

University of Texas at Arlington
English 1301 Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking
Fall 2009

“Language is wine upon the lips.” Virginia Woolf

Instructor: Johnny A. Stein

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ENG 1301-019 MWF 10:00-10:50

ENG 1301-024 MWF 11:00-11:50

* Note: This syllabus is a guide to the course for the students. The instructor may, at discretion, change content and requirements during the semester. Any changes to the syllabus will be discussed in class and electronically posted.

Required Texts:

- Bill McKibben, *Deep Economy*
- Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say*
- Hacker & Fister, *A Writer's Reference (Sixth Edition)*
- Online packet E-Reserve

Course Description:

Welcome to our class! English 1301 is an integrated course in critical thinking, reading, and writing. Because these three processes are mutually dependent, we will spend our time in the course reading and analyzing texts as well as writing about them. Our course work this semester will form around a central theme: sustainability. Together, we will define sustainability and determine what it means to pursue prosperity in a local direction. Obviously, this is not a course in economics or ecology. However, these fields will inform our work inasmuch as they define paradigms that are integral to our identities as consumers and producers, a major theme of our reading and writing assignments. In addition, reading and writing in this course are "integrated." You will use the readings as a basis for your essays, and you will use writing to deepen your understanding of the readings. The goal of the course is not only to improve your reading and writing skills, but to sharpen your abilities as a critical thinker in any field.

The texts you read and analyze and the essays you write will be "expository" in nature. (The next course in the Freshman English sequence, 1302, will teach you "argumentation.") With the exception of the final essay, you'll do little or no outside research when you write the essays; I'll mainly be interested in how you understand and interpret on your own the texts that we read.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of ENGL 1301, students should be able to:

Rhetorical Knowledge

- Use knowledge of the rhetorical situation—audience, purpose, genre—to analyze and construct texts
- Compose texts in a variety of genres, expanding their repertoire beyond predictable forms
- Use conventions of structure, tone, diction, and syntax appropriate to the rhetorical situation

Critical Reading, Thinking, and Writing

- Use writing, reading, and discussion for learning, communicating, and examining assumptions
- Summarize, respond to, and analyze texts
- Employ critical reading strategies to identify author's position, main ideas, genre conventions, and rhetorical strategies
- Produce texts with a focus, thesis, and controlling idea, and identify these elements in others' texts
- Provide appropriate support for claims
- Find, evaluate, and synthesize appropriate sources to inform and situate their own claims

Processes

- Practice flexible strategies for generating, revising, and editing texts
- Practice writing as a recursive process that can lead to substantive changes in ideas, structure, and supporting evidence through multiple revisions
- Use the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes to critique their own and others' works

Conventions

- Apply knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics
- Summarize, paraphrase, and quote from sources using appropriate documentation style
- Control such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling
- Employ technologies to format texts according to appropriate stylistic conventions

Description of Major Assignments:

IN CLASS WRITING:

“This is the practice school of writing. Like running, the more you do it, the better you get at it.”
– Natalie Goldberg, *Writing Down the Bones*.

During the first five minutes of class, we will conduct what Natalie Goldberg calls “writing practice.” Writing practice is raw, wild, and free flowing. The aim is to burn through to first thoughts. There is no good or bad writing practice. It is what it is. Most importantly, writing practice keeps us in the “practice of writing.” It serves as the most basic approach to any writing

and discussion we will do, including finished pieces. You will be keeping a writing journal throughout the semester. It is *your responsibility* to keep up with this journal. Goldberg asks us to keep these six strategies in mind when conducting our writing practice:

1. *Keep your hand moving.* (Don't pause to reread the line you have just written. That's stalling and trying to get control of what you're saying. Don't stop until the time is up.)
2. *Don't cross out.* (That is editing as you write. Even if you write something you didn't mean to write, leave it. Don't backspace.)
3. *Don't worry about spelling, punctuation, grammar.* (Don't even care about staying within the margins and lines on the page.)
4. *Lose control.*
5. *Don't think. Don't get logical.*
6. *Go for the jugular.* (If something comes up in your writing that is scary or naked, dive right into it. It probably has lots of energy.)

In addition to your writing practice journal, you will be writing one essay in class.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS PAPERS:

During the course of the semester, you will be turning in Critical Questions Papers. These papers will act as one-page, informal responses to the readings. Overall, these papers will serve as 10 percent of your final course grade. They must be typed in a 12-point font with one-inch margins.

Guidelines for Critical Questions Papers:

Individual Section (do this before you come to class)

1. Read the assigned essay. While you're reading, "mark up" the text by underlining, making marginal notes, etc. Reread if necessary.
2. When you're finished reading and marking, choose a "chunk" of the text or a "meaty" passage that seems particularly troubling, confusing, or just interesting to you.
3. Respond to your chunk in the following specific ways:
 - (a) Literally (what do you think is going on here?)
 - (b) Emotionally (what associations and connections do you make?)
 - (c) Intellectually (what ideas or questions does this raise for you?)

At the end of your response, pose a question about the text. The question must deal specifically with one of the assigned readings, or it can be a bit broader and engage several readings. If you ask a question about a specific passage, please provide the quotation and page number(s); if you ask a question about an issue found on specific pages, please include the page numbers. (There is no need to provide full bibliographical information for these questions.) This question should not have a mere "yes" or "no" answer. Also, do not ask definition-based or other easily researched questions (for example, "what does sustainability mean?") Rather, these questions should guide our class discussions. I will provide some examples of acceptable questions in class.

ESSAYS:

In addition to one in-class essay, you will be required to complete a **Discourse Communities Memoir**, a **OneBook Essay** related to *Deep Economy*, and a **Synthesis Essay**. Homework, handouts, in-class activities, mini-lessons, peer reviews, and discussions will help prepare for these assignments. These essays must be typed, double-spaced in Times New Roman font set at 12 points with margins set at one inch on all sides. All papers will be formatted and works will

be cited according to Modern Language Association (MLA) guidelines. A minimum of one rough draft is mandatory for each essay (the OneBook essay requires two rough drafts). Students will receive feedback on these drafts in peer review workshops and in student-teacher conferences. Additionally, students will receive individual feedback from the instructor in the form of comments on pre-writing and first drafts of early assignments. All drafts, comments, and peer review materials must be turned in with the final draft.

****Students must keep all papers until final grades are received from the university.**

Grading:

GRADES	
100 points	Attendance/Participation
200 points	Discourse Communities Memoir
250 points	One Book Essay
100 points	Poster Project
100 points	In Class Essay
100 points	Critical Questions Papers
150 points	Final Paper-Synthesis Essay
1000 Points Possible	TOTAL

Grades in FYE are A (100-90), B (89-80), C (79-70), F or Z (69 and below). The Z grade is reserved for those students who attend class regularly, participate actively, and complete all the assignments on time but simply fail to write well enough to earn a passing grade. This judgment is made by the instructor and not necessarily based upon a number average. The Z grade is intended to reward students for good effort. While students who receive a Z will not get credit for the course, the Z grade will not affect their grade point average. They may repeat the course for credit until they do earn a passing grade. The F grade, which does negatively affect one's GPA, goes to students who fail to write well enough to earn a passing grade, do not attend class regularly, do not participate actively, and/or do not complete assigned work.

*****If you ever disagree with or have a question about a grade that you receive on a piece of work, first please read my comments carefully, weigh them against the assignment requirements, and if you are still unsure, make an appointment to discuss it with me. If you would like me to reread and reconsider the paper or assignment, or you think an error was made in grading, you**

may request a re-evaluation in writing within one week after the assignment is returned to you. Your reasons should be *specific and supported by references to the grading criteria, to the expectations of the assignment, and to specific details from your paper.*

Revision Policy:

Re-writing is an important means for improving both the writing process and the final product. Students have the **option of revising the Discourse Communities Memoir and the OneBook Essay** after they have been graded. Students must request a rewrite opportunity immediately upon receipt of their graded essay, and will have one week to revise and resubmit the paper. To be eligible for a revised grade, a re-written essay must be substantially changed in both form and content. Revision does not simply mean making grammatical and spelling corrections as they appear marked on the initial paper. The original graded draft must accompany the re-written copy, with all changes highlighted by the student. The initial grade and the revised grade will be averaged to arrive at the final grade for each of these essay projects. Also note that points lost due to missing process work (drafts, peer review, etc.) cannot be regained through revision.

Late Assignments:

Written class assignments are *due at the beginning of class*. I will not be accepting any assignments via e-mail. This is a college level course. Therefore, I will not be accepting late assignments. Class requirements are outlined via the syllabus and are scheduled well in advance. If you foresee a conflict with a scheduled assignment, you are free to complete and turn in work early. If you have an emergency or unforeseen event that prevents you from turning in an assignment by the announced deadline, please talk with me immediately about your situation.

Attendance:

You are the best judge of when you are unable to attend class. From time to time we all face family illnesses or have obligations outside of the classroom which may preclude attendance. I appreciate the courtesy of letting me know in advance via e-mail when you will be missing a class, although I do not need to know the reason for your absence. After any absence, you are responsible for making up missed work, requesting handouts and borrowing notes from other students. *You may miss up to 2 classes without impacting your grade.* **Each subsequent absence (after two) will result in 10 points off of your final attendance grade.** I believe this to be a generous policy. Use these days wisely as any additional absences will reduce your grade. If you foresee a conflict meeting these expectations, make an appointment to talk with me right away. No accommodations can be made after the fact. Medical absences, deaths in one's immediate family, or religious holidays must be verified. Official university absences, military service, or religious absences will not count toward the above attendance policy. *No absences of any kind will exempt students from academic requirements.*

Ground Rules for Participation and Discussion:

Attendance means more than keeping your seat warm. You must come to class with all materials and fully prepared for discussion. Everyone's presence and active participation are essential for maintaining a successful educational community. Student participation will be tracked daily. Those who find it easy to speak in class should keep in mind that we must give everybody equal opportunity to participate in discussions. Those who are less comfortable speaking in large groups should talk to the instructor as soon as possible to develop strategies for full class participation. Keep in mind that quality participation does not mean that all comments must be brilliantly insightful; this class is intended to foster critical thinking. Questions and incomplete thoughts about these issues contribute to the process of learning.

The classroom is a space where we must each "claim our education" and endeavor to learn with and from each other. Everyone brings a unique set of experiences and knowledge to the conversation. Living and learning are inseparable. The ideas and issues we discuss will often have direct bearing on our day-to-day lives and personal philosophies. **It is appropriate to share these connections, but discussion should remain connected to our course readings.** In this class you are under no pressure to share personal experiences, and should share only those you are comfortable discussing in a public forum. **There is no reward or penalty for having a particular set of beliefs.** It is however important that we be clear about what we believe *and why*, and that we seek to understand alternative perspectives. We are here to take risks, speak up, ask questions and try out new ideas, but **discussion must always remain respectful.**

Disruptive Students

According to *Student Conduct and Discipline*, "students are prohibited from engaging in or attempting to engage in conduct, either alone or in concert with others, that is intended to obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with, or that in fact obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with any instructional, educational, research, administrative, or public performance or other activity authorized to be conducted in or on a University facility. Obstruction or disruption includes, but is not limited to, any act that interrupts, modifies, or damages utility service or equipment, communication service or equipment, or computer equipment software or networks" (UTA Handbook of Operating Procedures, Ch. 2, Sec. 2-202).

Individual Conferences:

I value individual consultations about all aspects of the class. I am happy to answer questions via email and will reply within 24 hours. If you are having problems with readings, assignments, class participation, or any other facet of the course, please come see me. I am on campus during much of the week, so if my office hours are not convenient, please contact me to arrange a meeting at another time.

Mid-Semester Check-In:

There is no formal midterm for this course, but we will take a moment to check in with each other at mid-semester. I will provide you with feedback about your class participation and journal as well as all assignments to date. You will have a chance to give me anonymous

feedback about what is or is not working for you in the class and to offer constructive suggestions.

Academic Dishonesty:

It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University. “Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or material that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.” (Regents’ Rules and Regulations, Series 50101, Section 2.2) You can get in trouble for plagiarism—even if you do not intend to cheat—by failing to correctly indicate places where you are making use of the work of another. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the conventions of citation by which you indicate which ideas are not your own and how your reader can find those sources.

Americans with Disabilities Act:

The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112—The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of federal legislation entitled *Americas with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens. As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty of their need for accommodation and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability. Also, you may visit the Office for Students with Disabilities in room 102 of University Hall or call them at (817) 272-3364.

University Writing Center:

The English Writing Center, Room 411 in the Central Library, provides support to FYC students and instructors. Undergraduate and graduate student tutors in the Writing Center are trained to help student writers at any stage in their writing processes and are familiar with the course objectives, assignments, and pedagogical methods of the FYC Program. They are trained to attend to the same rhetorical and organizational issues that FYC instructors value in student writing. Although tutors will assist students in identifying and correcting patterns of grammatical or syntactical errors, they are taught to resist student entreaties to become editors or proofreaders of student papers.

The Writing Center, Room 411 in the Central Library, offers tutoring for any writing you are assigned while a student at UT-Arlington. During Fall 2009, Writing Center hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday; and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday and

Sunday. You may schedule appointments online by following directions available at www.uta.edu/owl/appointments, by calling 817 272-2601, or by visiting the Writing Center. If you come to the Writing Center without an appointment, you will be helped on a first-come, first-served basis as tutors become available. Writing Center tutors are carefully chosen and trained, and they can assist you with any aspect of your writing, from understanding an assignment to revising an early draft to polishing a final draft. However, the Writing Center is not an editing service; tutors will not correct your grammar or rewrite your assignment for you, but they will help you become a better editor of your own writing. I encourage each of you to use the Writing Center.

The Writing Center director, assistant director, or tutors are available to make classroom presentations describing Writing Center services. The Writing Center also offers workshops on topics such as documentation and will design specialized workshops at the request of instructors. To schedule a classroom visit or inquire about a workshop, please e-mail or call Dean A. Hinnen, Writing Center director, at dean.hinnen@uta.edu or 817-272-2517.

Student Support Services Available:

The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. These programs include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for more information and appropriate referrals.

Drop Policy:

If you choose to withdraw from this course, it is your responsibility to do so within the university's deadlines. For information on dropping, consult with your major academic department (or the University Advising Center if undeclared).

Schedule of Class Meetings:

All readings are to be completed by class time as listed on the syllabus. The following is a tentative schedule. I might change readings, due dates, or assignments based on class progression. **It is your responsibility to make sure that you are aware of changes, handouts, and any other issues or information related to this course. These changes will be announced in class and submitted electronically should they occur.**

DE = *Deep Economy*

TSIS= *They Say/I Say*

Week One:

Mon. 8/24- Class introductions, syllabus handout and overview

Wed. 8/26- Diagnostic Essay

Mini-Lesson: What is Sustainability? Literacy? Community? Discourse community?

Fri. 8/28- Read: Eighner's "On Dumpster Diving" and TSIS Preface and Introduction
Introduction to Critical Questions

Week Two:

Mon. 8/31- Introduction to Discourse Memoir assignment

Wed. 9/2- Writing Mini-Lesson: Invention Strategies

Read: Douglass, "Learning to Read and Write"; Erdrich, "Two Languages in Mind"

Fri. 9/4- *TSIS* Chapters 1, 2, and 9

Due: Critical Questions Paper #2

Week Three

Mon. 9/7 Labor Day no class

Wed. 9/9- Drafting workshops for Discourse Memoir

Peer Review

Census Date

Fri. 9/11- ILPC Discourse Memoir

Week Four

Mon. 9/14- Discourse Communities Memoir Due

Introduction to *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*

Read: "After Growth"; Hawken "A Read: Declaration of Sustainability"; Capra, excerpt from *The Web of Life*

Wed. 9/16- Assign *Deep Economy* essay and poster project

Mini-Lesson: "Becoming Better Readers"

Read: *DE*: Introduction and Chapter 1

Fri. 9/18- View The Story of Stuff video (<http://www.storyofstuff.com/index.html>).
Read: Smith “On the Natural Progress of Opulence”; Behreandt, “Energy’s Future”; and TSIS Chapter 3.
Due: Critical Questions Paper #3

Week Five

Mon. 9/21- Read: Chapter 2 of DE, “Eating Locally”; Berry

Wed. 9/23 Read: “The Pleasures of Eating”; Erlich and Erlich, “Food, the Ultimate Resource”

Fri. 9/25- Watch Video: “Farewell My Subaru.”

Review blog at <http://www.dougfine.com>

Read: Fine, “Chicken Little” and “Reaping Rewards”; and TSIS Chapter 13

Due: Critical Questions Paper #4

Week Six

Mon. 9/28- Read: Chapter 3 of DE, “All for one and one for all”

Wed. 9/30- Read: Alexis de Tocqueville “Why the Americans Are So Restless” D’Souza, “America the Beautiful”; Quammen, “Provide, Provide: The Gaia Hypothesis and Global Evolution”

Fri. 10/2- Mini Lesson: “Setting ourselves against the discourse.” (entering academic dialogue)

Read: TSIS Chapters 4 & 5.

Due: Critical Questions Paper #5

Week Seven

Mon. 10/5- Read: Chapter 4 of DE, “Wealth of Communities”

Wed. 10/7- Read: Friedman, “30 Little Turtles”; Bansal, “Re: 30 Little Turtles”

Watch *Deep Economy* discussions

Fri. 10/9- Cont. discussion of *Deep Economy*

Read: TSIS Chapter 6.

Due: Critical Questions Paper #6

Week Eight

Mon. 10/12- Read: Chapter 5 of DE, “Durable Future” and “Afterword”

Wed. 10/14- Read: Brown “Learning from China

Read: TSIS Chapters 7 & 8; UTA Sustainability Committee website

(<http://www.uta.edu/sustainability>).

Complete process sheets on picking an issue and using quotations

Fri. 10/16-Library Day: MLA Workshop (B20)
Due: Response Paper #7

Week Nine

Mon. 10/19-Mini Lesson: Thesis
Thesis development process sheet

Wed. 10/21- Due: Draft one
Drafting Workshops/Peer review

Fri. 10/23-Due: Polished Draft
ILPC / Peer Review

Week Ten

Mon. 10/26-Mini Lesson: “Reading the Visual”
Due: *Deep Economy* paper

Wed. 10/28-Introduction to Poster Projects

Fri. 10/30-Mini-Lesson “Conquering the Essay Exam
Due: Poster Project Proposals
Last day to drop class

Week Eleven

Mon. 11/2- Process materials for Poster Project

Wed. 11/4- Peer Review

Fri. 11/6- Due: Poster Project
In-class Essay (explanation of visual argument)

Week Twelve

Mon. 11/9- Introduction to final essay assignment (Synthesis Essay)

Wed. 11/11- Class Activity: Interactive Generation

Fri. 11/13-Library Day

Week Thirteen

Mon. 11/16- In class work on final project (Synthesis Essay)

Wed. 11/18- Due: Rough Drafts/Peer Review

Fri. 11/20- Due: Polished Drafts/Peer Review

Week Fourteen

Mon. 11/23- Self Assessment and discussion

Wed. 11/ 25- “Work Day”

Due: Synthesis Essay Final Project

Nov 26-29th Thanksgiving Holiday NO CLASS

Week Fifteen

Mon.11/ 30-Final Project Presentations

Wed. 12/ 2- Final Project Presentations

Fri. 12/4- Course Evaluations and Platica