

WRI 100 07 2: College Writing
Fall 2008

“HOW THE WORD GETS OUT”

TR 2:30 – 3:45 p.m.

Cedar Crest College

BHA 4

Professor Mary H. Snyder

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Course Description: The goal of WRI 100: College Writing is to understand and produce thoughtful writing, prose that expresses and develops, explores and sustains ideas and their justifications. We'll pay particular attention to the style of writing common to the academic community: writing that presents and develops an insightful claim about the world and supports that claim with sound reasoning and good evidence. As such, this course will ask you to read, learn, and think about cultural issues relevant to us today.

Cedar Crest College emphasizes a process approach to writing, a process by which you read and learn about a subject, develop your ideas about it through prewriting and drafting, and refine those ideas and language by revising earlier drafts. Intensive practice will be given in writing clear, logical, and persuasive prose that stresses focus, content, organization, style, and conventions in argument.

WRI 100: College Writing is designed to meet the following educational outcomes:

- Students will demonstrate the ability to engage in critical analysis.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and effectively through the written word.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to discriminate among sources of information and their appropriate uses.

In order to attain these outcomes, WRI 100 has the following course objectives:

- Thinking critically requires you to recognize and analyze patterns of argument. To analyze arguments, you will locate and evaluate writers' claims, the supports for these claims, and their counterarguments. You will also assess the credentials and authority of the writer. You will apply these skills of analysis to various sources of information, in both print and electronic forms, in order to evaluate the legitimacy and applicability of this information.
- In order to learn to communicate effectively in writing, you will be asked both to examine and to practice the uses and effects of various types of writing, noticing how different contexts for writing call for changes in tone, syntax, rhetorical mode, and genre. Feedback from your teacher and classmates will guide you as you write and revise your work.

WRI 100 meets its educational outcomes through the following forms of assessment:

- Students will demonstrate the ability to engage in critical analysis through class discussion of assigned reading and through informal and formal written assignments.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and effectively in writing in the prewriting, drafting, and revising of their papers for the course.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to practice information literacy through assigned research tasks.

Honor Philosophy: The Cedar Crest Honor Philosophy states that students shall uphold community standards for academic and social behavior to preserve a learning environment dedicated to personal and academic excellence. It is based upon the principle that, as a self-governing body, students have the ability to create an atmosphere of trust and support. Within this environment, individuals are empowered to make their own decisions, develop personal regard for the system under which they live, and achieve a sense of integrity and judgment that will guide them through life.

Classroom Protocol: Appropriate classroom behavior is implicit in the Cedar Crest Honor Philosophy. Such behavior is defined and guided by complete protection for the rights of all students and faculty to a courteous, respectful classroom environment. That environment is free from distractions such as late arrivals, early departures, inappropriate conversations, and any other behaviors that might disrupt instruction or compromise students' access to their Cedar Crest College education.

A special note is appropriate here regarding the tone of our classroom discussions. An important strategy for producing more thoughtful writing is to approach ideas with an attitude of skepticism, whether those ideas come from readings, professors, or classmates. In order to better understand a way of fashioning the world, we must probe the basis for that point of view and examine what reasons and evidence may or may not support it. This is especially critical when it comes to our most closely held beliefs, beliefs that we might feel uncomfortable with placing them under too much scrutiny. As we engage in this process of inquiry, please remember that, while we should question and challenge each other's opinions, a sign of intellectual maturity is that we do so respectfully.

As we live in an age of increasing technological diversion—the call of cell phones, the click of mice, ringing in our ear—it becomes easy to forget the good manners of paying attention to those immediately around us. Please remember to shut cell phones off and refrain from checking your email or any wayward browsing of the Internet during class. ***Let me reiterate this: no cell phone, laptop, or Internet use – or any technological item use for that matter – during class, or I will ask you to leave.***

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's ideas or words and passing them off as your own without giving credit to the original source. Since a key goal of a college education is to develop and express your own ideas, plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offense.

It is dishonest to present oral or written work that is not entirely the student's own, except as may be approved by the instructor. Students must follow the requirements of the instructor regarding when and how much collaboration with other students is permitted. Any language taken from another source, whether individual words or entire paragraphs, must be placed in quotation marks and attributed to the source, following the citation format specified. Paraphrased material from an outside source must also be attributed. In addition, if the student is indebted to another source for a specific perspective or a line of argument—regardless of whether the student has directly quoted the source or not—that debt must be acknowledged.

In this class, the penalty for plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty is a grade of F either on the individual assignment or for the entire course, to be determined by the instructor based upon the severity of the offense.

For an extended description of what constitutes plagiarism, please consult *Writing at Cedar Crest College: A Student's Guide*.

Attendance: Simply put, you are expected to attend and participate in each class meeting. Improving your college writing skills requires sustained practice in class-to-class discussions and exercises, and missing class means that you're missing activities that cannot easily be made up. There is no distinction between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. If you miss a class, you remain responsible for the material covered. Missing more than 1/4 of the class meetings (8 classes in a semester) will result in a final grade of F.

Class Cancellation: If Cedar Crest's campus is open, you should expect our class meetings to be held. If troublesome weather threatens to close the campus and thus cancel class, however, you should refer to Cedar Crest's Inclement Weather Hotline at 610-606-4629 for notification. If I cancel class independently of the campus closing, due to weather or for other reasons, I will send a class-wide email to your Cedar Crest account.

College Policy Regarding Learning Disabilities: Students with documented disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss these needs with their professors during the first two weeks of class. Students with disabilities who wish to request accommodations should contact the Learning Center.

My Policy Regarding Late Assignments: I DO NOT accept late assignments. If you experience extenuating circumstances that prevent you from completing an assignment on time, you will need to have documentation of that circumstance and I reserve the right to make my decision. If it is an extenuating circumstance, you have 24 hours past the due date to hand in the assignment, both through email and a hard copy. Thus, no late assignments will be accepted unless proper documentation of an extenuating circumstance is provided and approved by me, and then only by getting the late assignment to me, both through email and hard copy, within 24 hours of the due date. A penalty for lateness will apply.

My Policy Regarding Email: I will not accept writing assignments over email, especially due to the new version of Microsoft. Also, I will only respond to emails that I deem necessary to do so. I recommend that you bring any concerns or questions to me before/after class or during my office hours.

Course Content and Purpose

I have titled this course, “How the Word Gets Out,” because we’ll be exploring and examining “how the word gets out,” and we’ll also be attempting different means to get our own words out. We’ll be focusing on “how the word gets out” through literature, film, and other forms in popular culture. Also, we’ll be navigating ideas and developing our thoughts through intellectual discussion but primarily through writing. I use this subject for the course to provide a focal point for our writing, discussion, and thoughts.

The subject area focus of this College Writing course will involve the reading and discussion of ideas inspired by literature and film, a basic study of literature and film, and always meticulous, exploratory thought, through writing especially, of various topics. That is, you will begin to sharpen your critical thinking skills necessary for success in any academic discipline.

Texts

Cunningham, Michael. *The Hours*. New York: Picador USA, 1998.

Hacker, Diane. *The Bedford Handbook*, 7th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2006.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*. 1818. Ed. J. Paul Hunter. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1996.

Handouts.

Grading

It is important to remember that writing is a process, not merely a product. We will be focusing on various stages of writing, not only the final piece.

Your work will be evaluated as follows:

- Informal writing – 200 points, or 20% of final grade
- Papers (formal writing assignments) – 500 points, or 50% of final grade
 - #1 – 150 points
 - #2 – 200 points
 - #3 – 150 points
- Participation / Attitude – 200 points, or 20% of final grade
- Presentations – 100 points, or 10% of final grade
- Total = 1000 pts**

Informal Writing Assignments

Each informal writing assignment will be different, and explained in class. Some of these assignments are listed on the schedule, while others I might assign depending on the needs of the class. Sometimes the assignment will be done in class, and at other times, it will be an assignment expected to be done out of class. Informal assignments are not worth as many points per assignment as the formal assignments (papers) so that they are designed to allow for writing practice that ideally comes with less pressure and more freedom.

Papers

The first two formal assignments will be based on the following components leading up to a final draft that will develop from notes, reading, film-viewing, class discussion, group work, revisions, and class workshops:

1. A first draft
2. Peer review (of a partner or group member's paper)
3. A neat and correctly formatted final draft
4. A self-evaluation of the final draft of your paper

These items must be included, and paper-clipped together or put in a folder. If these specifications are not satisfied, I will not accept your assignment. Your name must be on each piece of the assignment, and each piece must be labeled (e.g., first draft should be labeled as such, etc.). I reserve the right to require additional items that I feel necessary or helpful to the paper assignment, and I will inform you of any such addition when you receive the assignment.

Participation / Attitude

You will be required to participate in class, and be respectful and open-minded with others, including myself. I will be calling on students during discussions, so be prepared. You will receive a weekly class participation grade out of 15 points that will be out of 200 total points for the semester, or as is listed above, 20% of your grade. This grade will also reflect attendance since it reflects your contribution to the intellectual environment of the class, which requires you be here to contribute.

Presentation

A presentation will be expected to accompany your work on Paper #2. More information will be provided when the assignment for Paper #2 is handed out and discussed. Another presentation will be included in the class, to be announced.

Assignment Schedule

Have assignments ready for specified day. I reserve the right to change the schedule should I feel it necessary for any reason, including both additions and/or subtractions. Also, further details will be given in class for all assignments listed; this is a general guide.

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| T 8/26: | Introductions, syllabus |
| Th 8/28: | Writing sample essay
"Fun" |
| T 9/2: | "Whatever It Takes" essay
Response questions due
Discussion |
| Th 9/4: | Use of "I" and personal experience in writing (handout)
Personal experience piece assignment |

- T 9/9: Personal experience piece due
Million Dollar Baby – film
- Th 9/11: Finish film
- T 9/16: “Million Dollar Baby”
“Frozen Water”
Film/readings questions due
- Th 9/18: “A Member of the Fancy”
Assignment for Paper #1 – discuss – prewriting
- T 9/23: Full outline
- Th 9/25: First draft of Paper #1 due
Peer review
- T 9/30: Final draft of Paper #1 due
Discussion of next “project”
- Th 10/2: “The Yellow Wall-Paper” – Charlotte Perkins Gilman
“Why I Wrote ‘The Yellow Wall-Paper’” – Gilman
Virginia Woolf documentary
- T 10/7: Excerpt from *Mrs. Dalloway*
Stream of consciousness writing style
- Th 10/9: Excerpts from *Fascinating Womanhood*, *The Feminine Mystique* – discuss
Clips from *Mona Lisa Smile*
- T 10/14: Fall Break
- Th 10/16: *The Hours* – pp. 3-112
Quiz
- T 10/21: *The Hours* – pp. 112-226
Assignment for Paper #2 – discuss, prewriting
- Th 10/23: MLA Exercise – library (for Paper #2)
- T 10/28: First draft of Paper #2 due
Peer review
- Th 10/30: Final draft of Paper #2 due/presentations

- T 11/4: *The Hours* film
- Th 11/6: *The Hours* film
Film review assignment – compare/contrast
- T 11/11: Film assignment due
Frankenstein, Preface, Introduction, Volume I
- Th 11/13: *Frankenstein*, Volume II
Quiz
- T 11/18: *Frankenstein*, Volume III
Discussion
- Th 11/20: *Frankenstein*, 1931 film
- T 11/25: Film questions due – discuss
- Th 11/27: Thanksgiving
- T 12/2: Film adaptation essay – response – discuss
- Th 12/4: Research exercise (for Paper #3)
Paper #3 – In-class essay

Grades for this course will be issued according to the following percentages:

94-100%	A
90-93.99%	A-
87-89.99%	B+
84-86.99%	B
80-83.99%	B-
77-79.99%	C+
74-76.99%	C
70-73.99%	C-
67-69.99%	D+
64-66.99%	D
60-63.99%	D-
0-59.99%	F

Please note: A D- cannot be given as a final grade according to university policy. If your final quantitative grade falls in the D- range, I will make a decision as to your letter grade based on my judgment of your work and effort in the class.