COMPOSITION—Pr. Bizzell—Fall 2013

Fenwick 210 office hours: M 1-3:30; T 11:00-3:30; W 1-3; and by appointment; phone x 2524; email pbizzell@holycross.edu

Required Texts:


Course Plan:

This course aims to help you to improve your abilities to read and discuss difficult academic texts, to write analytic arguments about them, and to present coherent argument orally. You will learn:

- how to understand challenging reading
- how to organize your writing
- how to use evidence persuasively
- how to write correctly and elegantly
- how to make good oral presentations

Assignments and Grading:

You must practice to improve, just as if you were learning to play a musical instrument or a challenging sport. You engage in many practice activities before the concert or the big game, such as doing finger exercises or lifting weights. I will give you practice exercises to improve your reading, writing, and speaking, and you will also have opportunities to show what you have learned.

Your practice exercises will be reading assignments and brief (1-3 pages) writing assignments every week. To show what practice has taught you, you will write three longer papers (5-7 pages), and make three oral presentations linked to these papers. Feel free to consult me at any time about any assignment for me; I will be happy to help you.

The weekly writing assignments will be graded pass-fail. If you complete all of them, you will receive a grade of A for this portion of the course; your grade will go down depending upon how many of them you miss. Weekly assignments must come in on the due dates; they cannot be made up unless you have a serious reason for their lateness, and in any case, cannot be submitted later than one week after the original due date.

You will receive a grade for each longer paper and each oral presentation.
Each longer paper may be rewritten; if you improve your grade, I will record for that assignment the average of the original and rewrite grades.

Any rewrite must be submitted no later than one week after you receive the graded original back from me. This original version with my comments must be attached to your rewrite.

Note: there is no final exam in this course. Here is how your grades will be weighted in determining your final grade:

Weekly writing assignments = 10%
Oral presentations = 10% each (total 30%)
Longer papers = 20% each (total 60%)

Of course, any violation of the College’s policy on academic honesty will result in an F for the assignment on which you cheated. If you have questions about this policy, please ask me before submitting the paper. I encourage you to use the Writers Workshop for help with any assignment for this course and I do not consider that to be cheating!

**Syllabus**

Reading assignments are identified as follows: GM = *Grammar Moves*; TCW = *Transition to College Writing*; TSIS = *They Say/I Say*. Named essays can all be found in TSIS.

W 28 Aug:
Read (in class): TCW Chapter 1, on differences between high school and college.

F 30 Aug:
Read: TSIS Introduction and Chapter 1, on attending to what sources say; GM Chapter 1, on punctuation (colon)

M 2 Sept:
Paper due today: movie review in which you disagree with another review (2 pages)
Read: TSIS Chapter 2, on summarizing others’ views; GM Chapter 2, on active voice verbs

W 4 Sept:
Read: GM Chapter 3, on prepositions; TCW Chapter 3, on handling the reading load

**NO CLASS FRIDAY 6 SEPT: ROSH HASHANAH**

BEGIN readings in TSIS Chapter 16, arguing about fast food
M 9 Sept:

W 11 Sept:
Paper due today: brief argument in which you locate yourself in relation to Zinczenko and Balko (2-3 pages)
Read: TSIS Chapter 3, on how to quote from sources; GM Chapters 20, on quotation marks, and 4, on imperative verbs

F 13 Sept:
Read: TCW Chapter 6, pages 107-124 only, on structuring essays, decoding assignments

M 16 Sept:
Read: TSIS Chapter 4, on responding to others’ arguments; Warner, “Junking Junk Food”; Haygood, “Kentucky Town of Manchester Illustrates National Obesity Crisis”

W 18 Sept:
Paper due today: Read Orbach, “Fat Is a Feminist Issue,” and write a brief argument in which you locate yourself in relation to her (2-3 pages)
Read: GM Chapters 5, on the comma, and 6, on the conjunction “but”; TSIS Chapter 6, on planting a naysayer in your text

F 20 Sept:
Read: Freeman and Mersken, “Having It His Way”

M 23 Sept:
Read: TCW Chapter 4, on how good writing gets written, and Chapter 6, pages 124-130 only; TSIS Chapter 8, on connecting parts of your argument; Pollan, “Escape from the Western Diet”; Maxfield, “Resisting the Moralizing of Eating”

W 25 Sept:
Major paper due today (5-7 pages): on TSIS readings from Chapter 16 (details TBA), arguing about fast food
Read: TSIS Chapter 7, “So What? Who Cares?”

F 27 Sept:
Read: GM Chapters 7, on modifiers, and 11, on the semicolon

M 30 Sept:
Read: GM Chapter 12, on cumulative sentences

W 2 Oct, F 4 Oct:
First oral presentations due (your due date will be assigned): on issues from TSIS Chapter 16, arguing about fast food
M 7 Oct:
Read: TCW Chapter 5, on rules and errors; bring all your previous papers to class (copies with my comments)

BEGIN readings in TSIS Chapter 14, arguing about whether higher education is worth the price

W 9 Oct:
Read: TCW Chapter 7, “Writing in Reference to Others,” and Chapter 8, pages 183-191 only; GM, Chapters 14, on past tense, and 19, on special uses of present tense; Ungar, “The New Liberal Arts”

F 11 Oct:
Read: Wallace, “Kenyon Commencement Speech”

FALL BREAK

M 21 Oct:
Read: GM Chapters 17, on adverbs, and 18, on clues to stylistic complexity; Addison, “Two Years Are Better Than Four”

W 23 Oct:
Paper due today (2-3 pages), opinion piece on your views about value of college education, using Ungar, Wallace or Addison
Read: Hacker and Dreifus, “Are Colleges Worth the Price of Admission?”

F 25 Oct:
Read: Murray, “Are Two Many People Going to College?”; Rose, “Blue Collar Brilliance”

M 28 Oct:
Work in class on second major paper due W.

W 30 Oct:
Major paper due today (5-7 pages): on TSIS readings from Chapter 14 (details TBA), arguing about the value of college
Read: GM Chapter 22, on breaking the rules

F 1 Nov:
GM assignment 3, page 126, interviewing faculty about use of the first person, due today (notes only)
BEGIN readings from TSIS Chapter 18, arguing about the American Dream

M 4 Nov:
Read: Herbert, “Hiding from Reality”; Thomas, “Is the American Dream Over?”

W 6 Nov, F 8 Nov:
Second oral presentation due (your date will be assigned): on issues from TSIS Chapter 14

M 11 Nov:
Read: Frank, “Income Inequality”

W 13 Nov:
Paper due today (2-3 pages): argument analysis comparing/contrasting Herbert, Thomas, Frank
Read: Krugman, “Confronting Inequality”

F 15 Nov:
Read: Ruzich and Grant, “Predatory Lending and the Devouring of the American Dream”

M 18 Nov:
Read: Wilson (in Chapter 14), “A Lifetime of Student Debt?”

W 20 Nov:
Paper due today (2-3 pages): opinion piece regarding importance of material wealth to the American Dream

F 22 Nov:

M 25 Nov:
Work in class on paper due after Thanksgiving Break

THANKSGIVING BREAK

M 2 Dec:
Major paper due today (5-7 pages): on issues from TSIS Chapter 18, arguing about the American Dream (details TBA)

W 4 Dec, F 6 Dec:
Third oral presentation due (your date will be assigned): on issues from TSIS Chapter 18