SYLLABUS

INSTRUCTOR: Jo Anna Bashforth
OFFICE: FOB 113
OFFICE HOURS: Wed. 9-10 AM or by appointment
OFFICE PHONE: 677-6469 (no voicemail)
EMAIL: joanna.bashforth@csun.edu

MEETING TIMES: MWF 8:00 – 8:50
MEETING PLACE: Mon. & alternate Fri. JR 247,
Every Wed. and alternate Fri. JR 248 (Lab)
WEB PAGE: http://www.csun.edu/~bashforth/
LISTSERV: bashforth155-c@csun.edu

REQUIRED TEXTS:
Course Reader

REQUIRED MATERIALS:
2 two-pocket folders to turn in on essay due dates
Ringbinder and notebook paper
2 Bluebooks for in-class essays
A supply of floppy disks formatted for IBM (Labeled with your name, please.)
An email account

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:
A CSU English Placement Test Score of 151, or the EPT and a grade of Credit in English 097 and/or 098, if applicable.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND RATIONALE:

English 155 is a course in expository writing designed for freshmen and transfer students. Every CSUN student is required to take this course. In fact, a composition course is probably a requirement for every student, at every university throughout the United States. Why is this course required of every student who wishes to earn a college degree? Because no matter what field you go into, you will at some point (in both your school and professional careers) need to communicate effectively in writing – and that’s why you’re here. During the semester, you will fine-tune your ability to tap into your own reservoir of knowledge, explore the ideas of others using various resources, analyze the information you gather, and then synthesize these parts into a cohesive whole – the final product, an argumentative essay.

The emphasis of our course is to help you gain experience with academic reading and writing. To accomplish this goal, you will have extensive practice in exploring ideas, conveying information, thinking critically about concepts presented in written works and other media, and adopting a thoughtful position about complex, substantive and sometimes controversial topics. We will further focus on developing your skills in organizing an essay, using logical reasoning in support of an analytical and thought-provoking thesis, and expressing ideas clearly and effectively. Beyond that, we will work to push your writing to a new level, complete with stylistic flair and grace and a unique sense of voice.
Through work on all parts of the writing process (invention, drafting, revision, editing), by using group workshops, appointments at the Writing Center (LRC), and individual conferences with me, we will work to establish you as a writer possessing depth and fluency. We will further diversify your knowledge through practice in various research and analysis techniques as well as the examination of culturally diverse texts and media. During the semester, you will also gain experience in presenting to an audience and communicating online.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**ASSIGNMENTS:**
Listed below are the assignments required throughout the semester and their grade point values.

- Portfolio 250 points
- Opinion Paper 50
- Three 4-6 page Major Essays (ME) (100 pts. each) 300
- Two in-class timed essays (50 pts. each) 100
- Learning Log 100
- Friday HyperNews Posts 75
- “Grammar Experts” Presentation 50
- Participation: discussions, quizzes, in-class freewrites, mandatory conference, workshops, attendance, etc. 75

1000 points

Assignments are due *at the beginning of class* on the date specified on the schedule. No late work will be accepted. You *cannot* email papers instead of attending class. You *cannot* have other classmates turn in your paper for you. Your final grade will be lowered for each missing assignment. No matter how many points you have accumulated, you cannot pass the class unless you turn in all three major essays.

**PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS:**
Instead of having a final, you will be required to submit a portfolio of your work, which will include:

- Cover letter
- One (1) in-class timed essay
- Two (2) essay packets including a clean copy and rough draft(s), ungraded, with assignment sheet attached

We will discuss the portfolio in-depth at a later date. In the meantime, please note that it is crucial that you save all class materials, preliminary drafts, brainstorming notes, outlines, as well as completed assignments – *please* don’t *throw anything away!*

**PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE:**
This class is conducted as a workshop and your participation is necessary for our success. It is important that you come to every class prepared and on time. To be “prepared” means that you have thoughtfully engaged with the reading, have reviewed your Learning Log assignment, are ready to discuss the issues surrounding the topic, and arrive in class equipped with the supplies necessary to participate (books, paper, writing instruments, floppy disks, etc.).

Because your presence in class is important, three or more absences will impact your final grade. In most circumstances, 4 absences may result in failure. I understand that this is an early class, but it is also important that you be present for the majority of the class session: at 8:05 you will be considered
tardy. Because we will periodically begin class with quizzes, free-writes and similar activities – important work that cannot be made up – it is essential you arrive on time. Two instances of tardy will equal one absence.

Cell phones and pagers are to be turned off and kept out of my sight. If your phone or pager rings during class or if I see you checking your messages/pager during class, you will be marked absent – no exceptions.

CONFERENCES
To receive full participation points, you must attend one individual conference with me, which will be scheduled for early November. We will discuss the paper you are currently working on as well as your general progress in the class.

EMAIL
Please be aware that I respond within 24 hour to most email messages sent Monday to Friday. If you send me an email and I do not respond during this timeframe, it is your responsibility to resend the email or attempt to contact me some other way, e.g. through the English Department Office.

A WORD ABOUT ATMOSPHERE
From time to time, we will discuss “heated” issues in class and online. In order for us to succeed, we need to constantly work to preserve an environment of mutual respect. While we will never reach consensus on these issues, we can, however, respect each person’s right to an opinion. Name-calling, rude or menacing behavior will not be tolerated. Additionally, the HyperNews forum will have special rules of conduct that you are expected to adhere to.

If you are having difficulties with any aspect of our course, in class or online, please feel free to see me before the mandatory conferences are scheduled. Academic writing is a challenging process and everyone needs help and support from time to time.

THE WRITING LAB AT THE LRC
At CSUN’s Learning Resource Center (LRC), writing lab peer tutors are available to help students enrolled in 097, 098, or 155 in Asian American Studies, Chicano Studies, English or Pan African Studies, as well as to help students enrolled in University 100, Freshman Orientation. They are undergraduate and graduate students from all University disciplines. In addition to helping students with their writing process, tutors can help students develop effective study strategies. During this semester, you will be required to make at least two visits to the LRC to have your first draft of Major Essays 1 and 2 peer-reviewed. The Writing Lab operates on a walk-in and appointment basis, although appointments are strongly recommended. Call (818)-677-2033. The website is http://www.csun.edu/~hflrc006.

CLASS GRAADING: The semester grading scale will be as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Lower Boundary</th>
<th>Upper Boundary</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>930-1000</td>
<td>730-769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>900-929</td>
<td>700-729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>870-899</td>
<td>670-699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>830-869</td>
<td>630-699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>800-829</td>
<td>600-629</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>770-799</td>
<td>Below 600</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
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**Grading Guidelines:** Here is a sketch of expectations for written work.

**A** represents a writing level of excellent polish and style, often taking an unusual or especially thoughtful or insightful position on the topic. The thesis is well-supported and the writer addresses the complexity of the topic by acknowledging and then arguing skillfully against an opposing viewpoint. The essay is extremely well developed and organized, and the writing is not only free of grammatical problems or careless mistakes but is rich in detail and exhibits considerable fluency and control.

**B** represents solid, readable writing that does what the assignment requires. The thesis is thoughtful and the writer indicates his or her awareness of the complexity of the topic by acknowledging and then arguing against an opposing viewpoint. It demonstrates concrete support for the thesis, good organization, and is free of grammatical problems or careless mistakes.

**C** represents writing that, for the most part, satisfies all the requirement of an assignment. However, the thesis is not well conceived and the writing lacks sufficient, concrete support needed to illustrate its assertions or prove its point. C-level writing also shows lapses in editing proficiency and contains careless errors.

**D** represents writing that does not adequately satisfy the requirements of the assignment. The thesis is poorly conceived or missing, and the writing lacks coherence and support. D-level writing is characterized by significant lapses in editing proficiency and numerous careless errors.

**F** represents writing that is flawed in terms of fulfilling the requirements of the assignment and supporting a thesis, as well as in overall coherence and appropriateness. The writing is characterized by considerable lapses in editing and a great many grammatical errors.

**Academic Honesty**

According to the CSUN catalog, plagiarism is “intentionally or knowingly representing the works, ideas, or work of another as one’s own in an academic exercise” (551). Plagiarism is a serious academic crime, and if a student’s work is found to be plagiarized, even in draft form, the student will receive a zero for the plagiarized assignment. CSUN’s policy requires that Dr. William Watkins, the Assistant Vice President for Student Life, be notified. As part of our class work in ENGL155, we will review the proper way to use outside sources in order to avoid plagiarism; however, I encourage you to meet with me if you are at all uncertain whether something you are working on could be misconstrued as plagiarism.

*If you need special course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please speak to me immediately after the first or second class meeting.*