**ENGL 125: College Writing Skills**  Course # 56311

Instructor: B. Nakamura 11:00AM-12:50PM, Tuesday & Thursday, HUM 62

[brice.nakamura@fresnocitycollege.edu](mailto:brice.nakamura@fresnocitycollege.edu) Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 8AM-9AM, Thurs 1-2PM

Final Exam Date: Tuesday, December 15 No “W” Drop Date: Sept. 4, 2015

**Course Materials**

*They Say, I Say, With Readings, 3rd Edition* by Gerald Graff, Kathy Birkenstein, & Russel Durst

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Write multiple papers of at least 1200 words, which include an introduction, multiple body paragraphs, and conclusion of some sophistication. This essay will include:
   1. A clearly defined thesis statement
   2. Unified supporting paragraphs, which begin with topic sentences
   3. Quotations that support the topic sentences and the thesis
   4. Supporting material and ideas, which exhibit critical thinking
   5. Complete sentences which include a variety of sentence types (simple, compound, complex, and compound/complex sentence)
   6. Descriptive vocabulary that exhibits growth and sophisticated word choice
   7. Avoidance of fragments, comma splices, sentence fuses and other basic skills errors, such as capitalization, spelling, homophone issues, verb tense issues, subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, word choice issues, confused syntax, etc.
   8. Use of MLA guidelines to set up essays, correctly use in-text citations for at least one source, and complete a works cited page
   9. writing that is free from plagiarism
   10. demonstrated awareness of how to write from the 3rd person point of view for a specific audience
2. Plan and revise independently, employing all stages of the writing process as necessary and appropriate.

Complete a multi-paragraph in-class essay with a thesis and support.

**Course Conduct**

*Homework*: meworkntss: by appointment onlyedunHomework will mainly consist of reading the assigned texts and posting to the discussion boards on Blackboard, along with various other assignments. Please make sure you are keeping up with the homework. Homework will be due at the start of class, unless I give specific instructions.

*Warm-Ups & Quizzes*: Warm-ups will typically be an informal response, graded on a credit/no credit basis. Quizzes will serve as a way for me to check if everyone is completing the reading assignments. Most quizzes will be given at the start of class; if you are not in class on time, I will not accept any of your answers for the quiz.

*General Writing Assignments*: This is a writing class; as a result, you can expect to do a lot of writing. We will write essays, short responses, and other assignments.

*Digital Submissions of Assignments:* Many assignments will be submitted to Blackboard or an online database such as Turnitin. For this reason, I **strongly** recommend that you use Microsoft Word to write your papers. It is your responsibility to make sure that you have a file format that will be accepted by the database. If you need access to a computer to complete assignments, they are provided for you on campus in the library or the writing center. If you are having issues submitting assignments to electronic databases, the best alternative is **to email me the assignment before the deadline** so that it is not late. Technical difficulties are not something that I have any degree of control over, and are not a valid excuse for not submitting work. Please save all your work to a cloud drive (Google Drive and Dropbox are free) to avoid losing assignments or coming to class unprepared.

*Reading Assignments*: You will be expected to read and be prepared to discuss the materials in class, as well as perform on quizzes. I will provide reading questions & chapter guides to help you read. Failure to keep up with the reading will affect your performance in class and ultimately your final grade. If I get the sense that the majority of students are not reading, quizzes will increase in frequency and difficulty.

*Peer Response Workshops*: Throughout the semester, we will use class time to read and suggest revisions on peer drafts. This gives you a chance to get feedback on your paper before submitting it for grading, as well as helping to keep you on track with assignments. You MUST have a completed draft to receive credit for these assignments. There is no way to make up the workshops; failure to attend or bring completed work will result in a zero for the workshop, in addition to 10% off the final essay grade. I will also “Draft” students at random and require a submission that we may examine in class. By the end of the term, all students will submit work for potential critique at least once. Your identity will be kept anonymous, and failure to comply will result in a 0 for the assignment. The goal of this assignment is to highlight positives in your essays to demonstrate to other students what exactly I am looking for, not criticize your shortcomings.

**Grading**

Grading will be based on percentages in the following categories:

Essays & Related Assignments (Workshop, Peer Response, Written Assignments): 50%

Everything Else (Warm-ups, Quizzes, In Class Activities, some homework): 50%

100-90% A 89-80% B 79-70% C 69-60% D 59-0% F

**Course Policies**

*Instructor Contact*: It’s important to communicate with me in and out of class. I'm always willing to meet with students to discuss assignments and answer any questions in person or via email. Please use your student email to contact me to avoid getting blocked by a spam filter. Please properly format emails to me; one-line emails may be ignored. I may respond immediately or it may be several hours before you hear from me. E-mail and Blackboard Announcements (sent to your email) will be the two primary ways in which I contact you. If you have not set up your student email account and/or are not checking it regularly, you may miss important announcements that I send outside of class time.

*Lateness*: Being late to class is as unacceptable in the academic world as it is in the workplace. Some assignments (quizzes, warm-up writing, etc) will be given at the start of class. If you are late to class, you will not be able receive credit for these assignments. Similarly, you may lose points by leaving early. In addition to this, 2 tardies will count as one absence in calculating your attendance, and 2 instances in which you leave class early will count as an absence. A combination of leaving early and arriving late on the same or separate days will also count as an absence. If you are not present for at least half of the class time, you will be marked absent. Throughout the term I will be tallying up your absences, tardies, and departures, and you may be dropped accordingly.

*Absences*: You are allowed to miss 4 classes, for any reason that you choose. I do not typically excuse absences, but may make an exception for serious and compelling reasons at my own discretion. If you are having problems attending class, come speak with me privately and I will counsel you on the best course of action. For each absence that you accrue beyond the allotted 4 absences, I will deduct 5% from your final grade. Because there is a strong link between attendance and passing my class, any student who achieves perfect attendance will be exempt from taking the final exam. Should the student wish to take the exam to improve their overall grade in the class, a score on the final that would lower their overall grade will not count. If you miss any classes in the first 2 weeks without clearing it with me, you will be dropped from the class.

*Use of Electronic Devices and Other Non-Attendance Issues:* Unauthorized use of electronic devices in class is a form of non-attendance, and can result in accruing one absence. I may not inform you of the absence. This policy is a matter of fostering an inclusive environment; I do not use my cell phone when you require my attention to ask a question, look at an essay, etc, and I hold you to the same standard. Other examples of non-attendance include sleeping, excessive chatter, or discussing matters not pertaining to the course material during group discussion; as non-attendance, any of these can result in being marked absent (and I will not necessarily inform you about the absence).Please do not take pictures of lecture notes on the board; studies show that you best retain information when you are articulating it for yourself (i.e. writing or speaking). If I see students taking pictures of notes on the board rather than writing them down, I will use any and all methods to encourage you to take notes, including additional in-class assignments, homework, quizzes on the material, etc.

*Revising Your Work*: Any essay that receives less than a passing grade (meaning a D or F) will be eligible for a revision. All other assignments are final. To revise an essay, you will meet with me outside of class time to discuss a revision plan no later than one week after the essay is handed back to you.

*Late Work:* I do not accept late work. Please use any and all methods to keep organized for this class. If you have an extenuating circumstance that would prohibit you from submitting an assignment on time, I may make arrangements for you at my discretion. You will need to clear it with me no less than one week before the due date. At my discretion, I may allow an extension on the assignment on an individual basis for serious and compelling reasons.

*About this Class & Me:* Some of my former students would say that I am a tough instructor, but many students would also say that I reward hard work generously. I wholeheartedly want students to pass my course, and I am always looking for ways to increase the pass rate in my class without compromising on standards and quality of student work. If you are willing to work hard, I am willing to help you in any way that I can. Please take advantage of every tool for success that is offered: come to my office hours, email me, ask questions in class, visit the writing center, and take charge of your education.

College is not like high school; it is supposed to be challenging and rewarding, and students who think it will be easy are misguided in their expectations. We are here to challenge ourselves and grow intellectually, like a gym for the mind. We will watch R rated films; we will discuss topics that people can only whisper about in other countries; we will talk about religion, politics, social issues, the economy, and a number of other things that you would not want to bring up on a first date. Some of these things may make you uncomfortable because you disagree with it on a fundamental level; that is good for you. If it makes you uncomfortable because you feel it is inappropriate for an academic environment, then that is something entirely different, and I would encourage you to speak with me privately about the matter. In this classroom, you will meet many new people who will often have a radically different way of thinking than you do (I am probably one of them). While discussing issues in this classroom, you will be respectful, agree to disagree, and move on; anything less than this will result in your immediate removal from class.

*Accommodations*: If you have any need of special accommodations or materials in alternate media, per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act please notify me immediately. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your needs.

*Plagiarism:* Students at Reedley College are entitled to the best education that the college can make available to them, and they, their instructors, and their fellow students share the responsibility to ensure that this education is honestly attained. Because cheating, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities erode the integrity of the college, each student is expected to exert an entirely honest effort in all academic endeavors. Academic dishonesty in any form is a very serious offense and will incur serious consequences.

Cheating is the act or attempted act of taking an examination or performing an assigned, evaluated task in a fraudulent or deceptive manner, such as having improper access to answers, in an attempt to gain an unearned academic advantage. Cheating may include, but is not limited to, copying from another’s work, supplying one’s work to another, giving or receiving copies of examinations without an instructor’s permission, using or displaying notes or devices inappropriate to the conditions of the examination, allowing someone other than the officially enrolled student to represent the student, or failing to disclose research results completely.

Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating: the use of another’s words or ideas without identifying them as such or giving credit to the source. Plagiarism may include, but is not limited to, failing to provide complete citations and references for all work that draws on the ideas, words, or work of others, failing to identify contributors to work done in collaboration, submitting duplicated work to be evaluated in different courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors involved, or failing to observe computer security systems and software copyrights.

Incidents of cheating and plagiarism may result in any of a variety of sanctions and penalties, which may range from a failing grade on the particular examination, paper, project, or assignment in question to a failing grade in the course, at the discretion of the instructor and depending on the severity and frequency of the incidents. For more information, contact the Vice President of Student Services’ Office or the Vice President of Instruction’s Office.