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ENGL 151-08, First Year Writing Seminar, Spring 2012

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Authors	Warren, Eliza
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Course Syllabus
First Year Writing Seminar, 151 - 08
Spring Term, AY 2011-2012
MWF 12-12:50, 2:00-2:50 (CRN: 22333, 22334)
Clough Hall 100

Instructor: Eliza Warren, MFA
Instructor email: warrene@rhodes.edu
Phone: 843-3141
Office: Palmer Hall, 309A
Office hours: 10:45-11.45, WF; 3-4pm MW

Course Description:

A course that develops 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. Individual sections of the course will explore different topics in reading, discussion, and writing. Topics are selected by individual professors and are designed to help students develop transferable skills of analysis and argumentation, applicable to the various disciplines of the liberal arts and sciences. Several papers will be required, at least one of which will involve use of the library and proper documentation. The seminar will emphasize successive stages of the writing process, including prewriting, drafting, and revision, and will provide feedback from classmates and the instructor. Students may not take both English 151 and English 155.

Course Introduction:

We are what we eat. True or false? This semester, we will focus on food—who grows it, who sells it, what does it do to our bodies, how much does it cost, what is it really made of. Some of the questions we'll explore include: Who is the small farmer? What are GMO's, and are they bad for us? Why choose organic when one prefers Pizza Hut? We will spend the semester analyzing arguments about the science, culture, and politics of food through various media. And we will work to establish our own narratives by dismantling cultural assumptions and political jargon about food and by understanding the complexities of food production and commerce. Expect this course to challenge—sometimes graphically—your own perceptions of what you eat and where it comes from.

Course Outcomes/Goals:

By the end of the semester, each student enrolled in the Writing Seminar should know how to do the following:

1. Determine important questions about a topic or a text on their own.
2. Analyze a writing task and develop a strategy to fulfill it, considering the rhetorical situation and the audience.
3. Assess fairly the arguments of others and develop a critical/analytical response to a written text.
4. Plan and organize a coherent, well-supported argument with a clear thesis.
5. Support the thesis with unified paragraphs that are clearly related and substantially

- developed. Develop a polished, rational, evidenced argument.
6. Distinguish between kinds of evidence and select evidence that is relevant, sufficiently detailed, and substantial.
 7. Summarize, extrapolate, and synthesize material from a variety of sources, giving adequate and accurate documentation.
 8. Demonstrate sensitivity to tone, diction, syntax, and figurative language.
 9. Express complex ideas in clear and effective prose that has been carefully edited and proofread. Assess their own drafts (drawing on audience feedback when appropriate) and reconceive, restructure, or significantly modify their own arguments.

Course Materials:

Rottenberg, Annette. *Elements of Argument*. 10th. Boston: Bedford/ St Martin's, 2012.

Schlosser, Eric. *Fast Food Nation*. New York: Harper Collins, 2005.

Grading Information:

Distribution:

10%	Editorial (500 words)
15%	Critique Essay (1200-1500 words)
15%	Persuasive Essay (1800-2000 words)
20%	Rogerian Argument (2500-3000 words)
20%	In Class Writings/Peer Editing Sessions (5, total)
5%	Final Presentation
15%	Attendance/Participation/Involvement (41 class meetings, total)
100%	TOTAL

Scale:

The grading scale, based on 100 points, is:

A= 90-100 points

B= 80-89 points

C= 70-79 points

D= 60-69 points

F= 50-59 points

An **A paper** is characterized by outstanding informative writing marked by superior readability and competent handling of content. These traits are demonstrated in the following ways:

The substance and organization follow a clear, logical sequence that makes the information easily accessible to the reader. The purpose is clearly expressed, and the selected details of the assignment reflect this purpose. The audience is accommodated throughout the assignment as reflected in effective communication and style. Words are chosen and sentences are constructed to make the information understandable. The grammar, mechanics, and format are flawless.

A **B paper** is characterized by distinguished writing that successfully fulfills the requirements but contains one of the following weaknesses:

Although the writing is essentially well organized, the audience analysis, the statement of purpose, or the handling of the content is flawed. Although sentences are grammatically correct, their structure or length or both sometimes cause readers to work unnecessarily hard. Ambiguous or vague wording hinders precise communication. A small lapse in audience accommodation causes reader distraction. Grammar, mechanics, and format flaws interfere with reading and comprehension.

A **C paper** is characterized by satisfactory writing that is generally effective but contains any one of the following weaknesses:

Although satisfactorily written, the body of the assignment is not clearly organized, or some material is not clearly explained; the audience and purpose are not clear. Sentences, although they are grammatically correct, often make information difficult to extract; editing key words or converting nouns to verbs could solve such problems. Wording interferes with readability, but the reader can still glean the meaning; rereading is often required. Repeated grammar, mechanics, or format errors mar the paper.

A **D paper** struggles to communicate information and contains weak writing. In a professional working environment, such writing would be considered incompetent because it suffers from any one of the following problems:

Any two of the problems listed under a C paper. Minimal evidence of audience accommodation. Serious wording problems, such as garbled wording, gives the reader repeated and serious difficulties in understanding. Serious sentence problems, such as run-on sentences and comma splices, damage the readability. Grammar, spelling, or format problems create frequent obstacles to understanding.

A failing grade on a writing assignment usually means that your paper contains any two problems from the list for a D paper.

Plagiarism:

To submit material discovered to have been plagiarized means that you fail the course.

As you know, plagiarism is defined as passing off others' ideas and/or words as your own. It is an extremely serious offense. Careers of known plagiarists are ruined. Do not even think about plagiarizing. See Academic Policies/Intellectual Honesty in the Rhodes catalog.

Project Descriptions and Assignments:

Academic Policies:

- Attendance in FYWS 151 is mandatory. Please do not miss class. Your grade will suffer if you miss class. **15% of your course grade is based on attendance and participation.**

- Tardiness will count against your attendance grade. If you arrive in class after I have taken roll, you will be counted as absent. **Do NOT arrive late.**
- Any and all absences will count against your grade. More than 6 absences will result in an F in this course.
- It is solely up to you to find out what you missed—if you had to miss class. Please keep a list of classmates' names and contact information. It is up to you to contact a classmate to find out about missed work.
- Participation in every aspect of the course is required.
- Silence and put your phones **away** before entering the classroom.
- No food in class.
- No sleeping.
- Proper medical (or other) documentation must accompany late assignments in order to be accepted, if at all.
- Generally, I do not accept late work. Late work = significantly reduced grade.
- Respect of both your instructor and your classmates is expected. Disrespect will not be tolerated in any way, shape, or form.

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. Clear evidence of plagiarism (failure to use quotation marks around verbatim or copied language, failure to adequately paraphrase, and failure to

cite the source of quoted, paraphrased, or borrowed text and ideas), regardless of the Council hearing outcome, may likewise result in failure of the course. 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.

Writing Center:

The Rhodes College Writing Center is located in Barret Library, room 122.
<http://www.rhodes.edu/writingcenter/>. Use your writing center. It's a free and most helpful resource for *all* students.

This syllabus is tentative and subject to change, if necessary. Changes will be announced with as much notice as possible.

Tentative Course Schedule:

Week	Session Dates	Readings, Assignments, and Due Dates
1	Jan 11, 13	--Mon: no class --Wed: Intros. Syllabus homework: about me and food; read “Cheap Food: Workers Pay the Price” <i>Elements</i> --Friday: Intros. Syllabus. Receive assignment sheet: Editorial. homework: read “Food Fight” and “The Fight Over Food Deserts: Corporate America Smacks Its Way Down” <i>Elements. Elements</i> , ch 1
2	Jan 18, 20	--Mon: no class --Wed: homework: read “The Organic Myth” <i>Elements. Elements</i> , ch 2. --Friday: homework: read “The Climate Crisis at the End of Our Fork” and “The Rich Get Richer, the Poor Go Hungry” <i>Elements. Elements</i> , ch 3.
3	Jan 23, 25, 27	--Mon: peer editing homework: finalize editorial --Wed: Editorial Due. Begin Critique. (See assignment sheet.) homework: read “Putting Customers Ahead of Investors” and “Put Profits First” <i>Elements</i> . --Friday: homework: read “Safer? Tastier? More Nutritious? The Dubious Merits of Organic Foods” <i>Elements</i>
4	Jan 30, Feb 1, 3	--Mon: homework: “Food for Thought (and For Credit)” <i>Elements</i> --Wed: homework: “Competitive Foods and the Obesity Epidemic” <i>Elements</i> --Friday: homework: “Live Longer and Healthier: Stop Eating Meat” and “Why Let Stewardship Get in the Way of a Quick Buck?” <i>Elements</i>
5	Feb 6, 8, 10	--Mon: homework: from “Body Image and Adolescents” <i>Elements</i> --Wed: homework: “Do Thin Models Warp Girls’ Body Image?” <i>Elements</i> --Friday: peer editing

		homework:
6	Feb 13, 15, 17	--Mon: Critique Essay Due. Begin Persuasive. (See assignment sheet.) homework: <i>Elements</i> , ch 4 --Wed: homework: <i>Elements</i> , ch 5 --Friday: homework: <i>Elements</i> , ch 6
7	Feb 20, 22, 24	--Mon: homework: <i>Elements</i> , ch 7 --Wed: homework: <i>Elements</i> , ch 8 --Friday: homework: <i>Elements</i> , ch 9
8	Feb 27, 29, Mar 2	--Mon: writing center/self edit homework: --Wed: peer editing homework: --Friday: homework: Persuasive paper due.
9	Mar 5, 7, 9	***mid term grades due March 5*** --Mon: mid term wrap up/in class writing day homework: --Wed: fac mtg homework: --Friday: fac mtg homework: NONE
10	Mar 19, 21, 23	--Mon: Begin Rogerian Argument. (See assignment sheet.) homework: <i>Fast Food Nation</i> , to pg 49 “the brand essence” --Wed: “Food, Inc.” homework: <i>Fast Food Nation</i> , to pg 91, “Success” --Fri: “Food, Inc.” homework: <i>Fast Food Nation</i> , to pg 149, “Cogs in the Great Machine”

11	Mar 26, 28, 30	--Mon: thesis/brainstorming homework: <i>Fast Food Nation</i> , to pg 183, “the value of an arm” --Wed: complete thesis homework: <i>Fast Food Nation</i> , to pg 225, “Global Realization” --Friday: begin plan/source homework: <i>Fast Food Nation</i> , to end
12	Ap 2, 4	--Mon: sources/outline homework: <i>Elements</i> , ch 10 --Wed: works cited/paraphrasing/quotes homework: <i>Elements</i> , ch 11 --Friday: no class
13	Ap 9, 11, 13	--Mon: more planning homework: <i>Elements</i> , ch 12. Finalize outline/transitions/signal phrases --Wed: homework: TBA --Friday: homework: TBA
14	Ap 16, 18, 20	--Mon: drafting/writing center homework: --Wed: self editing/fac mtg. Begin Presentation plans. (See assignment sheet.) homework: --Friday: peer editing homework:
15	Ap 23, 25	--Mon: Rogerian Argument due homework: --Wed: presentations homework: --Friday: presentations
16		Exam Week