

English 102, Section A
Freshman Composition
3 credit hours
Fall 2014
M, W 12:00-1:15, 2nd Floor Library B
Prerequisite: Successful Completion of ENG 101

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Course Catalog Description: (pending catalog change): The study of academic research and writing with special attention to information literacy. Students enrolled in English 102 must also concurrently register for the Writing Proficiency Examination (ENG 099).

Special Topic: The first assumption of this course: you have something to say about movies. But lots has been said already by lots of people in lots of places, from high school newspapers to fanboy blogs to scholarly journals. Where can you fit in? And about the critics trailing the movies as doggedly as the posse trailing Butch and Sundance: who *are* those guys? That question alone makes writing about movies more and more difficult each year: who gets to decide what? If you want to say something about movies, as assumed above, you have to know what has been said already and who said it, and you have to figure out what matters to whom. The second assumption of this course: you care about how art, in this case film, reflects reality (or should we say truth?). This assumption may be true only for this semester for some of you. To say something about representation in the movies, then, and to see what others say will be a major goal of this course. How to gather and limit and then present information about film's representation of society will occupy us for much of this semester. Your role will include deciding on a topic of representation in film and then choosing the criteria for measuring how particular films accomplish that representation. Finally, you will situate yourself among the critics in your evaluation, clearly presenting where they stand and where you stand.

Course Rationale:

The purpose of English 102: Freshmen Composition is to introduce students to the challenges and strategies for conducting academic level research. Students will

- learn how to effectively and efficiently discover necessary information,
- explore how to evaluate the information they discover,
- understand how to incorporate that information into their own thinking and writing,
- decide how to use, acknowledge, and document that information ethically.

The course will help prepare students to write and conduct research across the disciplines as they continue their college course work. ENG 102 includes an information literacy emphasis as part of U Research, Mississippi College's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

Course Methods:

This course will emphasize practical exercises and assignments designed to help the student understand the current challenges of academic research and writing, including electronic retrieval and library offerings. Course methods may include discussions, lectures, group activities, conferences, quizzes, and exams.

Course Objectives:

Students will

- learn to read, write and communicate critically and analytically
- learn to access library resources, including print and electronic media
- learn to evaluate print and electronic sources based on objective criteria
- learn to integrate source material into their own with their own analyses and conclusions
- learn and practice proper documentation and attribution and understand the ethical dimensions of using source material
- develop interpersonal skills that facilitate group work

NOTE: Assignments and Assessment should follow the guidelines articulated in the “English 102 Assignment Parameters” document. The Attendance, Academic Integrity, and Late Paper policies are included on a separate handout. These materials are all located in the English Department’s “H:” drive.

Course Text and Supplies:

- An MC username and password for computer-related activities (email, database use, Moodle access, etc.). Note that students are expected to begin the course with basic computer skills, including word processing, using internet search engines, and negotiating professional email with attachments.
- Flash/thumb/travel drive or My Dropbox or similar account
- Articles to be assigned from EBSCOHOST and other sources (more info to follow in class)
- *A Pocket Style Manual*, 6th ed. (available at the Bookstore)
- Binder or notebook

Assignments and Evaluation: The following major assignments will be required during the semester. Note that the submission of major assignments follows the MC English Department’s late work policy, attached.

1. Summary and Paraphrase Group Assignment: Using a shared text related to our special topic, you will demonstrate your skills at composing longer and shorter summaries and paraphrasing complex ideas. **(10 points)**

2. “State of the Conversation” Project Proposal and Interview: Following instruction and practice in research strategies, you will compose a project proposal including a research topic related to the course topic, a clear and focused research question, a project rationale, and a list of preliminary sources. In a one-on-one conference, you will present your proposal to the professor and will answer questions about your research skills and strategies. (Students whose interviews indicate they need more research instruction and practice will be required to participate in additional preparation, to revise the proposal, and to re-interview before moving ahead to the next major assignment.) **(15 points)**

3. Source Evaluation Collection: You will research substantially and read widely about your topic. Then you will select at least six diverse, substantial sources that seem especially useful in demonstrating the “state of the conversation” regarding your specific research question. You will compose an extended evaluative summary of each source. **(20 points)**

4. Group Presentation of Selected Films and Criteria: As a group, you will present the films that best represent your chosen topic. Your presentation will include four sections: (1) an overview of the criteria used for your choice of films, (2) an overview of critical positions regarding these films, (3) a presentation of clips demonstrating how each film represents its topic, and (4) an evaluation that ranks the films in the order of their effectiveness of representation. **(20 points)**

5. Researched Essay Final Project: Using your Source Evaluation Collection and information from your Group Poster Presentation (and additional sources if necessary), you will complete and present an argumentative essay that limits the argument from your group presentation to the qualities of representation in one film. Your essay should be oriented around a specific, focused, original, and insightful argumentative thesis regarding that film. The essay should rely on—ethically and with appropriate citation—researched materials to support and develop your position, but your own ideas should control the essay’s structure and organization. Be sure to consider and address opposing or alternative ideas and positions. See the assignment sheet for further details. **(15 points)**

6. Exit Survey and Response: At the conclusion of the semester, you will complete an online survey and compose a response comparing the skills measured on the survey with your course experience. **(5 points, at our scheduled final exam)**

7. Participation and Preparation: Throughout the semester, you will complete “smaller” in- and out-of- class activities and assignments (in-class writing, homework assignments, drafts, peer reviews, and reading responses) that contribute to this score. This score is based on substantial completion and on-time submission. **(15 points, due throughout the semester)**

Grading Scale: 90-100 pts=A, 80-89 pts=B, 70-79 pts=C, 60-69 pts=D, 59 pts and below=F

Undergraduate Grading System: For final semester grades, the English Department adheres to the University's Undergraduate Grading System as described in the current catalog. According to that system:

- **A** is reserved for work which is definitely superior in quality.
- **B** is given for work which is consistently good and which manifests sufficient interest, effort, or originality to lift it above average work.
- **C** is given for average work and shows that basic requirements in class assignments have been met.
- **D** earns credit but is below the standard required for graduation.
- **F** indicates failure and naturally carries no credit.

Writing Center Tutoring: The MC Writing Center offers sessions by appointment and on a walk-in basis. Students can also sign up for standing, weekly appointments with a specific tutor. Forms to schedule weekly appointments are available from your professor or in the Writing Center (1st Floor of Leland Speed Library).

Course Policies:

Attendance & Participation: Attendance is crucial to the success of this class, as the class will be based on student discussion. Participation in such discussion and your ability to take and to offer constructive feedback will be recorded and will contribute to the student's grade.

The English Department adheres to Mississippi College's attendance policy as outlined in the current Undergraduate Catalog:

Class attendance is an essential part of university education, and students are expected to attend regularly and punctually all classes and laboratories for which they are registered. Cumulative absences may result in a lowered grade or loss of credit for the course. Tardiness is also subject to penalty, as is any failure to complete required class work on time. Although some specific requirements may vary according to the nature and structure of the course, the following guidelines summarize university policy:

1. Class attendance is required, and accurate records are kept.
2. Students must not accumulate excessive absences. A student receives a grade of F in a course immediately upon accumulating the following number of absences, whether **excused or unexcused**:
8 in semester classes meeting 2 times per week.

For lesser numbers of absences, the student should expect a lowered grade in the course, with the maximum penalty of one letter grade for each week of **unexcused** absences (in a semester) or the equivalent.

Absence Appeal. If a student misses more than the number of class periods specified in university policy and believes that there are reasonable explanations for the absences, he/she may appeal the absences to the dean of the school in which the course is being taught. Students may obtain a Student Absence Appeal Form from the office of the appropriate dean.

Late Papers Policy: Assignments that are due in class (such as reading responses, in-class writing, reviews, drafts, journals, and homework) will not be accepted after the class's regular meeting time unless a student has written documentation of an excused absence or has notified the teacher beforehand.

The English Department has established the following policy for late work submitted in core English courses:

- Grades for papers as assigned on syllabus will be reduced according to the following schedule:
- after time due and up to 24 hours late: one letter grade;
 - after 24 hours and up to 48 hours late: two letter grades;
 - after 48 hours and up to 72 hours late: three letter grades;
 - after 72 hours, any paper turned in will be given an "F."

Failure to turn in an assignment will result in a grade of zero on that assignment.

Academic Integrity & Civility: The English Department adheres to Mississippi College's academic integrity policy as

outlined in the current Undergraduate Catalog:

Mississippi College students are expected to be scrupulously honest. Dishonesty, such as cheating or plagiarism, or furnishing false information, including forgery, alteration or misuse of University documents, records or identification, will be regarded as a serious offense subject to severe penalty, including, but not limited to, loss of credit and possible dismissal. See the current Mississippi College Student Handbook or University Policy 2.19 for specific information regarding penalties associated with dishonest behavior at Mississippi College.

Academic civility will be required, as students must show respect for their classmates during discussions. All cell phones, pagers, I-pods, and other electronic devices should be turned off or silenced during class. There will be no texting or eating in the class. If students are caught using these electronic devices during class, they will not receive any participation points for that day.

Student Assistance

A. Early Alert System

Mississippi College has adopted the practice of finding students early in the semester who may be exhibiting behaviors that could ultimately have a negative impact on their academic progress. These behaviors are often called “red flag” behaviors and include, but are not limited to, excessive absences, poor test grades, and lack of class participation or evidence of non-engagement. Identifying these behaviors early gives the instructor the opportunity to raise the “red flag” on behalf of a particular student so that the student can take the appropriate action to redirect his/her progress. The system alerts the student, the student’s advisor, and the Office of Student Success.

These messages are intended to help a student recognize an area of concern and to encourage him/her to make some choices to improve the situation. When a student receives an Early Alert message, the student should quickly make an appointment to talk with his/her professor about the situation. Also, students can make full use of the Office of Student Success to set academic goals and connect to campus resources.

B. Students with Disabilities

In order for a student to receive disability accommodations under Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, he or she must schedule an individual meeting with the Director of Student Counseling Services **immediately upon recognition of their disability** (if their disability is known they must come in before the semester begins or make an appointment **immediately** upon receipt of their syllabi for the new semester). The student must bring with them written documentation from a medical physician and/or licensed clinician that verifies their disability. If the student has received prior accommodations, they must bring written documentation of those accommodations (example Individualized Education Plan from the school system). Documentation must be current (**within 3 years**).

The student must meet with SCS **face-to face** and also attend two (2) additional follow up meetings (one mid semester before or after midterm examinations and the last one at the end of the semester). Please note that the student may also schedule additional meetings as needed for support through SCS as they work with their professor throughout the semester. Note: Students must come in **each semester** to complete their Individualized Accommodation Plan (example: MC student completes fall semester IAP plan and even if student is a continuing student for the spring semester they must come in again to complete their spring semester IAP plan).

Student Counseling Services is located on the 4th floor of Alumni Hall) or they may be contacted via email at mbryant@mc.edu. You may also reach them by phone at **601-925-7790**. **Dr. Morgan Bryant is director of MC Student Counseling Services.**