Introductory Composition: Writing as Inquiry

English 10803.001
Fall 2009
MWF 8-8:50 a.m.
Room 218 Sid Richardson

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Office hours: MWF 9-10 [in the library], and by appt.

Overview and Outcomes

Welcome to English 10803. This course is a writing workshop focused on writing as a kind of inquiry and the critical thinking that occurs *while* you write—not *before* you write. You'll engage in processes of invention, critical reading, drafting, revision, and editing as they complete a range of writing tasks—from personal essays to argument essays—that include primary and secondary research. As we write, we will discuss everything from getting a first sentence on the page to revising a last draft. If we all do our part, together as a class we will have learned about ourselves as writers, readers, and thinkers and can talk about how this course can help us continue to write as we move through college and beyond.

This course, like all courses at TCU, has outcomes explaining what students should achieve in the course. The outcomes listed here are the goals we are working toward, and the course was created to best help you meet those ends. By the end of ENGL 10803, students should demonstrate:

- the ability to write in a range of genres, using appropriate rhetorical conventions, such as:
  - Write multiple assignments in several genres, expanding their repertoire beyond predictable forms (e.g. the 5-paragraph essay)
  - Create a text with a focus, thesis, or controlling idea, provide appropriate support for claims, use conventions of format and structure appropriate to the rhetorical situation, and recognize such in others' texts
- competency in reading, quoting and citing sources, as well as competency in balancing their own voices with secondary sources, such as:
  - Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize appropriate primary and secondary sources to inform and situate one's own claims.
  - Critically read texts for main ideas and claims, for use of genre conventions, for rhetorical strategy, and for the position of the author.
- the ability to employ flexible strategies for generating and revising their writing, such as
  - Write multiple revisions that might include substantive changes in ideas, structure, and supporting evidence, enabling students to experience writing as a recursive process.
  - Practice writing assignments as a series of tasks (invention, drafting, revising, editing)

Required Texts and Materials

- ✓ Ballenger, Bruce. *The Curious Writer, Brief Edition, 2nd Ed.* Pearson, 2007.
- ✓ Harris, Muriel. *The Writer's FAQs: A Pocket Handbook.* Pearson 2007.
- ✓ Supplemental Reading Packet (SLP) located in eCollege

- ✓ Common Reading booklet you received this summer and writing you brought to the session (CR)
- ✓ Regular access to eCollege and email (some readings will be on e-reserve through the TCU library or on your eCollege webliography)

Requirements

[Note: Except for in-class writings, everything you turn in should be typed.]

1) Major Assignments

We'll be producing four major assignments in the course totaling 20-30 pages of text. Each piece will go through subsequent drafts and revisions, and can be revised throughout the semester. **Every version must be accompanied by an author's note—always (see below).**

Essay 1: Personal Essay
Essay 2: Discovery Essay
Essay 3: Profile Essay with Visuals
Essay 4: Argument Essay

Before each assignment is due, you'll receive a detailed assignment sheet.

2) Daily Work/journaling

Daily work includes reading assignments, in-class writings, journal entries, informal out-of-class writings, pop quizzes, written feedback to peers, etc. This work, while informal, will be some of the most important work we do for the course, and while each piece is ungraded, they are a part of the grade within the portfolios (see below) in that not doing them adequately (or not doing them at all) can hamper your grade. The goal of daily writing is to generate ideas, thinking on the page, not about having a finished product.

Journaling: Journal entries (also done on eCollege) will allow you to reflect on your writing process, on your received peer review responses, and on my responses to your writing in a private setting. No one in the class will be able to read your journal but me. Journal entries will count towards your in-class writing grade.

3) Drafts/Workshops/Papers

For each major writing assignment, you will be asked to submit preliminary and revised drafts to be workshopped in small groups, by the whole class, and/or by me. Each draft should include an **author's note** explaining to readers 1) the state of your draft (first draft, third, etc.) and what you were trying to accomplish in this draft; 2) what you think is going well; and 3) what you are having trouble with or would like advice on. Failure to bring *full* drafts when due can affect your portfolio grades for each assignment and you may be asked to leave the classroom. During workshops, you are expected to read your peers' drafts carefully and provide a thoughtful, substantive response. During the semester, you will be asked to evaluate the performance of your peers as responders and these evaluations will contribute to my final evaluation of your work. Papers submitted for grades should be **formatted** in the MLA style. Papers should have 1" margins on all sides, typed in either Ariel or Times New Roman 12pt font, and MLA heading and page numeration [see Doc Sharing for handout].

4) Conference

Early in the semester, we'll meet one-on-one to discuss your goals and work for the course. When we meet, please come prepared—you will plan the agenda for our time together. Attendance is required for these conferences—if you need to reschedule, *contact me ahead of time*. Conferences will not be rescheduled due to lateness or an unexcused absence. Missing a conference constitutes missing two class periods since I will cancel two class periods for you to attend.

5) Discussion Questions

Discussion Questions: Throughout the semester, you'll be expected to post responses to discussion questions on eCollege. Discussion Questions are generally **due by midnight on Friday** evening (unless otherwise noted). Students are permitted to work on discussion questions during the first few minutes of class while I take role and attend to what I call "housekeeping duties" (making announcements, answering questions, etc.); otherwise, students are expected to complete the assignments out of class. I will make responses "editable"; so once class begins, students should save their work and direct their attention to me. When I "have the floor," so to speak, in class, there will be **no typing permitted. See "Technology" below.** The purpose of discussion questions is threefold: 1) to prepare you for class discussion; 2) to generate ideas for your own essays through analyzing readings; and 3) to practice writing brief analysis, frequently required in an academic atmosphere. ***Late discussion question posts will not be accepted.*** Frequently, students will be required to read and comment on classmates' posts; therefore, should you post late, students will lose the benefit of your individual point of view; moreover, discussion questions generally aid in the current writing project; completing a discussion question after the writing project due date negates the purpose of the assignment. **Your discussion questions will total 15% of your grade.**

6) Presentation/Final Evaluative Experience

At the end of the course, during our scheduled final exam time, you will give a five minute presentation, and part of your presentation grade will be based on asking questions of others' presentations. The presentation is meant to demonstrate the learning and thinking you've done in the course, and you'll receive more details as we move into the semester.

Course Policies and TCU Information/Resources

Attendance

Improvement in writing is a complex process that requires lots of practice and feedback from readers. Regular attendance is necessary to your success in this course. It is a Composition Program policy that in writing workshop courses, only official university absences are excused. Students representing TCU in a university-mandated activity that requires missing class should provide official documentation of schedules and turn in work *in advance.* **Three weeks of unexcused absences (nine classes) constitute grounds for failure of the course.** Absences due to illness, sleeping, and long weekends are NOT excused--they all count toward the three weeks' absences limit. Since illness is likely at some point during the semester, students are urged to save their unexcused absences for times when you are too sick to come to class. Students whose absences are due to circumstances beyond their control may appeal this policy by scheduling a meeting with the Director of Composition. Generally, the Director of Composition does not excuse additional absences without documentation. To do well in this course, you must come to class.

Evaluation

For each essay assignment of the semester, you'll turn in a first draft, and then after the second draft you'll turn in a portfolio that contains both drafts of the essay, informal work toward the essay (in-class writing, research notes and articles, etc.), and author's notes. You'll receive a "Pencil Grade" (or tentative grade) on the portfolio. You may choose to make the Pencil Grade a "Firm Grade" for the essay portfolio (meaning it will be the grade recorded for the semester), or you may choose to *substantively* revise the essay again. (Revising the essay doesn't guarantee the grade will be improved; we'll talk much more in-depth early on in the semester about making the decision whether or not to revise.) If you want to resubmit any essay portfolio, you must first submit a half to full-page revision plan a week

before the final due date for each essay portfolio (see class schedule for due dates). If you don't submit a revision plan by the deadline, your Pencil Grade will automatically become a Firm Grade for the course (Note: if you turn in a revision plan and then decide not to revise, there is not a penalty; your Pencil Grade will simply convert into a Firm Grade.). You'll receive a handout that explains in more detail how the portfolios are graded as the class gets underway. In preparation for constructing your portfolios, please keep *all* of the writing that you do for this class—rhetorical responses, drafts (including those with my comments and those of your peers), in-class writing, etc., together. SAVE ALL WRITING YOU DO FOR THIS COURSE!

It is important to remember that simply fulfilling the *minimum* requirements of the course warrants an average grade (as in C), not an A. Coming to class every day and doing assignments is not something that earns "extra credit" or an automatic A; it's expected by your being in the course. A higher grade will be based on the distinctive quality and development of your work, on your ability to guide a piece of writing through the various stages of revision, and on a willingness to explore new subjects, genres, and techniques. Below is a thumbnail breakdown of how I view letter grades; as we move into the semester you'll receive more detailed descriptions and we'll talk more about how I evaluate your writing:

A—excellent overall
B—good with some excellent aspects
C—adequate
D—mostly adequate with some unacceptable aspects
F—unacceptable overall

Grade Breakdown:

Portfolio 1 (Personal Essay):	20%
Portfolio 2 (Discovery Essay):	20%
Portfolio 3 (Profile Essay and Visuals):	20%
Portfolio 4 (Persuasive Essay):	20%
Discussion Questions (eCollege)	15%
Presentation	5%

Tardies: Please be on time for class. Students who are tardy (five minutes late or more) are a distraction to the whole class. ***Three tardies will equal an absence for the course.***

Late Work: Work will be due at the beginning of class and will be considered late thereafter. If you know you will be missing a class, you need to submit the assignment ahead of time. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade per day beyond the due date unless the instructor has agreed to late submission *in advance of the due date*. If you know you will be missing a class, you need to submit the assignment ahead of time or come meet with me well in advance of the due date for us to discuss the issue.

Technology:

Note: This course relies heavily on technology, so you will need to have reliable access to the internet, which is always available in several places (including the library) on campus. Problems with technology (i.e.: computer crash, printer malfunction, internet connectivity issues, etc.) are not acceptable excuses for submitting late work. Plan ahead to avoid last minute crises related to submittal of your assignments. Also, please note that some assignments related to this course will be submitted online through eCollege, and some of those deadlines will be due before the next day's class.

Our course takes place in a computer classroom, and while this allows us additional opportunities for our class, it also can bring distractions. Out of respect for a professional environment, please refrain from using any mobile technology—regardless of whether or not it is silenced—including but not limited to MP3 players, cell phones, text messaging, etc. Each student may have a computer in our classroom, but please limit your computer activities during class time to those related to this course. Other usage will negatively impact your grade and may serve as dismissal from the class for the day. Also, please turn mobile phones to silent mode during class. In cases where a student is experiencing special circumstances, professionalism dictates that he/she inform the instructor (me) in advance.

Classroom Atmosphere: I envision our classroom as a place where all of us can share our ideas, thoughts, and questions without fear of being made fun of or embarrassed. Our classroom interaction will be based on respect for all of the writers and readers we encounter this semester. The university classroom should be considered a professional milieu. Therefore, please conduct yourselves as you would in a professional and/or business setting. While we may discuss issues that generate strong emotion, please engage in debate—not name-calling, denigration, or disparagement. Moreover, class discussions that degenerate into venues for opinion not backed by research are generally non-productive and are discouraged.

Office Hours: During the office hours posted above, I will be available to talk with you about any questions, comments, or concerns you have about the course. Please stop by and see me during these hours—that time is yours. If the hours don't work for you, feel free to make an appointment with me.

eCollege Class Website: We have a course website we'll use for various activities throughout the course: in-class writings; discussion threads (when applicable); sharing resources on the webliography; accessing handouts for the course; and sometimes submitting course assignments to the course dropbox. However: most major assignments (rhetorical responses, essay drafts, etc.), I'll be collecting via hard copy as well as sometimes having you also submit the assignment to eCollege.

New Media Writing Studio
The New Media Writing Studio (NMWS) is available to assist students with audio, video, multimedia, and webdesign projects. Located in Rickel 38 (the basement of the Recreation Center's academic wing), the Studio serves as an open lab for use by students during posted hours. The Studio has both pc and Mac computers outfitted with Adobe CS3, which includes Adobe Acrobat, Dreamweaver, Photoshop, Flash, and InDesign. A variety of equipment is available for checkout to students whose teachers have contacted the Studio in advance. For more information and a schedule of open hours, see www.newmedia.tcu.edu.

The Writing Center: Please refer the TCU Undergraduate Studies Catalog, http://www.catalog.tcu.edu/, quoted here: The Center for Writing offers assistance with writing projects and assignments to all TCU students. Staffed by professional writing instructors and peer consultants, the Center for Writing provides students with one-on-one tutorials free of charge. Conferences usually focus on a particular project or assignment, but may also include general writing instruction. The 10 PCs in the center's computer lab are available for use by any TCU student during normal office hours. Located in Suite 244 of the Rickel Academic Wing of the University Recreation Center, the Center for Writing is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Students may make appointments by accessing an online scheduling service through the center's Web site (www.wrt.tcu.edu) or by calling 817.257.7221. Students may also use the Center for Writing's annex at the library Monday through Friday 2-5 p.m. and Sunday through Thursday 6-9 p.m. Those who wish to submit a paper online may do so via the center's

Web site. A consultant will read the paper and offer feedback within 48 hours.

Policies and Procedures for Students with Disabilities: Please refer to the TCU Undergraduate Studies Catalog, **http://www.catalog.tcu.edu/undergraduate/,** quoted here:

Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 11. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-7486.

Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations and accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations. *Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator*. Guidelines for documentation may be found at http://www.acs.tcu.edu/DISABILITY.HTM. Students with emergency medical information or needing special arrangements in case a building must be evacuated should discuss this information with their instructor/professor as soon as possible.

Academic Conduct Policy Refer to the *TCU Undergraduate Studies Catalog* (quoted below) http://www.catalog.tcu.edu/undergraduate/

An academic community requires the highest standards of honor and integrity in all of its participants if it is to fulfill its missions. In such a community faculty, students, and staff are expected to maintain high standards of academic conduct. The purpose of this policy is to make all aware of these expectations. Additionally, the policy outlines some, but not all, of the situations which can arise that violate these standards. Further, the policy sets forth a set of procedures, characterized by a "sense of fair play," which will be used when these standards are violated. In this spirit, definitions of academic misconduct are listed below. These are not meant to be exhaustive.

Academic misconduct.

Any act that violates the spirit of the academic conduct policy is considered academic misconduct. Specific examples include, but are not limited to:

A. Cheating. Includes, but is not limited to:

1. Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings.
2. Using in any academic exercise or academic setting, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test.
3. Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during an academic exercise without the permission of the person in charge of the exercise.
4. Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release.
5. Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in a manner that leads to misrepresentation of either or both students work.

B. Plagiarism. The appropriation, theft, purchase, or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit.

Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving credit therefore.
C. Collusion. The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.
D. Abuse of resource materials. Mutilating, destroying, concealing, or stealing such materials.
E. Computer misuse. Unauthorized or illegal use of computer software or hardware through the TCU Computer Center or through any programs, terminals, or freestanding computers owned, leased, or operated by TCU or any of its academic units for the purpose of affecting the academic standing of a student.
F. Fabrication and falsification. Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves altering information for use in any academic exercise. Fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.
G. Multiple submission. The submission by the same individual of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once in the same or another class without authorization.
H. Complicity in academic misconduct. Helping another to commit an act of academic misconduct.
I. Bearing false witness. Knowingly and falsely accusing another student of academic misconduct.
Sanctions. Sanctions will be imposed for acts of academic misconduct. Students may obtain a complete copy of the Academic Conduct Policy in the offices of all the academic deans, the Dean of Campus Life, the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, and the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs.

Tentative Schedule

(If necessary, this is subject to change—hence the word "tentative.")

Week 1 : August

M 8/24	Introduction to the course and syllabus
W 8/26	Chapter 1, *The Curious Writer* (sans exercises) (Have read before class.) (The Writing Process) **Introductory Letter Due in Journal**
F 8/28	Chapter 2, *The Curious Writer,* 38-51 (sans exercises) (The Reading Process) **Short Bio due in eCollege** **Discussion Question due by midnight**

Week 2: August/September

M 8/31	Chapter 4, 91-98; Oomen, Anne-Marie, "The Barn." Sedaris, "Our Perfect Summer" (click link or on eCollege Webliography) Assign and Discuss Essay 1
W 9/2	Nye, Naomi Shihab. "Long Overdue." Cofer, Judith Ortiz "One More Lesson." Elective reading—Student sample essay: Ward, "Wannabe," Reading Packet Elective reading—Student sample essay: Putney, "Khaki Shorts and Minivans," Reading Packet
F 9/4	Chapter 15 (637-640; 642-46)

Discussion Question due by midnight

Week 3: (Labor Day Holiday, Sept. 7, Conferences)	
M 9/7	*No Class—Labor Day Holiday*
W 9/9	**First draft of Essay 1 due for peer response. Bring 4 copies (for small group and for me)**
F 9/11	*No Class—Conferences* **Discussion Question due by midnight**

Week 4: (Conferences)	
M 9/14	*No Class—Conferences*
W 9/16	**Revised draft of Essay 1 due for peer response. Bring copies.**
F 9/18	**Portfolio 1 Due in class and an electronic copy of essay uploaded in eCollege Dropbox.** **To be decided later—We'll discuss going paperless and submitting portfolios online.** **Journal writing about peer responses and the writing process** **Discussion Question due by midnight** Assign and Discuss Essay 2

Week 5:	
M 9/21	Chapter 11 (429-433; 452; 456-457) Holmquist, "An Experience in Acronyms," in eCollege Doc Sharing Garrett-Brown, "Why Do People Tan?" pg 459 Elective reading—Student sample essay: Gangi, "Tattoo Crazy," Reading Packet Elective reading—Student sample essay: Parker, "We Proudly Brew Starbucks Coffee," Reading Packet
W 9/23	Chapter 12 (491-518) Possible Library tutorial/visit.
F 9/25	Chapter 11 (462-465); Chapter 13 (531-40; 550-56) **Discussion Question due by midnight** Discussion: Research, Using and Citing Sources Dual entry source forms on eCollege

Week 6: September/October	
M 9/28	**Three sources with dual entries due.** In-class work on drafting
W 9/30	**First draft of Essay 2 (using three sources) due for peer response. Bring 4 copies.**
F 10/2	Revision Work—Essay 2 **Discussion Question due by midnight**

Week 7:

M 10/5 Editing Work

W 10/7 **Revision of Essay 2 due (five sources) for peer response. Bring 4 copies.**

F 10/9 **Portfolio 2 Due in class and an electronic copy of essay uploaded in eCollege Dropbox.**
Journal writing on peer responses and the writing process
Discussion Question due by midnight
Midterm Reflection Letter (in-class)
Assign and Discuss Essay 3

Week 8 : (Fall Break: Oct. 12-13)

M 10/12 *No Class-Fall Break!*

W 10/14 Chapter 2 (54-67); Chapter 5 (133-37); Chapter 12 (521-24)
Discussion of Visuals
Tech Time: visuals with text
(Last Day to Drop Course)

F 10/16 Hall, "Home Girl," (click link or eCollege webliography)
Orlean, "The American Male at Age 10" on eCollege Webliography
Discussion Question due by midnight

Week 9: (National Day of Writing)

M 10/19 Mnookin, "The Man in the Irony Mask" (click link or eCollege webliography)
Discussion of drafting Essay 3
Bring notes from primary research

T 10/20 National Day of Writing!

W 10/21 Work on drafting on your own—No class

F 10/23 Out of class work—No class

Week 10:

M 10/26 **First draft of Essay 3 due for peer response. Bring copies.**
Discussion Question due by midnight

W 10/28 Revision Activity

F 10/30 **Revision of Essay 3 due for peer response. Bring copies.**
Discussion Question due by midnight

Week 11: November

M 11/2 Chapter 8 (267-279; 311-312)
Journal writing about peer responses and the writing process

Portfolio 3 due in class and an electronic copy of essay uploaded in eCollege Dropbox.
Assign Essay 4
Brainstorm Essay 4

W 11/4 Chapter 8 (267-77)
Common Readings: p. 8-13 ("Thunder," Levy, visuals, Doonesbury) (see eCollege)

F 11/6 Drenner, "Putting a Price on Nature" (Course Readings on eCollege)
Informal Research Reports due
Discussion Question due by midnight

Week 12: (Whole Class Workshop)

M 11/9 Discussion of drafting Essay 4
Prepare for whole class workshop

W 11/11 Whole class workshop of Essay 4 (4 drafts).

F 11/13 Whole class workshop of Essay 4 (4 drafts).
Discussion Question due by midnight

Week 13: (Whole Class Workshop)

M 11/16 Whole class workshop of Essay 4 (4 drafts).

W 11/18 Whole class workshop of Essay 4 (4 drafts).

F 11/20 **Final Date to Submit Revision Plans for Essays 1 and 2**
Whole class workshop of Essay 4 (4 drafts).
Journal writing about peer responses and the writing process
Discussion Question due by midnight

Week 14: (Thanksgiving Break, November 25-29)

M 11/23 **Revised Draft of Essay 4 due for peer response. Bring copies**
Portfolio 4 Due Tuesday by 2 p.m. on my desk in Reed, room 312 and an electronic copy of essay uploaded in eCollege Dropbox.
Final's Assignment Assigned and Discussed

W 11/25 *No School—Thanksgiving Break*

F 11/27 *No School—Thanksgiving Break*
***No* Discussion Question this week**

Week 15: December

M 11/30 **Final Date to Submit Revision Plans for Essay 3**
Revision Activities
(Essay 4's Revision Plan will be due the class period after you receive it back)

W 12/2 **Last Date to Re-submit Portfolios for Essay 1, if applicable**

Revision Activities
Work on Final Assignment

F 12/4 **Last Date to Re-submit Portfolios for Essay 2, if applicable**
Discussion Question due by midnight
Work on Final Assignment

Week 16: (Last Week!)

M 12/7 Editing Activity
Revision Workshop
Course Evaluations

W 12/9 **Last Date to Re-submit Portfolios for Essays 3-4, if applicable**
Prepare for Presentation
Discussion Question due by midnight.

Finals Week

F 12/18 (8-10:30) Final: Presentation

Note: Finals are on Friday the 18th, and frequently students will schedule flights home too early. Please DO NOT ask me if you present your final presentation early. As an adult college student, you must weigh the need to fly home early versus the need to attend class and complete the final project/presentation.