**English 109  Introduction to Academic Writing**
Instructor: Mark Rowell Wallin  
Time: Tuesdays, 7-10  
Room: AL 208  
Office: PAS 2218; x2705; e-mail: engl109mw@hotmail.com  
Office Hours: Wednesday 1:00-2:00, or by appointment

**Course Description**

In this class we will explore various styles of academic composition. We will begin with the assumption that the best way to learn how to write is by practice and imitation. Therefore, we will closely examine various essays in the fields of science and humanities in order to guide our writing experiments. Along with our regular readings we will practice by creating formal (marked essays and presentations) and informal (unmarked journals) texts.

We will critique our readings and exercises through the lens of rhetoric, or the strategies of persuasion that constitute all communication. We’ll consider various situations and genres of academic writing to develop a sense of how rhetoric can assist our work so that by the end of the term, we should be equipped with tools to continue growing and developing as writers.

**Required Texts**

Course Pack

**Assignments**

3 essays

**Analysis essay** (15%) – Develop a reasonable thesis that expresses your analysis of the Commoner essay (possibly drawn from your journal musings). You must use references (via quotation and paraphrase) to support your view. **Min. 800 words.**

- **Draft due:** May 27  
- **Final due:** June 10

**Synthesis essay** (20%) – Develop a position drawing from at least two essays (not Commoner). You must demonstrate a clear thesis, effective use of quotation, paraphrase and summary and must incorporate at least two viewpoints from the essays you’re addressing. **Min. 1000 words.**

- **Draft due:** June 24  
- **Final due:** July 8

**Research essay** (30%) – Develop a thesis that relates to any of the issues addressed in the Course Pack. The paper must draw upon at least 6 sources for research: at least 1 from the Course Pack; 2 from academic journals; and only 1 may be from an online source. **Min. 1500 words.**

- **Draft due:** July 29  
- **Final due:** August 8, in the English department drop-box (near HH229).

* Drafts – Both the peer editor and I will read the analysis drafts—prior to the final submission the essay. A peer editor only will critique the other two (synthesis and research) and from these initial drafts you will edit and compose your final documents. The in-class participation mark will be largely weighted on the completion and thorough criticism of these drafts. Drafts that are ‘forgotten’ or incomplete will be penalized (10% of the final mark on the assignment) and will not receive a peer or instructor edit. In other words, if you don’t bring your work to class, you’ll be on your own.
Late Submissions – Because peer editing and group work is so important to this class I’ll be taking a dim view of late submissions. But, S**t happens. So in the spirit of this axiom I’ll grant you each one (1) ‘excused’ late submission. You need to clear it with me BEFORE the assignment is due (not the day of). Otherwise, late submissions are 5% per day.

2 Presentations

Synthesis Colloquium (8%): Starting on the 8th of July and continuing through to the end of term, students will prepare a presentable version of their synthesis paper. This ‘speech’ will not be read, and will not be in the same format as the essay – it must follow the guidelines for effective presentation as outlined in St. Martin’s and in lecture. I will circulate a sign-up sheet in the third week of class. **Maximum 10 minutes**

Bibliography and Report (5%): On the 22nd, you will present in front of the class (and submit in writing to me) a breakdown and description of your sources (remember, at least 6), including where you found them and the process you followed to get where you are in your research. You should also describe what you’ve accomplished on your research paper and your goals for finishing. **Maximum 5 minutes.**

Other assignments

Journal (10%): Every week I expect a journal entry of at least 500 words. The entry will address questions from the discussion questions e-mailed during the week of each reading period. The journals will be handed in at the end of each class. The journal will be marked on both completion and thought – formal essay style is not required. They will be marked (with a check or a minus) and returned. The complete package will be handed in with the research paper. This is an all or nothing deal: if you keep up and hand in everything (and indicate that you’ve actually read the stuff) it’s an easy 15 marks. **10 entries total.**

Participation and Editing (7%): Part of this mark is based on the in-class discussions that will come out of the readings. You will all have something to say based upon your journal entries and I want to hear it. The other component of this category, peer editing, is extremely important to the smooth progression of the class and I want to make sure that you take it seriously. In large part, you will be responsible for each other’s marks, so you need to be very careful how you respond to your partner’s work. I will be examining your editing comments and assessing this mark based on the thoroughness and helpfulness of your criticism.

Editor’s Review (5%): throughout the term you will have several editors. I want you to keep track of their input and write a review of their editing. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of their comments and assign a mark (out of 5). Your mark on this section will depend partly upon your peer’s estimation of your editing, but also upon the seriousness of your reviews. **Minimum 50 words per entry.**

Academic Offences (and other unpleasantness): The faculty of arts requires me to politely let you know that

All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with policy #71 (student academic discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of any aspect of discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean.
To briefly expand on one point: plagiarism is “the act of presenting ideas, words, or other intellectual property of another as one’s own.” Make everything easy for all of us and remember to cite all your sources.

**Schedule (Tentative)**

May

6- Welcome, syllabus, course requirements  
   CP: Lane – (review) Signs

**An Overview of Composition**  
(*Introduction; Analysis; Summary/Paraphrase*)

13- Rhetorical Approaches; Introduction (thesis statement); Analysis (taking things apart);  
   **Summary**  
   SM: chpts. 1-2; 13-14 pp.126-127  
   CP: Lane – (review) Pearl Harbor  
   Gladwell – (review) Political heat  
   Hitchens –(review) Political animals

20- Argumentation (appeals and logic): Introduction (outlines); Analysis (putting them back together); Paraphrase  
   SM: chpts. 4-5; 15-16  
   CP: Watson and Crick - Molecular Structure of Nucleic Acids  
   Commoner - Unraveling the DNA Myth

27- Citation; Introduction (intro and conclusion); Analysis (your own ideas)  
   **(Analysis Draft Due)**  
   SM: chpts. 17-18; 42  (look over 44-47)  
   CP: Mann – Homeland Insecurity  
   Armstrong – Dick Cheney’s Song of America

June

**Style (Body; Synthesis; Quotation/Citation)**

3- The Word; Body (organization/points); Synthetic knowledge (compare/contrast); Quotation (selection)  
   SM: chpts. 30-31; 26-28; pp. 40-42  
   CP: Lazare – False Testament  
   Lester – Oh, Gods!

10- The Sentence; Body; Synthetic thinking  
   **(Analysis Paper Due)**  
   SM: chpts. 32-33; 19-23  
   CP: Leuchtag – Human Rights, Sex Trafficking, and Prostitution  
   Klinger – Prostitution, Humanism, and a Woman’s Choice

17- The Paragraph; Synthetic process (academic discourse); Quotation (introducing and glossing)  
   SM: chpts. 34-35; 48; pp 102-125; 505-511  
   CP: Gladwell – The Trouble With Fries  
   Groopman – The Thirty Year’s War

**Process (Conclusion; Research; Presentation)**

24- Invention; Conclusion (what it does); Research (general types); Presentations (Oral)  
   **(Synthesis Draft Due)**  
   SM: chpts. 40; 50; pp. 32-36;  
   CP: Boo – After Welfare  
   Gladwell – Do Parents Matter?
July

8- Research (specific strategies – library sources); Conclusion (avoiding summary)
    (Synthesis Paper Due; Synthesis Presentations Begin)
    SM: chpts. 36-37; 41; pp. 128 –130
    CP: Baudrillard – L’Esprit du Terrorisme
        Wideman – Whose War?

15- Arrangement (deploying strategies effectively); Presentation (document design)
    (Synthesis Presentations Continue)
    SM: chpts.; 38-39; 51
    CP: Fishman – Making a Killing
        Lynn – Unmade in America

22- Persuasion
    (Bibliography Reports Due; Synthesis Presentations Continue)
    SM: chpt 29
    CP: Slouka - Blood on the tracks
        Jenkins – The Next Christianity

29- Conclusions
    (Research Draft Due; Synthesis Presentations Conclude)

August 8: Research Paper Due to the department Drop-box (near HH229) by 4:00PM.