English 109E
Introduction to Academic Writing

Fall, 1997
Mondays, 7:00 - 9:45 p.m.
HH 227

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Introductory Note
This course aims to help you develop reading and writing strategies required for many university courses and useful in many contexts outside of university. We will discuss and practise “how-to’s” of reading analytically and critically, of making meaning, and of writing academic discourse. In the process, you will practise reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, individually and/or in work teams.

Required Texts and Supplies
A good university-level dictionary
A notebook that you can comfortably carry around to use only for your writer’s notebook, not for class notes, etcetera, since it will be handed in periodically.
Paper clips or a stapler and staples

The Assignments
Writer’s Notebook 20 points
Peer response 15 points
Active participation 25 points
5 Quizzes 20 points
Essay # 1 30 points
Essay # 2 40 points
Writing in the Disciplines Assignment 50 points

Policies
Strong writers revise their work. The question is not whether they do or not, but only how. I have built revision of your texts into the structure of the course. You will have an opportunity to write, find out how readers understand your writing, and work with that piece of writing again before you receive a grade. You may earn up to a 10% bonus on a paper if your revision results in significant changes for the better. To give you a sense of scale, I don’t consider copy-editing
and other surface alterations to be significant changes (although, of course, they improve a text).

You may revise your essays up to the end of term, and submit them for re-grading in a portfolio then. If you wish to do so, you must do two things: consult with me about the revision before the last two weeks of classes, and submit all versions of the paper, including the one that I graded, so I can see how the revising process has changed it. If you do not consult with me, and present a portfolio for my consideration, I will not accept it. If you do not include all versions of the paper in your portfolio, I will not re-grade the paper. In other words, don’t procrastinate, and for the duration of this course, keep everything.

During the initial revising process for each essay, you will meet with me for a 15-20 minute conference. I will add my response to those you receive from classmates, and you can ask me any questions you have about your plan for revising the essay. Please come to this conference prepared to tell me what you want to achieve in the revision, and what aspect of your text you want me to focus on, specifically, since we won’t have time for me to respond to something vague like, “Could you just tell me what you think needs work?”

If you are consistently absent and/or late, you may lose up to 25 points (the participation grade). It is possible to be physically present in a room, but absent intellectually. The structure of this course is based on full participation by all class members, and anyone who contributes consistently less than others may lose points. Naturally, things happen in our lives and you may occasionally miss or be late for class. If you know ahead of time that you will miss or be late for class, please try to let me know ahead of time, and don’t worry too much about it; you won’t lose points for occasional lateness or absence. This policy is meant only for people who have a pattern of not participating in class.

If you want an extension of a deadline for a graded paper, talk to me about it. I do grant extensions for graded papers, but if you don’t talk to me ahead of time, you may lose up to 15% of the final grade. Do everything in your power to have a draft ready for in-class workshops, since you won’t receive responses if you have no draft, and that could affect your ability to revise your paper. You are more likely to lose that 15% for not having a draft to workshop, or for missing a workshop, than you are to it for handing a paper in late for me to grade, but in either case, the most important thing is to keep me informed of what’s going on.

I will deduct more points for poor editing and surface errors (grammar and mechanics) as the semester goes on, on the assumption that you should be working to eliminate such errors as the course progresses. I will always be available during office hours to help you work on this.

Notes
Always double-space assignments, and leave one to one-and-a-half inch margins on all sides.

Bring your writer’s notebook to class with you each week. Write only on the right-hand page of your notebook.

If you have a problem, talk to me. If you have trouble making it to my office hours, we can
arrange another time.

**Important Dates**

Monday, October 13 — Thanksgiving holiday

Quiz dates:
Monday, September 22
Monday, October 6
Monday, October 27
Monday, November 10
Monday, November 24

Monday, December 1 (last class) — Writing in the Disciplines Assignment due

Friday, December 5 — Final Portfolios due

**Essay due dates:**
Essay # 1: Monday, October 6? Friday, October 10?
Essay # 2: Monday, November 3? Friday, November 7?