

# WRTG 2010.066 (Tentative Draft Syllabus)

## Intermediate Writing

### Louis Haffey-Sherman, MA

### Fall 2010

Days/Times: TR 10.45-12.05, BEH S 109  
Office Hours: By Appointment  
Office Location: 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor LNCO, Across from UWP  
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#### Overview

2010 focuses on developing college-level writing skills, but it is also a course on rhetoric—a tradition of using language for persuasive purposes. In addition to building rhetorical strategies for writing and argument, this course will develop the critical skills necessary to analyze rhetoric in culture and media.

#### Goals

- Master basic rhetorical concepts and use them in thesis-driven academic writing.
- Learn how to integrate research into your writing to support effective arguments.
- Employ grammatical and stylistic conventions consciously.
- Build critical thinking skills in order to analyze texts and develop ideas.
- Engage key texts from American rhetorical traditions.

#### Required Texts

- *Writing Arguments*, Brief 8th Edition, 2010. Ramage, Bean, and Johnson.  
ISBN: 0205665764
- *Argument in America: Essential Issues, Essential Texts*, 2004. Selzer.  
ISBN: 0321172787

#### Assignments and Course Weight

##### Participation (20%)

- Attendance and Class Participation: 50 points (5%)
- Weekly Thesis Statements on Readings (Generally Due Thursdays): 10 points each for 150 points (15%)

##### Brief Essays (30%)

- Review Argument, 1.5-2 pages (Sept. 10): 100 points (10%)
- Definitional Argument, 1.5-2 pages (Oct. 21): 100 points (10%)
- Causal Argument, 1.5-2 pages (Nov. 12): 100 points (10%)

**Major Essays and Projects (50%)**

- Rhetorical Analysis and Critique, 4-5 pages (Oct. 1): 200 points (20%)
- Evaluation and Proposal Argument, 7-8 pages (Dec. 14): 300 points (30%)
- Electronic Portfolio of Work (Dec. 16): Pass/Fail

**Optional Extra Credit**

- Instructor-Approved Project (Nov. 24): 50 points possible

**Policies, Etc.****Appointments and Office Hours**

- I will be available to meet with you at various times throughout the week, but I ask that you schedule appointments and, if necessary, cancel by email in advance. Be proactive about scheduling meetings if you need them. You should never feel overwhelmed by an assignment because a quick appointment should be able to clarify any problems and help direct you.

**Accommodations**

- The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this course, please notify the Center for Disability Services (CDS), 162 Olpin Union (801.581.5020), and please notify me as well. CDS will work with both of us to make arrangements to accommodate your needs.
- Some of the readings, lectures, discussions, or presentations in this course include material that may conflict with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience. For more information, please consult the University of Utah's Accommodations Policy, which appears at: <http://www.admin.utah.edu/facdev/pdf/accommodations-policy-background.pdf>

**Readings**

- All reading assignments should be completed by the date they appear on the schedule. Some are longer and more difficult than others (though generally less than 20 pages); give yourself plenty of time. The instructional text and primary readings are the foundation for most, if not all, of the course work. Class discussion and weekly thesis statements will depend on your thoughtful reading, and writing assignments could be confusing if you do not keep up.

**Late work**

- Weekly thesis statements on the primary readings, which will facilitate class discussion, will not be accepted after the day they are due, as a rule. Your thesis of a few sentences must be presented in class, which will allow you to explain or defend it, if necessary. *I will allow three of your weekly thesis statements to be turned in up to a week late*, in case of sickness or other unavoidable conflicts. Since there will be no opportunity for class discussion of your thesis, *you will need to provide me with an additional paragraph to explain your point*. Don't use the allowance unless you have to.

- I will accept late essays during the semester, but I will not guarantee feedback other than a final grade. In addition, *if an essay is more than two weeks late, you will be penalized a full letter grade.*
- If you cannot turn in an assignment on time, communicate with me so I can help you make a plan to complete the work.

### Rewrites

- If you are not satisfied with a grade on an essay, you may revise the paper (excluding the final Evaluation and Proposal Argument). The two attempts will be averaged for the final grade on the assignment. *In order to rewrite an essay, the original must be turned in on time. The revision is due two weeks after you receive the first grade.*

### Plagiarism

- At all times in this course, you should document and be prepared to prove where you find information that you use. Willfully copying another's work and presenting it as if it were your own constitutes plagiarism. If you fail to act responsibly, you will most likely receive a failing grade (E) for the assignment in question, and you will possibly fail the course. If you have questions about how to avoid specific instances of plagiarism, feel free to ask me. If you have questions about the U's plagiarism policy, please refer to sections II and V of the Student Code.

### Grammar and Deductions

- To be successful in Intermediate Writing, you need to be proficient in conventional English usage and grammar. In the course, grammar instruction will be limited and focus on sophisticated skills and techniques. At this level, targeted individual research is the best way to improve your facility with the written language. Come to me for resources, clarification and explanation.
- *I will use five particular categories to deduct for grammar misuse in your essays:*
  - Incorrect use of possessives.
  - Lack of agreement between subject and verb, noun and modifier, or pronoun and antecedent.
  - Comma splices and run-on sentences.
  - Fragments and incomplete sentences (with one free).
  - "This" or "that" used as a demonstrative pronoun (with one free).
- *For every three mistakes on brief essays and six mistakes on major essays, defined by the five categories (above), your grade will be reduced by one designation (for example, from B+ to B).*
- I will mark other grammatical mistakes as well, and I will expect you to do what is necessary to understand the problem and avoid it in future writing.
  - I reserve the right to require you to revise use of the passive voice, when used inappropriately. The agent should always be clear in your writing.

### Extra Credit

- Students who write an essay without any errors from the five categories, and with no more than one error or typo for every two pages, will receive a grade increase of one designation.
- During the course of the semester, you will have the opportunity to prepare an "open" argument (in consultation with me) for up to 50 points extra credit.

## Tentative Reading and Assignment Schedule

| Week          | Tuesday  | Thursday  | Writing   |
|---------------|--|---|---|
| 8/24 & 8/26   | <i>Writing Arguments</i> (WA)<br>Chaps. 1-2  | <i>Argument in America</i> (AA):<br>Tannen, "The Argument<br>Culture"   | Thesis statements due on<br>Thursday, unless otherwise<br>noted.  |
| 8/31 & 9/2    | WA 3-4   | AA: Thoreau, "Civil<br>Disobedience"  |   |
| 9/7 & 9/9     | WA 6   | AA: Gandhi, "Letter to Lord<br>Irwin"   | Documentary Video Review<br>Argument: Due Friday 9/10   |
| 9/14 & 9/16   | WA 8   | AA: King, "Letter from<br>Birmingham Jail"  |   |
| 9/21 & 9/23   | WA: "Informal Fallacies"   | AA: Douglass, "What, to the<br>Slave, Is the Fourth of July?"   |   |
| 9/28 & 9/30   | WA 5   | AA: Anthony, "On Women's<br>Right to Suffrage" and Truth,<br>"Ain't I a Woman"  | Analysis/Critique: Due Friday<br>10/1   |
| 10/5 & 10/7   | WA 10-11   | AA: Jefferson, "The<br>Declaration of<br>Independence," Stanton,<br>"The Seneca Falls<br>Declaration" and Grimke,<br>"Letter on Women's Rights" |   |
| Fall Break    |  |   |   |
| 10/19 & 10/21 | WA 13  | AA: Friedan, "An Open<br>Letter to True Men"  | Definitional Argument: Due<br>Friday 10/21  |
| 10/26 & 10/28 | WA 7   | AA: Allen, "Where I Come<br>From Is Like This" and Silko,<br>"The Border Patrol State"  |   |
| 11/2 & 11/4   | WA 12  | AA: Leopold, "The Land<br>Ethic"  |   |
| 11/9 & 11/11  | WA 14  | AA: Muir, "Save the Hetch<br>Hetchy Valley!"  | Causal Argument: Due Friday<br>11/12  |
| 11/16 & 11/18 | WA 15  | AA: Carson, "Silent Spring"<br>and Walker, "Am I Blue?"   |   |
| 11/23         | AA: Cooper, "The<br>Slaughter of the Pigeons"<br>and Momaday, "The Way<br>to Rainy Mountain" | Thanksgiving  | Thesis statement due Tuesday<br>11/23.<br>Optional Extra Credit Project:<br>Due Wednesday 11/24                   |
| 11/30 & 12/2  | AA: Glaspell, "Trifles"  | Final Conferences   | Thesis statement due Tuesday<br>11/30.<br>Thesis statement(s) and<br>outline of final essay due at<br>conference. |
| 12/7 & 12/9   | Final conferences  | Final Conferences   | Thesis statement(s) and<br>outline of final essay due at<br>conference.   |
| Finals        |  |   | Evaluation/Proposal, with<br>Electronic Portfolio: Due<br>Thursday 12/16  |