

ENGL 50249
Kristen
Reedley campus
MWF 1:00-1:50 in Fem 12
TTh 1:00-1:50 Ag 1

Office: A5

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Office hours: TWTh 9:00-10:00; F 12:00-1:00 or by appointment.

Required text: *Writing Inside and Out* by Mike Quinn, De Wayne Rail and Judy Ryan.

The text is available in the campus bookstore. Additional readings will be distributed in class.

Materials: A loose-leaf binder (not spiral notebook) used only for this class is required for all class notes, freewritings, drafts of essays, readings handed out, etc. Please always have notebook paper and a pen or pencil for class. Two 3^{1/2} inch computer disks are also required; disks may be purchased at the bookstore or any computer or office supply store.

Introduction to Basic Writing

I envision this class as emerging from and revolving around communication: your conversations with yourself, your own and others' writing, your classmates and me. At other schools you may have listened while the teacher did all of the talking, and you may have been expected to pick through readings for a "main idea" or "central theme", or to regurgitate back to the teacher his or her interpretations of the readings. Don't expect that here. I believe that meaning is not in the text alone; instead, meaning is created through the continual interaction between you — the reader — and the text, through reading and writing. This way of viewing reading and writing, I believe, will serve you better as you confront complex college level reading and writing assignments in your other classes. In other English classes you may have been asked to write essays arguing a position or a point of view on a text, to create an airtight argument. Learning, I feel, arises from communication rather than argumentation; and, although you will be expected to try to explain your personal understanding of writings, it won't merely be an academic exercise in academic debate. I want to know what you think and why — in your own words. That's how we readers are enabled to re-see or review the readings and thus to learn, to make meanings.

This is not a lecture course. Our class will be modeled on the workshop format. We will frequently create small discussion/work groups of three to four class

*Drop date
attendance*

members or pairs. In these groups we will explain our own writings to others, discuss readings, work on assignments or specific peer review sheets on groupmates' writings, and consider others' feedback; thus, we will see ways to make what we want to say match what our papers do say. We will also realize that we are teaching each other about the writing process. We are here to support and encourage each other; no cruel or flippant comments will be tolerated. The success, the life, of this class depends on you — all of you. Your being here to participate in class discussions and peer reviews is absolutely essential.

We will be viewing reading and writing as a process. You will always have a chance to revise your writings. We don't view reading or writing as an all or nothing/one shot deal (this introduction is at least a fourth draft!). What you put on the page is even more adaptable than the words that come out of your mouth. We think of the words that you write as possibilities; nothing is carved in stone. Language, we feel, is moldable like clay; and, as with clay, you only realize what you want to create as you are shaping it. In a similar manner, your impressions of readings, and the meanings that you make of them, may grow in complexity and even become altered as you re-read and thus re-view them. You will also re-view individual readings when they are seen in relation to other readings, when they are placed in a new context.

I expect that our course will challenge some of your expectations of what a college class is, or "must" be. Our readings will probably challenge expectations about English class texts. All of the readings may challenge "common sense" assumptions and expectations about education, teacher/student relationships, and the reading and writing processes themselves. They all invite you to talk back to them, to critically challenge them as they will challenge you, to respond and thus begin a never-ending conversation with them. They will invite you to continually ask questions, compare points of view, grapple with ambiguities, and never settle for a pat or simplistic answer. Our readings are painted in shades of gray rather than simply in black and white. Working with them will be a challenge for all of us, but we're up to it. We will be here to help each other, to lend encouragement, offer ideas and comments, give alternative points of view, and offer 25 sets of eyes, ears, and minds, and all the discoveries they can make. There's safety in numbers! Also, when I read your papers I won't be "correcting" them to fit some preconceived answers in my head. There are no right or wrong answers to these readings. Rather, I'll be making comments and suggestions, responding in a way that will help you come closer to what you want to say. We'll be reading fewer readings than you might have expected so that we'll have more time for your own responses to the texts. Your papers are the most important pieces of writing in this course — they deserve all of our close and careful attention.

You may be a bit apprehensive about the mechanics of your writing: grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. I am very interested in helping you approach those

aspects of writing because they can enhance the clarity of your ideas, but not at the price of your fluency. I don't want you to feel censored as you begin to write. Often people get so bogged down with how they say something that they have no energy left for what they want to say. Therefore, I will only check the "mechanics" of final drafts of your formal papers, and this aspect of your writing will not influence my grading of the paper. In cases in which problems with the mechanics of the paper create serious problems in the clarity of the paper's meaning, I may ask you to fix the problem and submit a revised draft to me as soon as possible for grading. We'll be meeting individually later on in the semester to look at some of the rough spots. However, I am happy to correct the mechanics in your journals if you choose for me to do so. If you do, please write a note telling me so on the top of your journal. Whether you choose for me to correct the mechanics in your journal or not, this aspect of your writings will not be reflected in your grade.

Description of Writing Assignments

We will be doing many different types of writing for this class — in class and take home freewritings, class preparation notes or lists, short writings composed in small groups responding to your group discussion, journals on individual readings, and many drafts of formal papers. All of these writings will relate and build on each other. For example, freewritings on your own ideas might be combined with journals on relevant readings to help you compose a rough draft of a formal paper. For each of the three formal papers you will need to incorporate the two readings preceding that assignment. Therefore, you can borrow whole sections from the two journals leading up to that formal paper, combining and adding to the journals to build a draft. So, if you like, you might think of journals as "mini-drafts" of formal papers.

You will be writing three formal papers for our class. They need to be three pages minimum in length. You will revise each formal paper three times. The first draft you write will be reviewed by a classmate (peer review). You must then revise the paper to turn in to me. I will return the paper and you must revise it once again for me. The last revision will be before the portfolio is due at the end of the semester. Revisions that receive a higher grade will take the place of the original paper's grade.

You must revise formal paper second drafts (the revised draft copies after peer review of your rough draft) within one week after the draft is returned to you. The second draft will not receive a grade, but it will have comments/suggestions for revision on it when I return it to you. We will continue working on new assignments during this time; schedule your time accordingly. The third draft will receive a grade of check+, check, or check- and additional comments. If you do not turn in a third, revised, draft within a week of the second draft's return, you will not receive a grade for that paper.

You will also be writing several journal entries. They need to be at least one and one half (1 ½) pages in length. You may always revise a journal and turn in the revised draft up to one week following its being returned to you. Although the journals are not as formal as papers, they are still public writing, not private diaries; please do not write anything that you would not want to read by anyone else. The journal entries will receive a check+, check, or check- rather than a letter grade. A higher mark on a revision will replace the original entry's mark.

We will also be doing some spontaneous, ungraded writing in class intended to help you get started writing (and to keep up your steam!) called "freewriting." We will also apply ourselves to discussions and revisions of student example papers. With the strong reading of example papers as a base (what we decide makes a paper "work" for the reader) you will be able to begin revising sections of your papers in class as in class writing assignments. As mentioned in the "grading" handout, all of these class activities do affect your grade.

You must revise all portfolio papers/journals following our "portfolio" revision meeting." In other words, your finished portfolio papers will be fourth drafts of formal papers (first draft plus three revisions). Your revised portfolio paper "grades" (check+, check, or check-) will replace your third draft grades for those papers.

Earlier drafts of journals and formal papers must be handed in (attached with a paper clip please) with your revised drafts. When you hand in your second draft of a formal paper you must also hand in your rough draft and peer review sheet to receive credit for that paper. Thus, previous drafts of papers must accompany revised drafts; you must turn in a rough draft (or drafts) of formal papers, the revised "second" draft, and the peer review sheet that your reviewer filled out for you. After your partner has filled out the peer review sheet for your paper, writing down comments and suggestion for revision for you, you will take those peer review sheets home with you to help you revise, and then turn in those sheets with all of the drafts of your paper.

Before you hand in revised drafts with your earlier drafts attached, highlight in the earlier draft those sections which you revised/altered/edited or added to. Thus, I will be able to quickly find/comment on all revisions.

Remember — your reader(s) appreciate it when you use spell check on the computer for typos and proofread your take home writings. We will work on strategies for proofreading and using spellcheck, as well as editing, in class.

Grading Information (Credit/No Credit)

- I. Grade Breakdown for Determination of passing or not passing
 - A. Combined journal marks=20%
 - B. Each formal paper (the fourth "portfolio" draft)=20%

- C. Class participation including discussion and peer review participation=10%
 - D. Participation in all instructional technology activities (weekly entries on our e-mail mailing list, for example)=10%
- II. ~~Attendance~~
- A. No more than 6 consecutive.
- III. Portfolio Revisions
- A. Failing to revise portfolio papers after our "portfolio revision meeting" will keep you from receiving credit for the course.
- IV. Missing Work
- A. Each "missing" journal (any journal assignment not turned in) will lower your final course grade one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) letter grade.
 - B. Each "missing" formal paper "draft packet" (rough draft, peer review sheet, revised second draft, revised third draft) drops the final course grade two and one half ($2\frac{1}{2}$) letter grades.
- V. Additional Grading Information
- A. I do not mark journals as stringently as formal paper drafts. Journals reflect more preliminary, early work on readings/assignment questions. Formal paper drafts are the product of former journals, freewritings, class discussions, earlier drafts, and peer review sessions. Thus, I expect much more of formal papers than of journals.
 - B. Always read and consider all comments/suggestions for revision on journals and formal papers, even if your mark is high. These comments and suggestions are for your benefit and can aid you in revising your drafts. Do not assume that a check+ on a journal or an A on a formal paper means that the draft needs no revision. Any paper can benefit from revision.
 - C. Grading of journals and formal papers becomes more stringent as the semester progresses because as your skills grow, readers (including teachers) expect that progress to be reflected in your work. I mark/grade/write comments and suggestions on journals and papers based on what can be expected at any given point in the semester. Thus, do not assume that a paper that received a check+ early to mid-semester is ready to be put in your portfolio at the end of the semester. Similarly, suggestions for revisions on early journal/papers only "count" at that point in the semester. All papers need new revision comments/suggestions before you compose a final revision for the portfolio at the end of the semester. Therefore, we will set up private meetings approximately two weeks prior to the portfolios due date to discuss final revisions. We will also have informal peer review sessions in class towards the end of the semester so that you may receive feedback/suggestions from several classmates.

D. If you have been diagnosed with, or feel you may have, a learning disability please let me know so that I can make accommodations.

CLASSES NOT IN SESSION

Monday January 17 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Friday February 18 and Monday February 21 Lincoln Day and Washington Day

Monday April 17-Friday April 21 Spring Break

Deadlines for Add/Drop of a class

Friday January 21 Last day to drop a semester-length course and qualify for a refund

Friday January 28 Last day to drop a semester-length course and not have it appear on a transcript

Friday January 28 Last day to register for Spring semester-length courses

Friday February 11 Last day to to change a course to or from credit/no credit grading option

Our Class [REDACTED] **May 11**
[REDACTED]

Schedule of activities and due dates (tentative)

Week 1: Jan 10-14

Student introductions; course introduction; written response journal to class intro and syllabus due Wed Jan 12.; read the Introduction to ***Ways of Reading***
And write response journal over the weekend, due Tues. Jan 18

Week 2: Jan 18-21 (Holiday Mon 17))

Discuss the Introduction to ***Ways of Reading***;
Group work on written journal responses.
Read Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour" (handout) for Thursday, Jan 20. Written response journal to Chopin's short story due Mon Jan 24

Week 3: Jan 24-28

Discuss Chopin's short story and the interpretive process. Group work on interpretation. Read Oliver Sack's essay "To See and Not See" (handout) for Thurs. Jan 27. Written response journal on Sack's essay due Mon Jan 31

Week 4: Jan 31-Feb 4

Microsoft Word workshop; in class interpretation of Elie Weizel's poem "Dialogues II"
Time in class to work on formal paper #1 on perspective
Rough draft of formal paper #1 due Thursday Feb 4 Read chapter #1 of Gloria Anzaldua's book ***Borderlands*** (handout) for Mon Feb 7

Objectives of first unit: Introduce students to strong, critical reading, context's role on interpretation, and individuals' perspective's influence on interpretation; introduce students to writing process (discussion, listing, brainstorming free-writing, collaborative writing, , organizing thoughts into a rough draft)

Week 5: Feb Feb 7-11

In class summary and discussion of Anzaldua's chapter. Written response journal due Thurs Feb 11; discussion of culture's influence on perspective; read Jamaica Kincaid's narrative "Girl" for Mon Feb 14 (handout) and chapters 1, 4, 5, and 23 and 24 in **"Writing: Inside and Out"**

Week 6: Feb 14-17 (**Holiday Fri. 18 and Mon 21**)

Revision workshops and peer review of formal paper #1 and discussion of textbook chapters

Discuss "Girl" in class; read Aurora Levins Morales' poem "Child of the Americas" (handout); written response journal due Mon Feb 22; read the poems "Dictionary Black" by Sista Roots and "Two Women I Know" by Rita Anyiam -St. John (both handouts) for Mon Feb 22

Week 7: Feb 22-25

Discussion of and written response journal to the above poems due Thurs, Feb 25; editing workshops. **Revised draft of formal paper #1 due Mon Feb 28**

Objectives of workshops: introduce students to revising, giving feedback towards self assessment and revision, proofreading, and editing processes; begin to learn grammar and punctuation conventions

Week 8: Feb 28-March 3

discuss paper #2 possibilities; read Spring Redd's essay "Something Latina Was Up With Us" (handout) for Tues, Feb 29; in class written response journal to Redd's essay to be handed in;

Rough draft of formal paper #2 due Thurs March 2; read Judith Stein's autobiographical essay "The Thirteenth Passenger" (handout) and chapter 17, and in "Writing: Inside and Out" for Mon March 6

Objectives for second unit: introduce students synthesizing several texts and their own experiences/ideas within a thematic framework

Week 9: March 6-10

Discussion of Stein's essay and textbook chapters;
read Edward Iwata's autobiographical essay "Race Without Face" for Wed March discussion of Iwata's essay; group work;
Read the autobiographical essay "A Farewell to Manzanar" for Mon March 20

Week 10: March 13-17

Revision workshop, peer-review, and self assessment of formal paper #2

Week 11: March 20-24

Discussion of "A Farewell to Manzanar" and in class writing to be handed in; editing workshops in class;

Revision of formal paper #2 due Thurs March 24;

Read Alice Walker's autobiographical essay "Beauty: When the Other Dancer is the Self" for Mon March 27 (handout)

Objectives of workshops: strengthen and deepen student's understanding of, and ability to apply meta cognitive analysis of their own work, learn and apply grammar and punctuation conventions
Week 12: March 27-31

Discussion of Walker's essay; written journal response due Wed March 29; read Lilitana Hekker's short story "The Stolen Party" for Thurs March 30 (handout); discussion of, and in class written response to, Hekker's story to be handed in
Free writing on "Transitions" due Mon April 3; read chapters 15 and 22

Week 13: April 3-7

In class time to work on Formal paper #3; **Rough draft of formal paper #3 due Thurs April 6**; peer-review and self assessment in class

Objectives of third unit: Introduce students to complex compare/contrast within a personal narrative framework

Week 14: April 10-14

In class individual conferences; revision and editing in class

Week 15: April 17-21 **NO CLASSES HELD (SPRING BREAK)**
Revision of formal essay 3# due Mon April 24

Objectives of workshops and conferences: Help students to recognize and correct own weaknesses in essays, recognize and correct major grammar and punctuation errors in own work.

Week 16: April 24-28

In class individual conferences; revision and editing in class

Week 17: May 1-5

Revision and editing in class

Week 18: May 8-12

Revision and editing in class

Week 19: May 15-19 **Finals week; no regular classes held**
Portfolio due on class'Finals day