UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

ENGLISH 109E, FALL 1989
Introduction to Essay Writing I

Meeting Place: HH 139, Thursdays, 7-10 p.m.

Instructor: Terry McCain
Office: HH 228C
Extension: 3986
Home: 894-0047

Office Hours: T 1:00-2:30, R 2:00-3:30, or by appointment.

The chief merit of language is clearness. (Galen)

Explaining metaphysics to the nation -
I wish he would explain his Explanation. (Byron)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Clarity, organization, argumentation, style - these are the principles we will attempt to achieve in asserting our point of view via the essay. Through lecture and discussion, readings, in-class writing labs, and take-home revisions, we will make effective use of written language in the persuasive communication of ideas. Each assignment will call for demonstration of specific strategies, such as comparison and contrast, cause and effect, process analysis and classification. By the end of the course, students should be able to write clear, coherent, argumentative essays.

FORMAT

The first hour of class will be reserved for lecture and discussion. For the final two hours (every other week) students will write the first draft of the assignment and submit it at the end of class. Essays will be returned the following week with suggestions for improvement in pertinent problem areas; and we will discuss ideas for revision as well as the readings. Students will take home and complete the final draft, typed and double-spaced, and hand it in at the next meeting. Marked essays will be returned to students the following week. Except for the first assignment, there will be an essay due every other week.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will write six essays, the first of which will not be marked. There will be no final exam. The final essay will be a research paper and should be started fairly early in the course. I will be available for consultation on the research paper during regular office hours, and a guest speaker from the Arts Library will outline various research approaches. Writing assignments will be weighted so that improvement will reflect the final grade. To receive credit for English 109E, you must complete all assignments i.e. write and satisfactorily revise each essay. Extensions may be granted only under extraordinary circumstances. There will be a penalty for late papers.

REQUIRED TEXTS


A paperback dictionary, such as Webster's, is also recommended.