Engl. 030. 020—HONORS FRESHMAN COMPOSITION

Instructor:

Elaine Richardson, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of English, Pennsylvania State University, Phone: 814-865-9283; email ebr2@psu.edu
Office, Burrowes South 41; Office Hours, Tues. & Thurs 12:45 to 2:15 or by appointment

Books:

Carter G. Woodson’s *The Miseducation of the Negro* (MSED), Winston-Derek Pub, 1990 (reprint).

Course Packet (CP) “Readings in African American Rhetoric” Available at Gnomon’s Copies, 130 West College Avenue, phone 237-1111

Location:

Room 308 Boucke Building

Meeting Time:

2:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays

Course Description and Objectives:

This class is designed to broaden your perspectives on the uses of language. It focuses on African Centered Rhetorical purposes and styles, and rhetoric in general. Participants are expected to produce thoughtful essays and “think” pieces on a regular basis throughout the course. Come to class prepared, having read and thought about the assigned readings.

This course has the following objectives:

1. To overview African American rhetorical styles and purposes.
2. To enhance participants’ writing and rhetorical skills, toward the goal of producing well constructed and well informed pieces of academic writing.
3. To develop strategies for employing writing for critical analysis and the acquisition of knowledge of self and society.

Topics:

Main topic is African American rhetoric; however, the following will be explored as they relate to African American rhetoric: freedom through literacy, racism and oppression, cultural hegemony, Black Culture.
Requirements:

1. Produce (5) final draft essays.
2. Write a critique of essays by several of your peers.
3. Participate in peer writing group.
4. Write a one page weekly response to readings. This response is not a summary of what you’ve read. Response should reflect themes that you find running through a reading and a video or audio, or a rhetorical strategy employed by a writer or speaker.
5. Find song lyrics featuring Black rhetorical strategies. Use them as the basis for one of your (5) essays. The web is an excellent resource for this.
6. Attend all classes unless you’re dead or very ill. (I know some things can’t be helped—hence everyone can miss two classes—unexcused).
7. Participate in all class activities and discussions.
8. Use a computer to write your papers and use new disks to save your work.
9. Please come to my office hours or make an appointment to see me about your work—don’t wait until you’re in trouble.

Attendance Policy:

Please drop the class if you know you’ll be absent more than twice. If you do not drop the course, and you do not have documentation for your absence (i.e. medical/catastrophe/death), your grade will be lowered one full letter grade (a to b etc) for each two unexcused absences. Do not arrive late to class. Be on time and bring your texts to class. Lateness is a sign of disrespect of you and me.

Grading and Late Assignment Policy:

Papers handed in within a week of deadline will be given ½ score, after that they won’t be accepted.

Weekly responses are due each Thursday at the beginning of class. These may be neatly handwritten or word processed.

Papers are due on Thursdays at the beginning of class-unless it’s a holiday. In that case, they’ll be due on the following Tuesday. Papers must be word processed. All papers should be double spaced and have a title. Don’t underline it or put it in quotation marks. Your name, Course and Instructor name and date should appear on the first page flush right or left.

If I have to attend a conference or have a speaking engagement, I will arrange for a substitute to take my place. I expect that you all will be teaching him or her about African American rhetoric and what we’re working on.

- OUT of class essays #1—OUT, #2 OUT, #3, #4, & #5 = 50%
- In class essays #1—IN, #2—IN, #3 IN) = 30%
- Weekly responses to readings= 15%

Participation—you critiqued 5 out of class essays of your colleagues=5%

Accommodation and Alternative Formats:

The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. 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. It is your responsibility to provide your professors of formal documentation to receive accommodations in your classes.
Calendar:

8/27/98 Thursday
Overview of Syllabus, introductions

9/1/98 Tuesday
**Have Read** an introduction to African Centered Rhetoric by Richardson and pages 3-27 of CP. Golden and Reike’s Chapter on Black Rhetoric, and the overview of “Black Rhetorical Studies”, pages 28-32 in CP.

9/3/98 Thursday
**Have Read** “A Metatheory for Black Communication” by Asante and “A Linguistic Description of Social Dialects” by Williams and Wolfram in CP
Weekly response paper due
Paper 1OUT choices distributed

9/8/98 Tuesday
**Have Read** Chapters 3-5 in Smitherman’s T&T. Proposal #1 Due

9/10/98 Thursday
Essay #1—IN
Weekly response paper Due!

9/15/98 Tuesday
**You must have a draft to participate in Draft Workshop**

9/17/98 Thursday
**Have Read** “American Letters, African Voices” by Gates. pp 70-71 of CP
Paper 1OUT DUE!
Weekly response Due TOO!

9/22/98 Tuesday
**Have Read** “A Narrative of the Most Remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Albert U. Gronniosaw: An African Prince, Related by Himself, pp 72-93 of CP.

9/24/98 Thursday
**Have Read** “The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African by Equiano and all introductory material in (CSN) pp. ix –182.
Weekly response Due!

9/29/98 Tuesday
**Have Read** ½ of “Narrative of Frederick Douglass” by Douglass in (CSN)
Video excerpt from “Roots”
Proposal #2 Due

10/1/98 Thursday
**Have Read** 2nd ½ of “Frederick Douglass” in (CSN)
Weekly response paper Due!

10/6/98 Tuesday
**Have Read** “Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl” by Brent pp. 336-433 In (CSN)

10/8/98 Thursday
**You must have a draft to participate in Draft Workshop**
Weekly response paper Due!

10/13/98 Tuesday
Essay #2—IN

10/15/98 Thursday
Video “Story of Black English”
Paper 2OUT DUE! AND WEEKLY RESPONSE TOO!

10/20/98 Tuesday
**Have Read** Sojourner Truth—“If We Can Laugh” pps. 94-127 of CP
10/22/98 Thursday **Have Read** *No Disrespect* by Sista Souljah in CP
Weekly response paper Due!

10/27/98 Tuesday **Have Read** ½ of *The Miseducation of the Negro* by Woodson
Proposal #3 DUE

10/29/98 Thursday **Have Read** 2nd Half of *The Miseducation of the Negro*
Weekly Response paper Due

11/3/98 Tuesday **Have Read** *Makes me wanna holler* by McCall in CP
Video excerpt "Higher Learning"

11/5/98 Thursday Essay #3 IN
Weekly Response paper Due

11/10/98 Tuesday **You must have a draft to participate in Draft Workshop**

11/12/98 Thursday **Have Read** "The Chain Remain the Same: Communicative Practices in the Hip Hop Nation" by Smitherman in CP
Paper 3OUT DUE
Weekly Response paper Due

11/17/98 Tuesday **Have Read** "Black Nationalism and Rap Music" by Henderson in CP
Video excerpts from "Rhyme and Reason"

11/19/98 Thursday **Bring in Some Lyrics**
Weekly Response paper Due

11/24/98 Tuesday **Have Read** "Word from the Hood: The Lexicon of African American Vernacular English" by Smitherman in CP
Proposal #4 Due
Weekly response due today!

11/26/98 Thursday **Thank God It’s Thanksgiving!**

12/1/98 Tuesday **You must have a draft to participate in Draft Workshop**

12/3/98 Thursday **Have Read** "Soul For Sale" from *Emerge* and "Black Sexuality" and "Black Rage" from *Race Matters* by West in CP
Paper #4 Due
Weekly Response Due

12/8/98 Tuesday **Have Read** "The Abolitionist Rhetorical Tradition in Contemporary America" by Bormann in CP
Proposal #5 Due

12/11/98 Thursday audio—Farrakhan, Malcolm X
Weekly response due

**PAPER #5 OUT DUE DECEMBER 15th!**