

Syllabus
English 1301-057, Introduction to College Writing
Fall 2008, 1:00 MWF, Dallas Hall 120

Instructor: Professor J. Austin Johnson
17-5 Dallas Hall

Office hours: Monday 3:00-4:00, Tuesday 2:00-3:00

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Conferences by appointment

Welcome to English 1301, Introduction to College Writing. In what follows, you will find a detailed description of classroom management and grading strategies as well as a day-by-day listing of assignments. It is important that you read the following carefully and ask questions until you are satisfied that you understand all course requirements and procedures. September 2 is the day on which the syllabus, the course requirements, grading practices, class attendance policies, and all other matters described below will be explained and discussed; students should study both the syllabus and the syllabus registration sheet carefully and make sure that all their questions about the course are answered. On September 3 all students must bring to class a signed syllabus registration sheet, all three required textbooks, and a double-pocket theme folder of the sort shown on September 2. Students who do not bring all of these materials will not be admitted to class and will not be allowed to continue in the class until they do bring all required materials.

Materials: *Quick Access Reference for Writers* (Fifth Edition, Eds. Troyka and Hesse); *Criteria* 2008-2009 (Eds. Jackman and Hopper); *The Devil's Highway* (Luis Alberto Urrea); double-pocket folder with pockets only; dictionary; a notebook for taking class notes, making outlines, and recording other coursework

Blackboard: All students enrolled in the course will be expected to consult Blackboard postings prior to each class meeting. (The most effective pattern is to consult Blackboard on Tuesday, Thursday, and the weekend.) With some frequency, reading assignments, discussion questions, and writing worksheets will be posted on Blackboard. Printing and bringing the appropriate materials to class is a requirement. Students who fail to bring the appropriate materials to class will be counted absent.

Course Objectives: The primary objective of English 1301 is to help students become better writers. Writing well is an essential ability not only in advanced university-level work but also after graduation, no matter what career or field of endeavor one chooses. Because SMU regards the ability to write well as so important, all students are required to be enrolled in a Written Communications class until the Written Communications requirement is satisfied (see the "Written Communication" requirement of the General Education Curriculum in the 2008-09 *Undergraduate Catalog*). As a result, you may not drop this course; you have until August 29 to change into another section of 1301, but you must be enrolled in 1301 until you earn at least a grade of C-, and after August 29, you must remain in this section. If, as the semester progresses, you attempt to drop yourself from the course, at the end of the term the W will automatically become an F. The course gives students the chance to do a lot of writing and to see the integral relationships among writing well, reading critically, and understanding how the intended audience shapes any writing task.

Attendance: Roll will be taken at 1:00 P.M. promptly each time class meets, beginning Friday, August 29. Students are required to attend all classes. Students who prefer courses where attendance is not required or who have a history of missing numerous classes should not remain in this section of 1301. In recognition of the possibility that, on occasion, a student simply may not be able to attend, the first three absences for all students are automatically excused. No explanation for these absences will be expected or accepted. Students may not, however, "bank" these excused absences. They are automatic. Once a student has missed three classes, attendance penalties begin to accumulate. With the fourth absence, the final grade is reduced by two points, with the fifth by an additional four points (six points total), with the sixth by an additional eight points (fourteen points total), with the seventh by an additional sixteen points (thirty points total). With the eighth absence, the student automatically fails the course. Once students have missed class three times (thereby exhausting their automatically excused absences) they may petition to have further absences excused. Such further excused absences, however, will depend on documentation such as a note from the SMU Student Health Center, an official letter from a medical professional licensed in the State of Texas, evidence of a jury or trial summons, etc. Any student wishing to petition for an excused absence must do so no later than one week after the day of the absence. All unexcused absences become permanent after one week. Students who miss three or more consecutive classes should contact (or arrange for someone on their behalf to contact) the Professor. Students who miss more than three consecutive classes will be presumed to have ceased participating in the course. Letters from parents and friends, traffic tickets, travel records, traffic jams, parking problems, lost textbooks or writing assignments, etc. are rarely sufficient to justify excusing an absence. Students are strongly encouraged not to use their three automatically excused absences unless doing so is absolutely unavoidable. Students with poor attendance records almost never do well in this class. It is the responsibility of tardy students to make sure that their absence has been corrected to tardy. Correcting an absence to a tardy may be done only on the day of the

tardy. Three tardies will be counted as an absence, and students who come to class more than fifteen minutes late will be counted absent for the day (though they are encouraged to come late even though the tardy cannot be changed; it is always better to attend part of a class than to attend none of a class). Students who travel on University business (with an athletic team, a musical or artistic performance group, a debate team, or other officially approved University travel activities) should provide the Professor with documentation written by the University official responsible for administering such travel. Requests for such absences may not be made by the student him/herself but must be made by the University official in charge. The deadline for requesting permission to miss class for official travel is Friday, September 5.

Religious Observance: Students who must miss class to participate in a religious observance should notify the Professor no later than Wednesday, September 3.

Conferences: Three times during the semester (September 8-12, October 3-8, and November 17-21) meetings in the regular classroom will be suspended so that students may have a conference with the Professor. All students are required to sign up for a conference time on each of these three occasions. These conferences are especially important because they allow the Professor and the student extended individual time to focus on the student's strengths and weaknesses as a writer and on the progress the student is making in the course. Missing a conference is the same as missing a full week of classes and counts as three absences; normally unexcused missed conferences are not made up. Usually, conferences occur in the Professor's office, which is in the basement of Dallas Hall, room 17-f. Students who feel they need extra help or who wish to pursue conversation about the class beyond classroom discussion are strongly encouraged to meet with the Professor, either during office hours or at a prearranged time. Students may chat with the Professor briefly prior to or just after class or email to set up a conference.

Contacting the Professor: Students are urged to contact the Professor if they are concerned about any aspect of the course or interested in pursuing any ideas that arise in the course. Students are encouraged to visit during office hours (or any time the Professor is in the office) or to telephone. Email, however, is usually the best method of contacting the Professor.

Course Requirements: To complete the course successfully, students must write five essays: three done primarily out of class and two done almost entirely in class. In addition, there will be ten ten-question quizzes spread across the semester to make sure that students have read the assigned material and paid attention in class. Students who miss the first in-class paper or as many as three of the ten quizzes and who have an excused absence for the day on which the task occurred may make up the missed work on make-up day, which is Friday, December 5. Students with no work to make up are excused from class on make-up day. The value of the assignments is listed below:

Paper 1	20 points
Paper 2	25 points
Paper 3	10 points
Paper 4	25 points
Paper 5	10 points
Quizzes	10 points (each quiz question is worth 0.1 points for the course)

Grading Scale:

94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-*
67-69	D+
63-66	D
60-62	D-
0-59	F

*Students must earn a grade of C- or higher to satisfy the University's General Education Written Communication requirement. Students earning a grade below C- must repeat the course the following semester.

Quizzes: There will be ten unannounced quizzes during the semester. Each quiz will consist of ten questions, with each question counting one-tenth of a point (0.1) toward the final grade, for a total of ten points over the course. The purpose of the quizzes is to ensure that students keep up with their reading assignments and pay attention in class. The quiz period begins with the class that meets on Friday, August 29, and ends the class that meets Friday, November 14. Students should come to class each day prepared for and expecting a quiz. Quizzes will cover all reading assignments, Blackboard assignments, and course activities since the last quiz. (Quiz one will cover all reading assignments, Blackboard assignments, and course activities from the beginning of the semester to the day of the quiz.) Students who have an excused absence for a day on which a quiz is given may petition to make up as many as three missed quizzes on Make-Up Day. The deadline for such petitions is December 1; the petition must include the quiz that was missed, the date, and how the absence was excused. Make-up quizzes will consist of five questions worth two-tenths of a point (0.2) each.

Late or ineffective work: Papers one, two, and four are due at the beginning of class on the day assigned. Late work will be penalized four points per class meeting. The first penalty will occur as of 1:05 on the day assigned. At 1:05 of each subsequent class meeting, an additional four-point penalty will be added. Students are required, however, to write all three of the out-of-class papers, even if a paper is so late that all of the available points have been forfeited. A student who does not write all three out-of-class papers cannot pass the course. Students who do not submit a good-faith effort during the drafting stages of a paper (when the first part is due or the first or second draft is due) will have up to four points deducted from the final grade on the paper for each failure to improve. Students who make no significant progress on a paper between the first, second, and final drafts will have up to four points deducted from their final grade for each failure to improve.

Make Up Day: It is possible for a student who misses either the paper written in class on October 10 or as many as three quizzes to petition for permission to make up the missed work, so long as the student has an excused absence for the day on which the work was missed. The deadline for such petitions is Monday, December 1. In their petitions, students must specify the work that they hope to make up, the date on which the work was missed, and how their absence on that date was excused. Students who do not file a petition for make-up work by 5:00 p.m., December 1, may not make up any work at all. Students may not make up work that occurred on days for which they have no excused absence, and students may not make up both the October 10 essay and one or more quizzes. All make-up work will be done on the last day of classes, Friday, December 5. Students with no work to make up will be excused from class on December 5.

Honor Code: All work for this course (quizzes, in-class and out-of-class papers, anything submitted to meet a requirement or to earn a grade) is governed by the SMU Honor Code. Any student with a question about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism should raise that question on syllabus discussion day (September 2) or through conversation with the Professor as the course progresses. In general, use of any material not specifically assigned in the course as well as consulting with anyone not enrolled in the course or employed in SMU's Learning Enhancement Center will be treated as intentional cheating. Essays one, two, and four must be submitted both as a printed, finished essay and electronically; the electronic version must be the same essay as the printed version. All essays submitted in the course are subject to review through "SafeAssign," which is a computer and web based plagiarism recognition program.

Disabilities: Students with disabilities that might affect performance in the course must register with Ms. Rebecca Marin and must notify the Professor no later than September 5. Students must meet with Ms. Marin prior to requesting disability consideration.

Laptop computers may be used in class but only for class related activities. They may not be used to check email, web surf, work on other courses, play games, or perform any tasks not directly related to activities current at the time in class. Students who are discovered using their laptops inappropriately will be counted absent for the day (forfeiting scores on quizzes or other activities for the day) and will not be allowed to bring a laptop to class again for the duration of the course. Students with questions about the appropriate use of laptops should ask those questions either September 2 or September 3. After September 3 the Professor will assume that students know the rules.

Cell phones, PDAs, iPods, MP3 Players, and other such electronic devices must be silenced and concealed at all times during class. Students with such devices that are either visible or audible will be asked to leave class and not to return with such devices. Students may not videotape any part of classroom activities; those wishing to make audiotapes must receive prior permission from the Professor before any part of class may be audiotaped.

Schedule of Assignments

(Assignments from the *Quick Access Reference for Writers* are indicated by “QAR,” from *Criteria* by “CR,” posted on Blackboard by “Bb,” and from *The Devil’s Highway* by DH. Paper Topic, Revision, Planning, Design, and Assignment sheets are available in the Course Documents section of Bb. Students should read daily assignments *before* coming to calls) During individual conferences weeks, class does not meet.

- 8/25 Beginning discussion of *The Devil’s Highway*; students should bring the book to class
- 8/27 Continuing discussion of *The Devil’s Highway*
(All students are presumed to have completed a careful reading of DH prior to class today)
(Consult Bb before coming to this and all future classes)
- 8/29 In-class writing assignment; Paper 1 Topics and Requirements Worksheet due; bring two copies to class
- 9/2 Course requirements and class schedule (**Note that this is a Tuesday—SMU follows Monday Schedule**)
All students should bring a complete syllabus and a syllabus registration sheet to class today
- 9/3 Course materials day: no admission without signed syllabus registration sheet, all required textbooks, printed copy of course syllabus, and double-pocket folder; bring Paper 1 Revision Sheet to class; QAR pp. 27-42
- 9/5 First full draft (approximately 800 words) of Paper 1 due; bring **three copies** to class; completed Paper 1 Revision Sheet due. Last day to request consideration for disabilities; last day to request permission to miss class for official travel
- 9/8 Individual Conferences on Paper 1; bring two copies (approximately 1100 words) of second draft of Paper 1
- 9/10 Individual Conferences on Paper 1; bring two copies (approximately 1100 words) of second draft of Paper 1
- 9/12 Individual Conferences on Paper 1; bring two copies (approximately 1100 words) of second draft of Paper 1
- 9/15 Paper 1 due (approximately 1250 words); Aristotelian Rhetoric Sheet Bb; QAR pp. 48-60
- 9/17 Bb Didion’s “On Going Home” & Momaday’s “The Way to Rainy Mountain”
- 9/19 Bb Cisneros’s “Only Daughter,” Bradbury’s “The Veldt,” *Genesis* 2:4-3:24
- 9/22 Bb Cohen’s “Words Left Unspoken,” Baca’s “I Ask Myself, Should I Cry? Or Laugh?” “Solemnization of Matrimonic,” & Lessing’s “My Father”
- 9/24 CR Rodriguez’s “The Achievement of Desire” and hooks “Keeping Close to Home: Class and Education”; Bb *Koran* 24:1-39
- 9/26 Bb Paper 2 Topics and Requirements Worksheet
- 9/29 First part (400-500 words) of Paper 2 due, bring three copies to class
- 10/1 First full draft (approximately 800 words) of Paper 2 due; bring three copies to class
- 10/3 Individual Conferences on Paper 2; bring two copies (approximately 1100 words) of second draft
- 10/6 Individual Conferences on Paper 2; bring two copies (approximately 1100 words) of second draft
- 10/8 Individual Conferences on Paper 2; bring two copies (approximately 1100 words) of second draft
- 10/10 Paper 2 due (approximately 1250 words); Bb *Jonah*; also bring “The Haystack in the Floods”
- 10/15 Topics and Requirements Worksheet for Paper 3; bring three copies to class

- 10/17 Brainstorming, organizing, and drafting workshop for Paper 3
- 10/20 Paper 3 written in class
- 10/22 CR Plato's "Allegory of the Cave"
- 10/24 Bb Bambara's "The Lesson," Marchand's "The Parable of the Democracy of Goods," Craig's "Men's Men and Women's Women"; CR Cox's "All You Need Is Love"
- 10/27 CR Bertrand "Cresson"; Bb *Genesis* 1:1-2:4, Levin's "The Case for Torture"
- 10/29 Bb Regan's "The Case for Animal Rights"
- 10/31 Bb Thoreau's "Life Without Principle"
- 11/3 Bb Forster's "What I believe"
- 11/5 Bb Achebe's "Language and the Destiny of Man"
- 11/7 Bb St. Augustine's *Confessions* & Porter's "St. Augustine and the Bullfight"
- 11/10 Paper 4 Topics and Requirements Worksheet; bring three copies to class
- 11/12 First part (400-500 words) of Paper 4 due; bring three copies to class
- 11/14 First full draft (approximately 800 words) of Paper 4 due; bring three copies to class
- 11/17 Individual conferences on Paper 4; bring two copies (approximately 1100 words)
- 11/19 Individual conferences on Paper 4; bring two copies (approximately 1100 words)
- 11/21 Individual conferences on Paper 4; bring two copies (approximately 1100 words)
- 11/24 Paper 4 due (approximately 1250 words)
- 12/1 Brainstorming, organizing, and drafting workshop for Paper 5; deadline for requesting permission to make up work
- 12/3 Drafting and critique workshop for Paper 5
- 12/5 Make-up day; students wishing to make up work must receive permission to do so no later than December 1
- 12/10 Paper 5 Written in class (11:30-2:30)

This is the final examination time set by the Provost of the University through the Registrar's Office. All students will be required to write the essay at this time. Exceptions will not be made to accommodate students' holiday travel plans, to allow for job interviews, to relieve students who have multiple examinations on this day, or for any other reason. Students will be allowed to make up a missed final only if they can prove a significant and genuine personal medical emergency or the death of an immediate family member (parent, sibling, or spouse). Normally students who miss the final exam fail the course. No early final exams will be given.