

ENG 1100 DD: Workshop in Essay Writing

Fall Term, 2015

**Instructor:** Dr. E. Bailey

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**Office:** SMD 327

**Class times:** Tuesdays 11:30-13:00 FTX 227; Fridays (DG 1: 13:00-14:30 in LMX 342; DG 2: 13:00-14:30 in LMX 339)

**Office Hours:** Fridays 14:30-15:30 or e-mail me at [ebailey@uottawa.ca](mailto:ebailey@uottawa.ca) for assistance.

**University of Ottawa E-Mail Policy:** The University's Senate stipulates that students must check their university e-mail account regularly to receive information notices from staff and administration. Please also remember to check the university's "Important Dates and Deadlines": <http://www.uottawa.ca/important-academic-dates-and-deadlines/>

**Course Description and Objectives:** The ENG 1100 Essay Writing course introduces students to the conventions of formal composition at the university level. The syllabus tackles four key elements of composition: prewriting and thesis development; organization of essay content and paragraph writing; rewriting and revising; and the documentation of sources in MLA, APA, and Chicago. By the end of this course, students are expected to research a topic independently and develop a persuasive argument in grammatically correct prose. The method of instruction will combine the theory of composition with practical application. Lectures examine influential essays on topics of common interest as a starting point for developing critical reading skills and perfecting the composition of an academic essay. The Discussion Groups emphasize exercises that require students to improve grammar skills and to apply the strategies described in the previous lecture. Students should take notes during lectures in preparation for the workshops, the midterm, and the final examination.

**Required Texts:**

1) Joanne Buckley's *Checkmate* (Available at the University Bookstore.)

2) Read the essays as indicated on the syllabus in preparation for lectures and discussion group assignments. Some essays may be found online but are more conveniently available as a package in print at Reprography <http://www.uottawa.ca/print/course-packs/>

**Method of Evaluation:** Discussion Group work (Total 10%-- i. Participation 4% ii. Grammar Quizzes 6%); Short Essay (10%); Midterm Essay (20%), Research Essay (25%), Exam (35%)

1) **Discussion Group work: i) written assignments during workshop times and submitted at the end of class at the instructor's discretion: (late submissions are not accepted.) Value: 4%** of final grade. Students of this class are advised to keep a portfolio of their work. During the workshops, you will be asked to work in class on an assigned question, which I and the T.A. will occasionally review at the end of class and return the following week. I will not record grades for these assignments, but I will monitor your progress and offer suggestions for improvement, if needed. Students will receive 4 marks for workshop participation. The grade you receive will depend on two factors: the extent to which the assignments reflect your attendance in class and the effort you exhibit in your answers. **ii) 4 Short Grammar Quizzes:** Held during Workshop classroom time (see page 5 of syllabus for a list of grammar components). Each quiz is worth a mark of 2%, but only the best 3 of the 4 will count toward your grade. **Value: 6%** of final grade. Absence without medical documentation cannot be used as an excuse for a remedial test.

2) **Essay #1** approximately 1000 words. Essays are due October 2 at the BEGINNING OF CLASS. **Value: 10 %** of final grade.

3) **Midterm (Required component for course completion): Write an essay response of approximately 700-1000 words. Value: 20%** of final grade. Held on Oct. 20, 2015.

4) **Research Essay (Required component for course completion):** approximately 2500 words. **Value: 25%** of final grade, due December 1 at the BEGINNING OF CLASS. Essays submitted after the date of the final exam will receive a zero.

5) **Final exam (Required component for course completion): Value: 35%** of final grade. (Open-book exam held during exam period; electronic resources not permitted.)

**Classroom Policies: Please read the following policies carefully:**

1. **Attendance Policy:** Students should attend classes regularly. Except in extenuating circumstances and by prior arrangement, professors are not responsible for supplying lecture notes or assignments outside of classroom hours. Attendance will be taken at every DG.

2. **Missed or Late Assignments and Required Components for Course Completion:** The penalty for a late essay is 5% per class. If your essay is late (even if only by a day), hand it in the following class. Assignments for the portfolio must be submitted by the end of workshop sessions, and late workshop assignments will not be accepted. N.B. In the event of illness, students may write supplemental assignments/ the midterm/ final exam on another day, but *only if medical documentation is provided*. The dates for the midterm and the final exam are nonnegotiable. N.B. The midterm test, the research essay, and the final examination must be written in order for the student to complete the course. Since learning to do research is an important pedagogical goal of our course, the use of paid research assistants is not permitted.

3. **Style and Documentation:** For the research paper, you must construct a formal essay and document the sources according to the MLA, the APA, or the Chicago style (the style depends

on the subject matter). The lectures on documentation will explain the difference between acceptable citation and plagiarism. Remember that *accurate documentation is important*. *Failure to acknowledge sources can result in penalties ranging from failure on the assignment to dismissal from the university. If a professor detects problems in correct documentation, he or she may forward the essay / assignment to the Chair of the department for further investigation.*

**4. Submission of assignments and essays:** All assignments must be submitted in person during class. E-mail attachments are not normally accepted except by prior arrangement with the professor, nor will the departmental secretariat accept students' assignments.

**5. Use of Electronic Media:** Except in the case of an emergency and with prior permission from the professor, students should not use cell phones or computers to text friends, play games, or surf the Net. Many students find their peers' improper use of electronic media very distracting, so please use electronic devices responsibly within the classroom. The recording of classroom material may also constitute an infringement of copyright, so refrain from this practice

**Schedule:** (The schedule may need to change slightly, depending on the progress of our discussion). Specific pages of Buckley's *Checkmate* have been selected for the grammar quizzes (see page 5), but you are encouraged to read the whole text. It explains key grammar rules that will be helpful for all aspiring writers. Other required readings can easily be found online, though students may prefer to use the photocopied package of essays available at Reprography.

**Sept. 8:** No lectures in any Arts classes.

**Sept. 11:** Introduction to the syllabus; Diagnostic writing sample.

**Sept 15 Lecture:** Topic and thesis. **Readings:** Sanders, "Under the Influence".

**Sept. 18: Workshop #1: exercises on common writing errors.**

**Sept. 22: Lecture:** Free-writing and brainstorming **Readings:** Robertson Davies, "A Few Kind Words for Superstition"

**Sept. 25: Workshop #2: Workshop exercises based on readings and previous lectures.**

**Sept. 29: Lecture:** Style, tone, and audience; introductions and conclusions.

**Readings:** Swift, "A Modest Proposal" and Elizabeth I, "Speech to the Troops"

**Oct. 2: Workshop #3: Workshop exercises based on readings and lecture. Grammar quiz #1.**

**Oct. 6: Guest Lecturer Ann Hemingway: Library Information Session, Essay #1 due.**

**Oct 9: Workshop #4: discussion and writing exercises Readings:** Staples, "Black Men and Public Space"

**Oct. 13:** Taking notes, paraphrasing and summarization; Plato, "The Allegory of the Cave".

**Oct. 16: Workshop #5: based on previous lecture. Grammar Quiz #2**

**Oct. 20: Midterm Essay**

**Oct. 23: Workshop #6: Beginning the Essay and Exploring the Library**

**Week 8: Reading Week: no classes Oct.26-30**

**Nov.3: Lecture:** Essay Models, Paragraph Models, and "slanted" language.

**Readings:** Mitford, "Behind the Formaldehyde Curtain"

**Nov. 6: Workshop #7: (electronic distribution of exercises and answer key).**

**Nov. 10 Lecture:** MLA, Chicago and APA citations; "Scholarly" sources. **Readings:** You may skim through the sample research essays in *Checkmate* (pp. 171-184, 202-210, 223-226), since the aim of this class is to illustrate various models of citation.

**Nov. 13: Workshop #7: Workshop exercises based on readings and lecture. Grammar quiz #3.**

**Nov. 17: Lecture:** Writing a position paper, objective voice, finding a critical voice. Lecture will refer to C.S. Lewis, “On Writing for Children” and Hornyansky, “The Truth of Fables”

**Nov. 20: Workshop #8: Based on previous readings and lecture.**

**Nov. 24: Lecture:** Revising essays; Sentence variety; Transitions.

**Nov. 27: Workshop exercises on revisions. Please bring Essay Draft to workshop (to be initialled by Workshop Leader: Grammar Quiz #4.**

**Dec. 1 Lecture: Research Essay due:** Analyzing arguments. **Readings:** Jane Rule, “The Harvest, the Kill” OR Maggie Helwig, “Hunger”.

**Dec. 4: Based on either of the readings (your choice)**

**Dec. 8: Review of ENG 1100: Final questions, last-minute reminders.**

The date and location of the Final Examination will be determined by the Faculty of Arts. Students are responsible for finding the correct place and time at which their exams will be held. Final grades will be posted on the web in late January, 2015.

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Quizzes: Based on assigned readings from *Checkmate* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition).

The quizzes will be held during the Workshops. These are short tests worth 2% each, but only the best 3 of 4 will count. If you are absent from a quiz, it will be counted as the lowest test and dropped from your record. Rewrites are not permitted. In the event of an illness, please obtain medical documentation that will justify a remedial test held on the last class of the term.

Remember to attend Workshop sessions regularly, where we practise correcting common sentence errors.

I have selected the following passages from *Checkmate* for the quizzes because these errors appear most commonly in students’ work. However, I urge students to review the entire textbook. Also, note any specific trouble spots your Workshop Leader notices in your essays.

Quiz #1 on Oct 2: Correcting Sentence Fragments, Comma Splices, and Fused Sentences. Read *Checkmate* (pp. 334-345).

Quiz #2 on Oct 16: Correcting Errors in Subject-Verb Agreement. Read *Checkmate* (pp. 346-353).

Quiz #3 on Nov. 13: Comma, Semicolon, and Colon Usage, *Checkmate* (401-429).

Quiz #4 on Nov. 27: Correcting the Apostrophe, *Checkmate* (pp. 418-422).

Recommended: Review the passive and active voice, *Checkmate* (pp. 464-468, 315, 323, and 534-535).

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Essay #1: Due Oct. 2 in class (10%)  
See Policy #2 on pp. 2-3 for information on late penalties and medical extensions)  
ENG 1100: Topics for Essay #1 (Short Essay)

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Assignment: Write a short expository or persuasive essay of approximately 1000 words on ONE of the following six topics. An essay that exceeds or falls short of the required word count by more than 200 words will be penalized (-20%). The objective of this assignment is to allow your markers to assess your work and assist you in preparing for the major essay due at the end of term. Research is not required.

Format: Please use Times New Roman, 12 point font, and remember to double space your essay so that we can make comments as needed. Please staple your essay in the top left corner and write your last name and page number in the top right margin.

Style and tone: Use grammatically correct English and a serious, academic tone. Avoid first and second personal pronouns (*I* and *you*).

Evaluation of the essay: Please see the reverse side of this page for some information on how we will assess your work.

Reminders: The topics below are fairly broad. Remember to narrow your topic before constructing a thesis. Always keep an extra copy of your essay in your own files, and e-mail an extra copy to yourself. **N.B. This essay should be independent work, and research is not necessary. If you *do* consult any sources, please document them in either the MLA, APA, or Chicago style. If the corrector detects problems in appropriate documentation, he or she may forward the essay to the Chair of the department for further investigation.**

Topics

- 1) Read “Under the Influence” by Scott Russell Sanders in the Course Pack and answer the first question posed by the editors: “Sanders frequently punctuates his memories of his father with information from other sources—dictionaries, medical encyclopedias, poems and short stories, the Bible. What function do the sources serve?” Remember, if you seek opinions from sources other than yourself, cite them in your essay and bibliography.
  - 2) Technology has become a pervasive aspect of the classroom environment. What limitations should be placed on the use in the classroom/examination room of such technological devices as cell phones, laptop computers, blackberries, or other electronic devices? Why?
  - 3) What are the benefits and/or drawbacks of online courses? Should distance learning have an increased presence in Canadian universities? Why or why not?
  - 4) The transition from high school to university can prove daunting for some students. Explain what some of these challenges are and suggest useful strategies for coping with this transition
  - 5) Suggest strategies for controlling and/or repaying student debt.
  - 6) In “Black Men and Public Space,” Brent Staples illustrates the potential dangers of racial profiling. Using his essay as a starting point, explain how biases or preconceptions against members of a minority group or vulnerable sector of society affect their movements or behaviour in public space.
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In determining a grade, a marker will ask himself or herself the following questions:

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- 1) Has the student sufficiently narrowed the topic?
- 2) Does the essay have a clear, focussed thesis statement that appears in the introduction?
- 3) Is the thesis statement self-evident, or does the thesis offer fresh insight into the topic?
- 4) Is the thesis supported with examples or illustrations?
- 5) Does each paragraph have a focussed topic sentence, followed by a logical sequence of ideas?
- 6) Does each paragraph directly relate to and support the thesis statement?
- 7) Does the essay have a smooth transitions between paragraphs, or does the essay appear choppy and disjointed?
- 8) Does the introduction establish the parameters of the discussion, and does the conclusion offer a neat synopsis of the essay while suggesting related topics worthy of future discussion?
- 9) Is the style mature, poised, and serious; in short, is the tone academic?
- 10) Is the grammar correct?
- 11) Has the student accurately cited any relevant material?
- 12) Has the student met the requirements of the essay in format, due date, and length?

A grade: The essay meets the highest standards in grammar, format, style, and content.

B grade: The essay is very good but suffers from a few errors in grammar, style, format, or content.

C grade: The essay is good but needs some editing. There are several grammatical or stylistic errors and the content should be improved.

D grade: The essay needs considerable revision in grammar, style, and content.

E/F grade: The essay does not meet the requirements of a university paper. The essay was either written too hurriedly or without sufficient attention to the rules of grammar, format, and style. The thesis and argument lack sophistication.

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