

*SECTION 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 require that VCU provide an “academic adjustment” and/or a “reasonable accommodation” to any individual who advises us of a physical and/or mental disability. If you have a physical or mental limitation that requires an academic adjustment or accommodation, arrange a meeting with me at your earliest convenience. Adjustments and accommodations cannot be retroactively applied to coursework that has been previously completed or due.*

## ENGLISH 101 – WRITING & RHETORIC WORKSHOP I Spring, 2007

*course information:*

Section 12  
TR 11-12:15  
Hibbs 327

*instructor:*

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*office hours:*

R 10-11 & by appt.  
The Village Cafe  
(1001 West Grace St.)

### Overview of the Course

English 101 is an intensive writing and thinking course that moves recursively through three stages. The first stage emphasizes generative sources of language and thinking, with freedom of form and content. The second emphasizes form and genre (meditative, persuasive/analytical, argumentative, and interpretive) along with the rethinking of one’s own writing and the responses one makes to the writing of others. The third stage emphasizes careful, critical thinking and revising in response to judgment and feedback from the community of writers that will form in the classroom as the course progresses.

Students will write short pieces, essay drafts, or revised essays every week. [Note: I encourage you to think of this course as a writing workshop, where we will practice the art of writing within the community of our workshop. You should be prepared to spend a significant amount of time re-thinking and re-seeing drafts of the two portfolio essays, both in and out of our workshop.]

Through their collaboration in small sharing and responding groups, they will establish a community of writers. Through class conversations, demonstrations, and one-to-one teacher/student conferences, students will make use of course knowledge, explore course techniques, and develop their ideas and essays. Through in-class writing, journal writing, and other written and oral communication, students will demonstrate processes and techniques for developing their work and responding to the work of others. These activities structure the class so that it becomes a supportive, encouraging force in the development of its writers.

After exposure to and participation in this course, students will be expected to

- recognize that writing is thinking, not just the product of thought;
- increase and retain natural human curiosity and initiative in searching for and developing information and knowledge;
- generate ideas and insights on topics of interest, as well as those that may not be of interest;
- develop an awareness and control of writing processes;
- adjust writing to needs of particular audiences;
- recognize the main point/focus of their own and others’ writing;
- locate and remedy problems in reasoning and logic;
- identify some basic rhetorical forms and genres;
- demonstrate library/electronic research and source documentation skills;
- analyze and evaluate sources of information;
- recognize the importance of feedback in the development of pieces of writing;
- distinguish between revising (a re-thinking, re-seeing process) and copy-editing (a “mechanical” process);
- revise writing into coherent and workable paragraphs, as well as longer units;

write clear, natural, lively sentences;  
correct problems in grammar, spelling, usage, and punctuation.

### **Textbooks/Materials**

Elbow, Peter and Pat Belanoff. *A Community of Writers*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.

Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition.

A dedicated process journal divided into three sections

Students also will need a VCU email account (the VCU email ID and password give access to Blackboard, the online component of this class) and a good collegiate dictionary.

## **Course Requirements**

**Portfolio:** In the thirteenth week of the semester, students will be asked to turn in a portfolio consisting of **two revised essays (meditative and argumentative)** accompanied by a **final reflective letter (2-3 pages)**. A portfolio group consisting of Writing Program faculty will evaluate the portfolio, and in order for a student to pass the course, the portfolio must receive a “passing” review from the portfolio group. The classroom instructor is one of the readers in the portfolio group, and will be the one who assigns a specific letter grade of A, B, C, or D to all passing portfolios. A failing portfolio results in a failing grade in the class. *Note that only final papers developed as a result of the English 101 course process will be considered for portfolio review.* Students must present developing drafts to their course instructor prior to the submission of your portfolio. *Note also that how much your thinking and writing skills improve will be considered when determining final grades.*

- ❑ **Portfolio Essay #1:** A **4-page meditative essay** in which the writer draws from his or her own experience to produce a piece of writing in which narrative and reflection are sustained by a clear focus that is relevant to an audience.
- ❑ **Portfolio Essay #2:** A **5-7 page argumentative essay (plus a works cited page with 3-5 citations)** in which the writer takes a strong position based on his/her own research, producing an essay with a clear main claim and line of argument that are supported by correctly documented sources.

**Additional Essay:** After the portfolio has been submitted for review, students will write an additional interpretive essay in which they observe and analyze a text to produce an essay with a clear main claim and line of argument.

**Note:** Essays (and drafts) should conform to the following specifications. Students may need to adjust the default settings on their computers to adhere to these requirements:

- ❑ Font: Times New Roman, 12 point
- ❑ Margins: 1 inch, left and right, top and bottom
- ❑ Justification: left margin only
- ❑ Line spacing: double-spaced
- ❑ Print: dark, and on one side of the page
- ❑ Graphics: in an appendix only
- ❑ Documentation: MLA style

**Process Journal:** The process journal will have three sections: (1) writing about the student's own writing experiences and writing processes, which includes writing about the student's experience with the text, *A Community of Writers*, (2) writing about the collaborative process of the sharing/responding groups and the student's roles in them, and (3) private freewriting.

**Sharing and Responding:** As students learn to re-envision their work and discover their process through sharing their own work in their sharing and responding groups, they will at times be asked to write responses to the work of their peers. These responses will utilize the language put forth in class and be courteous as well as thoughtful. These responses will be evaluated.

**Writer's Memo/Cover Letter:** Each main assignment (that is, each draft of a portfolio essay as well as the portfolio itself and the additional interpretive essay) should be accompanied by a cover letter in which the writer addresses issues of process specific to the assignment.

## Grading

- ❑ Portfolios: **50%**
- ❑ Additional essay (interpretive): **10%**
- ❑ Other coursework: **40%** - including
  - Collage (5%)
  - Persuasive letter to editor/op-ed and analysis of that letter/op-ed (5%)
  - Other working drafts and assignments (15%)
  - Sharing and responding and class participation (10%)
  - Process journals (5%)

**Note:** Participation counts; unwillingness to participate actively in workshop activities will lower a student's final grade. Along with instructor's responses/comments, working drafts will be designated **check plus**—strong; **check**—satisfactory; and **check minus**—weak.

## Class and University Policies

**Attendance:** Students must come to every class prepared and on time. The instructor has the right to lower a student's final course grade as the sole result of his or her repeated absences and tardiness. English 100, English 101, and English 200 are workshop courses that improve student progress through in-class writing and response activities; therefore, **attendance is mandatory and there are no excused absences**. You are allowed up to two (2) absences this semester for any reason without penalty. More than (5) five absences will result in a final failing grade for the class. If you come to class more than ten minutes late (thereby interrupting the discussion or workshop), I will mark you absent. Two tardies equals one absence. If you come to class unprepared for the day's activities, I may ask you to leave and will mark you absent.

**Note: Nearly 50% of those who fail English 101 fail because of poor attendance!**

**Late Work:** Being absent from class does not relieve students of responsibility for completing all coursework. If you must be absent, you should send your work to class with someone else or email it to me before the class period begins. Note, however, that the workshop nature of this course means that some missed class work cannot be made up. I schedule time to read and respond to your work when it is due, and will not accept late work unless you have contacted me and received an extension before the due date.

**Email Policy:** Electronic mail or "email" is considered an official method for communication at VCU because it delivers information in a convenient, timely, cost effective, and environmentally aware manner. This policy ensures that all students have access to this important form of communication. It ensures students can be reached through a standardized channel by faculty and other staff of the University as needed. Mail sent to the VCU email address may include notification of University-related actions, including disciplinary action. Please read the policy in its entirety: [www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/rg7email.html](http://www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/rg7email.html).

You are expected to check your official VCU Email on a daily basis. Students are responsible for the consequences of not reading, in a timely fashion, University-related communications sent to their official VCU student Email account.

**Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:** The *VCU Resource Guide* states: “Virginia Commonwealth University recognizes that honesty, truth, and integrity are values central to its mission as an institution of higher education. Therefore, it must act to maintain these values, even to the point of separating from the University those who violate them. [The VCU honor system policy] describes the responsibilities of students, faculty and administration in upholding academic integrity, while at the same time respecting the rights of individuals to the due process offered by administrative hearings and appeals. All persons enrolled in any course or program offered by VCU, and all persons supervising the learning of any student are responsible for acting in accordance with the provisions of this policy.” VCU has recently revised its honor policy. Students should review that policy as described in the *VCU Resource Guide*: [www.students/vcu.edu/rg/policies/rg7honor.html](http://www.students/vcu.edu/rg/policies/rg7honor.html).

*In this class, because coursework will be at times collaborative, particular issues of integrity arise. Students should not copy or print another student’s work without permission. Any material from another source must be credited, whether that material is quoted directly, summarized, or paraphrased. In other words, students should respect the work and ideas of others and in no way present them as their own.*

**Student Conduct in the Classroom:** According to the *VCU Resource Guide*, “The instructional program at VCU is based upon the premise that students enrolled in a class are entitled to receive instruction free from interference by other students. Accordingly, in classrooms, laboratories, studies, and other learning areas, students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly and cooperative manner so that the faculty member can proceed with their [sic] customary instruction. Faculty members (including graduate teaching assistants) may set reasonable standards for classroom behavior in order to serve these objectives. If a student believes that the behavior of another student is disruptive, the instructor should be informed.” Among other things, cell phones and beepers should be turned off while in the classroom, and refrain from eating unless you bring enough to share with everyone. Also, the University Rules and Procedures prohibit anyone from having “...in his possession any firearm, other weapon, or explosive, regardless of whether a license to possess the same has been issued, without the written authorization of the President of the university...”

See the *VCU Resource Guide* for more information. Certainly the expectation in this course is that students will attend class with punctuality, proper decorum, required course material, and studious involvement. The *VCU Resource Guide* contains additional important information about a number of other policies with which students should be familiar, including Guidelines on Prohibition of Sexual Harassment, Grade Review Procedure, and Ethics Policy on Computing. It also contains maps, phone numbers, and information about resources available to VCU students. The *VCU Resource Guide* is available online or through the Division of Student Affairs.

## **WEEKLY SYLLABUS**

### **Week 1 (Jan 16-18)**

*Focus: Generating writing and building community*

**Reading:** Mini-workshop A: Writing Skills Questionnaire (447-449); Cover letter for sharing and responding (507-509); Workshop 1, “An Introduction to the Variety of Writing Processes” (5-29).

**Writing:** First day of class pre-diagnostic essay; WSQ; reflective response to WSQ; generating writing through invention strategies; process journal; the collage (12-13); “Summary of Kinds of Responses” (511-520).

**Sharing/Responding:** SR1-10 (overview, pages 511-515)

## **Week 2 (Jan 23-25)**

*Focus: Generating writing for meditative essay*

**Reading:** Workshop 2, “From Private Writing to Public Writing” (31-65), emphasizing “Sondra Perl’s Composing Guidelines” (32-35) and/or “The ‘Open-ended’ Writing Process” (35-37).

**Writing:** Up to ten pages of *private* writing; from that, five pages of *public* writing; process journal (53).

**Sharing/Responding:** SR1-4 (detailed on pages 521-530).

*January 26: Deadline for students to provide advance written notification to instructors of intent to observe religious holidays. Reasonable accommodations for completion of work missed should be made for students observing holidays. A partial list of major religions holidays is provided on the Web.*

## **Week 3 (Jan 30 – Feb 1)**

*Focus: Developing narrative through image*

**Reading:** Workshop 4, “Getting Experience into Words: Image and Story” (99-119).

**Writing:** Draft five pages in which images enrich the narrative and thoughtful reflection supports the narrative; process journal (107).

**Sharing/Responding:** SR3, and questions on pages 107.

## **Week 4 (Feb 6-8)**

*Focus: Re-seeing and re-thinking*

**Reading:** Workshop 6, “Drafting and Revising” (149-187)

**Writing:** Revise the writing from week 3, so that both narrative and reflective elements connect to a clear focus; process journal (161).

**Sharing/Responding:** SR 1-4.

## **Weeks 5 and 6 (Feb 13-15 and Feb 20-22)**

*Focus: Persuasion as Informal Argument*

**Reading:** As assigned from Workshops 9 & 10, “The Essay” (235-253) and “Persuasion” (255-275). Additional reading around to find substantive article in a print or on-line journal.

**Writing:** Using the Main Assignment guidelines on pages 263-264, draft a 2-page response to the substantive article, in the form of a persuasive letter to editor or op-ed piece, and an accompanying 2-page explanation; process journal (266).

**NOTE: The persuasive letter to the editor/op-ed piece will serve as exploratory writing for the argumentative essay that will be the second portfolio essay.**

**Sharing/Responding:** SR 1-5 (SR 5 is detailed on pages 530-532)

**Process Journals Due Feb. 22.**

## **Week 7 (Feb 27-Mar 2)**

*Focus: Building an Argument*

**Reading:** Workshop 11, “Argument” (277-282); Selections from Workshop 12, “Research” (303-336); Mini-workshop F, “Doing Research on the Web” (469-477); and Hacker.

**Writing:** Further freewriting about topic; develop research questions.

**Class activity:** Analysis of a published piece of writing (285); process journal (286).

## **Week 8 – Midterm conferences (Mar 6-8)**

*Focus: Mid-term evaluations. Students may also want to read ahead to Weeks 10 and 11 and should continue their research.*

**Reading:** Mini-workshop D, “Midterm and End-term Responses to a Writing Course” (459-462).

**Writing:** WSQ: midterm reflections.

**Week 9 – SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES (Mar 11-18)**

**Weeks 10 & 11 (March 20-22 and Mar 27-29)**

*Focus: Research – Finding and Incorporating Information from Sources*

**Reading:** Selections from Workshop 12, “Research” (303-336); Mini-workshop J, “Quotation and the Punctuation of Reported Speech” (494-496); Hacker, MLA documentation chapter.

**Writing:** Draft and revise a 5-7 page argumentative essay in which you take a strong position based on your own research, producing an essay with a clear main claim and line of argument that are supported by correctly documented sources.

**Sharing/Responding:** SR 10 (detailed on pages 544-547); also SR 6 and 7, and questions on pages 279-81.

**NOTE: Friday, March 23, is the last day to withdraw from spring classes.**

**Weeks 12&13 (Apr 3-5 and 10-12)**

*Focus: Purpose and audience; portfolio revision; final editing.*

**Reading:** Workshop 7, “Revision Through Purpose and Audience: Writing as Doing Things to People” (189-211); Mini-workshops G-L in Part III, “Editing” (481-504).

**Writing:** Final revisions of both essays and final reflective letter; process journal (199).

**Sharing/Responding:** 6, 7, 8, and others.

**\*\*\* PORTFOLIOS DUE: Week 13 (Exact date at the Portfolio Group’s Discretion)**

**Weeks 14 & 15 & Last Day of Classes (Apr 17-19, Apr 24-26, and May 1)**

*Focus: Interpretation; End-term evaluations.*

**Reading:** Workshop 14: “Text Analysis through Examining Figurative Language” (363-383); Mini-workshop E, “Midterm and End-term responses to a Writing Course” (459-462).

**Writing:** Interpretive essay; process journal (371).

**Sharing/Responding:** SR 2, 3; questions on page 371

**Process Journals due April 26.**

Monroe Park Campus final EXAMS for spring semester: May 3-11