SYLLABUS FOR IC 105: COLLEGE WRITING I
Term 1, Fall 2006
Franklin Pierce College Division of Graduate and Professional Studies

Professor: Tracy Mendham, MFA
Email: mendham[at]fpc[dot]edu (preferred method of communication)
Location: Franklin Pierce College, 17 Bradco St, Keene NH 03431
URL: http://academics.keene.edu/tmendham/FPC.htm
Phone: The number for the Keene campus is (603) 357-0079. You can leave messages for me and I'll pick them up before class.

FPC Library: Both the library catalog and EBSCOHost (an online database of articles you can use in research essays) can be accessed at: http://library.fpc.edu/

CLASS MEETING TIMES
Monday and Wednesday, 5:30-8:00 pm.

TEXTBOOKS
You also need a standard composition notebook.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
College Writing I is a foundation course to develop effective writing. The skills learned in this course will be carried over in other disciplines to prepare students for the various types of writing assignments through the process of prewriting, writing, revising and editing.

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS
I expect you to:
- Take ownership of your learning process;
- Perform the written work and reading assignments on time and to the best of your ability;
- Participate actively, conscientiously, and courteously in our community of scholars (this class)

TEACHING STRATEGIES
During our class meetings, I'll allot time for writing practice, peer response, discussion of related readings, instruction on the conventions of academic essay writing, and when needed, review of rules for standard written English. In addition to bringing any writing assignments that are due that day, always bring a pen or pencil, notebook, and the assigned reading material to class. When you study or complete reading or writing assignments, write down questions that come up--answering specific questions will always be a priority during class time.

This is not a lecture course. In this class you'll learn by doing, not just listening. A typical class day might entail spending 15 minutes talking about the day's agenda and doing a writing exercise, listening to 30 minutes of discussion and instruction on the day's material, taking a short break, spending 30 minutes completing peer review or a small group activity (often about a reading assignment), and then talking about and preparing for upcoming assignments, often with informal individual writing time.
COURSE OBJECTIVES
College Writing I will help you to develop your essay writing and critical reading and writing skills at the college level. Here’s what this course should do for you, and how you’ll get there:

- **To help build your self-confidence in writing**: You’ll develop your ability to write college-level expository prose by writing four papers and keeping a journal of your responses to readings.

- **To increase your awareness of the writing process and how it works for you**: Through the use of various invention techniques, writing multiple drafts of essays, your own evolving ideas, and constructive instructor and peer feedback, you’ll understand that writing involves serious thinking, preparation, reflection, reconsideration, and revision.

- **To enable you to feel at ease in any writing situation**: By analyzing assignments and identifying: a) the purpose of the paper; b) the audience or “discourse community” that is to be addressed in the paper; and c) the role, voice, or level of formality required for the paper, you’ll understand the influence of the “rhetorical situation” on your writing.

- **To enable you to become an active learner**: There will be little opportunity to sit back and learn passively in this class. You’ll read actively, take part in small group exercises and large group discussions, and take responsibility for your learning experience.

- **To enable you to experience the benefits of teamwork through collaborative learning**: You’ll learn the value of discussing your ideas and drafts with others (such as other students in the peer review sessions, and individual conferences with your instructor). You’ll find that the development and expression of ideas is a process that can be enriched by discussion, debate, and research, and group inquiry.

- **To emphasize taking responsibility for the written word**: You’ll take responsibility for your work in writing your own essays, expressing your ideas in class discussions, and articulating your understanding of readings. You will learn the conventions of MLA style documentation by incorporating appropriate sources into your work, demonstrating your understanding of the meaning and importance of academic honesty.

- **To enable you to develop your ideas thoroughly using adequate details, examples, and reasons**: Through instructor and peer feedback and analysis of the assigned readings, you’ll learn to organize an essay according to an identifiable pattern, with an effective introduction, a main point or thesis, the clear development of an idea that builds to a conclusion, and balance between main and supporting points. In developing and revising essays you’ll learn the purpose and importance of paragraphs and sentence structure in contributing to the overall effectiveness of an essay.

- **To allow you to recognize and respect the power of language as a tool for thinking clearly and deeply**: As you accept feedback on your writing, you’ll learn how your words affect other people. With this class, you enter the academic conversation and make a place for yourself in it.

- **To become a critical reader**: You’ll learn critical reading of professional non-fiction essays as you are asked to read carefully and critically. You’ll learn to recognize both the rhetorical (i.e. purpose, structure, audience, theme, techniques, style, etc.) and cultural (e.g. time period, race, class, gender, etc.) contexts of the essay.

- **You’ll learn the importance of editing and proofreading** as you write prose that is free of serious mechanical errors and avoids sexist language. You’ll practice eliminating the kind of errors that weaken the effectiveness of the essay or interfere with comprehension.

College Writing I is not a grammar course, but grammatical issues and principles that affect style, rhetorical effectiveness, and expression will be addressed with the whole class or individually as needed.
EVALUATION

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>4 Essays</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation and preparation</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
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During the term, you will keep a journal of your responses to readings, and write a total of four essays. These papers will cover a range of essay forms. All writing in this course should be revised (looked at and changed between the first and final drafts, before it is handed in). Since good writing is about process as much as product, students must attach to their completed work all preliminary notes, drafts, interviews and outlines—everything which led to the final draft.

In addition to the four essays, each student will be responsible for completing peer reviews for their classmates. I will be looking at these reviews for thoughtful, honest, enthusiastic, and constructive dialogue between two writers.

Your class participation grade will evaluated by attendance, preparedness (having the writing and reading assignments done), and most importantly, what you do to help this make classroom a lively and thought-provoking, yet a unjudgmental, studious, and civil environment. (This means that you cannot just sit in class quietly and expect more than a C for your participation grade: you will need to ask questions and contribute to class discussions on a regular basis, and be visibly and constructively active in small group work and peer reviews.)

You will receive detailed instructions for each of the four formal essays. For your journal, you will be writing short, informal assignments of 1-2 pages in an old-fashioned composition notebook.

SUMMARY OF PAPER ASSIGNMENTS

**Essay 1: Examining Received Ideas.** You’ll examine “the standard view” on a topic of your choice, question it, analyze it, and persuasively express your own view on it.

**Essay 2: Responding to a Text.** You’ll choose one of our assigned readings and illuminate it for the reader, talking about how the text works and discussing the ideas in it. Again, persuasively expressing your own views on the text will be central.

**Essay 3: Researched Claim Paper.** This will take you deeper into library research and the conventions of MLA style. You’ll further explore the art of making a claim which you’ll support with evidence, and integrate multiple sources into your writing.

**Essay 4: Formal/Informal Tour de Force.** This will be hard work but it should also be fun. I’ll be asking you to use all the formal writing skills you’ve acquired, but to also to blend them with informal or colloquial language, and reference popular culture in your research. As a writer, you’ll put the “new” you (your academic voice) together with the “real” you (your natural voice and identity).

There are no minimum or maximum numbers of pages for any essay assignment—just write as much as you need to in order to make it a good essay.

When a peer draft is due, that means that you have to bring a first (or rough) draft of the essay to class to use in peer review; another student will read it but it will not be graded.

When an instructor draft is due, bring in a final draft of the essay to give to your instructor. Attach your peer draft and any peer review or other feedback you’ve received.
Always bring a printed copy of the essay to class when one is due. I encourage you to also email the essay to me as a Word (.doc) or Rich Text (.rtf) file, but email submission is not required. (Email is a backup for you in case your printed essay should not make it to class on time, and is a convenience for me when I need to give you detailed feedback and assistance on mechanical issues in an essay.) Any sources you use should be documented in MLA style. Dictionary and encyclopedia articles are not acceptable sources for these essays. All peer and instructor drafts should be typed.

Safeguards: Always, always back up your work. It’s not a question if your computer will crash, it’s a matter of when. When you’re writing on the computer, save your work every 15 minutes, and at the end of each writing session back up your work by printing it, saving it onto a disk or removable drive, or emailing it to yourself. (You might want to set up an free email account just for this purpose through Gmail, Hushmail, or Yahoo.)

POLICIES

Late Assignments: Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Instructor drafts will drop a letter grade for each day they are late. Having your rough draft for a peer review is essential; without it you cannot participate fully in the work of the class (and your grade will take a hit not only in terms of your writing assignments but in terms of your class participation as well.)

Attendance: Regular attendance and active, constructive participation are mandatory. You should attend all class meetings; it’s hard to do an excellent job on all the assignments otherwise. However, to cover any emergencies, you can miss one class (that’s one week of classes) without it affecting your grade. You are adults so there will be no such thing as excused or unexcused absences in the class. It’s up to you to decide what constitutes an emergency. A second absence lowers your participation grade by one letter grade, and a third an additional letter grade. If you have to miss class, you are still responsible for the work. If an assignment is due and you cannot attend class in person, email it to me before class, have a friend bring it to class, or drop it off ahead of time.

Punctuality and Participation: You are expected to be ready by the beginning of class to participate in that day’s work. Walking into a class late, without the required materials, or without having read or written the day’s assignment is disruptive and will affect your participation grade. If you are more than 10 minutes late more than twice, it will be counted as an absence. If you are not prepared and equipped for class you may be asked to leave, and this will be counted as an absence. You are expected to contact me before class to inform me of any issues that could influence your attendance, participation, or preparedness.

Accommodations: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, any student in this class who has a documented learning disability will be provided with reasonable accommodations designed to meet his/her needs. Before any such assistance can occur, it is the responsibility of the student to see that documentation is on file with the Campus Director. Please see me as soon as possible to discuss any need for accommodations.

In addition, there are some accommodations I can provide without formally documented learning disabilities.

Syllabus Change: This syllabus is subject to change. You’ll be notified of any changes well in advance.
Academic Dishonesty Policy

This part of the Franklin Pierce College policy on academic integrity:

Since plagiarism strikes at the very heart of the academic enterprise, it is taken very seriously at Franklin Pierce College. Plagiarism is the act of stealing or passing as one’s own the ideas or words of another. Specifically this includes:

- copying the words of another student from examinations, themes, term papers or theses;
- copying the printed words or ideas of another writer without giving credit to the author;
- failing to cite quotations and borrowed ideas,
- failing to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks, and failing to put summaries and paraphrases in your own words;
- using, borrowing, stealing, presenting or downloading another’s ideas/writing and submitting such material as your own work;
- resubmitting work, in whole or in part, that has previously been submitted in another course without prior permission of the current instructor.

The minimum penalty for a first offense, for all forms of cheating, including plagiarism, is at the instructor’s discretion, with a mandatory placement of a documented record on file in the office of Graduate and Professional Studies. For a second offense of cheating, including plagiarism, the student will receive a one-semester, non-deferrable suspension from the College. For a third offense of cheating, including plagiarism, the student will be dismissed from the College. In any case discussed above, the ultimate discretion lies with the Dean’s Office of the Division of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Further explanation and specific examples of plagiarism can be found on pp. 331-334 of A Writer's Reference.

If I find that a paper is plagiarized in whole or in part, I will give it a zero; this frequently leads to a failing grade for the course.

Grades: Please note that your final grade for the semester will be an “A,” “A-,” “B+,” “B,” “B-,” “C+,” “C,” OR “F.” Since this is a required core course, if you do not earn a grade of “C” or higher, your grade will be recorded as an “F” by Franklin Pierce until such time as you retake the course and earn a passing grade.

You may find the following scale helpful for understanding your numerical grades on assignments:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96-100</td>
<td>Distinguished work, excellent thinking and analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>High quality thinking, above average work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
<td>Typical, standard quality work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-66</td>
<td>Below C-level work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
<td>Does not meet minimum standards</td>
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ABOUT YOUR INSTRUCTOR

I teach college writing at the Keene campus of Franklin Pierce College, New Hampshire Community Technical College, and Keene State College. I taught both in the traditional classroom setting and hybrid online courses. I have a Master of Fine Arts in Writing degree from Vermont College, and a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Smith College.

I am a strong believer in writing as a means of empowerment, discovery, and self expression for students. The most important thing for you to know about me is that I believe that no one is a bad writer. If you have been led to believe you are a bad writer, we will bend all our efforts toward proving it isn’t so. Often very important things are said and done in beginning college writing and I feel privileged to be a part of that process.
RECEIPT OF COURSE SYLLABUS

I certify that I have received, read and understood the course syllabus for College Writing I.

If I have any questions, I will write them below.

SIGNED: ________________________________ DATE: ___________

Print your name here in case I can't read your signature: ________________________________

Write your unanswered questions below. You may also use this space to inform me of any special needs or concerns you have regarding the course. This information will be kept confidential.