

ENGL 3371: Advanced Exposition
Spring 2013

Instructor: Professor Kevin Porter

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Office Hours: TR 2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m., and by appointment

Section Information: ENGL 3371-001

Place and Time of Class Meetings: Preston Hall 202, TR 12:30 p.m.-1:50 p.m.

Course Description

Expository writing is typically defined as a kind of writing in which authors attempt to inform, but not necessarily persuade, their readers about a particular topic. The distinction between “informing” and “persuading”—i.e., between “explaining” and “arguing”—is, of course, contestable, but it seems reasonable to assume that a reader may be informed by a text without being persuaded by it or that a writer may write about a particular viewpoint without advocating it. The first major goal for 3371, then, is the improvement of students’ abilities to critically read and effectively write brief expository texts (e.g., rhetorical précis) and short papers. The second major goal is to hone your skills in writing concisely *and* precisely, coherently *and* cohesively. That is, whereas most writing courses focus on invention or production (i.e., writing *more*) and perhaps sentence-level mechanics (i.e., writing *correctly*), we will repeatedly practice strategies of writing *more effectively in fewer words*; to do so, we will attend closely to matters of meaning, structure, and style at all levels of discourse, from words to phrases to clauses to sentences to paragraphs to sections to complete texts. Along the way, I will try to “demystify” concepts such as “coherence,” “clarity,” “concision,” etc.

Writing is always writing about something to someone. That “something” will be, for this course, derived from our readings and discussions about interconnections between literacy, writing instruction, grading, higher education, and society. And that “someone” will be, in addition to me, your fellow classmates, who will read and respond to your writing just as you will read and respond to their work; consequently, a significant portion of class time will be spent in peer groups.

Note: 3371 is a course in *advanced* exposition; as such, students are expected already to be able to write proficiently. Although we will discuss issues related to grammar and mechanics, they will not be the focus of this course. Students who lack such proficiency will find this course extremely difficult, if not impossible; students who are largely proficient will likely need to spend extra time working on assignments, visiting the Writing Center, etc.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students should be able to:

- employ proper grammar, punctuation, spelling in writing
- employ standard MLA guidelines for formatting assignments and citations
- write with clarity to communicate effectively
- write rhetorical précis
- revise existing sentences and paragraphs to improve their precision and concision
- respond critically to course material, using synthesis and analysis
- develop active listening skills, including paraphrasing and synthesizing ideas expressed in class
- develop methods and strategies for analyzing and interpreting texts
- evaluate an oral, visual, or written argument for sound or faulty (fallacious) reasoning
- compare and contrast major themes, issues, or topics in more than one text
- respond critically to the writing of others in primary and secondary sources

Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials

- Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th ed. New York: MLA, 2009. Print. [ISBN: 978-1603290241]

Major Assignments

The major assignments for 3371 are comprised of five rhetorical précis and eight other short writing assignments (point values and due dates for all assignments are listed below). *All assignments must be emailed to me via email attachment prior to the start of class, whether or not you attend class that day. For each half-hour that an assignment is late, 10% will be deducted from its final grade.*

Grading Policy

Your final grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

Rhetorical Précis	50%
Writing Exercises	50%

A grade of "Incomplete" will be assigned only under documented cases of extreme medical, family, or personal emergency; in all cases, the incomplete must be resolved by the start of the next 15-week semester or else the grade will be changed automatically to an "F."

Attendance Policy

This is an upper-division course; consequently, attendance is mandatory, and active participation is expected. Courses such as 3371 that rely on writing workshops do not function well when several students are frequently late or absent. At the start of each class, a sign-in sheet will be distributed; if you are not present by the time the sheet makes its way around the room, you will be counted as absent, *even if you subsequently show up and sign the sheet*. If you have some scheduling conflict that you know will prevent you from arriving on time to class, please discuss this with me as soon as possible.

Excluding the first day of class, we have 29 meetings; however, because attending class is not always possible, I will allow **three** absences without penalty. For each subsequent absence, 1% will be deducted from your final course grade; conversely, for each class you attend above 26, you will receive .5% extra credit toward your final grade (+1.5% maximum)

Schedule of Assignments

I reserve the right to modify, as necessary, the readings and other assignments listed on this syllabus. All readings marked *** are available for download from our MavSpace course folder. An electronic ticket to access the folder will be emailed to you.

1/15		Introduction: Conceptualizing Coherence
1/17	***	Woodworth, "The Rhetorical Précis"
	***	Sample Rhetorical Précis
1/22	Due:	Polished version of Précis 1 (submit electronic copy to professor) (20 points)
1/24		Continued discussion of Précis 1
1/29	***	Brandt, "Remembering Writing, Remembering Reading"
1/31		Continued discussion of Brandt, "Remembering Writing, Remembering Reading"
2/5	Due:	Draft of Précis 2 of Brandt ("Remembering Writing, Remembering Reading") (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor)
2/7	Due:	*** Polished version of Concise Writing #1 (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (20 points)
2/12	Due:	*** Draft of Concise Writing #2 (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor)
2/14	Due:	Polished version of Précis 2 of Brandt ("Remembering Writing, Remembering Reading") (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (40 points)
2/19	***	Brandt, "Sponsors of Literacy"
2/21		Continued discussion of Brandt, "Sponsors of Literacy"
2/26	Due:	Polished version of Concise Writing #2 (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (100 points)
2/28	Due:	Draft of Précis 3 of Brandt ("Sponsors of Literacy") (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor)

3/5	Due:	***	Polished version of Sentence Combining #1 (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (20 points)
3/7	Due:	***	Draft of Sentence Combining #2 (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor)
3/12	Spring break		
3/14	Spring break		
3/19	Due:		Polished version of Précis 3 of Brandt ("Sponsors of Literacy") (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (80 points)
3/21	Due:		Polished version of Sentence Combining #2 (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (100 points)
3/26	***	"Issue 15: Does the Practice of Grading Students Serve Useful Purposes?"	
3/28	Continued discussion of "Issue 15: Does the Practice of Grading Students Serve Useful Purposes?"		
4/2	Due:		Draft of Précis 4 of Kohn ("From Degrading to De-grading") (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor)
4/4	Due:	***	Polished version of Paragraph Reconstruction #1 (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (20 points)
4/9	Due:	***	Polished version of Paragraph Reconstruction #2 (consult assignment to determine what to bring to class) (20 points)
4/11	***	Polished version of Paragraph Revision #1 (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (20 points)	
4/16	Continued discussion of Paragraph Revision #1		
4/18	Due:		Polished version of Précis 4 of Kohn ("From Degrading to De-grading") (120 points)
4/23	***	Smith, "Students' Goals, Gatekeeping, and Some Questions of Ethics"	
4/25	Continued discussion of Smith, "Students' Goals, Gatekeeping, and Some Questions of Ethics"		
4/30	Due:		Draft of Précis 5 of Smith (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (Note: For the purposes of this assignment, instructor feedback will be limited.)
5/2	Due:	***	Draft of Paragraph Revision #2 (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (Note: For the purposes of this assignment, instructor feedback will be limited.)

Note 1: The polished versions of Précis 5 (240 points) and Paragraph Revision #2 (200 points) are due by 1:00 p.m. on Monday, May 6th. They should be submitted to me via email attachment. *For each half-hour that an assignment is late, 10% will be deducted from its final grade.*

Note 2: Writing, discussing, and revising rough drafts is a crucial part of 3371; consequently, a student who fails to submit a completed rough draft of any given assignment will be counted as absent because unprepared (even if he or she attends class), and 10% will be automatically deducted from the grade of the polished version.

Classroom Decorum: I treat students with utmost respect and courtesy; when teaching, conferencing, and grading, you and your work will have my full attention. In return, I ask the same from all of you: Please turn off and put away all cell phones, pagers, books from other classes, etc. You may use a laptop to take notes during class, so long as you are mindful enough not to disturb the students around you.

Subject Librarian: Rafia Mirza is the Reference and Instruction Librarian for English, History, and Communication. She is available to answer questions about how to access and use the resources provided by the library; and she is also happy to meet with students for a one-on-one research consultations. She may be contacted at rafia@uta.edu or 817-272-7428.

Writing Center: The Writing Center, Room 411 in the Central Library, will assist you with any writing assignment while you are a student at UT-Arlington. You may schedule appointments by calling 817 272-2601, by following directions listed at www.uta.edu/owl/appointments, or by visiting the Writing Center. If you come to the Writing Center without an appointment, you will be helped on a first-come, first-served basis as tutors become available. Writing Center tutors are carefully chosen and trained, and they can assist you with any aspect of your writing, from understanding an assignment to revising an early draft to polishing a final draft. However, the Writing Center is not an editing service; tutors will not correct your grammar or rewrite your assignment for you, but they will help you learn to solve your grammatical and organizational problems.

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more information.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Academic Integrity: It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University. According to the UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts."

Student Support Services Available: The University of Texas at Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. These resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals to resources for any reason, students may contact the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107 or visit www.uta.edu/resources for more information.

Electronic Communication Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University "MavMail" address as the sole official means of communication with students. MavMail is used to remind students of important deadlines, advertise events and activities, and permit the University to conduct official transactions exclusively by electronic means. For example, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation are now sent to students through the MavMail system. All students are assigned a MavMail account. **Students are responsible for checking their MavMail regularly.** Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/email/>. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active even after they graduate from UT Arlington. To obtain your NetID or for logon assistance, visit <https://webapps.uta.edu/oit/selfservice/>. If you are unable to resolve your issue from the Self-Service website, contact the Helpdesk at helpdesk@uta.edu.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory will be asked to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS) about the course and how it was taught. Instructions on how to access the SFS system will be sent directly to students through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback data is required by state law; student participation in the SFS program is voluntary.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.