

Kutztown University

ENG 023 College Composition

Spring 2005

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Hours: Tuesday: 11:30am—12:30pm
Wednesday: 1:00pm—4:00pm
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Introduction:

The main goal of this course is to assist you in developing writing skills that will serve you well in college and the world beyond. Over the next several years of your studies here at Kutztown, you will be asked to negotiate a range of audiences, engage in original and independent research, and express yourself both clearly and critically. Academic writing, like all forms of writing, has its own conventions and values that are distinct from writing that you may already be familiar with. One of the goals of this course is to ensure that you will be taken seriously as a student and intellectual in the university community.

However, it is also important to discuss what it is we mean by “good writing” or “developing” your writing skills. It’s common for students to enter a composition class thinking that they will be discussing writing in terms of paragraph development, catchy introductions, considering both sides of an argument, and accurately citing sources. While all of these are part of polished writing, they do not, on their own, add up to “good writing.” One of the things that we will discuss extensively is the purpose of writing within the university and our culture at large. In particular, we will continue to inquire into the role of writing in a democratic society in an increasingly global context.

We will approach our inquiry from three directions: literacies, contexts, and borders. Too often “literacy” is thought of as a set of basic skills such as the ability to read and write. However, in any culture **literacy** is much more involved. It includes the knowledge of how to “be” in our culture, how effectively communicate, how to “read” social cues. It also encompasses the boundaries, limitations, and possibilities of making sense and negotiating social institutions. In order to fully understand “literacy” at any particular moment in history, it’s also necessary to examine the social and cultural **contexts** that frame any particular act of writing. That is, if I write a letter to a member of Congress, my argument will not be judged solely on the merit of my argument or how well I conform to conventions of citizenship petitions. More likely than not, other factors—my monetary contributions to a campaign, whether or not I am representative of an influential voting bloc, if I am acting alone or as part of a broader constituency—will contribute to my ability to be heard. Finally, most issues that matter are not framed in pro/con,

either/or positions. Rather, in the real world, issues are generally messy. One of the ways of analyzing an issue in its complexity is to look for the **borders** of an argument or borders between different constituencies. I am using the word “border” to signify both actual and ideological borders. At and around these borders issues are generally more complex than they are represented in dominant culture.

We will be focusing on critical writing—writing that is consciously situated within distinct “modes of intelligibility” or “world views.” That is, while every individual may have unique experiences, HOW we make sense of those experiences relies upon the historically available ways of understanding those experiences. This class assumes that when we write we are taking part in a collective process of making knowledge. Writing is both an individual act and a social act simultaneously. For example, when we are writing about something we utilize the available cultural explanations, narratives, and knowledges to make our writing “cohere”—to explain cause and effect, to assign intention, and to draw lines of inclusion and exclusion. In short, writing is a process of making sense that connects the individual to the social in a way that positions a writer politically, socially, and materially within an on-going historical struggle over the meaning and organization of society and culture.

By focusing our inquiry into writing as a question of literacy, then, we will be looking at *both* conventions of standard academic writing *and* the broader ideological frameworks you make use of to make arguments and read the world.

Specific Areas of Focus in ENG 023:

1. The composing process with attention to your individual relationship to writing and how your relationship to writing is bound up in social and political networks.
2. Revision strategies for both conceptual and formal issues.
3. Writing as a means of generating ideas, concepts, and arguments.
4. Writing for a range of contexts, purposes, and audiences with special emphasis on academic writing.
5. Questions of organization, style, and effectiveness.
6. Critical reading and analysis.
7. Summary and synthesis of a range of texts by other writers.
8. Research skills including the use of KU’s online catalogue and Internet resources.
9. Evaluation skills.
10. Grammar, punctuation, spelling as needed.
11. Modern Language Association (MLA) style conventions.

Required Textbooks and Supplies:

- George, Diana and John Trimbur, ed. Reading Culture: Contexts for Critical Reading and Writing, Fifth Edition. New York: Longman, 2004.
- Some of the readings listed on the syllabus are on eReserve in the library. To access these readings, refer to the directions attached at the end of the syllabus.
- A good college dictionary
- Email account
- Notebook for class and reading notes
- Folder to keep assignment sheets, copies of your papers, and class syllabus

You may also be asked to make several copies of your papers for in-class writing workshops.

Major Writing Assignments and Grading:

You will receive detailed assignment sheets for each paper.

Paper #1 Literacies [Due 2/15]	20%
Paper #2 Commercial Narratives [Due 3/3]	15%
Paper #3 Commodity Culture and Public Space [Due 4/7]	20%
Paper #4 Research Paper: Extending the Discussion [Due 4/28]	25%
Process Papers [See Calendar for Due Dates]	10%
<u>Participation</u>	<u>10%</u>
	100%

Note on Grading:

You will be graded on a plus/minus system on each paper. However, Kutztown University does not currently use a plus/minus grading system for calculating your GPA. I use the plus/minus system throughout the semester to provide you with a better sense of your performance in the class.

General Guidelines for Papers:

- All papers must be word-processed or typed, double-spaced, stapled (not paper-clipped or folded), and follow MLA style guidelines. I will not accept papers that are not stapled.
- **Process Papers:** You should try and limit Process Papers papers to a maximum of two (2) pages. I would prefer reading responses to be **single-spaced**. Process Papers should demonstrate a substantial engagement with the **arguments** of the texts. While these papers do not have to be as formal as the major papers, they should demonstrate your grasp of the reading and that you have thought through the claims and implications of the texts. I have provided prompts for each of the Process Papers on the Course Calendar. However, the specific focus of each Process Paper may change given the direction of our class discussions. If there are changes, I will tell you in class. Please make sure to take careful note of any changes.
- For each paper you hand in you should include a **title page** with the following information:
 - your name
 - the assignment name/paper number (continued on next page)

- the date you are handing in the paper
- a title
- course name and section number
- my name
- **Save all your work!** I can't stress this point enough.

Late Papers and Email Copies:

- To receive full-credit you **must** hand in your papers in class on the due date. If you hand in your paper late, you will be graded down for that paper. For each day your paper is late, you will be graded down by a third of a letter grade. In other words, an "A" becomes an "A-," an "A-" becomes a "B+," and so on. If you do not hand in a paper, you will receive a zero (0) for that assignment.
- **Emailing papers.** If you cannot make it to class on the date a paper is due, or if you need to hand in a paper on a non-class day, you may email me your paper. To be accepted, you must send your paper as an attached **Microsoft Word** file. **DO NOT** copy your paper in the body of an email message, and **DO NOT** send your paper as a Microsoft Works file. Make sure your name is on your paper and you "sign" your email. Never send an email copy of your paper without a short message telling me what you are sending. Papers received by 5pm on the due date will not be marked late.
 - **YOU MUST PROVIDE ME WITH A HARD COPY OF YOUR PAPER THE NEXT CLASS PERIOD.** I will not consider your paper handed in until I receive a hard copy from you in the format outlined above.
 - **The only purpose of emailing me the paper is to avoid any additional late penalties.** I will not read your paper until you give me a hard copy.

Class Policies:

- It is crucial that you attend every class to do well. Unlike a lecture class, this course depends on active discussion and in-class work. In addition, I will frequently give short assignments in class that are not listed on the syllabus. If you need to be absent, it is your responsibility to find out what happened in class from another student.
- If you are not in class when I hand out paper assignments you will need to go to the course website to download a copy of the assignment or come to my office to pick up a hard copy of the assignment. I WILL NOT carry extra copies of assignment sheets around with me. To download assignment sheets, go to the course website at <<http://faculty.kutztown.edu/mahoney/Courses/ENG023.htm>>.
- If you are not in class when I hand back your papers, you must pick up your paper in my office, 237 Lytle Hall.
- You should be prepared for each class. This includes **completing all the reading and writing assignments** due on that day. **Reading is NOT optional.** Active reading entails taking notes on the reading, reflecting on the reading, and coming to class prepared to have something to say about what you have read. If I notice that people are coming to class without reading, I will begin giving quizzes at the beginning of each class.
- Turn off or set to silent all cell phones prior to class.
- Respect your classmates.

Special needs:

If you have any special needs including physical or mental disabilities, please let me know and contact the Disabilities Services located in the Office of Human Diversity, Room 115 in the Stratton Administration Building. We will make any necessary accommodations. To get further information about Disability Services visit their website at:

<http://www.kutztown.edu/admin/humandiversity/disabilityservices/>

Special Note on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. Plagiarizing one of your papers or a significant portion of one of your papers will result in **failure of the course**. In addition to failing the course, I will notify the University of the violation. If you have not already, please review the University's Academic Dishonesty policy at the following web address: <http://www.kutztown.edu/admin/conduct/>. The university subscribes to an anti-plagiarism service for checking student papers against material posted on the Internet—this includes websites that require payment to download papers.

Academic Dishonesty is defined in the student handbook, *The Key*, as follows:

Definitions of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty involves any attempt to obtain academic credit or influence the grading process by means unauthorized by the course instructor. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to the following situations and examples.

1. Providing or receiving unauthorized assistance in course work and lab work, or unauthorized assistance during examinations or quizzes.
2. Using unauthorized notes, materials, and devices during examinations or quizzes.
3. Plagiarizing the work of others and presenting it as one's own without properly acknowledging the source or sources. At its worst extreme, plagiarism is exact copying, but it is also the inclusion of a paraphrased version of the opinions and work of others without giving credit. It is not limited to written materials. It includes the wrongful appropriation in whole or in part of someone else's literary, artistic, musical, mechanical, or computer-based work.
4. Presenting material to fulfill course requirements that was researched or prepared by others (such as commercial services) without the knowledge of the instructor.
5. Falsifying or inventing data to be presented as part of an academic endeavor.
6. Gaining unauthorized access to another person's or the University's computer system. Violations include tampering with or copying programs or data or access codes associated with coursework.
7. Possessing or arranging for someone else to possess course examination or quiz materials at any time without the consent of the instructor.
8. Altering or adding answers on exercises, exams, or quizzes after the work has been graded.
9. Making fraudulent statements, excuses, or claims to gain academic credit or influence testing or grading.
10. Taking examinations or quizzes for someone else or arranging to have someone take examinations or quizzes in place of the person registered for the course.

From: Lazere, Donald. "Ground Rules for Polemicists: The Case of Lynne Cheney's Truths." College English 59 (1997): 661-685.

Polemics: "Heatedly partisan argumentation."

Polemicist: Someone who engages in polemics.

Below is a passage by Donald Lazere, a professor of English at Cal. Tech. He is arguing that there can be heated partisan debate that does not lapse into "invective" and undemocratic forms of argumentation. I think these "rules" provide a good framework for the kind of writing and analysis we will be doing in this class. [KM]

Ground Rules for Polemicists:

1. Do unto your own as you do unto others. Apply the same standards to yourself and your allies that you do to your opponents, in all of the following ways.
2. Identify your own ideological viewpoint and how it might bias your arguments. Having done so, show that you approach your opponents' actions and writings with an open mind, not with malice aforethought. Concede the other side's valid arguments—preferably toward the beginning of your critique, not tacked on grudgingly at the end or in inconspicuous subordinate clauses. Acknowledge points on which you agree at least partially and might be able to cooperate.
3. Summarize the other side's case fully and fairly, in an account that they would accept, prior to refuting it. Present it through its most reputable spokespeople and strongest formulations (not through the most outlandish statements of its lunatic fringe), using direct quotes and footnoted sources, not your own undocumented paraphrases. Allow the most generous interpretation of their statements rather than putting the worst light on them; help them make their arguments stronger when possible.
4. When quoting selected phrases from the other side's texts, accurately summarize the context and tone of the longer passages and full texts in which they appear.
5. When you are repeating a second-hand account of events, say so—do not leave the implication that you were there and are certain of its accuracy. Cite your source and take account of its author's possible biases, especially if the author is your ally.
6. In any account that you use to illustrate the opponents' misbehavior, grant that there may be another side to the story and take pains to find out what it is. If opponents claim they have been misrepresented, give them their say and the benefit of the doubt.
7. Be willing to acknowledge misconduct, errors, and fallacious arguments by your own allies, and try scrupulously to establish an accurate proportion and sense of reciprocity between them and those you criticize in your opponents. Do not play up the other side's forms of power while denying or downplaying your own side's.
8. Respond forthrightly to opponents' criticisms of your own or your side's previous arguments, without evading key points. Admit it when they make a criticism you cannot refute.
9. Do not substitute derision for reasoned argument and substantive evidence.

(Lazere 661-662).

Course Calendar

- All readings from Reading Culture unless otherwise noted
- Readings and assignments are due on the day they appear on the calendar

WEEK 1

Tue 1/11

Introductions. Hand out syllabus. Explanation of the course.

Thurs 1/13

Read:

- Min-Zhan Lu, “From Silence to Words: Writing as Struggle,” 135-145.
- Mike Rose, “Crossing Boundaries,” 124-131.

WEEK 2

Tue 1/18

Read:

- June Jordan, “Nobody Mean More to Me than You and the Future Life of Willie Jordan,” 145-155.
- Lisa Delpit, “Skills and Other Dilemmas of a Progressive Black Educator,” 155-161.

**Thurs 1/20 NO CLASS—FOLLOW MONDAY SCHEDULE
(CALENDAR ADJUSTMENT DAY)**

WEEK 3

Tue 1/25

Read:

- Stuart and Elizabeth Ewen, “In the Shadow of the Image,” 182-186.
- Gloria Anzaldúa, “How to Tame a Wild Tongue,” 517-525.

DUE: Process Paper

Hand in a short (1-2 pages) response to the readings we have done so far. While process papers are not as formal as the major papers you will be writing for this class, they should demonstrate that you are carefully considering the arguments and issues raised in the readings. Process papers are meant to provide a “snap shot” of how you are thinking about the course material at a specific moment. They are also meant to serve as “brainstorming” opportunities for your first paper. Because we will read more articles in this unit, you should not try to write the first draft of your paper at this point. Rather, you should consider the concepts, issues, and implications of the authors’ arguments. Review the “General Writing Guidelines” on the syllabus.

Thurs 1/27

Read:

- Margaret Finders, "Note-Passing: Struggles for Status," 131-135.
- Theodore Sizer, "What High School Is," 106-113.

WEEK 4

Tue 2/1

Read:

- William Uricchio, "Television Conventions," 38-40
- Amy Goodman, "Not on Bended Knee," 237-250 (on eReserve).

Thurs 2/3

Presentation of paper topics.

Come prepared to talk briefly about your paper. You should make sure you have prepared a one-paragraph abstract that includes: 1) the thesis of your paper; 2) the texts you will be using and why; 3) how this paper contributes to a discussion of the issues we have discussed during this unit. Be prepared to answer questions about your arguments and approach.

DUE: Draft of Paper #1 including abstract.

WEEK 5

Tue 2/8 No Class--Conferences

In lieu of class today, you will sign up for an individual conference with me to discuss your drafts and to strategize about where to take your paper from here.

My Conference Time is: _____ in Lytle 237

Thurs 2/10

Paper Workshop. Outline of MLA Style, providing "signal phrases" for introducing authors and texts, and introduction to "glossing" as a revision strategy.

WEEK 6

Tue 2/15

DUE: Paper #1: Literacies

Assignment: Quotidian Research: This assignment asks you to look more closely at some of the most common and pervasive stories our culture generates: commercials. Yes, we all know that commercials are designed to sell a product. No questions that. However, commercials use narratives and cultural assumptions in order for their message to make sense. For this assignment, choose a television commercial to take careful notes on. Ideally, you should tape the commercial so that you can review it several times. You should pay particular attention to the overall narrative, the setting, the characters (including their appearance, their “status,” their manner of speaking, etc.), and any details that you think are important in understanding the narrative of the commercial. Bring all your notes to class today. You will be working in groups for this project. Be sure to get together with 2 or 3 other students, get their contact information, and put together a work plan.

My Group:

NAME	EMAIL	PHONE

Thurs 2/17

In-class work on Commercial Narratives: *Come prepared with rich descriptions of your commercials. You should also consider the “arguments” made in each of the commercials about identity, life-style, relationships, class, and race. Remember, we are looking at these commercials in order to construct some of the common-sense ways our culture tells stories about what is “natural,” “normal,” and “acceptable.” You will have time to work with your group to put together an outline of your narrative and formalize your work plan.*

WEEK 6

Tue 2/22

In-class work on Commercial Narratives: *In addition to working on your papers and abstract, I will meet with each group to discuss your progress.*

Thurs 2/24

DUE: Abstract of Commercial Narrative. *Unlike the abstract you wrote for paper #1, this abstract should take your reader “behind the scenes,” so to speak. That is, rather than explaining what you wrote, this abstract should draw a reader’s attention to the cultural issues raised in your narrative. This is the place to discuss what you saw in your commercials and how you tried to foreground particular issues through your narrative.*

WEEK 7

Tue 3/1

Presentation of Commercial Narratives.

Thurs 3/3 *SPRING BREAK BEGINS AT 6PM—CLASS WILL BE HELD*

Presentation of Commercial Narratives.

DUE: Paper #2: Commercial Narrative

WEEK 8

Tue 3/8 & Thurs 3/10—*NO CLASSES—SPRING BREAK!!!*

WEEK 9

Tue 3/15

Read:

- Naomi Klein, “No Logo,” 240-249.
- Kalle Lasn, “Hype,” 199-201.

Thurs 3/17

Read:

- Thomas Frank, Excerpt from “*The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism*” (eReserve) **or** go directly to the web page at: <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/259919.html>.

Fri 3/18—**LAST DAY TO MAKE UP INCOMPLETES FROM FALL 2004**

WEEK 10

Tue 3/22

Read:

- Barbara Ehrenreich, “Nickel-and-Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America,” 374-381.
- Tom Hayden and Charles Kernaghan, “Pennies an Hour and No Way Up,” 384-386.

DUE: Process Paper. *In this process paper, I would like you to respond to how the articles we have read depict our current cultural and historical context. What do the authors suggest about our world today? How did it get that way? What are the implications of their arguments? Do these issues have any relevance to our lives?*

Thurs 3/24

Read:

- John Fiske, “Shopping for Pleasure: Malls, Power, and Resistance,” 271-275.
- Thomas Hine, “Goths in Tomorrowland,” 68-73.

WEEK 11

Tue 3/29

Read:

- Mike Davis, “Fortress Los Angeles: The Militarization of Urban Space,” 275-281.

DUE: Draft of Paper #3: Commodity Culture and Public Space

Thurs 3/31 No Class--Conferences

In lieu of class today, you will sign up for an individual conference with me to discuss your drafts and to strategize about where to take your paper from here.

My Conference Time is: _____ **in Lytle 237**

WEEK 12

Tue 4/5

Paper Workshop.

Thurs 4/7

DUE: Paper #3: Commodity Culture and Public Space

WEEK 13

Tue 4/12 NO CLASS—SPRING RECESS

Thurs 4/14

Research Paper Workshop. *Today we will discuss the range of resources available for research. In addition to the Internet, there are many excellent resources available in the KU Library that you will need to use. We will also discuss the format for the final paper, issues of citation, addressing your audience, and putting together an archive for your research.*

DUE: Research Topic

WEEK 14

Tue 4/19

Workshop

Thurs 4/21

Workshop

WEEK 15

Tue 4/26

Workshop

Thurs 4/28 LAST DAY OF CLASS

DUE: Paper #4: Research Paper: Extending the Discussion

WEEK 16

FINAL EXAM WEEK—5/2-5/6

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!!

Accessing eReserves

Instructions for Use

- Go to the library eReserves webpage at: < <http://ereserves.kutztown.edu/>>.
- Click on "Electronic Reserves and Course Materials".
- On the MAIN COURSE INDEX screen, select "Mahoney, Kevin" from the "Select an Instructor" drop down list, and click on the GO button.
- On the COURSES screen click on ENG 023 (Spring 2005).
- On the next page, type in the password (the password is GO). Click on the ACCEPT button.
- On the next screen, click on the title of the reading you want to view.
- When the password screen appears, type the password. Click on the CONTINUE button.
- Adobe Acrobat Reader will open and your document will appear on the screen.
- You can print the article from this screen.
- If you have any problems or comments, call the library at: 610-683-4480, or send an email to [Susan Czerny](mailto:Susan.Czerny).