Doane College
Spring 2015

English 101: Writing Seminar

M 6:00PM-10:30PM 3 Credits

Instructor: Lee Tasey
Office Hours: TBA
Email: lee.tasey@doane.edu

“Writing is not life, but I think that sometimes it can be a way back to life.”

—Stephen King

English 101 Writing Seminar fulfills the requirement for a Foundational Area of Knowledge in Rhetorical Communication. A course that fulfills this requirement will assure that students will use language purposely and effectively to become more thoughtful communicators, more keenly aware of what they are doing and why in each phase of the communication process. In this class, students will work to:

1) analyze rhetorical context (purpose, audience, genre) and operate accordingly in oral and/or written communication

2) support a clear argument with appropriate evidence and analysis in a focused and organized way

3) understand effective communication as a process that involves reasoned decision making and multiple steps including planning, invention, drafting, feedback, revision and editing
Course Readings:


Course Description:

A writing intensive course designed to enhance the quality of critical thinking and the knowledge of writing. A variety of texts are interpreted, and critical responses are written, using one or more literary forms. The student increases breadth and depth of critical thinking and knowledge of writing.

English 101 is an introduction to writing course. It is designed to help you succeed in college and in life. Over the next eight weeks, you’ll deepen your knowledge of punctuation, grammar, the elements of style, and various types of essays. You’ll also develop critical reading and thinking skills so that you can express your ideas clearly and concisely both in verbal and written communication.

Learning Outcomes:

1) students will improve their English grammar, punctuation and vocabulary

2) students will write well-crafted personal and persuasive essays

3) students will become more persuasive public speakers
4) students will discover their talents as writers and develop the tools to nurture those talents over a lifetime

**Learning Strategies:**

In order to fulfill the learning outcomes of ENG 101, various learning strategies will be used. Strategies include but are not limited to the following: lectures by the instructor, small group discussions, interviews with writers on You Tube, and occasional guest speakers (poets, novelists, columnists for local newspapers, etc.)

**Learning Assessment:**

Attendance, Participation & Attentiveness (APA): *Attendance is mandatory. The material we’ll cover in class may not be found in the readings. Participation is expected. Learning to express your ideas orally is a huge part of a college education; it also makes discussion more interesting. Attentiveness is also expected. You may use a laptop computer for class notes only. If you use a laptop for the Internet, email or video games, you will lose the privilege of using a laptop for the rest of the semester. Finally, if you are disruptive in class (talking while the instructor is talking, texting, sleeping or flirting), you will be asked to leave for the remainder of the class. APA will account for 40% your grade.*

Writing Exercises: Each week you’ll submit writing exercises based on *The Pen Commandments*. The purpose of these exercises will be to learn to construct a wide variety of sentences and to master the art of punctuation. **Writing exercises will account for 10% of your grade.**

Personal Essay: You’ll write a 2-3 page personal essay about an insightful or transformative life experience. Our models for the essay will be the essays in *A Summer Life*. If you were to write an essay for inclusion in one of these books, what would you say? This is a chance for you to share a personal life story or your personal life
philosophy. The Personal Essay will account for 25% of your grade.

Persuasive Essay: You’ll write a 5-7 page persuasive essay. First, you’ll choose a religious, political or ethical issue that has a “pro” side and a “con” side. Second, you’ll defend one of those sides (e.g., God doesn’t exist, abortion is wrong, etc) and then offer reasons to support your position. Other topics may include, but are not limited to, the following: capital punishment, genetic engineering, suicide and physician-assisted suicide, legalization of drugs, gay marriage and gun control. The final paper will be graded on your handling of the readings, clarity of thought, organization of ideas, and creative thinking. The Persuasive Essay will account for 25% of your grade.

What to Expect in Class:

Expect to be challenged. This class will challenge your most deeply held convictions. Get used to it. You won’t grow as a human being unless you wrestle with points of view—religious, political, and ethical—in opposition to your own.

Expect to read and write. This isn’t a “coasting” course. You must do the readings and come to class ready to discuss them. This will be a boring class if I’m the only one up here talking.

Expect to pay attention in class. Don’t talk while the instructor is talking or while a colleague is talking. Raise your hand if you have a question and wait until you’re called on to speak.

Expect to be in class until at least 8:00PM.

Expect to be on time for class. If you arrive to class late, don’t ask the person next to you what you’ve missed. Wait until the break or after class to ask this and related questions.

Expect the instructor to teach the class. Don’t think you can teach the class by dominating the class discussions.
Many students enroll in the courses offered at Doane College. Expect to hear from all of those students.

Expect to keep all books, notebooks and pencils on your desk until class is over. Don’t put them away early. Don’t do anything that suggests class is over when it isn’t; doing so will trigger the “off” switch and students will stop paying attention.

Expect to turn your cell phone off at the beginning of class—and keep it off.

**Grading Scale**

100-95 = A  
94-90 = A-  
89-87 = B+  
86-84 = B  
83-80 = B-  
79-77 = C+  
76-74 = C  
73-70 = C-  
69-67 = D+  
66-64 = D  
63-60 = D-  
59 & below F

**A Note on Plagiarism**

All written work must be in your own words. Borrowing an author’s words, sentences or thoughts without a proper citation is a crime. If I find you guilty of plagiarism, not only will you earn a free trip to the Dean’s Office, you may also fail the course. Play it safe—don’t steal.

**A Note on Courtesy**

We live in the twenty-first century. Everybody should act civilized. When the instructor is talking, nobody talks. When you’re talking, nobody else talks (including the instructor). And finally, if you disagree with someone, attack the person’s argument, not the person.
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Session VII  The Pen Commandments (10)
Persuasive Paper Draft Due (Note: Make copies for entire class)

Session VIII  On Life and Writing
Persuasive Essay: Critique and Response

Note: The Personal and Persuasive Essays are due one week after our last class meeting. Send both assignments to Mr. Tasey’s email address at lee.tasey@doane.edu