ENG 204, Introduction to Writing Studies  
Fall 2016  
Eastern Connecticut State University  
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Office Hours: MF 2-4 in the Writing Center, Library 134; W 10-11 in Webb 254; also by appointment


Other required course readings, consisting mostly of scholarly articles, will be emailed to you. You are expected to print out the readings I don’t distribute in hard copy and bring them to class, so please budget for that. (In the past some people have brought them on their phones or laptops, but that hasn’t worked out well in terms of class discussion and learning; see “Laptop/Phone Policy,” below.)

*This course fulfills the Stage 2 University Writing Competency requirement for the English major and is required for the concentration in Rhetoric and Composition.*

**Course Goals:** Through the writing and reading you’ll do this semester, you’ll be introduced to foundational concepts in the discipline of Writing Studies (also, and often, called Rhetoric and Composition). These concepts, called “threshold concepts” for reasons we’ll talk about, are:

- Writing is *both* an activity and a subject of study;
- Writing is a social and rhetorical activity;
- Writing speaks to situations through recognizable forms;
- Writing enacts and creates identities and ideologies;
- All writers have more to learn;
- Writing is (also always) a cognitive activity. (Adler-Kassner and Wardle)

**Assignments and Reading:** This is a new course (taught for the first time last semester), and I’m still playing around with the readings and assignments. So I haven’t listed all the reading assignments on the syllabus; however, you can expect about 30-40 pages of reading per week at least at the beginning of the semester. I will give out readings and assignments for each unit as we go along; any updates to the class schedule will also be posted on my website, [www.easternct.edu/malenczykr](http://www.easternct.edu/malenczykr).

There will be three major graded assignments: a literacy narrative, a rhetorical analysis, and a self-portrait as a writer (or autoethnography). You will be using Chicago author-date style for these and for the other two smaller assignments, the Writing Center assignment and the letter to a friend; I’ll go over this style before the first paper is due. (MLA is not necessarily the standard citation format for work in Writing Studies; it really depends on the venue of publication.) Each of the three major assignments must be 5-7
pages long, double-spaced, and will be drafted and revised as indicated on the class schedule below. The Writing Center assignment will be 2-3 pages double-spaced; the letter to a friend should be around 5 pages double-spaced (and by the time the end of the semester rolls around, you shouldn’t have trouble reaching this length—in fact, you may need to shut yourself up).

Class participation: First, you need to come to class every day having done the reading and prepared for discussion. Take notes when you read and bring those notes to class along with the reading. You may already have your own method of taking notes in place, but if not, use the following questions as guidelines:

- What do you think are the most important or interesting aspects of this reading? (There is no right or wrong answer to this question.)
- What do you have questions about? What was incomprehensible to you?
- What do we need to spend some time on in class? What would you like to discuss further?

In order to ensure participation, I may often ask you to write at the beginning of class or answer some questions about the reading assignment for the day; usually, I’ll ask you about points you want to talk more about. You can write about what you struggled with and all the annoying parts that you didn’t understand!

You’ll also be asked from time to time to write in class about connections you see between the different materials you’ll be reading. As you’ll (I hope) come to understand, there are connections between writing and learning, and at times it may seem that I’m presenting the material in a disjointed way. This writing will help you understand how the weeks flow into one another. I’ll say more about this in class.

I do collect in-class writing and grade it check (fine), check-minus (completed only partially), zero (didn’t do it, or didn’t address the assignment). I don’t allow make-ups of in-class writing; missing a couple won’t hurt you, missing a lot will. At the end of the semester I average these (all checks would be an A, all zeros an F, plus other combinations something in the middle) to arrive at a class participation grade; see “Grading,” below.

Regarding participation: In every class there’s a group of people who say a lot and a group of people who don’t, but are learning nevertheless; engaging in class discussion can be useful for even the quiet people, however, so I try to encourage everyone to contribute. Having said that, I know some people are naturally quiet, but I can tell the difference between someone who’s thinking and absorbing the material vs. someone who is, well, sleeping. I reserve the right to lower the final grade of someone who comes to class flagrantly unprepared a lot of the time.

Attendance: You’re allowed two unexcused absences; save them for when you might be sick and don’t feel like going to the Health Service, or when your car might break down on the way to class. Anything beyond that requires documentation or other reasonable
evidence of a compelling excuse (I consider each case on its merits); otherwise I will lower your final grade by what I call a “step” for each unexcused absence (in other words, an A will become an A-, an A- will become a B+, and so on). If you are a student athlete and need to miss class for games, this can be excused, but please submit the required form to me as soon as possible before the event. If you’re ill and missing class beyond the two absences, you’ll need a doctor’s note. If there’s something going on in your life that requires you to be absent for an extended period of time, please see me as soon as possible so we can figure out a plan. It’s your responsibility to contact me.

Also: You’re responsible for your own learning in this class. Early on, I will ask you to exchange contact information with two or three other students so you can contact them (not me, please) for homework and be prepared for the next class if you’re absent.

Grading:

- In-class writings and other in-class assignments: 25% of final grade
- Writing Center assignment and “letter to a friend” assignment: 25% of final grade
- Three major, drafted-and-revised writing assignments: literacy narrative, rhetorical analysis, self-portrait as a writer (5 pages double-spaced, MLA style): 50% of final grade

Late assignments: I do not accept in-class assignments late at all unless you have an extended illness or other justifying circumstance and have made prior arrangements with me. As far as the three graded assignments go, they must be turned in at class time—both drafts and finals—unless, again, there is a justifying circumstance and you have made prior arrangements with me. If you haven’t done so, your grade on the paper will be lowered a full grade for every day it is late (a “day” starts as soon as class is over, so be on time). Your paper grade will also be lowered by a full grade if you do not have a draft on the day one is due.

Ethics:
Do not deliberately present the work of another as your own. This is plagiarism and will result in certain failure of my course and possibly further disciplinary action by the university.

Laptop/Phone Policy:
Turn your cell phones off or mute them when you enter this class, and don’t use them during the class period. If for some urgent reason you need to have your phone on, let me know at the beginning of class. I also ask that you not use your laptops, if you have them, in class. I’ve found that with laptops, people tend to be so busy paying attention to their screens—even if they’re taking class notes—that it isolates them from the rest of the class and creates a weird dynamic in which they tend to do things like asking me to repeat/explain things I’ve already said/explained so they can get it right in their notes, when they really should be participating in and contributing to discussion. I want you to be present in class, both physically and mentally, and engaged with each other and with
me. If you must use a laptop as an accommodation for a disability, then I need documentation for that. See below.

**Accommodation for Disability:**
Eastern is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or think you may have a disability) and, as a result, need a reasonable accommodation to participate in this class or complete course requirements, contact the Office of AccessAbility Services in Wood Hall, 465-0819, as soon as possible. To receive any academic accommodation, you must be appropriately registered with OAS and I must receive a letter describing what accommodation I should make (OAS will not disclose the nature of your disability). If you do not have a documented disability, remember that other support services, including the Writing Center (Library 134) and the rest of the ASC, are available free to all students for help with any class.

**The Writing Center:**
While we’re on the subject of the Writing Center: you’re required to make an appointment to visit once early this semester to work on an assignment (for any class) and write a brief report on what happened during the session and how it seems connected to a reading I will give you and which we’ll discuss before you visit. Writing Center teaching and learning has been important for the field of Writing Studies, and this assignment gives you the opportunity to think about yet another aspect of the field. This is due on October 31. The Center gets busy during midterm, so I recommend going early (“I couldn’t get an appointment because they were full” won’t fly as an excuse). You can make appointments using GradesFirst—I’ll show you how to do this.

**Schedule (I reserve the right to modify this to meet the needs of the class):**

**WEEK 1**
August 29 – Introduction to course: the syllabus as genre. Some in-class writing.

August 31-Sept. 2— readings due: Downs, “What Is First-Year Composition?”; excerpt from John Brereton, *The Origins of Composition Studies in the American College*, 1875-1925; *NWWK* (*Naming What We Know*), 1-16

UNIT 1, WEEKS 2-4: “Writing Is a Social and Rhetorical Activity,” “Writing Enacts and Creates Identities and Ideologies” (the key words here are “social,” “rhetorical,” and “identity”

**WEEK 2:**

Sept. 5—Labor Day, no class

Sept. 7— Reading: Adler-Kassner and Wardle 17-34; Mirabelli, “Learning to Serve: The Language and Literacy of Food Service Workers.” Discussion of “social” and “rhetorical.”

Sept. 9— Reading: Adler-Kassner and Wardle 48-58.
WEEK 3:
Sept. 12–Reading: Roozen,”From Journals to Journalism: Tracing Trajectories of Literate Development;” literacy narrative assignment given, including introduction to Chicago author-date style.

Sept. 14 –Discussion of assignment, Adler-Kassner/Wardle, Roozen. What has been your “trajectory of literate development,” so far? What identity or identities have you enacted, or do you enact, in writing?

Sept. 16 –Bring very rough draft (a beginning!) to class. Email draft to Dr. Malenczyk for response no later than 5 pm (this is a hard and fast deadline). Bring enough copies to share with 3 other people.

WEEK 4:
Sept. 19– Reading, Bruffee, “Peer Tutoring and the Conversation of Mankind.” Writing Center assignment given.

Sept. 21—readings/activity TBA

September 23– Writing Assignment 1, literacy narrative, due; introduction to next unit

UNIT 2, WEEKS 5-8: Rhetoric: “Writing Speaks to Situations Through Recognizable Forms” (the key words here are “situation” and “form”)

WEEK 5:
Sept. 26 – Reading: Adler-Kassner and Wardle 35-40; Summer Smith, “The Genre of the End Comment”

Sept. 28– Smith, continued (please review article again for class discussion)

Sept. 30-- Reading: Adler-Kassner and Wardle 40-47; possibly another reading TBA

WEEK 6:
Oct. 3 – Reading: Keith Grant-Davie, “Rhetorical Situations and their Constituents”; rhetorical analysis assignment given


Oct. 7—discussion of Grant-Davie, continued (please review article again for class discussion); reading on genre TBA
WEEK 7:
Oct. 10 – readings on genre TBA

Oct. 12—draft of rhetorical analysis assignment due; peer review. Bring enough copies to share with 3 other people. Email draft to Dr. Malenczyk by 5 pm today. Again, this is a firm deadline.

Oct. 14—Dr. Malenczyk out of town on personal leave; assignment or class activity TBA. Plan to come to class, as there may be a sub.

WEEK 8:

Oct. 17 – reading/readings on writing across the curriculum TBA

Oct. 19– TBA

Oct. 21: rhetorical analysis assignment due; introduction to next unit

UNIT 3, WEEKS 9-11: “All Writers Have More to Learn”

WEEK 9:

Oct. 24– Reading: Adler-Kassner and Wardle 59-70; Sommers, “Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers”

Oct. 26– Reading: Prior, “Tracing Process: How Texts Come into Being;” assignment given, self-portrait as a writer—or, autoethnography

Oct. 28– further discussion of Prior (please review article prior to class) and assignment

WEEK 10:
Oct. 31– Writing center assignment due. Other activity TBA.

Nov. 2 – reading TBA

Nov. 4 –first draft of self-portrait/autoethnography due. Bring enough copies to share with 3 other people. Email draft to Dr. Malenczyk by 5 p.m. (firm deadline)

WEEK 11:

Nov. 7 – TBA

Nov. 9 – TBA

Nov. 11 -- TBA
WEEK 12:
Nov. 14 – final draft of self-portrait/autoethnography due

Nov. 16 – Reading: Lindquist, “Class Ethos and the Politics of Inquiry: What the Barroom Can Teach Us About the Classroom”

Nov. 18 – TBA

WEEK 13:

Nov. 21 – letter to friend assignment given: explain to a friend what you’ve learned in this class.

Nov. 23-25: Thanksgiving recess, no class

WEEK 14: “Writing Is (Also Always) a Cognitive Activity”

Nov. 28 – Adler-Kassner and Wardle 71-81

Nov. 30 –TBA

Dec. 2 – TBA

WEEK 15:

Dec. 5 – TBA

Dec. 7 – last day of class; letter to friend assignment due at class time. Wrap-up.