

Achievement Requirements—English 112

Spring 2006
MWF 10:30-11:20
122 Jerome Library

Contact Information

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Required Texts and Materials

1. Behrens, Laurence, and Leonard J. Rosen, eds. *Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum*. 9th ed. New York: Pearson Longman, 2005.
2. Troyka, Lynn Quitman, and Douglas Hesse, eds. *The Simon and Schuster Handbook for Writers*. 8th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007.
3. A college-level dictionary.
4. Portfolio of English 112 materials (sold at BGSU Bookstore).
5. Access to a computer for word processing and internet.
6. Two floppy disks, zip disks, or other portable file storage device.
7. A BGNet email address and a MYBGSU account.
8. A (free) account on both LiveJournal and Blogger (we'll sign up for these the first week).

Course Description and Information

English 112, "Varieties of Writing," is the last in the series of General Studies Writing (GSW) courses offered at BGSU. Although there are probably hundreds of varieties of writing that occur in various contexts (some of which you may have explored in 110 or 111), we will be concentrating on three varieties of writing that are especially prominent in academic settings: the critique, the multiple source synthesis essay, and the synthesized, researched essay.

The emphasis in English 112 is on developing your critical and analytical skills in reading, thinking, and writing. Specifically, English 112 is designed to give you instruction and extensive practice in reading scholarly articles, writing critiques of what you read, making logical connections among several sources, and writing about those connections.

Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation:

Our time in class will be very valuable to you. Because 112 is designed to combine thorough writing instruction with practical skill-building, you will have many chances during in-class workshops to write and revise essay drafts and get immediate feedback from your peers and me. You will also be involved in important in-class discussions of the assigned readings and other activities designed to help you better understand the requirements of your writing assignments. Because class time is so valuable in English

112, your attendance and participation is important. Keep in mind that this class is not a repeat of 111: it is much more in depth, therefore attendance and active participation in this class are mandatory.

I do understand that severe illness / family emergencies can prevent your coming to class. If a true emergency arises and causes you to miss class, please contact me before class to let me know. As in a job, you would contact your boss before work to let him/her know you were not coming; please treat this class in the same way. When you return, I am willing to work with you to try to accommodate your situation. I'm happy to work with you in case of emergencies, but obviously I cannot do the work for you.

Please remember that if you must be absent for any reason, it is your responsibility to find out what occurred in class and to make up any assignments. Excessive absences will result in your portfolio not being eligible for submission at the end of the semester.

Checking Email/Casual Surfing:

These computers are temptations, I know. You find yourself zoning out in class and might decide to make time go faster by IM-ing a friend or checking your email. This is absolutely not allowed and is actually being very rude towards me. I will be in the lab at least 15 minutes before class, and for about 1-2 minutes at the start of class I will let you have your time to log in and quickly check your email.

Food in the Lab:

Sorry, a general BGSU labs rule of no food or drink while in the lab applies to this class as well. If you do have a drink, make sure it's got a tightly fitted lid that can stay in your bag during class.

Use of iPods, cell phones, Walkmans, etc.:

You can have these in class, but they need to stay in your bag—and turned off or to vibrate—at all times.

Conferences:

We will spend a great deal of time in English 112 talking about your writing. To facilitate our discussions, you will be required to schedule at least three out-of-class conferences with me this semester. Although you are required to attend only three conferences, I strongly encourage you to schedule more than the three required. Most writers make better progress toward proficiency when they receive continual feedback regarding their writing, so please feel free to schedule conference times with me throughout the term as needed.

We will also have peer conferences in class, usually held on the day the rough draft of each essay is due. These classes are especially important—not only do you receive helpful feedback from other students who may be working through the same kinds of problems as you, but you also receive excellent experience in evaluating other's writing, which enables you to see problems that may occur in your own papers. Attendance, once again, is crucial here. If you are not able to attend class on a peer conference day, I am requiring you to make an appointment with the Writing center to review your paper, as a substitute for extra feedback.

After each peer conference day, write a summary reflection of one or two paragraphs discussing your overall comments about your peer's paper. Include the following:

- a. Your overall evaluation of your peer's paper, summarizing briefly what suggestions you made

b. An explanation of what you learned about your own writing or about essay writing in general from reading and evaluating your peer's paper.
Post this reflection to our LiveJournal site by the beginning of the next class meeting.

Essays:

You will be graded on four fully-revised essays this term: a critique, two multiple source essays, and one researched essay.

Critique (40 points): The critique is written as a systematic evaluation of an academic article. An effective critique provides your reader (and yourself) with a full understanding of the article being critiqued, its intended meaning, and its merits and faults. The 112 critique will be graded on how fairly, accurately, and efficiently the text is summarized, how thoroughly and sensibly it is evaluated, and how clearly the criteria used to evaluate the essay are presented.

Multiple Source Essays (#1, 80 points; #2, 100 points): Another kind of essay you will write is a synthesized multiple source essay. You will write two of them during the course, each assignment slightly different. In an effective multiple source essay, you offer your own argument supported by various sources. In writing the English 112 multiple source essays, you will be asked to present your view on the subject matter of several readings, while synthesizing ideas from the authors you have read. While a proficient multiple source essay clearly expresses your own thoughts on a particular issue, it also exhibits your thorough familiarity with differing views on that issue. Your success in writing these essays will be determined in part by how well you understand and synthesize information from the various sources you have read and, in the case of the second multiple source essay, your ability to incorporate sources found through independent research.

Researched Essay (140 points): You will write one researched essay in English 112. This essay will make use of a variety of sources. Like the multiple source essays, the researched essay will present your view on an issue while synthesizing ideas from a number of sources. The researched essay will be graded on the quality of research, the clarity and accuracy with which the information is presented, and the effectiveness and logic with which sources are used to support your own original and relevant argument. Because proficiency in argumentative synthesis is a key goal of 112, all students must pass the researched essay with a grade of C or higher in order for their work to be submitted for portfolio assessment, which is necessary for passing English 112.

Format for all Drafts:

All rough and final copies of your essays are to be in the proper MLA format. Check the sample paper beginning on p. 604 in *Simon & Schuster* for details. Use Times, 12 point font, double spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides. The final draft must also be accompanied by any prewriting, the Audience and Values Exploration sheet, rough draft(s), peer review sheets, and assignment sheet. All of these elements will be stapled together with a rubric attached to the top.

Late Assignment Policy:

English 112 requires you to write four fully-revised essays and one exploratory draft. Each assignment must be turned in on time. However, emergencies arise, and if you are unable to attend class you may turn in any rough draft in to the Discussion Board forum on the same day it is due. Final drafts must be turned in on time in class, although you do get one emergency exemption (which, after you contact me, is an allowance made by me prior to class on the day it is due). Any final draft not turned in on time and not

exempted from the due date will put you at serious risk for not being submitted for portfolio assessment. Please pay attention to the due dates listed on your syllabus. Feel free to see me for further clarification of my late paper policy or to discuss any concerns regarding essay due dates.

Revision Policy:

Improving your ability to revise your essays effectively is an important goal of English 112. Revision will occur for each essay you write this semester, but the goal of 112 is that you learn skills which will enable you to revise your essays before you turn them in for a grade. Since effective revision is a skill that can be learned and improved upon, we will spend class time working on activities to improve revision skills. As you revise your work in progress, I encourage you to take advantage of my office hours and to schedule writing conferences with me. The Writing Center can provide additional assistance.

You may revise either of the multiple source essays or the researched essay once after their original evaluation if you first schedule a conference with me to discuss your revision strategy. A revised essay is due on the specified date (usually one week after I hand it back to you) and should be submitted with the original graded essay and a new rubric. The grade for a revised essay can be no higher than one letter grade above the original. The critique may not be revised after it has been submitted as a final draft. If no rough draft has been handed in, no revision is allowed.

Lost Essays:

You are responsible for maintaining a copy of each draft of your essays. All of the essays will be returned after they have been evaluated, and all essays must be present in the portfolio at the end of the semester. Because occasionally essays and diskettes are stolen, lost, or destroyed, you should keep an additional copy of each essay and a back-up disk in a safe place. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to submit a complete portfolio. Incomplete portfolios will not be evaluated; students without portfolios will not pass the course.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. Please consult BGSU's *Student Affairs Handbook* and your GSW portfolio materials for policies concerning plagiarism and academic honesty. All policies and penalties for violations stated in these materials apply to our class. We will discuss this issue in more detail later this semester.

Other Assignments:

I will assign some short writing exercises to supplement drafting, revising, and editing the graded projects that, like the graded writing, need to be fulfilled as part of your achievement requirements for passing English 112. As with the graded assignments, the additional writing assignments are designed to improve your critical thinking and writing skills.

You will also have reading assignments that we will discuss as a way to improve your critical thinking and reading skills. You should be prepared throughout the semester to discuss all reading assignments in class on the dates they are assigned. You can keep up with the reading pace of this class if you read on a regular basis and follow your syllabus closely.

Research/General Writing Blog:

A good writer always keeps a book full of practice writings and potential ideas. I want you, as developing academic writers, to keep a blog (a web log, via Blogger.com) to store

your notes, ideas, brainstorming, drafting, and revising, especially to help you as you research your final paper. I will often have writing exercises to begin, so we will be using it nearly every day. You may also want to use your writing blog more often—keep a journal of writing ideas, of observations, or of events. Your writing blog grade will be figured on the basis of completion only—not content.

Live Journal Class site:

To make things more interesting this semester, instead of using the available BlackBoard forums (as those are rather dull and institutional), I've set up a Live Journal site for all of us to use this semester to discuss, reflect, and share ideas about writing and about what we read. What is Live Journal, you ask? It's a social networking site, similar to MySpace or Facebook, but more heavily reliant on the journaling or blogging aspect of this type of webpage. There will be a link to this site on our BlackBoard class site.

Letter Grade and Point Scale for English 112

Your final grade in English 112 will be based on the following point scale. Each assignment will be worth a varied amount of points as noted below:

Essay Type	Grade and Range of Points that can be Awarded			
	A	B	C	NP
Critique	40-36	35-32	31-28	27↓
Multiple Source #1	80-72	71-64	63-56	55↓
Multiple Source #2	100-90	89-80	79-70	69↓
Researched Essay	140-126	125-112	111-98	Must Revise

Remember that you must pass the researched essay to be eligible for portfolio assessment.

<u>Assignment Type</u>	<u>Points</u>
Critique	-----
Multiple Source #1	-----
Multiple Source #2	-----
Researched Essay	-----
Total Points	_____

Once all points have been awarded, add the total together and use the following scale to determine your final grade for this course:

360-324 points = **A** 323-288 points = **B** 287-252 points = **C** Below 252 points = **NP**

Summary of Requirements for Passing English 112

- Hand in all required written work on time.
- Attend all classes and participate meaningfully in all class discussions and group work.
- Complete all reading assignments.
- Attend all scheduled conferences (three required).
- Receive a grade of C or higher on the researched essay.
- Receive a grade of C or higher for the course.
- Pass the Portfolio Assessment at the 112 level.

University Grading Policy for English 112

If your work passes the Portfolio Assessment at the English 112 level, you will receive an A, B, or C for this course. Your English 112 grade will be calculated into your grade point average.

If your work does not pass the Portfolio Assessment, you will receive an NR, meaning “No Record,” in English 112. What the NR means is that no notation of the course will be made on your transcript, nor will your grade point average be affected.

A student whose work is not eligible for a Portfolio Assessment, but who has attempted to meet all of the achievement requirements, will also receive an NR. The assumption behind the NR is that writing is a skill which takes some students longer than others to master. Therefore, a student who is showing improvement and who is working toward proficiency should not be penalized in the traditional ways.

It is also possible to receive a WF (Withdraw Fail) in this course. If you should stop attending this class for any reason without going through the University's official procedure for dropping a class, you will receive a **WF** for this course, the grade will appear on your transcript, and an **F** will be calculated into your grade point average.

Portfolio Assessment Process

During the last week of class, I will let you know whether your essays are eligible for Portfolio Assessment. It is important that you save all of your essays in your portfolio folder as you get them back from me throughout the semester -- your portfolio must show all of your work on each essay you wrote.

If, by the end of the semester, you have met all of the English 112 achievement requirements, have passed the researched essay with a grade of C or higher, and have earned a final course grade of C or higher, your work will be eligible to go through portfolio assessment.

If your portfolio is eligible, during the last week of the semester your essays will be read and evaluated by another English 112 instructor (not by me). The portfolio reader determines whether or not your writing, overall, shows proficiency at the 112 level. Unlike other courses where one or two weak assignments can ensure your failure, the portfolio assessment allows you to make improvements in your writing and grow as a writer. Even if you struggle with an essay or two, as long as your portfolio meets the minimum requirements for passing English 112, you will pass this course.

If you have not earned a final course grade of C or higher, have not passed the researched essay with a grade of C or higher, or have not met other achievement requirements, your work will not receive a portfolio evaluation. Instead, you will be required to re-enroll in 112.

Policy for GSW Portfolio Appeals

The General Studies Writing Program allows opportunities for students to appeal their final grade for the course if their situation meets specific criteria. Students may appeal an instructor's decision not to submit their portfolios if they have evidence that they have met their instructor's Achievement Requirements and that they have fulfilled the minimum criteria for passing the course. Likewise, students may appeal no-passing

portfolio assessments if they have reason to believe that the two evaluators (both of whom are trained, experienced GSW instructors) have overlooked important evidence that their portfolio, in fact, successfully meets the learning outcomes/established criteria for passing the course. Students should not, however, routinely appeal no-passing portfolios simply because they are unhappy with their instructor's or the portfolio evaluators' decisions.

Campus Resources for Writers

1. *Writing Center Services*: The Writing Center is a free service that allows all students to receive individualized help with their writing needs at BGSU. It is located in 303 Moseley Hall, and the phone number is 372-2221. Please call ahead to make an appointment to guarantee that a tutor will be available to meet with you. More information about the Writing center, including handouts on common grammatical problems and other writing issues, is available at the lab and on-line at

<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/acen/writerslab>

The Writing Center has an e-mail "hotline," also known as the Online Writing Lab (OWL). If you e-mail a question (you could also include a part of your writing) to the Writing Center, a staff member will respond with comments, advice, or answers--usually within 48 hours. The e-mail address is *writers@bgsu.edu*.

2. *Online Information about BGSU's Library Resources*: The BGSU Library Services has created a web page to help familiarize students with what our library has to offer. Several links are available from the main web page to help you learn more about the library and effective research strategies. I encourage you to visit the "Library User Education" main page at the following URL address:

<http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/infosrv/lue/luehome.html>

Another great source of information is the Undergraduate Circulation Survival Guide, which explains the ins and outs of using the Jerome Library. The URL address below will take you there:

http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/circ/undergrad_guide.html

Try this site for basic information on library use, including how to check out materials and how to renew materials on-line.

The library also offers a clickable map of its first floor. Before ever setting foot in the library, you can figure out exactly where you need to go by using the on-line map, located at the following URL:

<http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/clickablemap.html>

Library personnel are always ready to help with any questions you might have about library use. Stop by the Information/Reference Desk with your questions or concerns.

A Final Word

I hope to make this class a place where you can work to improve your writing. Though many students are uncomfortable with writing, understanding how to go through the writing process will help you achieve your writing goals. To assist you in this endeavor, I

encourage you to take advantage of the resources around you and keep in touch with me as we go through the semester.

Remember that we are all here to help each other become successful writers, and by working together this goal can be accomplished. If you have any questions about these Achievement Requirements or other class matters, please feel free to talk to me. I look forward to working with you and helping you become a better writer. Let's have a great semester!

Brief Syllabus—English 112

Monday, 1/15—MLK Day, no class
 Monday, 1/19—Critique Rough Draft and Values Exploration Sheet due
 Friday, 1/26—Critique Second Draft due
 Monday, 1/29—Exploratory Draft MSE #1 due

Monday, 2/5—Exploratory Draft #1 due
 Wednesday, 2/7—MSE #1 First Draft due
 Friday, 2/16—Library Tour due
 Monday, 2/19—MSE #1 Second Draft due
 Wednesday, 2/21—Exploratory Draft MSE #2 due
 Monday, 2/26—Values Exploration sheet due
 Wednesday, 2/28—MSE #2 First Draft due

Friday, 3/2—Revision of MSE #1 due (optional)
 Friday, 3/2—No class
 March 3-11—No class, Spring Break
 Monday, 3/19—Research proposal due
 Friday, 3/21-Monday, 3/26—Library research days
 Friday, 3/23—Second Draft of MSE #2 due
 Wednesday, 3/28—Annotated Bibliography due
 Friday, 3/30—Values Exploration sheet due

Monday, 4/2—First Draft of Researched Essay due
 Wednesday, 4/4—Revision of MSE #2 due, optional
 Wednesday, 4/11—Final Peer Review for Researched Essay
 Friday, 4/13—Second Draft of Researched Essay due
 April 16-25—Presentations of Researched Essays
 Wednesday, 4/25—Revision of Researched Essay due
 Friday, 4/27—Portfolio due (no exceptions)
 Thursday, 5/3—Portfolio Pick-Up, 2-3 pm, my office