

## English 1A: Composition and Reading

Time: 6:00-7:50 p. m.--MW--Selma High School--Room 409

Sections: 7304

Instructor: Keith Heller

Telephone: 591-4333

Course Objectives: To learn better how to write clear, error-free, expository prose; to compose short descriptive, analytical, and argumentative essays; to develop skills in more logical and critical methods of thinking; to read and analyse nonfictional and fictional prose

Attendance: The classroom door will be closed and roll will be taken at 6:00 every evening. Any student not present at that time is, by definition, absent. Unavoidable absences may be excused in advance or retroactively with proper consultation. More than three unexcused absences may be grounds for dismissal.

Decorum: Any student who talks out of turn will be expelled from the class. Any student who is abusive or who uses derogatory language will be expelled from the class. Any student who disrupts the class in any way will also be expelled.

Texts: *The Contemporary Essay*, ed. Donald Hall  
*Giovanni's Room*, a novel by James Baldwin  
*Darkness Visible*, a novel by William Golding

Schedule: The class will be sectioned into permanent, named discussion groups or 'colleges' by the second week of the semester. These colleges will alternate weekly as leaders of the class. During the first meeting of each week, the college will lead the discussion on the reading and the topic that have been assigned by the instructor. During the second meeting each week, the other colleges in the class will evaluate the performance of the lead college and assign it a grade to be shared equally by all the members of the lead college.

Quizzes: Short reading quizzes will be regularly supplied by the instructor to check that everyone is keeping up with the reading. There will be no tests.

Papers: Each week, the instructor will supply writing assignments to be done in or out of class. In the first weeks, the instructor will evaluate and grade these writings. Eventually, the lead college will take over this responsibility with the instructor's guidance, including assigning grades to the papers by general agreement. Although the instructor reserves the right to make all final determinations of grades, the process should be fairly democratic and self-actuated. The midterm will be a 5- to 7-page typed paper on *Giovanni's Room*. The final will be a 8- to 10-page typed research paper on *Darkness Visible*.