

Instructor: Stacy Bell

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Office: Humanities 105

Office hours: MW 2-5 and by appointment

*Required Texts & Materials*

Conley, Dalton *Honky*

LeBlanc, Adrian *Random Family*

Thomas, Piri, *Down These Mean Streets*

A spiral notebook of any size for First Words

*Course Description & Objectives*

This course is an examination of grammar, mechanics and principles of effective written expression, with primary emphasis on the expository essay. Writing topics are inter-disciplinary, to emphasize the importance of effective written communication across the curriculum. 100C is required for students who need to review basic writing skills in order to meet college writing requirements. This course prepares students to formulate and support their own arguments effectively in writing. By reading texts that examine important current social issues, students examine some of the ways [memoir and ethnography, for example] in which writers present claims to persuade their audiences. From these arguments, students derive their own critical conclusions in order to create their own claims. As student writers develop confidence and greater understanding of the issues discussed in the texts, they argue more articulately and persuasively in writing and in class discussions.

Effective writing is characterized not only by strong presentation and support of a clearly identified thesis, but also by fluency in the grammar and mechanics of written Standard English. Students bring to a diverse academic community a variety of linguistic forms, some of which may deviate from the accepted classroom “standard.” Many students have been acculturated to classrooms in which “stamping out” errors and replacing them with socially and academically acceptable forms has been the norm. There is considerable debate among writing teachers about the extent to which grammar instruction improves student writing. In 100C grammar instruction will be contextual and based on the needs of the students in each class; students will learn to distinguish between errors and mistakes and in

so doing will eliminate nonstandard forms in their formal writing. Students will learn the differences between spoken and written English and will apply this knowledge in the process of expository writing. Students will submit no fewer than 17 pages of response writing, which will be well-organized and will demonstrate mastery of grammar, mechanics and organization appropriate in college-level writing, as well as the ability effectively to utilize a variety of rhetorical forms.

### *Assessment*

**TPSL:** This is a Theory/Practice/Service/ Learning course; each student will receive a placement at a local social service agency and will volunteer 18 hours during the semester. The books we read examine social and economic inequality. In order for you to understand the theories we discuss and to articulate your own positions on controversial topics, you will go “in the field” to observe firsthand the ways in which inequality is manifested in the U.S. I realize that your placement constitutes an additional demand on your time, and in exchange I have given you five days off from class. You receive 100 points for successful completion of TPSL [18 hours]; your TPSL grade is 10% of your final grade in the class.

**First Words:** At the beginning of each class you will respond in writing to an assigned prompt for three minutes. Responses will be written in a spiral notebook that will be submitted at the end of the semester. You will receive full credit [100 points] for these writing exercises if you do not have more than three unexcused absences. First Words is 5% of your final grade.

**Oral presentations:** each week one or two students will lead class discussions of our text or an assigned topic, and the same students will read their written responses to the class before submitting them on Friday. You will sign up at the very beginning of the semester for the week you will present. Depending on how well you present, you will earn up to 40 extra credit points to be added to your total cumulative points at the end of the semester.

**Essays:** You will submit 13 written responses of no fewer than 250 words to an assigned prompt each Friday, unless otherwise noted. I will return all written work to you with my comments and a grade at the next class meeting. Each response is worth 5% of your final grade. **REVISIONS: Important! Writing is a process, and you will have the opportunity to resubmit as many as four of your responses for a second evaluation. If your resubmitted response receives a higher grade, it will replace the first grade.**

Debate: On November 23 your class will engage in a planned debate. You will be assigned to one of two teams and will be expected to prepare ahead of time by collecting talking points through research and by participating orally during class. You will submit your talking points to me and I will assess your team's performance through an informal rubric. Your debate score is 5% of your final grade.

Your final exam will be a written response to a film we will view together in class. Your final exam will be 15% of your final class grade.

*\*Note:* Your written work will be evaluated based on a rubric of a predetermined set of criteria, including demonstration of competency in the mechanics and organization of essay writing. This is a college level writing course; spelling errors will not be tolerated. An essay with more than five spelling errors will receive a failing grade--NO EXCEPTIONS.

### *Responsibilities*

Blackboard: Your class conference, including all information about assignments, your grades and your class syllabus, is available to you on Blackboard. You are responsible for keeping up with the information and materials posted there.

Office Hours: I have scheduled and open office hours throughout the week. You can come to my office to sign up for an appointment or email me if you would like to meet outside of my office hours. Please come see me for help with your written assignments at any stage in the writing process. I am always happy to help you with your essays.

Late Essays: Your essays are due at the *beginning* of class on the specified date. I will lower the grade for an unexcused late essay by one full letter grade for each day it is late; after one full week the essay will receive a grade of zero.

Attendance: As per Oxford College policy, class begins at the designated time. If you are not present when class begins, I will mark you absent. If you are not prepared for class, I will mark you absent. Attendance requires wakefulness. You may miss three days of class without penalty, beyond which I will deduct ten points from your participation grade for each additional unexcused absence. I will excuse absences in the event of a major

illness [with a doctor's note], legitimate emergency, or religious observance. If you are absent without an excuse on a day in which an in-class activity is assigned, you will NOT be permitted to make up missed work.

Email: The best way to communicate with an instructor is in person, during class or during office hours. I accept email for the following reasons:

- To cancel an appointment
- To notify me of an absence
- To ask a legitimate question about an assignment

I will not respond to email requesting information contained in the syllabus. If you don't know what is in the syllabus, you aren't prepared for class. Finally, I will ***never respond*** to requests for grades or "averages" via email or in person. Your grades and averages will be available to you on our Blackboard site.

Plagiarism: The work you submit for class must be your own. You may not submit an essay more than once. If you use another author's words or original ideas in your writing, you must give credit to the author by using MLA documentation form as it is presented in *The Bedford Handbook*. All papers suspected of plagiarism will be turned over to the Honor Council (*Oxford College Handbook*). If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, read your handbook and please see me.

Electronic toys: cell phones, blackberries and iPod/Phones are strictly forbidden ☹ in the classroom—except for my iPhone ☺, which I use as a stopwatch. If you have one with you, turn it off. If I hear or see it, I'm going to ask you to remove it from the classroom, and I will mark you absent. Laptops are permitted only when I require them in class.

A Note about Printing: Blue and gold makes green! Please feel free to print preliminary drafts on recycled paper, and print double-sided final drafts to save paper. I realize that you must pay for all printing, and I am not able to subsidize this expense [unless you want to clean my house, which I would more than welcome]. You must turn in hard copies of all your essays, no exceptions. Plan ahead. I cannot accept "I have no money left on my swipe card" as an excuse for a late essay.

Behavior: The instructor and students will display professional and courteous behavior, including but not limited to respect for the opinions of others. What constitutes professional and courteous behavior is at the

discretion of the instructor. I will dismiss and mark absent any student who fails to show respect for his or her classmates and/or instructor. Continued disruptions and/or discourtesy will result in automatic dismissal from this class and referral to the Conduct Council. Dismissal from class may negatively impact the final grade.

Unless you obtain approval from the Academic Dean, there will be no exceptions to the policies outlined in this syllabus, which represents a contract between student and instructor. The instructor will meet her responsibilities in regard to instruction and evaluation of the student, and the student will meet his or her responsibilities in regard to completion of all assignments and adherence to all class policies.

I have read and understand all components of this syllabus. I agree to adhere to all the policies and guidelines outlined in this syllabus.

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print your name

signature

date

## AUGUST

26 Introduction and Objectives

28

Honky: Understanding difference through the First Person lens

31 Discussion leader:

## SEPTEMBER

2

4 Response due.

7 Labor Day: Class will not meet today

9 Discussion leader:

11 Response due.

14 Discussion leader:

16 Response due.

18 Class will not meet today.

21 Discussion leader:

23 Response due.

25 Class will not meet today.

Random Family: What we can learn about argument through observation

28 Discussion leader:

30

## OCTOBER

2 Response due.

5 Discussion leader:

7 Response due.

9 Class will not meet today.

12 Fall break--Class will not meet today.

14 Class will not meet today

16

19 Discussion leader:

21

23 Response due.

26 Discussion leader:

28

30 Response due.

## NOVEMBER

*Down These Mean Streets: Thinking through prejudice, knowing the other in context, and coming full circle*

2 Discussion leader:

4

6 Response due.

9 Discussion leader:

11 Response due:

13 Class will not meet today.

16 Discussion leader

18

20 Response due:

23 Debate: Are prisons necessary?

25 THANKSGIVING BREAK--no class.

27 THANKSGIVING BREAK--no class.

30 Discussion leader:

## DECEMBER

2 Response due.

4

7 TPSL response due.

### *Exam Schedule*

Students will report to classroom with laptops during their appointed time.

9:35

MWF Tuesday, Dec. 15, 9:00-12:00

11:45

MWF Thursday, Dec. 10, 2:00-5:00