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ENGL 151-03 , Critical Thinking and Writing, Spring 2003

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ENG151: CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING

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

Class: Tu/Th 1-2:30pm; Palmer 203

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

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

Course Description. The goal of this course is to develop your ability to read, think, and write critically, to employ discussion and writing as a means of exploring and refining ideas, and to express those ideas in effective prose. 151 will emphasize successive stages of the writing process, including pre-writing, drafting, and revision. One of your papers will involve the use of the library and research material and proper documentation.

Week 1	Th, Jan 16:	Information class.
Week 2	Tu, Jan 21: Th, Jan 23:	<i>The New Yorker</i> <i>The New Yorker</i> EA. Ch 9: Definition
Week 3	Tu, Jan 28: Th, Jan 30:	<i>The New Yorker</i> EA. Ch 5: Arguments of Value Workshop 1
Week 4	Tu, Feb 4: Th, Feb 6:	<i>The New Yorker</i> ; Paper 1 <i>The New Yorker</i> EA. Ch 14: Figurative Lang. & Arg.
Week 5	Tu, Feb 11: Th, Feb 13:	<i>The New Yorker</i> <i>The New Yorker</i> EA. Ch 7: Fact and Reason
Week 6	Tu, Feb 18: Th, Feb 20:	<i>The New Yorker</i> EA. Ch 4: Arguments from the Heart Workshop 2
Week 7	Tu, Feb 25: Th, Feb 27:	<i>The New Yorker</i> ; Paper 2 <i>The New Yorker</i> . EA. Ch 10: Evaluations
Week 8	Tu, Mar 4: Th, Mar 6 :	<i>The New Yorker</i> <i>The New Yorker</i> EA. Ch 5: Arguments of Character
Week 9	Mar 11 & 13:	No class. SPRING BREAK
Week 10	Tu, Mar 18: Th, Mar 20:	<i>The New Yorker</i> EA. Ch 13: Humorous Arguments Workshop 3
Week 11	Tu, Mar 15: Th, Mar 27:	<i>The New Yorker</i> ; Paper 3 <i>The New Yorker</i> EA. Ch 11: Causal Arguments
Week 12	Tu, Apr 1: Th, Apr 3:	<i>The New Yorker</i> Workshop 4
Week 13	Tu, Apr 8: Th, Apr 10:	<i>The New Yorker</i> ; Paper 4 <i>The New Yorker</i> ; Research questions EA. Ch 18: What Counts as Evidence

Week 14	Tu, Apr 15: Th, Apr 17:	Research proposal No Class. Easter Break.
Week 15	Tu, Apr 22: Th, Apr 24:	<i>EA</i> . Chs 20-22: plagiarism/sources Workshop 5
Week 16	Tu, Apr 29: Th, May 1:	No class. Convocation and Symposium Last Class. Paper 5

ENG 151 POLICIES. PROFESSOR FINLAYSON

PAPERS—70%

There are 5 formal papers for this class. They should be typed with approximately *300 words per page* (i.e. Times Roman 12; 1" margins), double-spaced, pledged in full, and **must include a word count, your name, my name, and a critical title**. Proofread your papers for typos and grammar errors. For every error, your paper grade will suffer 0.1 point on a 4.0 scale. (A=4.0, A-=3.7, B+=3.3, etc.) Your first four papers should not include any outside sources, excepting your class text where appropriate. Your final research paper will include outside sources, which should be documented in MLA format. All other paper formatting, including spacing, quoting, etc, also should follow MLA style, which can be found in your text *A Writer's Handbook*. Submit only hard copies of final drafts and always keep a spare hard copy of your paper. *Late papers*: All papers are due *in class* on the day stipulated on the syllabus. Any unexcused late paper will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for every day late (A becomes A-, B+ becomes B). I will grant extensions in special circumstances. If you need an extension, please contact me at least one class period before the paper is due.

Papers 1 and 2: 10% (1000 words ~ 3 pages)

Papers 3 and 4: 15% (1400 words ~ 4 pages)

Research Paper: 20% (1800+ words ~ 6+ pages)

Your papers will examine and expand on any essay we've read for class from *The New Yorker*. Each class period will be devoted to discussing these essays, so I encourage you to take notes that you may later use in your paper. When grading your papers, I will focus primarily on your ability to construct a viable and supported thesis from the text you are analyzing. This means that I'll want to see a thesis that is, in fact, arguable, followed by a good deal of evidence (i.e. quotations) that proves your position. I'll also be looking for stylistic things like helpful transitions (connections made between ideas), word choice, use of metaphor and tone, etc.

CONFERENCES

At some point in the semester, everyone is required to take at least one draft to the writing center (the center then forwards me a report) and also to meet with me regarding the formulating or writing of one paper (though you aren't required to bring me a draft). Failure to meet either of these requirements will count as a 1/2 absence. Please don't wait until the end of the semester to schedule your conferences (you may not be able to get an appointment).

WORKSHOP/DRAFT—10%

We will workshop approximately 3-4 drafts in the class period before a final paper draft is due. At the beginning of the semester, you'll sign up for which paper you'd like in workshop. If your paper is to be in workshop, you will need to submit 5 nameless copies of your draft to me no later than 2pm on the day preceding the workshop (see your syllabus). Your name should be on a separate copy for me. There are no "extensions" for drafts due to the nature of the assignment/workshop; however, you may switch with someone if you are unable to write your draft for the workshop for which you have signed up. Just keep me informed about any changes. Failure to turn in a draft will result in a zero for that assignment, which is worth 10% of your final grade. If the draft is not in by 2pm, you will be penalized one letter grade (1.0 points) for each hour it is late. During workshop, you will receive comments suggesting ways to revise both from your peers and me. **Your final paper grade will suffer if you don't revise the draft.** When you turn in your revised, final paper that has been workshopped, you must also submit the following: the workshop draft with my comments, your peers' "review" sheets (though not the drafts that accompanied them), and a statement of revision (what you focused on as you revised).

RESPONSE PAPERS—10%

You will write two response papers during the course of the semester. Each one is worth 5% of your final grade. They will be 1-page, single-spaced informal responses (~ 500 words) to the reading for that day. Each response should begin with a question about the essay's argument (or point), and the body of the paper should be your reply. Consider the response to be a "critique" of the article, rather than a critique of the topic itself. In other words, your comments should focus on how well the author made his/her point and the writing strategies used to make that point. Be careful not to simply summarize the essay.

Although the response papers are a chance for you to explore an idea that you haven't fully developed yet and they are not "formal" papers, these 1-pagers should be well written and should propose some sort of supported argument

assessing the author's strategies and ability. A response paper may also be used subsequently as a platform for one of your formal papers.

PARTICIPATION—10%

Class participation is an integral part of ENG 151, and it is formally included as a part of your final grade. Actively participating means the following: completing thoughtful written homework assignments, engaging in in-class writing (group or individual), joining frequently in class or group discussions with provocative and articulate comments and questions. I encourage you to take this aspect of the course seriously because your grade will reflect it. The Writing Center and professor conferences will be included in this grade.

ABSENCES

Failure to bring your book to class will result in a ½ absence, and many class periods will open with a brief quiz designed to determine if you have done the reading assigned for that day. If you fail the quiz, I will record a ½ absence for you. It is not enough to simply “attend” class. You must come prepared and informed; this means reading *well*, not skimming. Furthermore, please be on time. I will record a ½ absence if you are tardy (do not bother coming if you are more than 10 minutes late).

That said, use wisely the two “free/excused” absences I give (this includes illness, sports activities, personal holidays). Beyond those two, *each* additional absence (including those ½ absences due to failed quizzes and tardiness) will cost your final course average two tenths of a point. In the case of a truly extenuating circumstance, please come speak with me. If you physically miss more than six classes, you will fail the course. If you miss class on the day a paper is due, please leave it outside my office door no later than 2pm that day, otherwise it will be considered late. Note: ***you are responsible for finding out from a classmate*** what happened in class the day you were absent or late; please do not ask me.

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.