ENGL 3371: Advanced Exposition
Spring 2015

Instructor: Professor Kevin Porter
Office Number: 602 Carlisle Hall
Email Address: kporter1@uta.edu
Office Hours: TBA, and by appointment
Section Information: ENGL 3371-001
Place and Time of Class Meetings: PH 103, TR 9:30 a.m.-10:50 a.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 four rhetorical précis and seven other short writing assignments. *All assignments must be submitted to me via email attachment prior to the start of class, whether or not you attend that day. A late assignment has 10% automatically deducted from its final grade, with an additional 10% deducted per half-hour until it is received.*

Grading Policy

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

Rhetorical Précis	44%	Other Writing Exercises	56%

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

At the University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, I expect your regular attendance and active participation. Courses that rely on writing workshops, such as 3371, 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 twenty-eight scheduled meetings; however, because attending class is not always possible, I allow three absences without penalty. For each subsequent absence up to fourteen, 1% will be deducted from your final course grade; but if you miss fifteen or more classes, you will automatically fail the course. For each class you attend above twenty-five, 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 and assignments marked *** are available for download from our MavSpace course folder. An electronic ticket to access the folder will be emailed to you.

1/20 Introduction: Conceptualizing Coherence

1/22 Introduction, continued: Conceptualizing Concision

1/27 *** Woodworth, "The Rhetorical Précis"
*** Sample Rhetorical Précis

1/29 Continued discussion of Woodworth, "The Rhetorical Précis" and Sample Rhetorical Précis

2/3 Due: Polished version of Précis #1 (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (40 points)

2/5 Continued discussion of Précis #1

2/10 *** Brandt, "Remembering Writing, Remembering Reading"

2/12 Continued discussion of Brandt, "Remembering Writing, Remembering Reading"

2/17 Due: Draft of Précis #2 of Brandt ("Remembering Writing, Remembering Reading") (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (See note 2 below about the importance of rough drafts.)

2/19 Continued discussion of draft of Précis #2 (bring 6 copies to class)

2/24 Due: *** Polished version of Concise Writing #1 (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (20 points)

2/26 Due: *** Draft of Concise Writing #2 (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor)

3/3 Due: Polished version of Précis #2 of Brandt ("Remembering Writing, Remembering Reading") (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (80 points)

3/5 Continued discussion of Précis #2

3/10 Spring Break

3/12 Spring Break

3/17 *** Brandt, "Sponsors of Literacy"

3/19 Continued discussion of Brandt, "Sponsors of Literacy"

3/24 Due: Draft of Précis #3 of Brandt ("Sponsors of Literacy") (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor)

3/26 Due: Polished version of Concise Writing #2 (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (120 points)

3/31	Due:	***	Polished version of Sentence Combining #1 (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (20 points)
4/2	Due:	***	Draft of Sentence Combining #2 (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor)
4/7	Due:	***	Polished version of Paragraph Reconstruction (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (10 points) [Note: Make sure you are completing "paragraph reconstruction," not "paragraphing revision #1" or "paragraphing revision #2"]
4/9	Due:	Polished version of Précis #3 of Brandt ("Sponsors of Literacy) (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (120 points)	
4/14	***	"Issue 15: Does the Practice of Grading Students Serve Useful Purposes?"	
4/16	Continued discussion of "Issue 15: Does the Practice of Grading Students Serve Useful Purposes?"		
4/21	Due:	Draft of Précis #4 of Kohn ("From Degrading to De-grading") (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor)	
4/23	Due:	***	Polished version of Paragraphing Revision #1 (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (20 points)
4/28	Due:	***	Draft of Paragraphing Revision #2 (bring 6 copies to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (Note: For the purposes of this assignment, instructor feedback will be limited.)
4/30	Due:	Polished version of Sentence Combining #2 (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (120 points)	
5/5	work period (class canceled)		
5/7	Due:	Polished version of Précis #4 of Kohn ("From Degrading to De-grading") (bring 1 copy to class; submit electronic copy to professor) (200 points)	

Note 1: The polished version of Paragraphing Revision #2 (240 points) is due by 1:00 p.m. on Monday, May 11th. It should be submitted to me via email attachment.

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.

Miscellaneous Policies

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.

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. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/).

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.

Title IX: The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law "Title IX" such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX.

Academic Integrity: Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code: "*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence. I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*"

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. For information about activating and using MavMail, visit http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as "lecture," "seminar," or "laboratory" shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit http://www.uta.edu/sfs.

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.

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.

Subject Librarian: Rafia Mirza is one of the Reference and Instruction Librarian for English. 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, 411 Central Library, offers individual 40 minute sessions to review assignments, *Quick Hits* (5-10 minute quick answers to questions), and workshops on grammar and specific writing projects. Visit https://uta.mywconline.com/ to register and make appointments. For hours, information about the writing workshops we offer, scheduling a classroom visit, and descriptions of the services we offer undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty members, please visit our website at www.uta.edu/owl/.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.