English 202B: Advanced Rhetoric and Composition

Summer 2005

Writing in the Humanities

Literacy and the Liberal Arts Education

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Required Texts:
Bloom: The Closing of the American Mind (CAM)
Giroux: Channel Surfing (CS)
Rose: Lives on the Boundary (LB)
Rendell: Judgement in Stone

Additional readings are handouts that will be distributed the class period before they are due

Computer Stuff: In addition to the texts, you need to have an active email account that you check regularly. During the course of the semester it may be necessary for me to be in contact with the class to send announcements, updated assignments, and writing prompts through email. You may also find yourselves using email to communicate with other students in the class.

Course Description: Development, skills, and expertise in reading and writing can never be separated; therefore, Writing in the Humanities is an intensive reading and writing course, this section thematized on “literacy and the liberal arts education.” Because English 202B “asks students to consider problems or issues of perennial concern to those in the humanities,” our section will concentrate on the connection between literacy and the liberal arts education. Our reading across the genres on practices inside and outside the academy, within and across academic disciplines and various communities, and up and down socioeconomic categories will serve as a basis for our classroom discussions of what constitutes effective reading and writing, and what qualifies a person as literate. Hopefully our readings, discussions and writings will enable you to become a stronger, more confident, and more flexible writer than you were when the semester started.

The idea here is for you to explore various aspects of literacy as they pertain to a liberal arts education. Certain questions will be at the core of our discussions: What is literacy? What does it mean to be a literate individual? Why is it important? How does a liberal arts education contribute to that literacy? What is the purpose and value of your education in terms of your personal development within and beyond the academy? We will address a wide range of topics and issues and I don’t expect you to have all the answers to the problems of the universe. I do expect you to have thoughts, opinions, questions, possibilities and other types of input. Papers in this course will, for the most part, be on topics of your choice with a few parameters from me. As long as your papers are 1) well organized, 2) persuasive, and 3) supported by logical reasoning and research, you can write on whatever topic, related to literacy and a liberal arts education, that interests you.

Additional Resources: In Pattee/Paterno, you’ll find many resources on histories, theories, and practices of literacy. This is where you want to begin working on your research-based assignment. For example, books such as More Than Words Can Say, Adult Literacy, Perspectives on Literacy, Illiterate America, Class Issues, Critical Literacy, Literacy and Job
Performance, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Illiteracy: A National Dilemma, ABC’s of Literacy, Cultural Literacy, Savage Inequalities, Occupational Literacy Education, Eating on the Street, Literacy in Theory and Practice, The Violence of Literacy, Toxic Literacies, Roles in Literacy Learning and others may be useful to you. You can also browse the bibliographies of our assigned readings for names of promising authors and works. One of the books you use as a source will be the basis for your book review. Start looking through books early in the semester.

**Warning:** Any summer class that you take will be intensive; however, considering that we meet only two days a week for nearly three hours at a time, this class is especially intensive. Each class period will cover the same amount a material that would be covered during the entire week of a regular semester. This means that the reading and writing loads will be heavy. Keeping on schedule will be challenging. I’ve tried to arrange the assignments in a way that will make the path toward your final research paper smoother, but keeping on schedule is your responsibility. Consider meeting me early in the session to discuss your plan for each assignment.

**Course Requirements:** You will be expected to

1. attend class meetings and be prepared. That means **DO THE READING**; this is a discussion-based class and if you haven’t done the reading, you won’t be able to contribute and your grade will suffer accordingly. The reading assignments are not overwhelming; **R-E-A-D**;
2. participate in class discussions - - this class is what you make of it and will work only if everyone participates;
3. actively participate in in-class writing exercises;
4. participate fully in writing workshops and groupwork;
5. submit five one-page statements of understanding—one full single-spaced page wherein you demonstrate your understanding or interpretation of that week’s reading—don’t summarize the reading or the class discussion—I already know the stuff—tell me something new
6. propose, draft, and write five papers of various lengths and purposes
7. Attendance—You should attend every class. Missing more than one class will seriously jeopardize your chance of passing.
8. submit all work on time. Late papers will be docked one letter grade per day
9. Hand in all assignments. This is a requirement to pass the class.

**Grades:**
5 Statements of Understanding (no more than one each week; you choose the weeks) (15%)
Professional Literacy Statement 4 pages (15%)
Book Review 4 pages (10%)
Short Research Based Assignment 3-4 pages (15%)
Preliminary Abstract (Overview Paper) (4 pgs) (10%)
Research Paper 10 pages (25%)
Class Participation (10%)

**Accommodation and Alternative Formats:** The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state and federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell the instructor as soon as possible.
Academic Dishonesty: Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University's Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction.

Class Schedule: Subject to Change

Week One

5/17 Intro to the course, getting to know each other, read in class Orwell, “Why I Write”. Introduce Professional Literacy Statement Assignment


Week Two


5/26 Read LB 2-5 Watch The Last Supper in class

Week Three

5/31 Read LB TBA. Read CAM: foreward, preface, introduction, “The Clean Slate.” Be prepared to discuss final paper topics in class.

6/2 CAM: “Books”, “Music,” “The Student and the University” Read CS Preface Book Review Due Friday by 5 in my mailbox

Week Four

6/7 Read CS Section One

6/9 Watch Spellbound in class Research Overview Paper due Friday by 5 in my mailbox

Week Five

6/14 Read CS Section Two
6/16 Read Rendell 1st half Short Research Based Paper Due Friday by 5 in my class

Week Six

6/21 Read Rendell 2nd half

6/23 Bring a draft of your final paper to class. Paper due Friday by 5 in my mailbox.