Developmental Writing

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Texts: Matador Bookstore:
- Different Seasons, by Stephen King
- From Critical Thinking to Argument: A Portable Guide, 2nd ed.

Required Materials:
2 Large Bluebooks for in-class essays
Internet access and an email account which you check regularly

Highly Recommended:
A student planner or other type of calendar. Planning, or the lack thereof, can make or break your college career.

Admission Requirements:
A CSU English Placement Test Score of 142-150 or a grade of Credit in English 097, if applicable.

Course Objectives and Format:
English 098 is designed primarily to improve your existing talents and abilities to write in the kinds of genres you will use in your academic careers and beyond, giving you many opportunities to write in ways that challenge you and your analytical thinking skills. By the end of the semester, you will be aware of how the writing process – inventing, drafting, revising, editing – becomes actualized in your own writing. We will introduce and experiment with invention strategies such as brainstorming, clustering, free-writing, as well as small group and full class discussions. You will become skilled at evaluating your readers’ needs by producing essays which provide clear introductions and sufficient detail to accomplish your writing purposes. We will work together to build a writing community by introducing peer collaboration in the reading and writing processes, by encouraging peer response to student writing, by requiring conferences between tutor and student and by providing conferences between instructor and student.

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!

Preparation, Participation, Attendance, and Late Assignments:
This class is designed to be more workshop than lecture 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, meaning you will have read the assigned material before coming to class. As a result, you will be familiar with topics and vocabulary, have a frame of reference for and to be able to participate in class discussions, take quizzes successfully, etc.
Preparation, Participation, Attendance, and Late Assignments (con’t):

It also means reviewing/completing your Learning Log assignments so you are ready to discuss the issues surrounding the topic. You are also expected to arrive in class equipped with the supplies necessary to participate (books, paper, writing instruments, etc.).

Much in-class work will be collaborative, so your participation and hence attendance, is necessary. Because your presence in class is important and - if you are not here, you cannot participate – in a one-meeting a week class, missing even one session may impact the number of points you accumulate. In most circumstances, 2 or more may result in failure. It is important that you be present for the majority of the class session: at 4:25 you will be considered tardy. Because we will periodically begin class with free-writes, quizzes, and similar activities – important work that cannot be made up – it is essential you arrive on time. Early departures are counted the same as a late arrival. Two instances of tardy will equal one absence. All absences will require a doctor’s note or other appropriate documentation.

Most assignments will be due by email (documents in Rich Text Format), but those that are not, i.e. they require a “hard-copy,” are due at the beginning of class on the date specified. Alternatively, on rare occasions it may be requested that you drop documents off at the English Dept. main office at ST708 and have them time stamped. Having assignments completed on time is essential. If you expect to be away or miss a class when an assignment is due, you will need to make arrangements to get the assignment to me ahead of time. No late work will be accepted. Missed or late work of any kind means the equivalent of an “F” for that particular assignment.

Cell phones, PDA’s, and other personal communication devices are to be turned off and kept out of sight. If your phone or PDA rings or if I see you texting or checking your messages during class, you will be asked to leave and will be marked absent – no exceptions. Texting, checking your email, wandering the web, etc. is permissible only until class has begun.

Conferences
To receive full participation points, you must attend to least one individual conference with me. Other conferences may be scheduled at your or my request during the semester. Typically, 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 promptly to emails, within 24 hours – and often sooner - to most email messages. In fact, I know email is rather old-fashioned, but you should also check your email on weekends as there are sometimes changes in classroom assignments, etc. 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 “hot-button” issues in class. In order for us to succeed, we need all to work diligently 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, teasing, rude, or menacing behavior will not be tolerated. Additionally, should we on some occasions be using an asynchronous chat forum, there will be specified rules of conduct that you are expected to adhere to.
A Word About Atmosphere (con’t)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes for this Course

Students will demonstrate:

- **competence** in the recursive writing process, using strategies for invention, drafting, and revision.
- **understanding** that writing in an academic context means exploring a subject, distinguishing their own ideas from the ideas of others, and organizing information around a central focus.
- **skill** in developing comfort with reading and writing various genres, including in-class timed writing, personal writing, journal writing, text-based writing, and argument, developing rhetorical strategies appropriate to audience and purpose.
- **knowledge** of critical reading strategies and apply them to both print and visual texts.
- **evolving** competency in organizational patterns, sentence structure, and the basic usage and mechanical practices of Edited American English.
- **a developing understanding** of how to use writing and reading as a means of participating in the world around them.

Writing Requirements

During the semester, students will write three (3) substantive essays of 3-4 pages, developed through multiple drafts, revisions, in-class essays, and journal entries. Students should also engage in other forms of writing, including shorter free-writes, journal entries, or responses to readings. They will also practice timed writing in class. Writing assignments should grow out of reading assignments and class discussions. Assignments will be reasonably challenging, aimed at developing the intellectual maturity of students by encouraging a critical awareness of themselves, their values, and their multicultural environment. Students should expect to revise their written work. Although all work in the course will be reviewed, not every assignment will be formally evaluated. A portfolio assessment occurs at the end of each semester.

Reading Requirements

In developing their abilities to read college level texts critically, students will read broadly and widely in fiction and non-fiction forms. Most of the readings should be discussed in class focusing on the author’s ideas and purpose, organization, diction, and other rhetorical strategies. Some instructors may require reading journals, Learning Logs, analysis of websites and/or other visual texts. **New Voices**, a collection of English 097 and 098 student essays published each year, is required for the course.
English 098 Portfolio Requirements

Students in English 098 will submit a portfolio containing the following assignments:

1. A reflective cover letter in which the student discusses his or her writing process, evaluating the pieces in the portfolio.
2. A 3-4 pages personal narrative; previous drafts must be attached.
3. A 3-4 page argument with a central thesis and supporting points developed through library research; previous drafts much be attached.
4. A 3-4 page paper based on a whole text. This paper should discuss an author’s ideas and the student’s interpretation; previous drafts must be attached.
5. An in-class writing assignment, ungraded and unmarked.

Grading

English 098 is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis only.

**Credit:** A student may receive “Credit” if s/he earns a “Pass” score on the portfolio from two different readers. However, the grade of “Credit” is at the instructor’s discretion even with a “Pass” on the portfolio.

**No Credit:** A student will receive “No Credit” if s/he earns a “Fail” from two different readers on the portfolio.

Students who do not submit portfolios will receive “No Credit.” *Instructors may refuse to accept a student’s portfolio if the student has not completed the work as stated on the syllabus.*

Assignments:

Listed below are the assignments required throughout the semester.

- Position Paper 75
- Three 3-4 page Major Essays (ME) (125 pts. each) 375
- Two in-class timed essays (75 pts. each) 150
- Learning Logs 330
- Participation: discussions, quizzes, in-class freewrites, mandatory conference, workshops, attendance, etc. 70

Total 1000*

*Must have earned a minimum of 750 pts to submit a portfolio

The Writing Lab at the Learning Resource Center

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. The tutors 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 three visits to the LRC to have the first drafts of your narrative, literary analysis, and argument essays peer reviewed. The Writing Lab (BH408) operates on a walk-in and appointment basis, although appointments are strongly recommended.
The Writing Lab at the Learning Resource Center (con’t)
There is no excuse for not having your Peer Review completed by date specified on the class schedule. Not having the Peer Review completed on time (with receipt as proof) is considered Late Work. Call (818)-677-2033. Their website is http://www.csun.edu/~hflrc006/.

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 a preliminary 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 of the infraction. Many students are unaware that “self-plagiarism” – re-submitting your own work (done at CSUN, at a previous university or junior college, or from high school, etc.) is also unacceptable. As part of our class work in ENGL098, 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 special need, please speak to me immediately after the first or second class meeting so we can make arrangements.

University Requirements
First-time freshmen are required to complete all developmental and math courses within the first year of enrollment. The university’s “Basic Subjects” policy further requires that as soon as any needed developmental courses are completed, students must enroll in the General Education Basic Subjects (Section A) classes in writing, critical reasoning, oral communication, and math. Enrollment must be continuous until section A is completed.

Not what we mean when we talk about "pre-writing."