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ENGL 151-11, The Making of Identity, Fall 2008

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Engl 151 (19039) Sec 11
 Fall 2008
 T R 12:30-1:45
 BAR 216

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The Making of Identity

“First say to yourself what you would be; and then do what you have to do.”
 --Epictetus, Roman slave & Stoic philosopher, ca. 55–ca. 135

“Good writing is good manners.”
 --John Trimble

From the organizations we choose to join to our carefully constructed online profiles, we put on many different faces or identities each day. This course asks you to consider how people use the forces of inclusion and exclusion to craft identities at various levels, from the personal to the global. We will look at identity from historical and sociological perspectives, and we will evaluate mainstream and fringe groups and their interactions. Given the 2008 election this November, we will spend some time discussing how identity shapes voting and perceptions of voters.

As with any 151 class, you will be required to think, read, and write critically and with a well-defined audience in mind, whether it be me, the class, or a person or group outside the class. You will learn rhetorical terminology and approaches that will be of use to you in academic, professional, and public writing. We will also spend a lot of time on the structure of sentences, essays, and arguments along with developing a thesis statement so that you will gain more confidence in and understanding of the writing process. You will be required to complete a substantial revision of each of your essays in response to peer review, instructor comments, and your own insights into the writing process.

TEXTS:

- *Writing with Style*. John Trimble. 2nd ed. (ISBN 0-13-025713-3)
- *SF Express*. Ruszkiewicz, Hairston, Friend. (ISBN 0-13-196986-2)
- Course packet and handouts.
- *A Guide to Effective Paper Writing*. Finlayson.

GRADES AND GRADING POLICY:

Quizzes:	10%	Essay 2 (4-6 pages)	20%
Writing Notebook	25%	Essay 3 (8-10 pages)	30%
Essay 1 (4-6 pages)	15%		

Quizzes There will be 2 quizzes, one on *rhetorical terminology* and the other on *logical fallacies*. There will be no make-up of quizzes you miss due to unexcused absence or tardiness.

Writing Notebook: You will be required to maintain a Writing Notebook in which you respond to readings and questions posed by the instructor. All entries must be typed; while I will not grade you on spelling or grammar, I will expect you to have run spell-check. The journal entries will follow this basic format:

I. **First Reactions and Puzzlements:** *About a half page* of preparation for Part III, here you can focus on specific things you want to ask me about. What kinds of questions or instant reactions do you have? Critical reading is about questions, so ask away. This is also a great place to list each unknown word and a brief definition, since a good vocabulary will help you on the LSAT, GMAT, or GRE.

II. **Gems:** Record 3-5 of the most interesting phrases or lines from the assigned reading. Tell me why you chose each; I like knowing what you find cool, uncool, provocative, or troubling.

III. **Comment:** Write *at least a page* answering these questions: What is the text about (one sentence!)? What's its main claim? Who is the audience (and are you a member)? How does identity factor into the reading? How effective is this text in persuading that audience—could it be better? How? How many rhetorical devices can you identify, and how well are they used? Please write this section for the audience of our class, not just anyone.

IV. **Bringing It Home:** Here you can answer any or all of the following questions, OR write half a page of anything you want, OR continue a topic brought up in class—or all of these! Write PERSONAL if you don't wish me to read it. Here are some general questions: How does this text relate to anything else we've read? How does it relate to your life, your

experiences, or the experiences of someone you know? Conversely, if this text doesn't relate to you so directly, why should you care about its message?

Essay 1 This essay will be a rhetorical analysis in which you employ rhetorical terminology to make an argument about a specific or local identity.

Essay 2 This essay will be a letter to the presidential candidate of your choice in which you make an evaluative argument concerning a group's identity.

Essay 3 This paper will be more research-oriented and will ask you to make a proposal about a social problem or program. It will again be a letter, but addressed to the person or organization who can effect the change you seek.

Absences and Tardies You are allowed **TWO** absences free-of-charge; use them wisely. I will expect you to let me know in advance if you need to miss class for any reason, and it is at *my* discretion whether I choose to excuse an absence. Because tardies are disruptive, I will count each tardy as an absence starting with the third tardy. *Your final course average will drop .2 for each unexcused absence or tardy once you've used up the freebies.*

Papers All writing should be typed and proofread. You should use Times New Roman as your font, size 12 as your font size, and 1" margins. MLA is the default style unless otherwise indicated. You will need to turn in all essays in a folder.

The Writing Center A great place to go for some good one-on-one help with your writing *at any stage of the writing process* is the Writing Center, <http://www.rhodes.edu/4680.asp>. It is located in Barret 122. Always take a clean copy and whatever assignment you are working on!

Late Paper Policy Your letter grade will drop *1/3 grade* for each 24-hour period it is late. Failure to complete any major assignment will result in failure of the course. N.B. Because this course is process-oriented, failure to complete any part of the process will most likely result in failure of that assignment. As with any course, do not discard any drafts, notes, papers, or research materials you produce during the semester until you receive a final grade.

Academic Honesty All work must adhere to the honor code and be original. If you wish to work on a topic in both this and another class or re-engage a topic from a previous class, you must get permission from me to do so.

GRADING STANDARDS

A: Exceptional. Excellent in every way, in thought and execution. Not just acceptable, not just good. Excellent.

B: Good; better than average in both substance and style. Clearly expressed and supported thesis, accurate and effective use of evidence, clear and inevitable structure, few errors in syntax or punctuation.

C: Average. Clear argumentative thesis, reasonable support, some logical flaws, weak evidence, shaky structure, poor unity, loose coherence. Numerous errors of syntax and punctuation.

D: Below average. Thesis stated but weakly supported. Poorly organized, unclear, with many grammatical errors. More than one sentence-level error.

F: Extremely poor. No thesis stated or no support for a stated thesis. Many errors.

Schedule

You are responsible for reading all assigned texts by the start of the next class. The syllabus is subject to change.

Week	Date	Class Topic and Agenda	Assignment
Week 1	Thursday August 28	<u>Unit 1: Going Local</u> Discuss course, assignments, and goals.	Read "Social Contract." Read WS, Chapter 1. Type up a 200-300 word biography about your identity. This is the first entry of your writing notebook. Make a list of three identification markers that one can stumble upon at Rhodes College and say why you chose them. This is the second entry in your writing notebook.
Week 2	Tuesday September 2 Drop/Add ends Sept. 3	Assign Essay 1. Going Greek, or Rhetorical Rush: SPA and the Rhetorical Triangle	Read Plato's "Allegory of the Cave," http://webspace.ship.edu/cgboer/platoscave.html Read WS, Chapter 2. Find 2 personal ads from 2 different places, print or online. Copy and paste into Writing Notebook (include source and date) and locate all of the rhetorical strategies you can find. Brainstorm interview questions for Essay 1. Include these in your Topic Proposal.
	Thursday September 4	Another SPA Trip: The Stases and the Greek Time Warp	Complete Topic Proposal. Read Dickinson and Robinson. Write notebook entry. Review rhetorical terminology.
Week 3	Tuesday September 9	Topic Proposals due. Evaluate Proposals in class. Rhetoric Quiz!	Read Thayer. Write notebook entry.
	Thursday September 11	Topic Proposals returned. Writing Notebooks collected. Explain writing essays, using course books, and a good faith rough draft. Using the Library.	Read WS, Chapter 3 Read Bukowski and O'Hara. Write notebook entry.
Week 4	Tuesday September 16	Discuss reading.	Read WS, chapter 11. Finish Rough Draft. Bring three copies of Rough Draft to class.

	Thursday September 18	Rough Draft Due. PEER REVIEW.	Write Peer Letter. Bring <u>two</u> copies to class.
Week 5	Tuesday September 23	Peer letters due	Read WS, Chapter 6.
	Thursday September 25	Rough Drafts Returned. Writing good sentences.	Read WS, Chapter 12 and 13. Read speeches assigned (famous historical). Choose one and write a notebook entry.
Week 6	Tuesday September 30		Finish Essay 1
	Thursday October 2	Essay 1 due <u>Unit 2: Of National Concern</u> Essay 2 assigned.	Read Chapter 1 of Ben Franklin's <i>Autobiography</i> , Packet. Brainstorm his rhetoric and bring these remarks to class. Finish topic proposal.
Week 7	Tuesday October 7	Topic Proposals due.	Read <i>The Declaration of Independence</i> and "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions." List three main rhetorical strategies employed by both and bring them to class. Read WS, Chapter 8.
	Thursday October 9	Topic Proposals returned. Writing Notebooks collected. Discuss reading.	Read speeches assigned (military) and Koch, "To World War II. Choose one and write a notebook entry about it, integrating Koch's poem into your analysis. Read WS, Chapter 4.
Week 8	Tuesday October 14	Discuss reading.	Finish Rough Draft. Bring <u>three</u> copies of Rough Draft to class.
	Thursday October 16	Rough drafts due. PEER REVIEW.	Write Peer Letter. Submit <u>two</u> copies to me by Tuesday electronically. Read "The Parables of the Cave" and "The Yellow Wallpaper." Read WS, Chapter 5.
Week 9	Tuesday October 21 Fall Recess	NO CLASS. (Peer letter due electronically over break.)	
	Thursday October 23	Rough drafts returned. Discuss reading.	Read Truth. Read WS, Chapter 6.
Week 10	Tuesday October 28	Discuss reading.	Read Wheatley and Lazarus, McKay and Miles. Write notebook entry that integrates these poems and how they comment on each other. Read WS, Chapter 7.
	Thursday October 30	Writing Notebooks collected. Discuss reading.	Finish Essay 2.
Week 11	Tuesday November 4	Essay 2 due. <u>Unit 3: Culture and Sub-Culture</u> Essay 3 assigned.	Read "Dear George Bush" and "Underwear."

	Thursday November 6	Discuss reading.	Finish Topic Proposal. Read Whitman, Hughes, and Ginsberg's "A Supermarket in California" and "America." You can listen to Ginsberg read: http://www.poetryarchive.org/poetryarchive/singlePoet.do?poetid=1547
Week 12	Tuesday November 11	Topic Proposal due. Discuss proposal argument	Read Atlantic Monthly article. http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200807/memphis-crime
	Thursday November 13	Topic Proposals returned. Discuss reading	Read Williams. Work on topic proposal.
Week 13	Tuesday November 18	Writing Notebooks collected. Discuss reading.	Finish Rough Draft. Bring <u>three</u> copies of Rough Draft to class.
	Thursday November 20	Rough drafts due. PEER REVIEW.	Write Peer Letter. Bring <u>two</u> copies to class. Visit these websites: http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/jar-da/ , http://orpheus.ucsd.edu/speccoll/dspolitic/Frame.htm , http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/eresources/exhibitions/sw25/case1.html
Week 14	Tuesday November 25	Peer letters due. Visual rhetoric	Write a Notebook entry on the visual rhetoric in the websites from previous homework. Read SFW, 5d (pp. 28-31)
	Thursday November 27 Thanksgiving Recess	NO CLASS	
Week 15	Tuesday December 2	Rough Drafts returned. Logical fallacies.	Read WS, Chapters 15 and 16. Study for quiz.
	Thursday December 4	Writing Notebooks collected. Informal Presentations. Logical Fallacies quiz. Evaluations.	Finish Final Draft of Essay 3..
Week 16	Tuesday December 9	Essay 3 due.	