Dr. Cristina Kirklighter

Composition I

English 1301.245 Fall 2012

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“At the point of encounter, there are neither utter ignoramuses nor perfect sages; there are only people who are attempting, together, to learn more than they know now.”

Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed

“It would be horrible if we could dream about a different world as a project but not commit ourselves to fight for its construction.”

Paulo Freire, Letters to Cristina

“Clutter is the disease of American writing. We are a society strangling in unnecessary words, circular constructions, pompous frills and meaningless jargon.”

William Zinsser, On Writing Well

The classes in Triad E are symbiotic. As the semester progresses, you will be seeing the connections between the different classes in the triad – history lecture, composition, and first-year seminar – connections that are designed
to reinforce learning and foster discussion. As we pursue a greater understanding of early American history, we will also ask you to explore your histories, your lives, and your communities, and try to identify how current issues today are connected to aspects of early American history.

**Course Description:**

This course focuses on providing the necessary instruction and writing environment for students to become critical thinkers in writing and reading. The course will focus on a number of text and online critical readings. *Writing about Writing* will be used to help students analyze research on composition, discourse, language and literacy as it pertains to their own experiences with reading and writing. The book and this course focuses on helping students tap into their own experiences and learning that are tied to language, writing, reading, and literacy. Students will also become familiar with the research and writing process, such as developing a topic and thesis, researching using credible sources, using multimedia and correct citation formats, note taking, organizing, drafting, editing, revising, proofreading, and preparing the final draft. The other required book is entitled *On Writing Well* by William Zinsser and will help students with achieving simplicity and clarity in their writing, avoiding clutter, creating their unique style, selecting proper usage of words, and helping them learn and implement various genres in their writing. We will also use a number of online articles located on Our Resource Page. At the beginning of the course, we will focus on our individual literacy knowledge and practices as a way of better understanding the readers and writers in our classroom. Various historical U.S. autobiographical excerpts passed out in class will be used as the primary reading genre of study in throughout the semester that will link to the History class and seminar.

In this class, students will develop informed opinions about the readings, research, writing, and editing process and bring these to class discussions or postings. Like the professor, students have certain responsibilities of teaching. Students are teachers in peer editing, classroom discussions, and group activities. Along with the professor, they are there to provide guidance and information to others concerning what they’ve learned about issues related to the readings and writing processes. To help improve our performance in the classroom, everyone will periodically self-reflect on ways to create a better learning environment. Through collaborative and individual efforts, we will work together as students and teachers to improve our critical thinking skills and writing.
FYWP Goals 1301

- Develop cross-cultural understanding and respect
- Use writing, reading, and academic inquiry for learning, critical thinking, and problem solving
- Write, read, and speak for a variety of real-world purposes and for various audiences
- Write with readers in mind
- Read with writers in mind
- Deepen understanding of the reflexive processes of invention, drafting, revision, and editing
- Connect concepts across Triad courses
- Learn, evaluate, and use computer technology as a writing, reading, and research tool

1301 Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- Apply principles of the writing process, including drafting, editing, and revision, to generate academic / professional documents
- Analyze complex issues / ideas in research-based academic writing
- Analyze and interpret a variety of texts
- Write in several genres
- Produce an introduction with a solid focus, direction, and purpose
- Cohesively integrate academic research to support the writer's purpose
- Connect ideas across courses

Assignments

**Triad E Portfolios:** The Triad E portfolio is a collection of your work in the Triad that will be collected two times, at mid-term and at the end of the semester. While the focus will be on demonstrating your work in the triad, and on drawing upon the connections you have made between History, Composition and Seminar, you may also choose to include evidence of work or experiences from *outside* the triad that represents significant learning you've achieved this semester. **The portfolio grade you earn will**
contribute to your final average in all three triad courses: History, Composition, and Seminar. (Due dates to be announced)

Project One (Due dates on schedule)

You will create a personal academic essay exploring an important theme, issue, question, or perspective focusing on some experience that reflects your generation and particularly influenced your identity as it relates to the Early American historical past that you’ve studied in your History class so far. As stated in Dr. Wooster’s syllabus “An educated citizenry is crucial to the success of our nation. In order to better understand the present, educated persons must have an understanding of the past, of where they have come from, of how they have lived, and of why things developed the way they did.” We will study excerpts of autobiographies, letters, or personal narratives from some of the historical figures that shaped the U.S prior to 1865. Your task is to make connections between particular “Trailblazers” and/or “Hell-raisers” in Early American history who may be your predecessors and may shape how you see yourself within this spectrum of history. The personal academic essay should be an integration of these past voices with your voice as you explore how your roots may be linked to these past historical voices and movements. This assignment will strengthen your critical reading and writing analysis as it pertains to your experiences connected to history. A personal academic essay is a blend of genres that uses both personal writing and academic writing. This means you will be citing sources from your History texts and primary historical works that I will give you in class (historical excerpts from letters, autobiographies, etc.). You are also encouraged to seek out primary works from Early American historical figures that I have not given you, but who you believe may speak as a historical ancestor to your identity. I may be able to help you locate these sources, so please ask me. The length of the essay should be 4 full pages (300 words per page) and should not extend past 5 pages.

The second part of the project will involve the following:

Non-literary genre with a statement

photograph, movie, collage, painting, drawing, song, movie, etc. that you found to supplement your personal academic essay. The non-literary genre is also known as visual rhetoric. It should include a statement (at least 100 words) where you explain the connection to your personal academic essay. This can be turned into me electronically given what you find may be online.
Reflective Overview-a genre of writing that presents a writer's thoughtful, personal exploration, in this case, of putting the entire portfolio together.

2 full pages

Included with this project will be a reflective overview (RO) in which you will explain the narrative (briefly) and genre choices you made in developing this essay, as well as the process you took to create the final product.

Additional Assignments Related to Project One

In addition to Project One, you will have the following assignments that will help you with Project One:

Letters: As you review the various important Early American historical figures in your history class and my class, you will be asked periodically to write letters to these figures and make some connections that may help you make some decisions on your focus for Assignment One. You will select historical figures that you can connect with in some way and may give you a better understanding of your place as an educated citizen who connects to his or her past. You must address the letter to this historical figure, and you must sign this letter. Each letter should be at least 300 words. You will write two letters related to this assignment.

Online Discussions: We will have resources assigned in class that will help us understand the genre of the personal essay, autobiography, and similar genres. We will also have readings from researchers that help us understand some of our experiences with the reading, writing, and literacy processes in Project One.

Literacy Interviews: To help you understand the literacy experiences of your peer, you will conduct short interviews of at least two peers who will be part of your peer editing group. You will use these interviews to better understand your peers’ literacy experiences, so you can be a more informed peer editor for Project One and beyond.

Project Two

Different due dates will be assigned for components of this project (see schedule)

Organization Research Project and Presentation – The final research project and presentation will focus on a national, local, state, or campus organization of your choosing that you are a member of, an organization you
hope to be a member of, or an organization that a friend or relative is a member of that peaks your interest. Many “Trailblazers” and “Hell-raisers” either formed or inspired someone to create organizations, movements, etc. We will have various guest speakers who are members of organizations or movements as a way of enhancing our understanding of why people get involved and how they are inspired as educated citizens. In this research project, you will first explore organizations that most interest you and seem to speak to your identity. This might involve exploring on the internet, libraries, speaking to friends, relatives, or people within various organizations. Make sure this organization is well known, so you can find ample research for your research project. You will then select an organization after careful reflection and write me a 200 word description of this organization and how it fits with who you are and your beliefs. This will serve as your research topic paragraph. In your research of this selected organization, you will research parts of this organization that most appeal to your interests and how it can benefit you in the present and/or future. Keeping in mind your interests and how this organization might benefit you, you must selectively discuss the history of the organization, mission, objectives, connections to other organizations, activities, and the specific targeted audiences that the organization focuses on. As part of your research, you must also locate sources that objectively write about or assess this organization. You must conduct at least one interview with a member or leader of this organization as part of your research who can speak about his/her involvement and how this organization has benefited him or her. The paper to include all of these research components will be eight pages in length and use MLA format.

You will be required to meet the following criteria for Portfolio Two

1. Research and write an annotated bibliography with at least eight reputable sources. We will have a librarian visit us prior to this assignment and a handout on writing annotated bibliographies will be passed out in class.
2. Conduct a short two page rhetorical analysis paper focusing on how this organization presents itself to a specific targeted audience of your choosing.
3. Research Project (1,750 words) described above. A detailed handout will be passed out in class.
4. Presentation of Project using Multimedia. A detailed handout will be passed out in class.
5. Reflective Overview of project – three pages.

Additional Assignments Related to Project Two
In addition to Portfolio Two, you will have the following assignments that will help you with Project Two:

Letters: To continue with your letters, you will write one more letter to a historical figure from Dr. Wooster’s class or my class who started an organization or movement. You must address the letter to this historical figure, and you must sign this letter. This letter should also be at least 300 words.

Online Discussions: We will have resources assigned in class that will help us understand the research process, rhetorical analysis, community engagement, discourse communities, technology/multimedia literacies, plagiarism, techniques for clear writing, and citations.

**Grade Distribution**

Project One - 20%
Project Two - 30%
Letter Journals – 15% (three in all)
Literacy Interviews - 5%
In-Class and Online Assignments - 10%
Peer Evaluations – 5%
Triad E Portfolio One – 5%
Triad E Portfolio Two – 10%

**Texts:**

*On Writing Well* by William Zinsser (7th Edition)

*Writing about Writing: A College Reader* by Elizabeth Wardle and Doug Downs

Excerpts of autobiographies, letters, and personal narratives from Early American historical figures will be passed out in class.
1301 will also require these other materials:

- Access to University Network and an active islander email account.
- Appropriate / compatible media to save and transport computer files among computers on campus and / or between home and campus. The best option is a USB flash drive.
- A Sanddollar or SandPaper card with money on it for printing in the classrooms/computer labs.
- A folder, notebook paper, and pen or pencil to be brought to class every day.

**University and Course Policies.**

Students are expected to abide by the Texas A&M Student Handbook and Code of Conduct. Please review these policies in the handbook or at the designated website. Plagiarism (or other forms of academic dishonesty), gender, race, or class insensitivity, and sexual harassment will not be tolerated within this learning environment.

Acceptance of Diversity: We are one of the most diverse campuses, in terms of racial identity, in the Texas A&M system. This means that we are all meeting and working with people who are different from ourselves in terms of their identities: whether that is defined by their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and/or religion. Respecting and accepting difference is vital to your success for your professional and personal development in this class, on this campus, and in the global community.

**Course Policies**

Attendance/Participation

Absences

As an active participant, you are expected to attend every class on time. Attendance is a crucial part of a class grounded in liberatory learning and teaching that necessitates an active engagement in classroom discussions, group activities, and peer editing of papers as well as other writing activities. You are a valuable contributor in this classroom, and a responsible contributor and teacher must be in consistent attendance. The work we will do during class is crucial to your understanding of the material and your success in the course. When a student is frequently absent, this requires the teacher to frequently explain the assignments and missed activities to the
student and can hinder the effectiveness of group activities that require peer feedback. Consequently, the student who is frequently absent creates an unnecessary burden for both the teacher and their peers. Frequent absences will not fare well for your grade in that you will miss assignment explanations, handouts, in class activities, and course grade penalties as listed below. Please provide me with written documentation (e.g. doctor’s excuses, family deaths or serious illnesses, daycare issues, car trouble receipts) for any absences that you might have and e-mail me in a timely manner to notify me of your absence and receive makeup work information from me. I will then let you know if your absence is excused. Failure to follow these procedures will result in an unexcused absence.

Three unexcused absences = one lowered overall grade

Five unexcused absences = two lowered overall grades

More than six unexcused absences = failure of the course

**Deadlines**

*Late Work* - All work must be turned in on time. It is the policy of Triad E that, barring unusual cases of emergency or advance permission from your instructor, no late papers will be accepted.

**Triad E Facebook Page**

- As another source of assistance, the instructors in this triad have created a facebook page so that you can communicate with your peers. This is NOT a substitute for your composition, seminar, or my online pages. The name of the facebook page is *Trailblazers and Hellraisers: The American Experience through the Civil War*

**Discussions**

You must play an active role in classroom discussions and group activities. Dialogue (whether written or verbal) is a vital part of the learning process for this class.

**In Class Conduct**
Please refrain from using your computers for unrelated work during class. I will periodically ask everyone to turn off their monitors during some non-related computer or lectures, so we can avoid temptations to check our e-mails, facebook, etc. Also, please put away your cell phones during class.

**University Policies.**

**Grade Appeal Process**

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

**Notice to Students with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom, or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance.

**Academic Advising**

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.
Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

The University will not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of intellectual/academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is a serious violation of University policies, but it is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Often, students commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. Regardless, work that is turned in for the course that is plagiarized will be failed. If you are unsure about your use of sources, please consult with me or visit the CASA writing center (CASA building) for advice on source documentation BEFORE the item is due. For this course, you must use either MLA or APA citation style. Any grammar handbook and many web sites have directions on correct citation.

Acceptance of Diversity

We are the most diverse campus, in terms of racial identity, in the Texas A&M system. This means that we are all meeting and working with people who are different from us in terms of their identities: whether that is defined by their race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, and/or religion. Respecting and accepting difference is vital to your success in this class, on this campus, and in the global community.

Tentative Course Outline

Week One – August 22nd and August 24th

Introduction of Students and Course. Online instructions for logging in and Blackboard Online Instructions. Review of Project One.

Week Two – August 27th, 29th, and 31st

Read online excerpts from Bartolome de Casas’ “Apologetic History of the Indies” and second letter from Herman Cortes to Charles V. Read pages 1-5 and 56-66 in Writing About Writing (WAW); Online Discussions. Letter One due on August 31st. Distribute sample personal academic essays.

Week Three – Labor Day, September 5th and September 7th

Read pages 174-190 in WAW; Read ix to xii and 3-16 in On Writing Well. Read excerpts (distributed in class) from Anne Bradstreet and Mary Rowlandson. Discuss handout for Literacy Assignment; Online Discussions; Workshop on Critical Essay for Dr. Wooster’s class.
Week Four – September 10th, 12th, and 13th

Read pages 331-352 and 442-447 in WAW. Read excerpt (distributed in class) from Nathanial Cole. Conduct literacy interviews in class; Submit topic paragraph for personal academic essay.

Week Five – September 17th, 19th, and 21st

Read pages 142-146 and 281-294 in On Writing Well; pages 319-321 in Writing About Writing; Peer Editing handouts; Second letter due; Submit typed Literacy interviews; Online Discussions; Writing Workshop; Formation of Peer Editing Groups; Peer editing of partial draft on personal academic essay.

Week Six – September 24th, 26th, and 28th

No class on September 24th in lieu of conferences in my office (FC 254). Bring complete draft to conference and non-literary genre selection. Final peer editing session (reflective overview) on 9-28.

Week Seven – October 1st, October 3rd, and October 5th

Project One due on October 1st. Non-electronic components will be submitted in class and send me non-literary genre via e-mail if it is in electronic form along with your statement. Review Project 2; Read pages 367-395 in WAW. Guest Speakers from various organizations (to be announced). Online Discussions. Students wanting the extra credit by displaying Project One in UC Legacy Room next week will workshop with me during specific times early this week.

Week Eight – October 8th, October 10th, and October 12th

Contribute to wiki page describing various organizations you’re interested in. Review Annotated Bibliography handout; Read pages 67-85 in WAW; Read excerpt (distributed in class) from John Adams. Topic Paragraph due on 10/12; Final letter due on October 12th; Library visit. Extra Credit will be given if you visit the UC Legacy room and write two short responses to two writing displays (handout of this extra credit assignment will be distributed in class).

Week Nine – October 15th, October 17th, and October 19th
Review Rhetorical Analysis handout; Read pages 101-119 and 156-169 in WAW; Read excerpt (to be distributed in class) from Frederick Douglass. Annotated Bibliography Research and Writing Workshop; Online discussions. We will have a guest speaker who will persuasively speak about the benefits of his or her organization. In-class rhetorical analysis of guest speaker’s persuasive speech.

**Week Ten – October 22nd, October 24th, and October 26th**

Read pages 301-305 in WAW; Annotated Bibliography on due 10/26; Online Discussions; Writing Workshop on Rhetorical Analysis paper; Peer Editing Workshop on Rhetorical Analysis paper.

**Week Eleven – October 29th, October 31st, and November 1st**

Read pages 498-519 in WAW; Due Rhetorical Analysis paper; Online Discussions; Writing Workshop on Organization paper.

**Week Twelve – November 5th, November 7th, and November 9th**

Read pages 557-577 in WAW; No class on 11/7 in lieu of student conferences in my office. Bring at least four pages of your draft to the conference. Peer editing of partial draft of Organization on 11/9.

**Week Thirteen – November 12th, November 14th, NCTE Conference**

Read pages 395-421 in WAW; Workshop on Multimedia Project based on Organization paper.

**Week Fourteen – November 19th, November 21st, Thanksgiving**

Preparation and Rehearsal for First Year Celebration; Peer Editing Organization paper. Happy Thanksgiving!

**Week Fifteen – November 26th, November 28th, November 30th**

Preparation and Rehearsal for First Year Celebration. First Year Celebration on November 28th. Please bring your powerpoint or poster board to the First Year Celebration. Project two due (all components). Peer Editing Organization Paper and Reflection Memo.

**Week Sixteen – December 3rd**
Final Peer Editing Session of Organization Paper and Reflective Memo. Closing remarks and comments on First Year Celebration.

**Project Two is due on December 10th from 8:30-10:30 in my office (FC 254). If you wish to turn it in earlier, please contact me via e-mail, and we can make arrangements.**