

Expository Writing

01:355:101:FX (Fall 2012)

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Syllabus Version 1.0, September 2, 2012

- Instructor:** Aaron Braver
abraver@rutgers.edu (please include “Expos” in your subject line)
- Class Meetings:** Tuesdays, 3:20pm–4:40pm
Thursdays, 3:20pm–4:40pm
Allison Road Classroom Building (ARC), Room 326 (Busch Campus)
- Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00pm–1:40pm (and by appointment)
Allison Road Classroom Building (ARC), Room 322 (Busch Campus)

About this course

Course description

In this course you will read and write about a variety of texts concerning a range of fascinating, relevant, contemporary issues. Course goals include helping you to read deeply, think critically, and write interpretively and effectively. You will create your own independent arguments that synthesize multiple sources.

Learning goals

- (1) To *communicate* complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience.
- (2) To evaluate and *critically assess* sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly.
- (3) To analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to *generate new insights*.

Required texts

Please bring all texts, as well as your reading journal and your most recent essay draft, to every class meeting. If you do not have the relevant texts at hand, you may be marked absent and asked to leave.

- Miller and Spellmeyer, *The New Humanities Reader* (4th Edition)
- Kirsznner and Mandell, *The Pocket Wadsworth Handbook* (5th Edition)

Daily handouts

On most days, we will make at least some use of handouts. These handouts will be posted on the course Sakai site in advance. *It is your responsibility to print these handouts before the start of class.* You may wish to use the computer lab in the MSLC on the third floor of the ARC building.

Students who do not have a copy of the day's handouts will be marked as tardy.

Assignments and Grading

Course requirements

- Read and analyze six selections from *The New Humanities Reader*:
 - Juhani Pallasmaa—*The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (p. 281)
 - Oliver Sacks—*The Mind's Eye: What the Blind See* (p. 302)
 - Nicholas Carr—*Is Google Making Us Stupid?* (p. 66)
 - Malcolm Gladwell—*The Power of Context: Bernie Goetz and the Rise and Fall of New York City Crime* (p. 151)
 - Martha Stout—*When I Woke Up Tuesday Morning, It Was Friday* (p. 380)
 - Christine Kenneally—*You Have Gestures* (p. 186)
- Write 5 out-of-class essays (topics to be assigned)
 - Rough drafts must be a minimum of 4 typed pages each
 - Final drafts must be a minimum of 5 typed pages each
 - You must demonstrate significant revision between drafts
- Give three brief oral presentations in class, including one on grammar
- Take an in-class Midterm Exam (essay format, graded pass or fail)
- Take an in-class Final Exam (essay format, graded pass or fail)
 - *You must pass the final exam in order to pass the course*
- Keep all rough and final drafts in a folder for mid-semester and end-of-semester folder review
- Regularly check the course Sakai site and your Rutgers email

Grading

- Your final course grade will be determined by your highest rate of sustained achievement at the end of the term—not the average of all your assignment grades.
- You must pass the Final Exam in order to pass the course.
- The lowest passing grade for a paper and for the course is a C.
- All grades are subject to departmental review.

Late work

Late work will be penalized as follows:

- One half of a letter grade will be deducted for late rough drafts per class that it is late (e.g., B+ becomes a B)
- One full letter grade will be deducted for late final drafts per class that it is late (e.g., B+ becomes a C+)

Policies and expectations

Attendance and punctuality

You are expected to come to class on time and to participate fully in class discussions and exercises. *After four absences, you risk failing the course. Lateness of twenty minutes or more counts as half an absence.*

The discussions we hold in class are tailored to your writing. It is in your best interest to attend class on time and ready to go—we will not have the luxury of revisiting old material.

If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website (<http://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra>) to indicate the date and reason for your absence. This system will automatically notify me.

University policy (University Regulation on Attendance, Book 2, §2.4.7B) requires that no penalty be imposed upon students who are absent from class because of religious observances, and allows for students to make up the work missed because of such absence. Please notify me as early as possible in the semester of an upcoming absence for religious reasons.

Communications

Please send emails from your Rutgers email address only, and be sure to include “Expos” somewhere in the subject line. You are expected to check your Rutgers email address at least once a day—failing to check your email regularly is not an excuse for missing changes to course policies, assignments, or deadlines.

Submitting papers

Both rough and final drafts must be submitted in two formats: an electronic copy must be uploaded to Sakai before the start of class on the due date, and a hard copy must be submitted at the start of class on the due date. You will frequently be required to bring multiple paper copies—please be sure to read the essay prompt for this information.

Cell phone policy

Cell phone use distracts you and those around you. For the benefit of your classmates, *please silence your cell phone* before class begins and put it away until class is over. *If you use your phone during class—for talking, texting, or any other purpose—you will be asked to leave and will be marked as absent for the day.*

Other miscellaneous policies

- Papers that exhibit significant errors in punctuation, grammar, spelling, or syntax (generally, three or more errors per page) risk failing.
- You must submit typed rough and final drafts of all five papers in order to pass this course. You must also complete the midterm exam and pass the final exam to pass the course.
- *If you are two final drafts behind, for any reason, you automatically fail the course.*
- You cannot drop this course without a Dean's permission.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

If you have a disability and require some type of accommodation, your coordinator in the Office of Disability Services should provide you with a Letter of Accommodation, describing the accommodations to which you are entitled.

Please bring me your Letter of Accommodation as soon as possible. Don't wait until you start having problems or just before a test—I want you to have every opportunity to do well in this course, but advance notice may be necessary.

If you have any questions, you can contact me directly, or the Office of Disability Services at (848) 445-6800 or via email at dsoffice@rci.rutgers.edu.

Tutoring

The Writing Program offers free tutoring on Livingston, Cook/Douglass, and College Ave. Additionally, the College Ave. location offers "Grammar Fridays" 9:50am–5:10pm. I strongly recommend making use of these services early and often. (<http://wp.rutgers.edu/tutoring>)

Academic integrity

The short version:

- Read the Academic Integrity Policy (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>)
- Do your own work
- Cite your sources

The long version:

All students are expected and required to abide by the University's Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>. Note that ignorance of the policy is not a valid defense against charges of academic integrity. In order to avoid committing a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, intentional or otherwise, please be sure to read the policy in its entirety.

Copying from another source (another student, a course reading, a website, etc.) without citation constitutes plagiarism. Please cite any sources you use.

If you have any questions, please consult the instructor, a dean, or the University's Academic Integrity Policy.