ENGLISH 4371, 002: Advanced Argumentation

 Fall, 2015

 PH 302, TR 12:30-1:50p.m.

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 **COURSE PROCEDURES**

We follow **FOUR main procedures (and three subordinate, related ones)** in this course, procedures having to do with assignments in two types of texts, literary and argumentative/theoretical.

 Students do the following:

 1) Read and study a given assignment at home.

 2) Read and discuss this assignment in class.

 3) Write a one-page paper **a)** summarizing the argument of the theoretical text assigned, and **b)** applying its insights to a literary text (of each student’s choice), in order to note what shows up in the text when it is read via the given argument & its constituent modes and ideas. Run a copy for each class participant.

 4) Present this paper aloud to the class and after all papers have been read aloud, distribute a copy to each class member, including the instructor.

 5) Read selected papers of other class members and mark them for improvement.

6) Revise the elements marked for revision in returned papers and turn in

 these revisions.

 7) Take two types of quizzes, usually (not inevitably) brief and usually (not inevitably) announced: **a)** reading quizzes (i.e., quizzes over the material assigned for the class day on which the quiz is given, and before the material is covered in class), or **b)** over the material covered on the previous class day.

 Unannounced quizzes typically come on the class day following a class’s markedly improvable results on an announced quiz, and can be the very same quiz. The grade on a quiz given a second time will be averaged with the first-time grade. It will not replace it.

 **Additional information regarding the seven procedures:**

1) Reading a given assignment at home.

 a) The date appearing beside the name of an author or work (or its abbreviation) on the tentative schedule (a schedule of anticipated assignments) is the date by which this reading is due to have been completed).

 b) The importance of this initial reading cannot be overestimated. It provides a base for the in-class reading and discussion to build on. Roughly estimated, three times as much of the text-covered-in-class becomes apprehendable during class if read ahead of time as if not, and is approximately 40% more retainable (because of the immediate review). We’re after an intimate (i.e., not merely passing) acquaintance with the assigned texts. Take advantage of this first reading to build this acquaintance.

 To encourage this first reading, reading quizzes may be announced.

 2) Reading and discussion of assignment in class.

 a) This reading, too, is important, as is students’ being present for it. This has, among other things, to do with the fact that what is produced in the way of understanding(s) during class is often heavily class- and moment-dependent--a function of conditions obtaining in the class at any given time (whom the class is made up of, *how* there they are, what they are thinking, and what they say or suppress). At this reading, an exchange and development of ideas sometimes takes place that resembles a dialectic. Thus, although a set of intentions determines a set of goals for every class meeting, the actual intellectual destinations arrived at during the class period will inevitably differ from those *anticipated* by the goals precisely *because* of the dialectical nature of the course. One important aim of the class meeting: that the student *produce* unforeseen meanings for the text, and confirm, amplify, or discard previously apprehended meanings. Thus, while some of the “content” of a class meeting is unmistakably available both ahead of time (from reading the text) and after the fact (from someone else’s notes), much is not. What may be of greatest value (as, for example, what takes place generatively in the minds of students and faculty during the class meeting) will not be available ahead of time or later. Thus absences are strongly discouraged.

 Said slightly otherwise: although much of Procedure #2 takes place in what appears to be a lecture format, making the course at times seem a sort of information-delivery and -retrieval system, much of what in fact gets produced (by instructor and students) is in fact not (or, ideally speaking, will not be) what is conventionally understood as “information” (a pejorative term in such a class as this). What comes into being in class will not be altogether predictable, and thus not available, as suggested above, either ahead-of-time *or* after-the-fact. (Much of what takes place of course does so in the minds of the individual participants, where, because of the size of the class and the class’s limited available time, it inevitably remains. But it is not lost to the given student. It cannot, however, be recuperated for one student by another. That is, another’s notes are an indifferent substitute for one’s own apprehensions. In short, students absent from a Procedure #2 class meeting are **more** absent than they would be were this a course of the information-retrieval type, whose contents, by design, essentially follow a replicable textbook format, for which, as a substitute for a class meeting, another’s notes are useful indeed.

 3) Writing a paper summarizing the assigned argument and elucidating a literary text across it.

 The paper exhibits a number of characteristics, some of which will purposely be repeated here:

 a) It is **one page** in length. One page means one page, with print on one side. Page size is eight-and-one-half by eleven-inches, and spacing is double. Margins for all but the research paper are non-existent but for a vertical row of line numbers at left. The one-page format without margins allows space enough for thought development and condensation enough to enable everyone in class to present her/his paper aloud in its entirety.

 b) It may use all but one line of the space available exclusively for its text. That is, no title or title set-off is necessary. The top line should contain the student’s name (at left), course number, identification of the assignment (i.e., “Paper #3: psychoanalytical), and the date (at right). These conventions serve practical ends: they save time--the student’s as well as the instructor’s.

 c) Its lines are to be numbered at the left-hand side of the page, by computer or by hand. **Be sure to include these line numbers on your papers.** These too save in-class time.

 d) Its font is Times New Roman regular, 12-point. Smaller print will need to be handed back for print-enlargement before being read & graded. To date, no maximum number of words has been stipulated, though an upper limit may need to be invoked.

 e) Its contents should consist of two types of material, each to take up one-half of the page, and presented in this order: 1) material summarizing the argument of the theoretical assignment-in-question, and 2) an “application” of the argument to a literary text. This may seem to shortchange the application, but you will already have been “applying” the argument as you read to understand it. Both your nailing it and putting it to use are important here. Laying out the argument coherently may be the most difficult if not the most creative of these enterprises, for, once the argument is understood, the idea, at least, if not the conposing of the application, may be self-generating.

 **Due Dates of Papers and Item Revisions**

Due date: A paper is due on its due date. A paper available for presentation aloud, **and by its author**, to the class on its due date fulfills the assignment. Assignments for whatever reason unfulfilled can be made up (though inadequately) only by providing the assigned paper during the week in which it is assigned *and* by doing additional reading (one or more books or articles) related to the course content, to be accompanied by a 2-page, double-spaced paper summarizing and commenting on the argument of this additional reading, due within two weeks of the missing paper’s due date.

 If revisions are required, they are due at the class meeting immediately following receipt of the marked paper. Instructions for revisions:

 a) Triple- or quadruple-space the paper.

 b) Mark all items due for revision with brightly-colored marker.

 c) Determine the category or type of infelicity it is that calls for revision: spelling; punctuation (what type of punctuation “error”); grammar (what type of ungrammaticality: dangling participle, absence of verb); style (as in a break in style); usage (name your authority for necessary usage and anything you picked up while zeroing in on what’s preferred / required); form (as in need for transitions and need for re-ordering sentences for continuity); and other infelicities (whatever possibilities, including those of content) fall outside the previous categories).

 d) Make a list of the types of textual infelicity requiring modification, i.e., spelling, punctuation, dangling participle, “its/it’s” unconventionalities, punctuation in relation to quotation marks, “that/which” conventions [dependent on restrictiveness, non-restrictiveness of clause]). Check, with each further paper, to be sure you’ve not included the same sort of infelicity a second time. Turn in your list (the original list with whatever additions you make to it) each time you turn in a paper.

 Habit, rather than thought, produces many of these infelicities, and habits are hard to break. It will be my aim to provide you the opportunity to break them. A repeatedly marked, repeatedly appearing infelicity may bring a paper back to you without having been marked or graded, so that you can search out the problem in question.

 **Plagiarism**

The course follows university rules on plagiarism. I can provide you, on request, with an expanded definition of plagiarism. A short definition: representation of words, ideas, and other sorts of intellectual property generated by others, as one’s own, whether used verbatim or paraphrased.