produced exclusively for the course in which it is submitted. Papers written for one course, even if revised, are not to be submitted in another without the instructor's prior approval. Borrowing of ideas or language from other sources (including published material, other student papers, the internet or other electronic resources, etc.) must be carefully documented. Students are advised against posting their work on the internet since doing so may lead to suspicion of plagiarism. Students are advised to maintain drafts of their work to verify its originality. Cases of suspected plagiarism will be referred to the Honor Council, and the student if convicted will receive a grade of F in the course in addition to sanctions assigned by the Council. Carelessness in documenting sources, even if not technically plagiarism, will be penalized as the instructor deems appropriate. If you are uncertain about how or whether to document sources, consult your teacher.

Attendance Policy from the Rhodes College Catalog

Any student who fails to attend the first day of a class without providing prior notice of his or her absence to the instructor of the course or the chairperson of the department may be removed from the course upon request of the instructor to the Registrar. The student is responsible for dropping the class officially upon notification that such action has been taken.

Specific attendance policies are set by individual instructors, who state them in the course syllabi and during the first class sessions. Students are responsible for knowing the attendance policy in each of their courses, for obtaining and mastering material covered during an absence, and for determining, in consultation with the instructor, whether and under what conditions make-up work will be permitted.

Student's should understand if undertaking college-sanctioned activities (e.g., varsity athletics, internships, and off-campus competitions connected with courses) that their participation in such activities may come at the cost of absences from other courses or even forfeiting credit on certain assignments when making them up is not feasible. It is the student's responsibility to address the issues related to missing a class whatever the reason for the absence.

If, in accordance with the course policies, the instructor determines that excessive absences are jeopardizing a student's ability to obtain a passing grade in the course, the instructor may make written request to the Dean of the College that the student be removed from the course with a grade of F. If a student is removed from two or more courses in the same semester for this reason, the student may be asked to withdraw from the College.