**Spring 2016 English 120H: Honors Composition**

**Course Objectives, Requirements, and Policies**

**DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW**

English 120H: Honors Composition is intended to introduce you to strategies for critically reading, thinking, and writing in the context of a “microworld” (Geisler), a community defined by its common interest and knowledge in a given subject matter. Though not as specialized as an academic discourse community, the construct of a microworld can help you “bridge” to academic writing by emulating the general structure of an academic discourse community—particularly as it provides a set of intellectual and rhetorical commonalities and conventions that unite communicators in focused contexts. The uniting factors in an English 120H microworld are a standardized set of research-based assignments and a specific section theme to be selected by your instructor.

**Required Course Materials:**


**Section Theme: Beautiful Systems—Nature, the Wild, and Ecological Order**

This section of English 120 introduces students to different kinds of rhetorical analysis and uses the concept of the natural world as a basis for exercises that demonstrate skills in six related areas of writing and research. We use John Charles Goshert’s Entering the Academic Conversation as a textbook for rhetoric, and we use various other examples of writing, presentation and media work to center exercises in research and writing.

This course draws on a number of pieces of writing, many of which will be available on D2L/classroom blog: moneilatsiu.wordpress.com

**In addition to the Required Course Materials listed on the Syllabus, These whole texts are important to purchase:**

- *Henry Beston, The Outermost House*
- *Devin Johnston: Creationky and Other Essays*
- *Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac*
- *Farley Mowat, Never Cry Wolf*

**COURSE GOALS**

After taking English 120H, you should be able to do the following:

- generate effective compositions using various methods for critical thought, for the development of ideas, for the arrangement of those ideas to achieve a specific rhetorical goal, for the application of an appropriate style, and for revision and editing;
- demonstrate understanding of the ways that language and communication can shape experience, construct meaning, and foster community;
• analyze and describe rhetorical contexts and use such knowledge to increase the efficacy of communicative acts;
• analyze and use the forms and conventions of academic writing, particularly the forms and conventions of argumentative and analytical writing;
• produce texts that demonstrate an understanding of how purpose, process, subject matter, form, style, tone, and diction are shaped by particular audiences and by specific communicative constraints and opportunities;
• understand the relationship that exists between research and writing, explain kinds of research required by different kinds of writing, and compose effective texts using field research, library resources, and sources retrieved from electronic media;
• employ critical reading and listening as strategies for invention;
• compose reading and lecture notes that are concise and clear;
• synthesize information from multiple sources to engage in critical discourse;
• use Standard American English appropriately.

COURSEWORK

**Unit 1: Statement of Research Interest/Working Bibliography**
For this first major writing assignment, you will compose a “Statement of Research Interest” that identifies the topic you will be researching throughout the semester, and you will compile a “Working Bibliography” of sources relevant to that topic.

**Unit 2: Summary and Response**
Working with an academic text in your area of interest [either one assigned by your instructor or one that appears on your “Working Bibliography”], describe, evaluate, and engage with its arguments.

**Unit 3: Annotated Bibliography**
In Unit 3, you will combine skills relevant to these genres in creating an “Annotated Bibliography,” which will help extend your knowledge base relevant to your specific research interest and will provide a record of issues covered in various sources that may become integral to your subsequent essay assignments.

**Unit 4: Research Proposal**
You will articulate a “Research Proposal” for a more focused investigation centered on a research question that represents a narrowing of the gaze posited in your “Statement of Research Interest.”

**Unit 5: Exploratory Essay**
The “Exploratory Essay” should be written as a “first-person narrative that tells the story of your research process,” synthesizes the ideas and arguments you’ve encountered through your research (Goshert 256), and describes how your thinking may have evolved as you expanded your knowledge base about your research topic.

**Unit 6: Call-to-Action Essay**
For the “Call-to-Action Essay,” you will consider the rhetorical context of your argument by identifying an issue related to the course theme and to your research question. In addition, you will need to identify a specific group of stakeholders, an occasion and purpose for writing, and a specific role in issuing your call.

**Final Exam: Research Presentation**

COURSE GRADING

See the attached addendum for a detailed explanation of the percentage of the course grade attributed to major essay assignments and other course components.
**COURSE POLICIES**

**Late Work Policy**
If you know you will not be able to attend class on the day a major essay assignment is due, make arrangements in advance with your instructor for a revised deadline and secure written approval of this deadline (which you must include with the assignment). If your need to miss class is sudden, make sure that you have emailed your major essay assignment to the instructor in the specified format before the assignment is due. Late submissions of major essay assignments without prior approval will be accepted, but submissions under these circumstances will result in a deduction to the unit grade. Any submission after the deadline on the same day will receive a 5% deduction of possible points to be earned. For each day following (with a day starting at midnight), the folder will receive a 5% deduction.

Informal assignments—late informal assignments for unexcused absences will not be accepted for any reason and cannot be made up. Excused extensions of informal assignments are allowed. However, you will be asked to provide documentation of the reason for your absence if you want your instructor to allow you to make up an informal assignment. Planned excused absences will require prior arrangements with your instructor as well as written approval from your instructor. Unplanned excused absences will require after-the-fact, official documentation of the reason for your absence before you will be allowed to make up missed work.

(Never submit an assignment by leaving it on your instructor’s desk, giving it to your instructor’s officemate, or slipping it under your instructor’s door, as your instructor cannot be responsible for receiving such indirect submissions.)

**Attendance Policy**
Excessive unexcused absences will prevent you from passing this course. One day over three weeks of unexcused absences (consecutive or not) will result in automatic failure of the course. That’s nine class periods for a MWF schedule; six class periods for a T/TR schedule. Additionally, some substantial negative effects of total unexcused absences under the three-week mark are listed below:

- No in-class work can be made up without providing official documentation of the reason for the absence. Unexcused absences will result in a zero for work that took place during the missed class period.
- Work that comes in after the due date as a result of an unexcused absence will receive a deduction in accordance with the English 120H late work policy.
- Lack of participation in classroom activities will negatively impact your level of preparedness for succeeding on the major essay assignments.

If you miss over three weeks of class as a result of excused absences (e.g., those resulting from extended illness), you must obtain official documentation (e.g., a letter from a medical doctor) that establishes (1) the cause of the excessive absence and (2) the necessity for having to miss so many class periods.

If you are absent for an extended period of time as a result of illness or other personal crises, you should seek the assistance of SIUC’s Transitional Services Office at 618-453-7041. Furthermore, please note that early departures for holidays will not count as excused absences. Excused absences for weddings, funerals, court dates, and other clearly compelling matters must be pre-approved by your instructor. Procedures for making up missed work as a result of these absences must be pre-arranged with your instructor.

All absences that you wish to be designated as excused as a result of illness or an emergency must be officially documented. This documentation must be provided to your instructor no later than two weeks after the absence in order for the absence to be excused. If you are not feeling well enough to come to class and wish the absence to be excused, you will need to provide evidence/documentation from a health care professional.
**Tardiness**
An unexcused tardy or early departure that exceeds ten minutes of class time, as well as chronic instances of tardiness or early departure, will count as disruptive behavior (see below). You will not be allowed to complete in-class assignments missed partially or in full as a result of being tardy or leaving early from class unless the tardiness or early departure is excused and approved by your instructor.

**Disruptive Behavior Policy**
Behavior that disrupts the educational environment in English 120H and that interferes with others’ learning opportunities will not be tolerated. Disruptive behavior in the English 120H class incudes, but may not be limited to:

- disrespectful treatment of your instructor or peers;
- patterns of tardiness or early departure;
- violations of the policy for responsible and considerate use of technology.

If it is determined that you are disrupting class, a report will be sent to the Director of Writing Studies, and you will be referred to the Writing Studies Office. You will not be allowed to return to class until the behavior has been identified and the consequences of repeating the behavior clarified. This will take place in a meeting with the Director of Writing Studies, and, in certain cases, with the instructor of the class.

If repeated acts of disruptive behavior are observed after this meeting, you will be referred to the Chair of the English Department, the Director of Student Judicial Affairs, and/or the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. Consequences for repeated disruptive behavior could include suspension or expulsion from the course.

**Technology Policy**
The considerate use of cell phones and technological devices is expected in the classroom at all times. Although technological devices (i.e., cell phones, headphones, laptops, tablets, etc.) can be distracting and disruptive, they can be used as legitimate educational tools in the composition classroom. Therefore, devices should always be turned off or set to “silent” prior to the start of class. If students are allowed to use headphones during work periods, then the volume should be set low enough to ensure that they are not disturbing others. If a student is in the midst of some family crisis that requires him/her to keep a cell phone turned on, he/she must keep the ringer set to “silent” and alert the instructor before class about the situation. If students need to take an emergency call, they should quietly leave the classroom and find a place where their conversation will not disturb others. Students should also avoid using their cell phone or other device during class time for anything other than approved educational purposes related to the course content. Being mindful and considerate of other students and the instructor by adhering to these policies will minimize potential disruption to the rest of the class.

Certain instructors may choose to further restrict the use of devices in their classroom. In these instances, the instructor will provide an addendum to this syllabus that clearly communicates to students their cell phone and/or device policy. The Writing Studies Office will support individual instructor’s decisions regarding technological devices in the classroom.

Lack of compliance with this or the instructor’s policy will be regarded as disruptive behavior.

**Plagiarism**
Plagiarism is the use of another author’s material and/or words in your own text without acknowledging that author’s contribution. In academic environments, plagiarism is an ethical violation that carries serious consequences. Please read the sections on plagiarism in *A Writer’s Resource: A Handbook for Writing and Research*. In addition to the standards regarding plagiarism addressed in this book, the instructor will hold you to the standards immediately following:

- First, you are responsible for learning how to write effectively at the college level; therefore, even unintentional use of another author’s material will constitute plagiarism. You are responsible for understanding the standards...
taught in this class and abiding by them. If you are in doubt about a potential plagiarism problem, you should ask your instructor about the material before the assignment is due.

- Second, make no mistake about the fact that presenting even “unpublished” material written by someone else (e.g., a paper written by a friend for English 120H or another course) as if it were your own work is an act of plagiarism.
- Third, the use of texts in this class that you have written in the past or are writing during this semester for another course (the idea being to expand or rework them for submission in English 120H) must receive written approval from your instructor. You should submit a copy of the text (or the assignment) to your instructor when you request permission. In the case of an assignment that is being composed in another class during this semester, your instructor will request permission from the other instructor.

Per the Student Conduct Code, violations of plagiarism standards will be referred by the instructor of record to the Office of Students’ Rights and Responsibilities (SRR), the Writing Studies Director, the English Department Chair, and the Dean of Liberal Arts. The student will also be notified when such a referral is made, and he or she will have “five days to respond to the charges.” Depending on the outcome of this exchange, a hearing may be scheduled. If so, “the Dean or designee will contact involved parties to arrange for a mutually convenient meeting time. The results of the hearing will be communicated to the student, instructor, [Writing Studies Director.] Department Chair, and SRR within five days of the date of that hearing.”

Substantiated accusations of plagiarism may result in a failing grade on the assignment; a failing grade for the class; or, for repeated violations, more severe disciplinary action. All cases of plagiarism—intentional or unintentional—once reported to SRR will be placed on file for reference relevant to any future violations of the Student Conduct Code.

Please also note that assisting others in the act of plagiarizing by providing them with your own work to turn in as their own—and/or submitting your work to online databases from which students can purchase papers to turn in as their own—could be interpreted as an act of academic dishonesty and may be subject to disciplinary action under the Student Conduct Code.

**Proficiency Examination**

In accordance with the University’s policy regarding “academically talented students,” the Writing Studies Program in the Department of English offers proficiency credit for English 120H. The Writing Studies Program offers this credit to students who pass a three-hour examination designed to reveal whether or not they have developed proficiency in the areas of written communication addressed in English 120H. To be eligible for this test, a student can never have enrolled in English 120H and received a grade (including a W or an INC). Students interested in more details about proficiency examinations should consult the Undergraduate Catalog.

Students who wish to take the 120H proficiency exam should contact the Writing Studies Office Manager, Joyce Schemonia, at the following number: (618) 453-6811. She will schedule a specific time and place for the test to be administered during the first week of a current 120H course (or near the end of the semester in preparation for projected enrollment during a subsequent semester). To the exam, students should bring a pen and their SIUC identification card. Students are allowed to use a grammar handbook and a dictionary that meet the approval of the exam proctor. (Recommended texts are the *Penguin Handbook* and *Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*.)

**Disability Support**

Students who require accommodations for physical or learning disabilities should contact the Disability Support Services office (618-453-5738). The Disability Support Services office will provide Accommodations Agreements that students with differing needs may submit to their instructors.

**Policy on Accommodating Religious Observances of Students**

Students absent from classes because of observances of major religious holidays will be excused. Students must notify the instructor at least three regular class periods in advance of an absence from class for a religious holiday and must take the
responsibility for making up work missed ahead of time. Students should familiarize themselves with the complete Policy on Accommodating Religious Observances of Students in the Undergraduate Catalog.

**Emergency Procedures**
SIUC is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in every building on campus and in the Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. It is also available on BERT’s website at [www.bert.siu.edu](http://www.bert.siu.edu) and on the Department of Safety’s website [www.dps.siu.edu](http://www.dps.siu.edu).

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting their location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.