CIS English Composition
Sample Syllabus #2

College in the Schools
Writing Studies (WRIT) 1301 University Writing
Instructor: Jane Doe

COURSE OVERVIEW

Through frequent practice and study of writing, WRIT 1301 introduces students to typical university writing practices, including an emphasis on developing well-researched, properly cited papers. WRIT 1301 fulfills the first-year writing requirement.

Activities include but are not limited to: introduction to academic genres of reading and writing; critical reading and analysis of writing for rhetorical principles of audience, purpose, and argumentative strategies; emphasis on performing research with electronic and print library; and sequenced readings and writing, with a researched paper as major assignment.

Members of the class will practice using writing to develop, refine, and communicate ideas in academic contexts. Students should expect to write formally and informally, produce drafts, read and respond to each other’s drafts, and revise, edit, and proofread. In addition students will share their writing with others in the class, receive responses from others, and read and respond carefully to the work of others.

All of this means that the class is structured around writing activities, discussion of reading and writing, and group work of various kinds. Students need to be active participants in this course, and help insure the success of the course for all by making positive contributions to activities, assignments, and discussion.

COURSE OUTCOMES

At the successful conclusion of WRIT 1301, students will learn to:

Develop a process of writing
• control prewriting and planning strategies to arrive at a focused topic
• produce an outline or prospectus for a researched paper
• craft thesis statements that indicate a clear position on a topic and tie the paper together
• develop a topic through clearly structured paragraphs and the whole paper so that ideas are fully explained, assertions are backed up, supporting evidence is sufficient and claims are credible
• through the sequence of assignments, develop a body of knowledge and growing perspective on a topic

Explore diverse contexts and styles of reading and writing
• communicate their ideas and those of others to specific audiences
• write in appropriate academic genres and computer media to communicate with different audiences
• make choices in their own writing and articulate other options

Practice disciplines of research and study
• identify an author’s audience, purpose, argument, and assumptions (i.e., critical reading) in an analysis paper or class discussion
• locate and evaluate relevant scholarly and popular sources on a research topic using library resources
• properly and ethically use MLA or APA documentation format for in-text and external bibliographic
citations of scholarly, popular, and electronic sources
• consistently follow standards of written, edited English

Smile: There will be no tests!!!

Course supplies

For this class you will need a three-ring binder with loose-leaf paper (no spiral notebooks, please). You must also have access to a word processor. Copies of your drafts must be supplied when requested.

Texts

Supplemental readings/exercises will be taken from:

*The Bedford Guide for College Writers.* (Kennedy, Holladay)
*From Sight to Insight.* (Rackham, Bertagnolli)
*Line by Line.* (Cook)
*Student Writers at Work and in The Company of Other Writers The Bedford Prizes.* (Sommers, McQuade)
*Write to Learn.* (Murray)

Attendance

Daily class attendance is essential. Group conference attendance is mandatory. Much of our work in the class will depend on everyone’s presence. Therefore, attendance is expected unless clear and compelling arrangements are made in advance. You will find that work with peer groups is severely compromised if anyone is absent. Occasionally, circumstances may necessitate a group meeting to be made up outside of class.

N.B.: Poor attendance may result in loss of University credit and, according to University policy will result in grade reduction. Please note the University timeline for withdrawal.

Grading

The grade for this course will be based on your involvement in the process of writing and revising and of reflection on writing.

Major papers = 60% of final grade

You will write three or four major papers this term: they include a personal narrative, a trend research paper, a review of an arts event, and an ethnography (which may be a collaborative effort). Both drafts and final papers must be typed in 12 point font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Assignments must be turned in at the BEGINNING of class the day they are due. A detailed explanation of each assignment will be presented as each of the four major projects begins. The revision process is important in these papers. Expect to do three or four drafts for each paper. Only the final draft will be graded, but the other material will be counted in the cumulative notebook grade. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Notebook = 20% of final grade

In addition to your major drafts and papers, which will be kept in the notebook, you will be asked to write shorter assignments in and out of class. This notebook will also include critical reading responses, prewriting, drafts, lists, revisions, comments on conference drafts, in-class exercises, research notes, etc. These assignments should be kept in your three-ring binder dated in chronological order. I will briefly read and evaluate these assignments with a plus, check, minus system. A check means you met the basic
requirements, a plus means that you have gone beyond the assignment, and a minus means you didn’t appear to have put much effort or thought into it. At the end of the term, I will collect your notebook and give you a grade. These entries will be graded mostly on content. In order to receive an A or a B, you need to go beyond the surface and discuss complex issues, take risks, and be honest with your writing. This course portfolio is not busy work; it may do more than anything to make you a competent writer.

Participation = 20% of final grade

Participation includes the quality of your involvement in class discussions, activities, peer conferencing groups, and conferences with me. It also includes the quality of commentaries you make on the drafts of your peers’ work, the drafts of your writing assignments, and the responses to your work from your group. Missing any conference day will affect your grade.

Grading scale

Grading will be based on the following scale, in accordance with the guidelines set by the College of Liberal Arts.

A  You completed the assignment, fulfilled all requirements, went beyond by contributing additional material or developing new insights, and distinguished yourself through the use of a particularly creative or inventive approach.

B  You completed the assignment, fulfilled all requirements, and went beyond by contributing additional material or developing new insights.

C  You completed the assignment and fulfilled the requirements of it. Note a “C” indicates work, which meets the course requirements and is the normal grade in the course. Anything above a “C” reflects significant extra effort and skill and is considered an honors grade.

D  You fulfilled some of the requirements of the assignment, but not all of them.

F  You turned in the assignments but did not fulfill most of the requirements.

Scholastic Dishonesty

The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

“Scholastic Dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.”

http://advisingtools.class.umn.edu/cgep/studentconduct.html

Plagiarism, representing someone else's intellectual work as your own, can result in a grade of F for the assignment, and may result in a grade of F for the course. Plagiarism can include submitting a paper:

- written by means of inappropriate collaboration;
- written by you for another course, submitted without the permission of both instructors;
- purchased, downloaded, or cut and pasted from the Internet;
- or that fails to properly acknowledge its sources through standard citations.

Academic honesty, an expected component in the class, implies, for example, that the drafts you submit are composed by you, that the interviews you quote actually transpired, that site visits were made as
required by the assignment. If you have questions about the interpretation of academic honesty, please see me.

**Further course information**

Writing Studies 1301 is nearly identical to the course taught on campus at the University of Minnesota. Students are expected to perform at the college level and are subject to many of the same regulations as the students at the University, including those related to scholastic dishonesty.

Fee statements will be sent directly to your home. Tuition will be paid by the school district. A U-card enables you to take advantage of University of Minnesota programs and facilities, including the libraries.

At least one field trip is planned for this term on the University campus. This student field day is required.

The entire class will meet together approximately four times per week, with the remaining day reserved for individual work and small group meetings. Students who abuse the opportunities this schedule provides may be removed from the program.

The students will be guided in their revisions, but the major responsibility for revising and editing will rest with the students. **I will not revise papers for students.** The students must learn to consult a handbook to proofread their writing.

Remember, since collaborative planning, researching, drafting, revising, and critiquing are integral to the course, it is your responsibility to do all you can to contribute to your group’s success.

All due dates refer to the **beginning of the period** of the day assigned. Make arrangements for making copies for your group outside of school.

Additional help is almost always available before and after school, as well as during my prep time. Making arrangements for these conferences ahead of time is appreciated. And keep in mind there is no such thing as a “dumb question.”

You are responsible for saving EVERYTHING until the term is over. Keep all drafts, response sheets, notebook entries, etc., in order in your three-ring binder.

**Special concerns for students and parents**

This course fulfills the first-year writing requirement at the University of Minnesota; it is not a high school class. Because of that, this course creates special situations. Students are expected to be mature and responsible and to make a significant time commitment. Travel is required. Students may need to do off-campus work at the University of Minnesota libraries, public libraries, and possible other sites in the metropolitan area. They may need to do field research and interviews as well as attend meetings with their writing groups.

We encourage parents to become aware of paper topics and research steps. Please note that a student does not have to choose a “high risk” topic in order to do well. Parents may become involved in driving, attending interviews, etc. If you have any concerns during the term, please contact me.

I am looking forward to an exciting, challenging course, and I am anxious to help students as they undertake college level challenges.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

Student Signature: ___________________________________ Date __________________
Parent Signature: ________________________________  Date ____________