

ANG 1104: English Composition 4
Day and Time: Friday, 08h30-11h30
Venue: B-4245, Pavillon Jean-Brillant

Hiver 2012

Instructor: Yiu-Tsan Ng
Office: C-8134, Pavillon Lionel-Groulx
Office hours: Friday 12h00-13h30 or by appointment
Email: yiou-tsan.ng@umontreal.ca

“Sure, it’s hard to get started;
remember learning to use

knife and fork? Dig in:
You’ll never reach the bottom.”
—Rita Dove, “The First Book”

Course Description

Writing is a process of creative organization and a synthesis of thoughts into a coherent thesis. The primary objective of this course is to improve the students’ composition and to equip the students with writing skills and methods of critical thinking. The students will learn to develop their own original thoughts and to articulate them through their engagement in different tasks and exercises.

The course will be divided into two parts with two thematic foci. The first half before reading week will address the questions: What is literature? How does it work? Why do we study it? We will study formal and rhetorical aspects of literature, in order to develop skills in analyzing and reading literature. The remaining half of the course is designed with a particular focus on the topic of the city in literature.

Texts

Reading materials are made available via StudiUM.

Textbook (Optional): Sylvan Barnet, William Burto, and William E. Cain (ed.). Literature for Composition (9th edition).

Recommended: An English-English Dictionary; Joseph Gibaldi. The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.

Evaluation

Participation (attendance and class discussion): 15%

3 in-class writing assignments: 30% (10% each)

February 3

February 24

March 2

The three in-class assignments are designed for students to write playfully and creatively, and to have fun. These assignments will mainly be graded on language and style.

First essay (5-7 pages): 30%

Workshop date: February 17

Due date: February 29 (Wednesday)

Due date (revised version): April 13

Essays will be evaluated on the quality of argument, language, and organization.

Upon receiving the feedbacks and tentative grades on their first papers, the students may choose to submit a revised and expanded version by the end of the semester.

Second essay (5-7 pages): 25%

Workshop date: April 13

Due date: April 20

The second paper expects students to produce a similar critical essay, on a different topic or in response to a different question. It weighs slightly less than the first one, as the students will have less time to revise it. Nevertheless, what they learn from the experiences of drafting and revising the first paper will help them develop the second one.

Objectives

- (i) The primary objective is to equip the students with the skills to write effectively in English. During the course, the students will produce 2 essays that will meet the academic expectation in undergraduate level.
- (ii) The three mini-workshops will help students familiarize with the writing features and techniques of a proper academic paper in literary studies, including the formats of documenting secondary resources.
- (iii) The course will provide the students with the critical apparatus for reading literature. The students will learn the main features of different literary devices and strategies. They will appreciate from this course the importance of studying, reading, and writing literature.
- (iv) A parallel objective is to encourage the students to develop their own creative responses (by means of the 3 in-class assignments) to the literary texts discussed in class and/or the urban experiences outside the classroom.
- (v) The two writing workshops will allow the students to receive peer comments on their drafts of critical papers, to practice proofreading and rewriting skills, and to revise in-class assignments with peers.
- (vi) Progress, rather than correctness, is emphasized in this course. The students are given chance to revise their works in progress. They will be expected to learn, rather than have their marks deducted, from mistakes.

Important notes

Plagiarism: Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the University's regulations concerning plagiarism. Any plagiarized assignment will be graded F. More serious consequences may follow (I am sure you don't want to end up in any of them). You should always contact me in case you have any question regarding plagiarism.

Please visit these sites for more details:

<http://www.fas.umontreal.ca/etudes/plagiat/>

<http://www.faecum.qc.ca/plagiat>

Communication: I welcome any questions relating to the course. I will be available in office on Friday after class (12h00-13h30) or by appointment. If you send me an email, I will normally respond to it within 24 hours, excluding weekends and public holidays.

Classroom conduct: In order to maintain a healthy learning environment, I anticipate that you switch your mobile phones to silent mode. Please bring a hardcopy of the texts for discussion in each week. We are going to have fun and enjoy the process of drafting and of reading literature!

Workshops: During the two workshops, you will work in pairs or in groups. You need to bring two copies of the following materials: an outline of your essay and a draft of your paper including an introductory paragraph of the essay. It is advised that you bring also the texts, which you discuss in your paper.

Policy on late assignments (oops!): I understand that sometimes assignments do get piled up and all the deadlines strangely clash each other at the same time. Occasionally, unexpected circumstances do arise, too. If you feel you might not be able to submit an assignment on time, please discuss with me in advance, an extension could be negotiated. If you cannot turn in an assignment on time because of any health issue, you have to provide a medical certificate at the time you submit the paper.

Otherwise, a sub-grade will be deducted per day for any late paper.

Even though I encourage you to revise and resubmit the first paper by the end of the semester, you will be penalized if you fail to submit a complete version by the first due date (February 29).

Tentative Schedule

January 6 Introduction

January 13 Reading Poetry

Anonymous "Sir Patrick Spens"

Langston Hughes "Cross"

Edwin Arlington Robinson "Richard Cory"

Edmund Spenser "Sonnet 64"

Derek Walcott "A Far Cry from Africa"

William Carlos Williams "This is just to say"

Mini-workshop 1: Documentation

January 20 Reading Drama: Tragedy

Tennessee Williams *A Streetcar Named Desire*

Mini-workshop 2: Organization

January 27 Reading Fiction

Margaret Atwood "Giving Birth"

Gore Vidal "A Moment of Green Laurel" and "Pages from an Abandoned Journal"

Suggestion of essay topics

February 3 Why study literature?

Rita Dove " 'A Handful of Inwardness': the World in the Poet"

Terry Eagleton "Introduction: What is Literature?"

In-class writing assignment 1

February 10 Writing the City: essays

Gail Scott "My Montréal"

Sherry Simon "Crossing Town: Montreal in Translation"

Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe "Afropolis: From Johannesburg"

Mini-workshop 3: Thesis statement, outline, and the first paragraph

February 17 Writing workshop I

*Please bring two copies of the outline and the first draft of your paper

February 24 The Flâneur / Flâneuse

Richard Steele "Twenty-four hours in London"

Edgar Allan Poe "A Man in the Crowd"

In-class writing assignment 2

First essay due by noon, February 29 (Wednesday)

March 2 Poetic Inquiry: City as a Shelter?

William Blake Selected poems from *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*

Rita Dove Selected poems from *On a Bus with Rosa Parks*

In-class writing assignment 3

March 9 No Class (Reading Week)

March 16 Urban Narratives: Innocence and Experience

Grace Paley "Samuel"

James Joyce "The Sisters," "An Encounter," and "Araby"

Mordecai Richler "The Summer my Grandmother was Supposed to Die"

First essay returned

March 23 Strange Encounter

Brent Staples "Black Men and Public Space"

Amiri Baraka/LeRoi Jones *Dutchman*

Suggestion of essay topics

March 30 No Class

April 6 No Class (Good Friday)

April 13 Writing Workshop II

*Please bring two copies of the outline and the first draft of your paper

Revised first essay due (optional)

April 20 Second essay due

Note: The schedule is subject to change, depending on the pace of the class and at the discretion of the instructor.