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WRIT 1301
University Writing
Section 070
4 Credits
T/Th 945-1100 Lind Hall 325
http://www.tc.umn.edu/~heng0024/1301.php
Mailbox: 1 Lind

**Expectations**

WRIT 1301 is a writing class. By the end of this semester, you will have improved your ability to articulate your ideas to an academic audience. You'll learn to write like a professional and make convincing, clear arguments.

We will do a lot of writing. But the real work of our semester won't just be putting words on the page. As we read, discuss, consider, re-read, peer-edit, and re-vise our writing, we'll question what learning and education are all about.

Much of our time in class will be spent not writing but talking. It is impossible for this to happen without your participation—that is, your commitment to reading the assigned texts and sharing your ideas about them. To say something in class is always a risk. If we all enter this recitation with the understanding that this is a mutual venture—one in which most of us will make some "mistakes"—we can, I hope, have productive discussions. I will ask that you come to class with a willingness to take risks, to suspend closure, and to accept that asking questions is often more important than being "right."

**Attendance**

Keeping up to date with our ongoing conversation is essential. If you miss class, please be in touch—either visit my office hours or send an email. It is, naturally, your responsibility to find out what you missed. Please note: For each absence after your **second**, your grade will decrease; if you miss more than **five** sessions, you will not pass this course.

**Office Hours & Communication**

I strongly encourage you to visit me during office hours on the third floor of Lind Hall. They are a great opportunity to get direct assistance (remember: the more you tell me about your interests, the more I can do to help you succeed).

Another way to reach me is email, which I check regularly. Please check yours regularly as well, as I will often contact you with assignments and updates. (The U of M email system frequently blocks messages from senders like Hotmail—please use your U of M account.)

Finally: I will also operate a rudimentary course website where I will post weekly assignments, info, and various potentially relevant links. You can find that here: http://www.tc.umn.edu/~heng0024/1301.php

**Readings**

It is required that you buy: Anson, Chris, Robert Schwegler, and Marcia F. Muth. The Longman Writer's Companion. 4th edition. University of Minnesota edition. New York: Longman, 2007. (Available at the University Bookstore—as it is designed specifically for our program.)

This section won't require any other books. You will, however, have to do a fair amount of printing. We all need to have the essays we're discussing at hand in class to refer to. Please print them out and make marks on them as you read.

You will find (most of) these texts at the library's e-reserve page for our class. It can be found here—http://eres.lib.umn.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1000—and accessed with this password: N9awo8r. I will be adding (and subtracting) things both to that page and to the course webpage frequently.

| *(Tentative) Schedule* | **Tuesday** | **Thursday** | **Notes** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Week 1 (Sept 4 & 6)**<br>**Why are you at college?** | Welcome | Twitchell, "Higher Ed, Inc." | |
| **Week 2 (Sept 11 & 13)**<br>**What is College? What were its origins?** | Education of Henry Adams (Excerpts) | | |
| **Week 3 (Sept 18 & 20)**<br>**What is a Liberal Arts education? Is it useful?** | Newman, "What is a University?"* | Newman, The Idea of a University (excerpts) * | |
| **Week 4 (Sept 25 & 27)**<br>**How do our readings relate to you?** | Workshop: ESSAY 1 * | | Essay 1 due (TH) |
| **Week 5 (Oct 2 & 4)**<br>**Do universities have problems?** | Viewing (in class): Oleanna | Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Excerpts) | |
| **Week 6 (Oct 9 & 11)**<br>**How have people challenged the power structure? Was it successful?** | "Port Huron Statement" (excerpts) * | Rossman, "The Wedding Within the War" (excerpts); Savio "Sproul Hall" * | |
| **Week 7 (Oct 16 & 18)**<br>**What will you research?** | Workshop: Essay 2 * | [NO CLASS: Meetings] | Essay 2 due (TH) |
| **Week 8 (Oct 23 & 25)**<br>**How will you explain your area?** | [NO CLASS: Meetings ] | Workshop prospectus * | Prospect us due (F) |
| **Week 9 (Oct 30 & Nov 1)**<br>**How has the university changed from its origins? Has its curriculum changed?** | Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone" * | Pratt redux ** | |
| **Week 10 (Nov 6 & 8)**<br>**How do admissions work?** | Workshop: Essay 3 * | Thompson "Playing With Numbers"* | Essay 3 due (TH) |
| **Week 11 (Nov 13 & 15)**<br>**What are some alternative approaches to higher education?** | Rosin, "God and Country" ** | Goodyear, "The Searchers" ** | Biblio-graphy due (TH) |
| **Week 12 (Nov 20 & 22)**<br>**Why do we eat turkey on Thanksgiving?** | Revision of final draft | [thanksgiving break] | |
| **Week 13 (Nov 27 & 29)**<br>**Is college the American dream? Should it be?** | **Research Paper Due** | Kirn, "Lost in the Meritocracy" * | Research Paper Due (T) |
| **Week 14 (Dec 4 & 6)**<br>**Is college for everyone?** | Boo, " The Factory"** | **** | |
| **Week 15 (Dec 11 & 13)**<br>**What have we done this semester?** | Workshop Essay 4 * | Self evaluation * | Essay 4 due (TH) |

**Grades**

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|---|---|
| Participation*: | 15% |
| Essay 1: | 5% |
| Essay 2: | 10% |
| Essay 3: | 15% |
| Research Paper: | 35% |
| Essay 4: | 10% |
| Teaching: | 10% |

*includes all in-class writing & verbal participation

**Assignments**

TEACHING: This is your chance to shape our learning. Each of you will pick a week and submit a text that relates to education for the class to consider. These texts can be songs, poems, film clips, newspaper articles, federal laws, paintings, advertisements—it's entirely up to you. (They shouldn't play for longer than five minutes or be more than a few pages long.) When your turn rolls around, you'll prepare a short presentation (approx. 10 minutes) that introduces the text to us and makes an argument about it. (With your help, I will make these, as much as possible, available on the web for others to access later.)

ESSAY 1: Summarize Newman's argument from The Idea of a University for a popular audience. Your summary should be approximately two pages long. You must cite Newman, but you need no other sources.

ESSAY 2: This essay should be addressed to an academic audience. It should examine the relationship between Freire's argument and Oleanna. In at least four (though no more than five) pages, it should lay out an argument focused on any shared aspects of the two texts or apply an idea from Freire. Please focus on academic argument, not personal experience!

ESSAY 3: Write an academic analysis of Pratt's argument. What are its strengths? Its weaknesses? Your paper should stake a position with regards to Pratt's ideas about the university today (remember—this doesn't have to be just "pro" or "con"). This should total at least four (though no more than five) pages. To make this kind of argument, you will certainly need to cite sources other than Pratt's essay.

ESSAY 4: At the start of the term, we read Newman's popular argument "What is a University?" Now it's your turn. For a popular audience, write an argument like Newman's about what a University is today. This is your chance to offer correctives. This should total at least four (though no more than five) pages.

RESEARCH PAPER: This will be a seven to nine page research paper about any aspect of university education. The possibilities are vast and it will be up to you (though I'm glad to help) to delimit the focus of your argument. You should cite multiple sources—perhaps from our readings but certainly those discovered in your own research—and focus on an academic audience. Some potential topics include (but are hardly limited to):

- Diversity / Affirmative Action
- Requirements: liberal arts, science, foreign language, writing
- Useful/useless departments: American Studies v. Food Science
- Correspondence universities: Phoenix, Walden, and the like
- Privatizing public universities: UVA, research money from corporations
- Rankings systems: U.S.News, Princeton Review
- Grades
- Admissions: Who gets in? And why?
- No Child Left Behind / University Funding
- Cost of Higher Ed: To students, to graduate students
- Teaching: Why are so many classes not taught by professors?
- University v. Community College
- Whatever else you imagine…