

SYLLABUS English 110C

First Year English

Version 110C: Computers and Composition

Spring 1999

Denney 307

M W 1:30-3:18 p.m.

Call# 07611-2

Instructor: Chris Johns

Office: 419 Denney Hall

Hours: M W 1:00-1:30 and 3:30-4:30, and by appointment.

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Course Description and Goals: English 110C fulfills the requirement for the GEC first writing course. This section of English 110C is designed to develop one's reading, writing, and critical thinking, and to adapt those skills to the demands of the university environment. We will do this by reading critical essays and works of literature on a variety of controversial topics, and writing about them. The compositional goal of the course is to encourage and practice the art of critical analysis, and to better prepare the student to write college papers in any discipline. More specifically, we will emphasize clear, concise writing; cohesive thought and organization; significant content; and active class participation. Since this is a computer section, we will also utilize and critically examine the medium of computer technology. Students will become familiar with e-mail, listservers, the internet as an information resource, and on-line chat rooms. Proper documentation and integration of sources will also be covered. Grammar, style, and usage will be addressed as needed, and we will try to have fun. You can expect to do much reading and writing in this course, and to do well, you must work hard.

Course Materials: Available at SBX

- Critical Thinking Reading and Writing. Barnett. CTRW
- The Everyday Writer. Lunsford. EW
- Course Packet of supplemental readings (available only at Cop-ez in basement of Bricker Hall). CP
- 1 Mac floppy and 1 pc formatted floppy.
- E-mail account

Course Requirements: You are required to write four formal essays including drafts of each. You will also post a Listserv Journal (a one-page response to an assigned reading) on the class Listserv once a week. In addition, as part of class participation, you will be reading and responding to essays written by your

classmates. You can also expect occasional quizzes on the assigned readings, which will make up part of your participation grade as well. The grading percentages for these requirements are:

Essay One 15%

Essay Two 20%

Essay Three 20%

Final Essay 15%

Listserver Journal 20%

Class Participation 10%

Note: A student can fail the course by failing to turn in one or more essays.

Essays: Essays will consist of in-depth analysis of arguments on various social issues such as punishment, abortion, affirmative action, and the relationship between individuals and society.

- All essays and drafts must be composed on a computer, but paper copies will be handed in to the instructor. No title pages, please. Your paper must be formatted with **one-inch margins** and double spacing. The top left corner of your first page must present the following:

Your name

Instructor Chris Johns

English 110C-- (essay number or draft number).

Date

The title of your essay should be centered on the line below the date. In addition, your last name and a page number should appear in the upper right corner of every page.

A word about fonts and font-size: Please do not use any large or ornamental fonts. In order to insure fairness and to reduce irritation, I require that you use Times Roman, Palatino, Courier, Helvetica, or something very similar, and point-size 12. Do not use large space-gobbling fonts like Chicago.

Regarding computer use: There are many computer labs on campus; however, during busy times most of them are full. Also, computer, printing, and disk problems occur frequently. For these reasons, avoid the tendency to wait until the last minute to type your papers. Furthermore, while working in labs it is most important to *save your work often, and save it onto your own disk*. If you have any trouble with computer usage, please consult me.

Rough Drafts: The purpose of rough drafts is to encourage the idea that good writing is not so much a product of inspiration, but a process of perspiration: reading, re-reading, revising, critiquing, collaborating, editing, proofreading, etc. Therefore, it is wise to take your rough drafts seriously. They must be done on time for you to receive valuable feedback from me and your peers. If you do not bring your rough drafts to class, you forfeit the chance to have them reviewed. Furthermore, they should be as complete as possible. Rough drafts

are not graded, but your performance on them will definitely affect your essay and class participation grades.

Handing in final drafts: The final draft of your paper must be accompanied by the rough draft with my comments on it and any peer response sheets.

Listserver Journal: Listserver journals are shorter (one page), informal responses to the course readings and discussions. The purpose for them is to encourage a habit of writing and critical thinking without the pressure of grading, and to see what other students are thinking about. One Listserver Journal posting is due to be posted on the class listserver by Wednesday of each week. You may respond to any reading assignment assigned that week. Extra credit will be given to those who respond (conscientiously) to postings by other students. In general, Journal postings should have two sections: (1) a short paragraph expressing concisely as possible the central idea or main purpose of the reading. (2) your reaction to the reading: agreement, disagreement, like, dislike, and *why*. Or, connect the reading to some other related idea.

- Journals are worth 10 points each. Do all of them, for a total of 10, and you get an A for 20% of your course grade. Two points will be given for each one-paragraph response to a posted Journal. (Note: all extra points over ten will be applied to a paper grade, not to your Journal grade.) At the end of the quarter your point total for your Listserver Journal will yield the following letter grades: **90-100=A; 76-89=B; 61-75=C; 46-60=D; 0-45=E**. Plus or minus at either end of the scale.

- Note: If your point total yields an A, you cannot get an A unless you have completed all 10 of the entries. For example: you could do 9 and get 10 points each time, resulting in 90 points, which yields an A; but because you did not complete all 10 Journals, you get a B+.

Class Participation: English 110C is one of the few places where students and teachers can freely exchange ideas. How successful this class is depends in part on your willingness to participate in open discussions. Your active participation and input are important so that we can understand and learn from each other. It also makes the class much more fun and interesting. Furthermore, you have a responsibility toward other students to provide them with quality feedback on their papers. Keep in mind that this is a place to try out new ideas, without the fear of sounding foolish. Your class participation grade will be based on the frequency and quality of your class contributions and presence (enthusiasm is valued over apathy), and on attendance. Keep up with the readings, come to class, speak up on a regular basis, and you'll do fine.

- **Class Behavior:** The way you behave in the classroom has a direct effect on the content and character of the class. Please do not talk while others are talking, unless you are willing to speak to the entire class. Do not read newspapers in class, or e-mail your friends. If you are tired, sleep somewhere else, even if the teacher is really boring.

Attendance: Your attendance is important individually and to the class as a whole; so please be here. The University makes a distinction between excused and unexcused absences. Excused absences are absences due to illness, death in the family, religious holiday, academic testing, or athletic or military service. Such absences can be officially documented (e.g. a doctor's note). Unexcused absences are absences that do not meet the criteria for excused absences (e.g., oversleeping, forgetting, not feeling good, too busy). However, if you miss a class, you must still make up the work that was due. All absences (excused or unexcused) must be made up by writing a two page commentary on the readings assigned for the day you missed. This must be turned in within a week of the absence. If you fail to turn in your absence essay, you will be penalized by

one-half a letter grade for each absence (B to B-, B- to C+, etc.). Exception: If you are absent five times, University policy says I must fail you. However, you will not be penalized in case of extreme circumstances. Always feel free to speak to me about whatever ails you.

- **Lateness:** Late arrivals are distracting to me, but also, you risk missing important announcements or activities that will not be repeated. Therefore, my lateness policy is this: If you are not in class at the time I take attendance, you will be marked "absent." To avoid being marked absent you must speak to me during break time so that I can mark you as "late." However, if you are late by 30 minutes or more, you will be marked absent for that day, regardless. If you are persistently late, say, four times, you will fail your class participation grade.
- **Leaving early:** You can be marked absent for leaving class early, unless you have a legitimate excuse. Speak to me if the occasion arises.
- **If, due to an absence (whether excused or unexcused), you miss the deadline for handing in an assignment, you must call or e-mail me as soon as it is reasonably possible to do so.** In all cases you are responsible for completing any missed assignments and absence essays. As a general rule, if you anticipate being absent, it is best to tell me ahead of time.

Late Assignments: All assignments are due at the beginning of class time on the date specified in the Course Schedule. In order to be fair and consistent, late papers will be graded E, and journal entries will not receive points. If you are having a problem with an assignment, *you must contact me a day ahead of time.* I am more sympathetic to those who call ahead.

Revision Policy: If you are not satisfied with the grade you received on your paper, please talk to me; you may be able to revise it. To do so, I require that you meet with me during office hours. Bring all drafts of your paper, especially the final draft and the rough draft with my comments. After we discuss your paper, you must write up a one-page plan for revising it. Your plan should show thoughtful engagement with your paper and with my response to it. You have two weeks to submit a plan, revision, and all prior drafts. The final grade will stand. Note: Most revisions receive a higher grade, but not always.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious and complex issue. In general there are two kinds of plagiarism: intentional and unintentional. *Intentionally* using someone else's words, ideas, or work without proper acknowledgment is a serious academic offense and grounds for dismissal from the university. Intentional plagiarism is also a complex moral offense. It is stealing and lying. It is a social offense because it induces a damaging sense of distrust among students and teachers. It is a personal offense because it inhibits the writer from learning, and makes life in the long run more difficult. However, *unintentional* plagiarism is an offense of ignorance, and thus a cause for instruction and understanding, and the student may be given a second chance. Therefore, all cases of suspected plagiarism will be discussed with the student, may be reported to the Ombud, and may be reported to the University's Committee on Academic Misconduct. Keep this mind: it is very easy for me to detect a plagiarized paper, or a plagiarized portion of a paper. Every quarter at least one person in the class commits plagiarism. This results in a very unhappy situation for the student.

Please be sure to read and understand the statement on plagiarism included with this syllabus. If you have any trouble understanding this complex issue, please ask for guidance.

Conferences and Office Hours: Having a one-to-one meeting with your teacher is a very effective way to generate ideas and discuss issues in detail. You are expected to attend at least one 15 minute conference with me, preferably after your first draft is completed. Of course, I encourage you to meet with me as often as you like.

- During my office hours you are encouraged to just walk-in. I can be available at other times convenient to you. It is best, though, to let me know ahead of time that you want a conference. Speak to me, call, or e-mail if you want to set up an appointment or to inform me that you will come during office hours. It is helpful to get your work to me before your appointment so I can prepare comments ahead of time.

NOTE: Failure to meet me and/or failure to meet me at your scheduled time will automatically lower your paper grade by a full letter.

- Also, do not expect, as many students do, that just because we have a conference that your paper grade will go up. I will help you as much as I can, but I can't guarantee grades.

The Writing Center: If you need any additional assistance with any step in the writing process-- brainstorming for ideas, drafting, revision, organization, style, or grammar and usage--I strongly encourage you to see a tutor at The Writing Center in 338 Denney. You must call ahead for an appointment: 292-5607. Keep in mind that using a tutor does not mean that you are incompetent. Many "incompetent" graduate students, professors, and professionals have used the Writing Center.

Student Work Policy: After the quarter is over I will still have one of your essays. I'd like you to get it back. When you hand in your final essay, please provide me with a large SASE with enough postage to send your papers back to you. Or if you prefer, over the next two quarters your work will be available in my office for pickup. Call me and make arrangements. After two quarters your paper will be thrown out.

Accommodation of Students with Disabilities: The following statement is provided by the English Department Teaching Handbook:

If you are disabled (or have a disability) and need particular accommodations, please feel free to discuss this issue with me during office hours. Students with disabilities who need accommodations should be registered with the Office of Disability Services (292-3307).

The Ombud: The Ombud is a resource for teachers and students of first-year composition who have concerns about their English 110, 110L, 110C, and 367 classes. The Ombud is a graduate teaching associate who negotiates and resolves problems or complaints. If you have a problem that you do not want to talk to me about, see the ombud. *All discussions with the Ombud are confidential.* This quarter the Ombud is Wade Krueger. His office hours in Denney 363 are 11:30-3:30, Monday through Thursday. Phone: 292-5778.

Departmental Grading Standards. Some General Guidelines

Minimal Composition Skills

A student will receive a grade of C in English 110C only if he or she can regularly write essays that are responsive to the assignments and that satisfy the following minimal criteria:

1. An essay must present a clear central idea which provides focus for the composition.
2. An essay must be clearly organized; logical development of thought must be readily discernible.
3. Paragraphs within a composition must be unified, coherent, and adequately developed. They should contribute to the development of thought within the essay.
4. An essay must offer supporting details which make the central idea clear and convincing.
5. An essay must demonstrate a student's ability to use language well; choice of words must be appropriate and specific.

Minimal Mechanical Skills

1. An essay will not receive a grade of C or above if it contains major problems in syntax. Excessive fragments, confused sentence structure, and/or run-on sentences are not present in C papers.
2. While the C paper may, of course, contain few mechanical errors, such errors must be minimal. An essay will not receive a C when it contains serious basic problems of proofreading and editing, such as subject-verb disagreement, numerous comma or other punctuation mistakes, or numerous spelling errors.

Course Schedule: Scheduled readings and assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day listed. Please be prepared by bringing the appropriate course materials to class. I reserve the right to make changes, although students will be notified well in advance.

Key: CTRW= Critical Thinking Reading and Writing; CP= Course Packet; EW=Everyday Writer; The *italics* indicate in-class activities.

1. 3/29 *Course Intro; Review Syllabus; First Day Essay*

3/31 CTRW 3-21; 160-177

2. 4/5 CTRW 22-46; EW 9-24 *Conference sign-ups.*

4/07 CTRW 46-49; 99-115; CP Wills, "In Praise of Censure."; **Essay One, Draft One Peer Response**

3. 4/12 CTRW 177-190; 365-371; CP "The Allegory of the Cave"; Facts, Opinions, Judgment (p. 3-9) *Drafts Returned EW*

4/14 CTRW 50-76; CP Articles by Wilkins, Steel, and Adams **Essay One, FINAL Draft**

4. 4/19 CTRW 101-114; 119-122; Jeff Jacoby, "Bring Back Flogging";
CP Levin, "The Case for Torture" EW
4/21 CP Articles on death penalty by Koch, Bruck, and Conrad
5. 4/26 CTRW 177-190; CP Articles by Wattleton and Carr; *Internet Source Evaluation* EW
4/28 CTRW 191-218; CP Articles by Quindlen and Karlin **Essay Two, Draft One** *Peer Response*
6. 5/03 CTRW 251-307, "Love is a Fallacy" and Rogerian argument. *Essays Returned* EW
5/05 CP Jefferson, "Declaration"; Stanton, "Declaration"; *Library Databases*
7. 5/10 CTRW 125-129 "Five Myths of Immigration" CP Burke, "A Statue with Limitations" **Essay Two, FINAL Draft** EW
5/12 CTRW Modest proposals by Swift (p. 151) and Pollitt (p. 122).
8. 5/17 CTRW 339-364, Arguing about Literature; EW
5/19 CP Kafka, "The Penal Colony"; Hurston, "Sweat".
9. 5/24 CTRW 415-429, Plato's Crito; **Essay Three, Draft One**; *Peer response*
5/26 CTRW 429-445, King, "Letter From Birmingham Jail"; *Aspects: On-Line Discussion*
10. 5/31 MEMORIAL DAY NO CLASSES Read "Antigone" in CTRW
6/02 CTRW "Antigone" **Essay Three, FINAL Draft**; *Intro to Final Essay; Course Evaluations*
11. 6/7-10 Finals Week: Final Essay due no later than 4:30pm Wednesday, June 9th.

Author Title Length (pages)

Wills "In Praise of Censure" 4

Goshgarian "Facts, Opinions" 5

Plato "The Allegory of the Cave" 7

Wilkins "Harping on Racism" 2

Steele "Affirmative Action: The Price of Preference" 6

Adams "It's Past Time to Speak Out" 2

Levin "The Case for Torture" 1

Koch "The Death Penalty is Justice" 5

Bruck "No Death Penalty" 4

Conrad "Against the Death Penalty" 8

Watteton "Which Way Black America--Pro Choice" 3

Carr "Which Way Black America--Anti-Abortion" 3

Karlin "An Abortionists Credo" 3

Quindlen "Some Thoughts about Abortion" 3

Jefferson "Declaration of Independence, extra" 9

Stanton, "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions" 4

Burke "A Statue with Limitations" 3

Kafka "In the Penal Colony" 17

Hurston "Sweat" 9