

English 2010 Intermediate Writing

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## Course Description and Objectives

Hello everyone and welcome to English 2010 – the Internet version. Our class will be conducted electronically, using email, servers, electronic bulletin boards, the Internet, and other technologies.

Because this is an Internet course, I expect you to possess basic knowledge of computers, software programs, email systems, and the Internet. You should have daily access to a computer that you know how to operate. You should know how word processing programs in general work. You should know how to send and receive email, as well as know how to attach files to your email messages and open attached files that are sent to you. You must also know how to access and browse through the Internet. If you lack any of these skills, please ask a friend, roommate, family member, and so forth to assist you. For several reasons, I cannot spend the time teaching anyone these basic skills. You must learn them on your own if you don't already possess them.

You must take several important steps to get started in this class. If you don't already have an email account that enables you to easily attach files, then you need to obtain one immediately. Once you have an email system, practice using it. Email friends, email yourself if you want. Attach documents to messages, and learn how to read attachments. **Make sure you email me as soon as possible**, so that I may record your address in my address book. I will stay in touch with the class through email, so email me right away. **I expect to receive email from everyone by the first day of class. Be sure to check your email every day. I frequently send important messages to the class.**

You must use MsWord to submit all assignments for this class, preferably MsWord 2000 or XP.

Since this class is an independent study, you will have to discipline yourself so that all assignments are turned in on a timely basis. Don't fall behind thinking that deadlines don't matter in this class. They do, and students will be heavily penalized for not meeting them.

### **Here's a detailed description of our class.**

By the end of English 2010, successful students will have refined the rhetorical and grammatical skills practiced in freshmen composition courses, skills which include thinking clearly and independently and ordering that thinking to produce writing that communicates well. Specifically, they will be able to produce various types of papers that incorporate source material in support of general statements. Students will be able to research information from libraries and other sources and will use a research style guide in their writings. In addition, they will have improved their writing abilities to respond to the writing of peers and professionals.

English 2010 is an intensive reading and writing course that is designed to improve your ability to comprehend and construct argumentative discourse, particularly those that take place in an academic environment. The course will focus on those writing and thinking skills that predominate in college and professional environments. Such skills include the ability to summarize, synthesize, analyze, and evaluate what others have written.

### ***Papers***

You will write four major papers in this course: two summaries, a synthesis, and a contribution paper. You must select an issue that you will be comfortable dealing with for the entire semester. Almost any issue can be selected, whether it be at a local level (growth rate of St. George), at a state level (sales tax rate), a national level (welfare reform), or at an international level (foreign aid). A word of caution about issue selection, though. Some issues can be resolved only through political strength (by whichever party is in control of government at a given time), as opposed to reasoned discourse. That is, some issues have been so hotly debated for so long that everything that can be said about them has been said. People have already heard all the arguments, have made up their minds, and no argument, however persuasive, will influence them. With such issues, argumentation is useless. Constant political battles are assured, with the

"winning" party temporarily making the decisions. Such issues should be avoided in our class. One such issue is abortion. So much has been said about it that you will not likely be able to argue anything new.

However, you needn't limit yourself to the selection of a political issue. With the exceptions noted above, you may choose any issue, including a medical one (What is the best way to treat depression? Does attention deficit disorder really exist), an historical one (Who really assassinated JFK? What would have happened if Hitler didn't attack the Soviet Union?), a scientific one (Can humans colonize the planet Mars? Is the space station worth the investment?). **Just about any issue will do; just make sure that people hold different opinions on the matter and that you can fairly easily obtain various articles and arguments about it.**

After selecting an issue, you must then research this issue, looking for at least five argumentative essays--each one representing a different view of the issue. These essays must have one thing in common: they are all argumentative in nature. That is, if you are going to summarize an essay written by a biologist, the biologist's essay must argue for some point of view. For example, the biologist may argue that genetic research is immoral and should be stopped. Original essays that merely inform (like encyclopedia and newspaper articles) are not suitable for the first few papers you'll write. However, informative articles are invaluable sources in teaching you about your issue, so don't throw them away. Keep them in a separate folder. They will prove vital throughout the course, not only to keep you informed of your issue, but also as sources of important information that you will need to include and document in the last paper of the semester.

The authors' arguments must come from a variety of sources: online library materials, Internet, books, journals, and so forth. Most importantly, do not rely solely on the Internet, which can be an unreliable source of information. Note that online library material is not what I mean by the Internet. By Internet, I mean the personal web pages of organizations or private individuals.

Rough Drafts and Peer Reviews. Each assignment requires you to produce a rough draft for peer review. You will exchange drafts electronically with another student from our class. All drafts must be returned on time. Deadlines are noted in the syllabus. When you comment on someone else's draft, you must point out the weaknesses in the paper and make suggestions as to how the author can improve it. Peer reviews that include only positive comments ("Great paper!" "Nice job." Etc.) are not helpful to the author. Authors can improve a paper only if they are aware of its problems and know how to fix those problems. It's your

duty as a reviewer to help in this regard. Do not send me the rough draft during the peer review stage.

**Final Drafts.** Final drafts submitted up to two days late will be penalized a full letter grade. Final drafts submitted after two days late will not be read and will receive a grade of zero.

**The Summary Papers.** You will write to present the main point of an argument, as well as all the important subsidiary points the author makes. Summaries must include a statement about what's at issue in the original essay, how the author defines the problem being addressed in that essay, and what solution the author presents. Any major opposing arguments included in the argument should also be mentioned.

**The Synthesis Paper.** Synthesis papers show relationships among authors. You will group at least five authors according to how they are similar and dissimilar to each other, and explain to your readers the position that each author holds. Readers of your paper should be able to grasp the significance of the relationships you have established among the authors.

**Contribution Paper.** The contribution paper gives you the opportunity to contribute to your community of authors. Rather than only summarizing and synthesizing what others have said, you will argue for your particular viewpoint on your chosen issue.

## **Homework Assignments**

The course requires you to complete numerous assignments that are not related to papers. Such assignments include responding in writing to a reading assignment. I refer to these exercises as homework assignments. Homework assignments must be submitted on the day that they are due. Late homework assignments will not be accepted.

For many homework assignments, I will use the following grading system.

**Check:** This means that you have done a fine job on the assignment. Everything is as I hoped it would be.

**Check+:** This means that your assignment shows some outstanding qualities.

**Check-:** This means that the assignment is good, but it has some problems.

Zero: Occasionally, an assignment has such problems that a grade of zero is warranted.

The series of checks, check+'s, and check-'s will add up at the end of the semester to influence your final grade.

After I grade your assignment, I will attach it to an email message addressed to you. When you receive the email message, double-click the name of the attached file in order to open it. There, you will see my comments in the margin of your work as soon as you open the file. I customarily return all work within seven days of receiving it. If you haven't received an assignment back from me within seven days, something is probably wrong, so check back with me.

Remember, you must use a recent version of MS Word for this to work.

## **Required Materials**

English 2010 Supplement. You are reading it right now.

*The Brief Handbook*, Fifth edition. Textbooks may be purchased at the Dixie State College bookstore in person or by contacting Randy Judd at (435) 652-7641 or [judd@dixie.edu](mailto:judd@dixie.edu)

Note: This course is based upon the following textbook: Kaufer, David S., Cheryl Geisler, and Christine M. Neuwirth. *Arguing From Sources*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989. It is not necessary to purchase this book.

## **On the Public Nature of Writing**

Writing is an act of communication that requires the participation of at least two parties: author and reader. All forms of writing, except diary entries and other self-expressive forms, are a public matter in that authors are communicating

their ideas with someone else. This concept applies to our class as well. Virtually everything you write in this class will be read by someone other than the teacher. For example, every essay you write will be reviewed by a fellow student. Excerpts from your work may be used in class as examples. Your papers may be selected as examples for future classes, just as the papers of former students are included in this course for your examination. Of course, all papers that are publicly displayed in our class, future classes, or other pedagogical contexts, will remain anonymous. If you don't want your work, or excerpts from it, displayed in such a manner, you must provide me with a written statement saying so.

## **Grading**

**Class Participation.** Your participation is vital to your success in this class. Group discussions in electronic bulletin boards are important and require your full participation. Peer reviews of papers also play a vital role in this course. None of these things can succeed without your full participation.

**Papers.** The point value of each paper is shown below:

Summaries: 50 points each

Synthesis: 100 points

Contribution: 200 points

Final examination: 100 points

## **Syllabus**

English 2010

Instructor: George Jantzen

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Office hours: MW 11:15 a.m.-1:15 p.m. and F 11:15-12:15 MST

Local Phone: (435) 652-7828

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**The best way to contact me is to email me. Dropping by my office or calling me are less reliable ways to reach me.**

***Important note!***

Click on the Announcement button in WebCT Vista every day. I use the Announcement folder to send the class messages.

This course requires a lot of research, much of which should be conducted by using genuine library resources, as opposed to strictly Internet sources, which can be unreliable. To access the Dixie State College online library from off campus, use the following username and password: username--library; password--fall2006. The access code is not necessary if you use Dixie State College computers.

This course requires the use of Microsoft Word. All assignments are in MS Word 2000, but I currently use MS Word XP. Much older versions of Word may prevent you from reading my comments on your papers.

Please note that assignments must be completed and submitted to me by the date under which they are listed. For example, by August 25, you should have read Chapter 15 in *The Brief Handbook* (BH) and sent me your summary of the course description.

Anytime the syllabus requires you to complete a written assignment, email that assignment to me in an attached MS Word file so that I may grade it. Any exceptions to sending me the file will be noted in the syllabus itself. **Use your own email system, not WebCt email, to send me assignments.**

I return all assignments sent to me within seven days of receipt--usually a lot sooner than that. When I return your assignment, it will be in a file attached to my email message. Open the file, and read your grade and my comments on your work. Usually, the body of my email message just says, "Thank you." If you haven't received your work from me within seven days, something is wrong, and you must contact me about the missing assignment.

**August 23**

- Carefully read the [course description](#) and overview. If you haven't already, email me a message so that I can record your email address and enter your name in my class roster. Send me the message today!
- Introduce yourself on our WebCT discussion board.

**August 25**

- Read Chapter 15, sections 15a, 15b, and 15c only, in BH
- Summarize the *Papers* section of our course description. Follow all of the relevant advice from the BH reading of Chapter 15. Make sure that your summary begins with a running acknowledgement (e.g., "According to Mr. Smith. . .") and ends with a proper MLA parenthetical citation (Smith, online). A guideline for determining the length of any summary you write is that the summary should be about five to ten percent of the original text's length. This is just a guideline, though.

### **August 28**

- Now paraphrase the *Papers* section of our course description. Follow all of the relevant advice from the BH reading of Chapter 15. Make sure that your paraphrase begins with a running acknowledgement and ends with a proper MLA parenthetical citation. *At the top of your paraphrase, take a few sentences to explain the difference between summarizing and paraphrasing.*
- Complete discussion board assignment on issue selection.

### **August 30**

- Read Chapter 15, section 15d only, and Chapter 16 in BH
- Complete the [Integrating Sources](#) exercise.

### **September 1**

- Familiarize yourself with Chapter 17 in BH
- Complete the [MLA exercise](#).

### **September 4**

**Labor Day--No Classes**

### **September 6**

Read Chapter 2 in BH.

Read documents on [Milestones](#) and [Paths](#) and [Arguments of Existence](#) and Significance. The first two documents are extremely important, so study them very carefully.

Read about [arguments versus informational](#) articles.

Use the Peer Review sign-up folder (its icon is on our class' home page) to join a peer review pair. Note the person with whom you paired up, and use the WebCt mail system to contact that person. Get each other's email address so that you can swap MS Word files to peer review future papers.

### **September 8**

Read Chapter 9 in BH.

[Short argument assignment](#). Begin working on this assignment now. The rough draft doesn't have to be peer reviewed for a couple of days yet.

*Don't send me the rough draft. Send your paper to me only after it's been peer reviewed and you have revised it. Note the correct date on our syllabus for submission of the final draft.*

### **September 11**

Read pp. 47-51 in BH

[Peer review](#) of short argument. By now you should have found a peer review partner on our discussion board. Reviews should be completed and returned to peers by end of today. [Peer review sample](#).

### **September 13**

- Read documents about Assumptions, Counterexamples, Implications, including sample essay. Complete assumptions, etc. exercise. All of these documents are in our online Supplement. Email me your completed assumptions exercise.
- **Final draft of short argument due.**

## **September 15**

- Read Chapter 8 in BH
- Email me with your own examples of each of the logical fallacies.

## **September 18**

Critical Examination of [Airport Profiling](#) article: carefully read article, then identify milestones, faulty and return paths, assumptions, counterexamples, and implications, as well as the logical fallacies that the author commits. As with all other written assignments in this class, email your response to me in an attached MS Word file.

## **September 20**

Email me a MLA style annotated bibliographic citation for the first argument that you will summarize. The annotation should be a three-sentence summary of your author's argument: one sentence for each milestone. Remember that the issue statement must be in the form of a specific question. Make sure that the entry itself conforms with MLA documentation style. The argument to which I refer is one of the arguments that you have already found as a result of your research on your issue. As you can see in the syllabus, in a couple of weeks, you must submit a summary of an argument related to your issue. I just want to know now what argument you have chosen to summarize.

## **September 22**

Continue with your research

## **September 25**

Critical Examination of ["Elephant in the Room"](#) article: carefully read article, then identify milestones, faulty and return paths, assumptions, counterexamples, and implications, as well as the logical fallacies that the author commits.

## **September 27**

Read Document on [Summary Assignment and Criteria](#).

Read sample Summary [paper # 1.](#)

Read sample Summary [paper # 2.](#)

## **September 29**

Research Day. Continue your research into authors who *argue* a point in your issue. Articles that merely inform are not acceptable right now. Keep them in a separate folder for future reference. Informative articles will become important later in the course.

## **October 2**

Research Day. Continue looking for more arguments related to your issue. You'll need at least five for your synthesis paper. Remember that your five authors must represent different perspectives on the issue. Using five authors who are all for or all against a proposal will not work.

## **October 4**

- Draft of First Summary Paper due (send to your peer, not to me).
- Peer review of summary paper draft.
- Read the [peer review guide](#) and [peer review sample](#).
- When you complete your peer review, return the draft to your peer.

## **October 6**

First Summary Paper due

## **October 11**

Critical Examination of [Sugarman article](#). Carefully read article, then identify milestones, faulty and return paths, assumptions, counterexamples, and implications, as well as the logical fallacies that the author commits.

**October 12-13**

**Mid-semester Break--No Classes**

**October 16**

Read Chapter 22 in BH.

**October 18**

Critical Examination of [Carlson article](#). Carefully read article, then identify milestones, faulty and return paths, assumptions, counterexamples, and implications, as well as the logical fallacies that the author commits.

**October 20**

Work on second summary paper. This is the same exact assignment as summary paper one, except that you will summarize a different argument related to your issue.

**October 23**

- Draft of Second Summary Paper due (send to your peer, not me). Summarize a different argument from the one you summarized first.
- [Peer review](#) of second summary paper draft. Peer review must be completed and returned to peer by end of today. [Peer review sample](#).
- When you complete your peer review, return the draft to your peer.

**October 25**

Second Summary Paper due

**October 27**

Read Document on [Synthesis Assignment](#)

Read Document on [Grid of Common Points](#)

### **October 30**

Read Document on [Synthesis Tree](#).

### **November 1**

Read Document on [Drafting the Synthesis Paper](#).

### **November 3**

Read sample synthesis [paper # 1](#)

### **November 6**

Read sample Synthesis [paper # 2](#).

### **November 8**

Complete your Grid of Common Points and your Synthesis Trees. Your grid must contain *three* common points. You can complete both the grid and the tree by using MS Word's table feature for the grid and drawing feature for the tree. **Send me your grid and tree today.**

### **November 10**

Provide me with a written description (1-2 paragraphs) of what position you will eventually argue related to your issue. This position is the one you anticipate arguing in your contribution paper--the last paper you will write in this course. This position is only

tentative, you may change contribution paper topics later, but I want you to at least have some well-formulated position at hand right now.

### **November 13**

- Draft of Synthesis Paper due (send to your peer, not me).
- [Peer review](#) of synthesis paper draft. Peer review must be completed and returned to peer by end of today. [Peer review sample](#).
- When you complete your peer review, return the draft to your peer.

### **November 15**

Synthesis Paper due.

### **November 17**

- Read Contribution paper [assignment description](#).

### **November 20**

Read sample Contribution [paper #1](#).

### **November 22-24**

**Thanksgiving Holiday--No Classes.**

### **November 27**

Read sample Contribution [paper #2](#).

### **November 29**

Drafts of Contribution Paper due (send to peer, not me).

First [peer review](#) of contribution paper draft. Peer review must be completed and returned to peer by end of today. Revise your paper between now and next assignment. When you complete your peer review, return the draft to your peer. [Peer review sample](#).

### **December 1**

Second review of Contribution drafts. Complete a review of newly revised paper. You needn't send this one to me.

### **December 4**

**Contribution Paper due**

### **December 6**

Critique our class. Write at least 300 words describing the strengths and weaknesses of our class. Make recommendations as to how this class can be improved.

Study for final examination.

### **December 8**

Study for final examination.

### **December 11-12**

Final examination to be taken via the Internet. Details will be provided the week before the examination.