

English 304C: Advanced Composition

Amy Ferdinandt Stolley

Email: aferdina@purdue.edu

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~aferdina/304c>

Office: HEAV 303A

Office Hours: T/Th, 11-12

Course Meeting: T/Th 9:30-10:15 ENAD 130

course description

What makes writing, especially academic writing, good? Many of us have an idea in our head of what good writing is, yet it's hard to describe in precise terms. Indeed, many answer this question with "I know it when I see it." Can't we find a better answer than that?

This course aims to find a more definitive answer (or answers) to that question, and throughout the semester, I expect us to discover new, related questions. What are the forces at play that determine one person's idea of good writing? How do we as scholars of writing, teachers of writers, or writers ourselves conceive of the writing process(es) so that we attain that end goal of "good writing"? How do we negotiate our own ideas of "good writing" with those of our professors, bosses, or other audience members?

Throughout the semester, we'll read a variety of sources—essays from newspapers, academic articles, news reports, etc. We'll look into some of the core issues of composition studies to identify what the field sees as the qualities of good writing and good writing processes and we'll compare that to popular notions of writing. This course will cover three primary topics: composition studies' rhetorical roots, composition studies' process theories, and political/public discussions of writing.

While you're doing this reading, you'll also be doing a good deal of writing, both formally and informally. You will complete one major research project that will be due at the end of the semester, but you will also be responsible for graded reading responses, a commonplace book (sort of like a journal), and other ungraded, in-class writing assignments. As we are thinking about the criteria for good writing, then, you will also be expected to employ the writing strategies we discuss.

required text and materials

- *English 304C coursepak* (available at CopyMat in Chauncey Hill)
- Access to a computer with the following software:
 - Microsoft Office XP
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader
 - Working Purdue University e-mail account

All of the software is available on any ITaP computer on campus. The software is also available at Boiler Copy Maker in Purdue Memorial Union at a discounted price if you are interested in purchasing it, but it is not necessary that you do so.

course expectations & participation

In order to accomplish the course goals, you must come to each class prepared. This means coming to class on time, as well as completing your readings and outside assignments. Active and informed participation in class discussions and collaborative work is also crucial.

You will be responsible for the following this semester:

reading responses

You will be responsible for completing four 1-2 page reading responses during the course (Due dates are posted online). These reading responses should cover some issue raised by the readings that is of interest to you. Successful responses will also relate that issue to your own experience as a reader, writer, and student.

commonplace books

In an effort to identify the qualities of good writing, you will be responsible for keeping a commonplace book where you will record, analyze, and reflect on passages of writing that you find particularly effective. The passages you record can come from anywhere—your favorite novels, textbooks from other classes, news reports, personal blog entries. You should plan on making an entry each week for a total of at least 14 entries. Your commonplace books will be collected throughout the semester, so be sure to keep up with your entries.

final research project

Your final research paper for the semester should explore a question related to composition studies that is of interest to you. As a part of this process and in addition to your final paper, you will complete a *paper proposal* and an *annotated bibliography*.

class participation

You will be expected to attend class prepared and ready to discuss the day's readings.

point distribution

assignment	points	percent of grade
reading responses	200 pts (50 pts each)	20
commonplace books	150 pts	15
research paper proposal	150 pts	15
annotated bibliography	150 pts	15
final research paper	250 pts	25
class participation	100 pts	10

grade distributions

point totals	grade
900-1000	A
800-899	B
700-799	C
600-699	D
Below 600	F

paper requirements

Each paper that you turn in should be:

- Word-processed or typed
- Formatted following MLA guidelines. (see Purdue OWL for details). This includes double-spacing, 1-inch margins, and 12-point Times New Roman font.
- Stapled or paper-clipped

attendance

Your attendance is expected and required. If you accumulate more than 3 absences, I will automatically lower your final participation grade by one letter grade. If you have six absences, I will lower your participation grade by two letter grades. If you miss more than six classes, you will fail the class.

In case of extended illness or an emergency, please contact your advisor and the Office of the Dean of Students to make necessary arrangements.

office hours

I look forward to discussing with you matters pertaining to the course, readings, and your writing. Please feel free to contact me via e-mail or phone, and I hope you will also take advantage of my office hours, which are Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon (or by appointment) in HEAV 303E.

plagiarism

Cheating: All written work submitted for a grade in this course must be the product of your own composition. Ideas generated due to reading and group discussion may provide the inspiration for your work, but should not be the sole ideas represented. With collaborative projects, of course, ideas should be representative of the group's work. Plagiarism is the act of presenting as your own work another individual's ideas, words, data, or research material. The concept applies equally to written, spoken, or electronic texts, published or unpublished. All ideas and quotations that you borrow from any source must be acknowledged: at a minimum, you should give the name of your author, the title of the text cited, and the page number(s) of the citation. The only exceptions to this requirement would involve what is familiar and commonly known (e.g., the fact that the earth is round). You should know that penalties for plagiarism are severe and can entail suspension from the University. Students are responsible for reading and understanding the University policy on Cheating and Plagiarism set forth in Purdue University's Academic Integrity: A Guide for Students.

POLICY STATEMENT AGREEMENT

I have read the contents of the English 304C Course Policy Statement, and I understand what will be expected of me this semester. I know that I can ask my instructor at any point to clarify her expectations of me for the course, and I also know that the information in this document may change as the semester progresses.

Name _____

Date _____
