

English 124, Section 10
Winter 2008
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:30-4:00 pm
2454 Mason Hall

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Office: 3029 Tisch Hall
Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 1-2 pm
& by appointment

English 124: Writing & Literature
Sincerity, Authenticity, and Identity

Required Texts:

The following texts are available at Ulrich's, 549 East University Ave.; Michigan Book & Supply, 317 S. State St.; and the Michigan Union Bookstore, 530 S. State St. You may buy the texts at any one of these locations.

James Joyce, *Dubliners* (Norton Critical Edition, 2005)
Vladimir Nabokov, *Pnin* (Vintage, 1989)
Banana Yoshimoto, *Kitchen* (Washington Square Press, 1994)
Tom Stoppard, *The Real Thing* (Faber & Faber, 2000)
Diana Hacker & Barbara Fister, *A Pocket Style Manual 4e and Working with Sources*
MLA Quick Reference (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004)

Course Description:

This writing course focuses on the creation of complex, analytic, well-supported arguments that matter in academic contexts. Students work closely with their peers and the instructor to develop their written prose. Readings cover a variety of different genres, with a primary focus on literary texts.

This course is intended to help you become a stronger critical thinker and a better analytical writer. By the end of the semester, you will have learned to think analytically about literature, to structure written arguments so that they are nuanced, persuasive, and clear, to support those arguments with well-chosen, well-deployed textual evidence, and to interpret constructive criticism from outside readers – both the instructor and your peers – in order to improve your written work. These four skills are crucial to your success as a college-level writer.

The readings in this class, to which you will respond in your writing, are organized around a few related questions: Is sincerity important? What does it mean for someone to act in a way that is “authentic” or “genuine”? Is there such a thing as a “genuine self,” and, if so, how can we recognize it? Over the course of the semester, we will be continually returning to these questions in relation to the literature we read.

Course Policies:

Attendance and Class Participation: The success of this class depends upon the active participation of all of its members. Unexcused absences will negatively affect your grade, and more than three unexcused absences will put you in danger of failing the course. An absence is considered unexcused if you do not contact me at least 24 hours in advance to tell me you are ill or have an emergency, *or* if you do not provide me with a doctor's note or other documentation of an emergency at the class meeting just after the

one you missed. Coming late to class consistently will have a negative effect on your grade in the course. Please speak with me if you have any questions or concerns about this policy.

Late Work: All assignments are due on the date indicated on the syllabus. If an emergency or conflict arises which prevents you from turning in an essay on time, please *contact me at least 24 hours in advance*. I understand that in some extraordinary circumstances, such as an accident or family emergency, giving me advance notice may not be possible, and I can make exceptions to this policy in those cases. In most cases, short assignments, such as reading response papers and peer response letters, will not be accepted late under any circumstances.

Grading

The grade breakdown is as follows:

Essay #1: 10%

Essay #2: 15%

Essay #3: 20%

Final Project: 25%

Response papers, process letters, and reading quizzes: 15%

Class participation and workshop draft annotations: 15%

Attached to this syllabus is a grading rubric which explains my grading standards in detail.

Responding to Your Peers: One of the goals of this class is for you to become comfortable with and adept at giving feedback to your peers about their writing. There will be three kinds of peer feedback in this course: small discussion groups, in which you will discuss your peers' work with them during class; peer response letters, which you will write about two of your classmates' paper drafts; and full-class workshops, during which a few students' drafts will be discussed by the entire class. When discussing and writing about your peers' work, aim to be constructive in your criticism. Mention the areas in which the writer could improve, but do so in a thoughtful and respectful manner.

Paper Formatting and Citation: All essays and response papers must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font with 1 inch margins. Please include page numbers and a title, and remember to staple. You are expected to cite page numbers when quoting from a text. We will discuss citation at greater length in preparation for your first essay.

Office Hours: You are always welcome to stop by my office (3029 Tisch Hall) during my office hours, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00-2:00, to discuss any questions or concerns you might have. If my office hours are not convenient for you, please email me or speak to me before or after class and we can set up another time to meet.

Email communication: Email is generally a good way to reach me, and I check my email daily. However, unless otherwise specified, I will generally not accept any assignments over email, nor will I answer questions about material covered in a class you did not

attend. Ask questions about your work and your progress in the course during office hours.

I have set up a class listserv which you are to use when distributing your paper drafts in advance of your workshop date (I will provide more details about this).

Food & Drink: Food is not permitted in class, but drinks are allowed.

Academic Misconduct: Plagiarism is representing someone else's ideas, words, statements or other works as one's own without proper acknowledgment or citation. Cheating is committing fraud and/or deception on a record, report, paper, computer assignment, examination, or any other course requirement. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course, and will result in your failing the assignment and, possibly, the course as a whole. The UM Department of English policy on plagiarism can be found at <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/english/undergraduate/plagNote.asp>. I expect you to review this policy carefully: it is important to understand not just for this course, but for your entire academic career at UM.

The Sweetland Writing Center: The Sweetland Writing Center (SWC), located at 1139 Angell Hall, offers free half-hour consultations with undergraduates who wish to work on their writing in a tutorial setting. The service is available through appointments or on a walk-in basis. In addition, the SWC offers peer tutoring, both in person and online. For more information, visit their website at <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/swc>.

Students with Disabilities: In accordance with University of Michigan policy, I am happy to provide accommodations for students with learning disabilities, and I will protect the confidentiality of students' individual learning needs. I work closely with the Office for Students with Disabilities (SSD), and if you have not already contacted them, I encourage you to do so. Please email me by the second week of the term if you would like to show me your letter from SSD describing approved accommodations, and I will set up a confidential appointment with you to discuss your needs.

Religious Observances: If a class session or due date conflicts with your religious holidays, please notify me by the fourth week of the term so we can make alternative arrangements. In most cases, I will ask you to turn in your assignment ahead of your scheduled absence, but, in accordance with University policy on Religious/Academic conflicts, your absence will not affect your grade in the course.

Course Requirements:

1. ***Writing Reflections & Process Letters.*** Throughout the course, you will reflect on the writing process and your personal progress as a writer. We will spend some time at the beginning of the semester thinking and writing about what writing means to you, and during the last week of the term you will write and turn in a 1- to 2-page reflection on your progress in the course. In addition, you will write process letters (approximately two paragraphs in length) with each essay you hand in. These letters will include a brief account of the development of the essay – the ways in which you refined your ideas and

changed the essay's structure over the course of writing it. These process letters, along with other writing reflections throughout the term, will be counted as part of your response paper/reading quizzes grade, worth 15% of your final grade.

2. **Short response papers.** Approximately once a week, you will be required to turn in a one-page written response to material covered in the course. You might be asked to write a short analysis of a particular aspect of a short story or novel, or you might be asked to map out the structure of an expository essay distributed in class. These responses will be given checks, check-minuses, or check-pluses, and, together with response papers and reading quizzes, will account for 15% of your grade.

3. **Reading quizzes.** On weeks in which response papers are not due, you may be given a short reading quiz at the beginning of class. There will be five short answer questions on each quiz, and you'll have 10 minutes to complete the quiz. The quizzes, together with response papers and writing reflections/process letters, will count as 15% of your grade.

4. **Individual writing conferences.** Twice during the semester, you will be required to meet with me for a twenty-minute, on-on-one discussion of your progress in the course and your plan for the upcoming essay assignment. I will distribute a sign-up sheet during the second week of the term. If you do not show up for your scheduled conference and do not inform me beforehand, your absence will be counted as an unexcused absence from class.

5. **Analytical essays.** Over the course of the semester, you will write four essays in which you will be expected to provide a clear, well-structured argument relating to a passage or theme in the assigned literature. The first of these essays will be 3 pages long; the second and third will be 5 pages each, and the last will be 7-8 pages long.

For each essay, you will be required to complete four separate assignments. Before you begin drafting each essay, you will hand in a short **outline**, approximately one page in length: it should include a preliminary thesis statement and a well-organized list of textual evidence you plan to use to support that thesis. If you fail to turn in your outline on time, your final essay grade will suffer.

You will hand in a **draft** of the essay approximately one week before the essay is due. Paper drafts must be at least half the length of the final draft and must be well-structured and written in complete sentences and paragraphs (notes or bullet points in your draft are not acceptable). If you fail to turn in a draft on time, your final essay grade will suffer.

Your **final draft** should reflect a relatively lengthy process of revision, and should be clear, tightly argued, and free from typos and mechanical errors. Along with the final draft, you will turn in a **process letter**, a one-paragraph-long reflection on the writing and editing process. The process letter will be graded on a separate basis from the essay.

6. **Peer responses.** You will provide feedback on your peers' writing in two ways. When you turn in your essay drafts to me, you will also exchange those drafts with

two other students in the class. You will then write **peer response letters**, approximately one page in length, which you will give to your two partners at the next class session. I will distribute a list of questions your response letters should address before the first draft is due.

On days on which we have full class paper workshops, you will be responsible for bringing **annotated copies of the two papers to be workshopped** to class with you. "Annotated" means the paper should include your original written comments throughout the paper and a few major points of suggestion or observation at the end of the paper.

Schedule:

Week 1

Th Jan 3 *In class:* Introductions

Week 2

T Jan 8 *Homework due:* **Read** syllabus, departmental plagiarism policy, & "The Search for Authenticity" (*Newsweek*, 8/20/07); **write** response paper

In class: The essay-writing process

Th Jan 10 *Homework due:* **Read** Joyce, "The Dead" (in *Dubliners*, pp. 151-161) & supplemental materials (pp. 245-249)

In class: Literature discussion

Week 3

T Jan 15 *Homework due:* **Read** "The Dead," pp. 161-170; **Write** response paper

In class: Reading quiz; discussion of expository essay organization and mapping

Th Jan 17 *Homework due:* **Read** Joyce, "The Dead" pp. 170-179.

Write outline for Essay #1 (bring three copies)

In class: Peer workshopping of outlines; thesis statements activity

Week 4

Individual student conferences held this week

T Jan 22 *Homework due:* **Read** "The Dead," pp. 179-194

In class: Reading quiz; literature discussion

Th Jan 24 *Homework due:* **Write** draft of Essay #1 (bring three copies); read, comment on and bring in the two workshop drafts

In class: Full class workshopping of essays

Week 5

T Jan 29 *Homework due:* **Write** Peer assessment letters (bring two copies of each); read, comment on, and bring in the two workshop drafts

In class: Full class workshopping of essays

Th Jan 31 *Homework due:* **Final draft** of Essay #1 & process letter
In class: Genre & citation exercise

Week 6

T Feb 5 *Homework due:* **Read** Yoshimoto, pp. 3-30; **Write** response paper
In class: Literature discussion; grammar exercise

Th Feb 7 *Homework due:* **Read** Yoshimoto, pp. 30-60
In class: Reading quiz; literature discussion

Week 7

T Feb 12 *Homework due:* **Write** outline for essay #2 (bring three copies).
In class: Peer workshopping of outlines; work on essay organization

Th Feb 14 *Homework due:* **Read** Yoshimoto, pp. 60-82; **Write** draft of Essay #2 (bring three copies); read, comment on and bring in the two workshop drafts
In class: Full class workshopping of essays

Week 8

T Feb 19 *Homework due:* **Read** Yoshimoto, pp. 82-105; **Write** Peer assessment letters (bring two copies of each); bring annotated copies of the two workshop drafts
In class: Reading quiz; full class workshopping of essays

Th Feb 21 *Homework due:* **Final draft** of Essay #2 & process letter
In class: Literature discussion

Week 9

NO CLASS: Spring Break

Week 10

T Mar 4 *Homework due:* **Read** Nabokov, *Pnin*, Chapter 1 (pp. 7-28); **Write** response paper
In class: Historical background overview; literature discussion

Th Mar 6 *Homework due:* **Read** Nabokov, Chapter 2 (pp. 29-61)
In class: Reading quiz; literature discussion

Week 11

T Mar 11 *Homework due:* **Read** Nabokov, Chapter 3 (pp. 62-83); **Write** response paper
In class: Literature discussion

Th Mar 13 NO CLASS

Week 12

T Mar 18 *Homework due:* **Read** Nabokov, Chapter 4 (pp. 84-110); **Write** Outline for essay #3 (bring three copies)

In class: Reading quiz; peer workshopping of outlines

Th Mar 21 *Homework due:* **Read** Nabokov, Chapter 5 (pp. 111-136); **Write** Draft of essay #3 (bring three copies); bring annotated copies of the two workshop drafts

In class: Reading quiz; full class workshopping of drafts

Week 13

T Mar 25 *Homework due:* **Write** peer response letters (bring two copies of each); bring annotated copies of the two workshop drafts

In class: full class workshopping of drafts

Th Mar 27 *Homework due:* **Final draft** of Essay # 3 & process letter

In class: TBD

Week 14

T Apr 1 *Homework due:* **Read** Stoppard, *The Real Thing*, Act I, Scene 2 (pp. 15-34) and do additional reading for your final paper

In class: Reading quiz; literature discussion; exercises on essay revision

Th Apr 3 *Homework due:* **Read** *The Real Thing*, Act II, Scene 5 (pp. 44-54) and additional reading for your final paper; **Write** outline of your final paper (bring three copies)

In class: Literature discussion; peer workshopping of outlines

Week 15

Individual student conferences held this week

T Apr 8 *Homework due:* **Write** Draft of your final paper (bring three copies); bring annotated copies of the two workshop drafts

In class: Full class workshopping of essays

Th Apr 10 *Homework due:* **Write** Peer assessment letters; Bring annotated copies of the two workshop drafts

In class: Full class workshopping of essays

Week 16

T Apr 15 LAST DAY OF CLASSES.

In class: Full class workshopping of essays

TBD: Final Paper & Course Reflection Due