ENGLISH 20

Writing, to me, is simply thinking through my fingers. Isaac Asimov

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Office Hours:
10-30 - 11-30 TR
TR 1:30-2:30 by appt.

Course Description
An advanced writing course that builds upon the critical thinking, reading, and writing processes introduced in English 1A or 2. This class emphasizes rhetorical awareness by exploring reading and writing across academic disciplines.

Prerequisite: 30 units and a grade of C- or better in ENGL 1A or equivalent.
Requirement: A minimum of 5,000 words.

Course Requirements:

Writer/Designer
This class focuses on new modes and multimedia forms of writing and communicating. The projects assigned involve reading about, analyzing, and creating multimedia assignments. Writing and practicing with digital forms of composition is critical in the 21st century. Students need to be able to compose academic work across the disciplines in forms beyond the traditional print essay. Multimodal/multimedia texts “are works that use more than just words or letters to communicate a thought. They may include audio, video, photographs, drawings—basically any visual element used to supplement the text in some purposeful way.” (Brittany VanMaele)

This class will ask you to expand your understanding of what it means to read and compose pieces of written communication. Our culture values digital expression and there are a vast array of digital tools available to produce multimedia texts. The changing face of real world digital communication allows each of us to be both a 21st century consumer and producer of this type of digital expression. This class hopes to equip you with the analytical skills as a consumer of these multimedia pieces and the digital tools to produce your own multimedia assignments both in the academic environment and beyond in your professional and personal community. Learning to write well is still increasingly important to success. There will be continued emphasis on the fundamentals of good writing that set the foundations for multimedia composition: thesis statements, audience awareness, clear main ideas, and well reasoned support with logical evidence and analysis.
Assignments:

Multimodal assignments can help students develop visual and digital literacy in a world where new technologies are constantly emerging. The class will provide you with a toolkit for both analyzing and creating texts in multimedia formats. There are a host of technologies and applications available. Each of us has different hardware and software available. As individuals we must make decisions about the hardware (smart phones, pads, laptops, etc.), the availability and price of the hardware and software, and the learning curve associated with each choice. English 20 hopes to give you an overview of multiple choices available but is fully aware that individually we have a finite knowledge of those choices. Together we have a wealth of digital knowledge that we can share and learn from with each other. The class will allow you to experiment and learn from array of possibilities so that you can use the communication mode, genre or technology that best serves your purposes. This allows you to apply these practices to learn and incorporate new technologies whenever they emerge.

During the semester we will explore a range of digital tools that will assist you in creating multimedia projects. You do not have to have any expertise with these programs initially. I will expect a willingness to explore and learn many of the digital tools presented. You then will need to experiment and learn some of these tools well enough to create the quality work you envision. Mastering some of these apps and programs means time, energy and purpose at home or in the computer lab. It means learning from online tutorials and seeking help from me, other students, or techs in the computer labs on campus. Please remember that computer problems are not an acceptable excuse for late or incomplete work.

Email and SacCT

Email Account and SacCT – You must have an active email account that you check regularly. You can email me if you are going to be absent. I will also use email to make announcement or any changes to the assignment schedule. SacCT will be used for other texts and handouts. You must have access to a computer and printer. A computer problem is not an acceptable reason for failing to complete your assignment. There are school computer labs available if needed.

Attendance and Punctuality - You will be dropped if you miss any two class sessions in the first 2 weeks of school. Attendance is mandatory, as is arriving to class on time. You will be allowed no more than 3 absences. Three late arrivals or early departures will represent one absence. Those who exceed three absences will have one third of a grade deducted from their final
grade. Each additional absences will take another $1/3$ of a grade off. (For example if you have an A- a fourth absence lowers the grade to B+, a fifth absence lowers it to B, etc.) If you choose to sleep in class it will be marked as an absence.

**Essay Assignments** – Assignments will be discussed in class and you will receive a detailed handout for each assignment. Generally all drafts and notes, informal writing and workshop feedback are handed in. If you do not turn in all required material points will be deducted.

**Informal Writing Assignments** – Informal in class writing assignments and homework will be assigned throughout the semester. You will be expected to keep them in a folder through the semester and hand them in at the end of the semester. These assignments are intended to help you better understand, think critically and analytically about the readings and give you additional writing practice. There may be occasional in class writing/quizzes based on the reading assignment for the week so keeping up with the reading schedule is important.

**Late and missed assignments** – Assignments that are late one class meeting will have at least one grade deducted. Assignments that are late will receive a grade but no written comments from the professor. Assignments late more than one additional class meeting will be discussed on an individual basis.

**Classroom Expectations** - Assignments for this course will usually be some type of reading and writing. Due dates will be on the detailed schedule. Be fully prepared to discuss the readings and your responses in detail with the class. I make a practice of calling on students during class. I expect your full attention and your preparation to participate when called upon. I reserve the right to give unannounced pop quizzes. You will be responsible for drafting, revising and editing a number of essays this semester. There will also be some shorter writing assignments during the semester.

One of the biggest signs of respect that you give your classmates and your teacher is by listening attentively when someone is talking and/or by actively participating in group activities. This means that laptops and cell phones should only be used to accomplish the goals of this class. They are not to be used for work in other classes or for personal reasons during class time. It is disruptive to have students come in late or leave/come back in during class. We are together for a short hour and fifteen minutes; I expect you to take care of all necessary obligations before or after class.

We DO NOT have “breaks” during class.

**Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism** - Students who plagiarize may be expelled from the university. Academic writing requires you to give credit for anyone’s words or ideas that you may use, which includes paraphrasing, re-wording, and anything else which may hide the fact that the idea/words did not occur originally with you. Regardless of where you obtained an idea (e.g. the internet, a book, another student’s paper, etc.), you must report that the idea did not originate from you. Whatever the means of appropriation, incorporation of another’s work into one’s own requires adequate identification and acknowledgement. Failure to properly document the use of someone else’s work is considered plagiarism and may result in one warning and a failing paper. Any further problem with plagiarism can result in dismissal from the university. If you have any doubt about how to properly give credit for an idea, please consult me prior to submitting your work. For the college’s policy on academic honesty see the CSUS website.
Participation & Attendance – In addition to showing up to class I expect that all assignments will be completed when due and all materials read before the class session. Bring any drafts, reading materials, and handouts to class on the dates designated on the schedule. I expect active participation in all discussions and/or activities.

Getting Help – From Me: As with any course of study, but especially with writing, it is extremely important that you take the work you do in this course seriously. In order to improve your writing skills, you must write often and be critical of your own work. Working one-on-one with your professor can be very helpful to your writing progress. From the Writing Center: I also strongly encourage all students to visit the Writing Center (Tel. 278-6356, Calaveras Hall, Room 128). The Writing Center (WC) is a place where students can get free help on their reading and writing assignments. Staffed by student tutors, the WC can schedule one-on-one appointments to discuss and provide assistance with your writing assignments from idea generation to final editing. Drop in hours are Monday through Thursday 2-4.

Students with Disabilities: Finally, students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations to fully participate in course activities or meet course requirements must register with “Services to Students with Disabilities.” If you qualify for services through SSWD, bring your letter of accommodations to me as soon as possible. Visit the SSWD website for more information: http://www.csus.edu/sswd/sswd.html

Learning Outcomes:
- Reading texts from a variety of disciplines in a variety of genres
- Identifying appropriate context-based writing conventions
- Composing formally and informally in different genres
- Developing the ability to think and analyze critically within different disciplines

Requirements:
- Writing Assignment #1 - Critique
- Writing Assignment #2 - Multimedia Rhetorical Analysis
- Writing Assignment #3 - In-class timed writing Midterm based on WPJ style example
- Writing Assignment #4 - Multimedia Project
- Semester folder Assignment #5 - Homework, in-class writing and integrated media assignments from Writer/Designer