

English 1050: **THOUGHT & Writing** (41967)

Fall Semester 2006 – Tuesday, Thursday 12-1:50 pm – Sangren Hall 3313

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Office: Sprau 813 Office Hours: Tuesday, 2:15-3:30 pm, and by appointment

COURSE OBJECTIVES: English 1050 is an introduction to writing at the college level. However, the “thought” half of our course’s title will also be an essential concept—with students learning not only the basics of writing to the standards of the university, but also how to place this writing within a larger theoretical framework. Plainly speaking, students will produce pieces of writing in various genres and styles, but will also have the opportunity to look at these pieces, genres, and styles with an ever-increasing critical eye—developing both the tools used to write an effective composition and the intellectual capacity to understand the complex issues surrounding these writings and the forms that they take in the university setting. We will also keep an eye toward technology, and develop strategies to utilize new forms of technology in effective writing.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Over the course of the semester, we will read, write, and discuss a wide variety of material. Course readings are assigned from *The Norton Field Guide to Writing* (2006) and the multimedia disc *IX: Visual Exercises* (2004); readings selected from outside of these resources will also be used, but will be provided for the students. Students additionally need to purchase a five dollar Fee Card at the WMU Bookstore. Writing will also be assigned, and should be turned in at the beginning of the course session in which it is due. Our course will consist of four main projects:

FILM/ALBUM PROJECT: Students will select a movie or album and create a substantial text in the genre of their choice in response or reaction to this work. Our textbook’s largest chapter, that on genre (19-192), will be necessary for guidance on the genre that you select. This project will be accompanied by a reflection piece, in which the students give their rationale for selecting the genre that they did, how they worked within the conventions of this genre (or strategically chose not to do so), and how they feel the new piece significantly interacts with the original film or album.

ARGUING A POSITION: Participants will select a topic, research it, and eventually produce a text in response to it. The most obvious form this text could take is the traditional persuasive essay; however, students will also be allowed the opportunity to select an angle that works with their evolving views after researching.

RESEARCH PROJECT: After selecting an original research topic, students will, not surprisingly, conduct research and write a paper—utilizing the accumulated facts in a way that is both interesting and persuasive. As an added incentive, I will offer extra credit to those students brave enough to research a topic that does not have a Wikipedia entry and to write their paper in a style that would be appropriate for eventual Wikipedia submission; however, this is not a requirement.

MY MAJOR: HOW IT WORKS, AND DOES IT WORK?: Participants will research and explore how writing is used within their major or field of interest and produce a short piece that describes this methodology. The second half of this project will be the final exam, in which students are asked to produce an essay that evaluates the strengths, weaknesses, and other issues surrounding this style of writing.

MINI WRITING PROJECTS: In preparation for the larger projects, students will be asked to complete a series of shorter writing projects. These projects will allow students to begin to deal with and practice many of the same issues, techniques, and ideas as the larger projects.

CLASS DISCUSSION/PARTICIPATION, PEER REVIEW, AND CONFERENCES: Participating in a variety of ways in this course is essential. This means contributing to the group discussions, contributing valuable ideas to peer reviews, completing in-class writing assignments, and attending scheduled conferences with the instructor. If a student misses a session in which we peer review, it is up to the student to arrange providing copies of the piece and to complete a review of other participants' work.

GRADING: The course will be based on the following percentages:

A	93-100
B/A	87-92
B	83-86
C/B	77-82
C	73-76
D/C	67-72
D	60-66
F	59 and below

Final grades will be calculated by the following distribution:

Film/Album Project	15 %
Arguing a Position	15 %
Wikipedia/Research Project	20 %
My Major: How It Works	7.5 %
Final Exam: My Major: Does It Work?	7.5 %
Mini Writing Projects	15 %
In-Class Writing Projects	10 %
Participation	10 %

ATTENDANCE: In order to receive the full benefits of taking this course, it is absolutely essential that you attend class. However, emergencies, illnesses, and poor weather conditions do happen. For these circumstances, three no-questions-asked absences are allowed during the course of the semester. For each absence after the third, your final grade drops by 3%. For instance, a student with 5 absences will lose 6% of the final course grade. If you have especially difficult circumstances, please contact the instructor.

Tardiness to class is unacceptable—perpetual offenders will face consequences such as being counted absent and the loss of participation points.

LATE WORK: Late assignments are not accepted—each assignment must be turned in at the beginning of the session that it is due. If you have a special situation in which you must turn a paper in late, please contact the instructor BEFORE the due date.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY: WMU takes all forms of academic dishonesty seriously, including plagiarism. Plagiarism undermines academic integrity values and WMU's educational goals. Plagiarism

is defined in the Student Rights and Responsibilities section of the WMU's Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs as follows:

Plagiarism: Definition: Plagiarism is intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the ideas, information, etc. are common knowledge.

Students caught cheating in this course on any assignment will fail the course and be subject to disciplinary action by the appropriate WMU authorities. If you are confused at any time about what you need to do to avoid plagiarism and other ethical issues, please feel free to contact me to discuss your concerns.

As a guard against plagiarism, WMU subscribes to Turnitin.com. This system allows educators to check suspected plagiarized works against a large database of student work. I do not want to use this system, but if I suspect serious plagiarism I reserve the right to do so. Papers submitted to Turnitin.com become part of an anonymous database of student writing. If you would prefer that your papers do not become part of this anonymous database, you must submit a request to me in writing. The university senate stipulates the following disclaimer:

Students who take this class must be prepared to submit electronic copies of some or all assignments. The University expects that all students will be evaluated and graded on their own work. If you use language, data or ideas from other sources, published or unpublished, you must take care to acknowledge and properly cite those sources. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism. To deter plagiarism, encourage responsible student behavior, improve student learning and ensure greater accountability, assignments for this class may be submitted to Turnitin® for plagiarism detection. Papers that are submitted to Turnitin® become part of the Turnitin® database (student identities are protected). If you choose to request that your paper(s) not become part of the Turnitin® student papers database this must be communicated to me in writing at the beginning of the course. If the results of a Turnitin® originality report may be used to charge you with plagiarism you will be notified of the result of the report, and you will be given the opportunity to respond per the regular institutional process and procedures that govern student academic conduct (<http://www.osc.wmich.edu/academicintegrity/>).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Western Michigan University provides academic assistance for Students with Disabilities, including the technical, academic, and emotional support necessary to achieve academic and personal success. Course related assistance and academic accommodations are provided to eligible students with documented disabilities. Services may include advocacy, reader services, interpreters, alternate exam administration, and note takers. Adaptive equipment is also available. Students are encouraged to contact one of the following offices:

- Disabled Student Resources and Services (DSRS), 387-2116, serves students who have documented physical and psychiatric disabilities.
- The Office of Services for Students with Learning Disabilities (OSSLD), 387-4411, serves students who have documented learning disabilities and related emotional issues.
- The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE), 387-8880, acts affirmatively on behalf of qualified persons who have disability related compliance issues in accordance with Federal and State guidelines and regulations.

NOTE: If you have questions regarding access to the materials for this course, you should contact the instructor (stephen.f.grandchamp@wmich.edu) immediately.