

SYLLABUS: WRITING II

1 of 4

Prof. Elizabeth Marino, M.A. E-mail: teacherneu@yahoo.com
FALL 2009 – NEIU/EL CENTRO Mail Tray: behind El Centro's front desk
ENG 102 Sec. 18 (Ref. 14738) Office Hours: 10-11 a.m. & by appt.
Class Meeting: Sat. 11:20 am - 2:00 p.m. Course duration: AUG. 29 – Dec. 12, 2009
El Centro Office: 773/442-4080 3119 North Pulaski Road

REQUIRED TEXTS

Available at El Centro and main campus bookstore:

Larson, Erik. *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair That Changed America*. New York: Random House, Vintage Books 2004.

Hacker, Diane. *Rules for Writers*. 6th ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009.

- *One spiral notebook for class notes, in-class writing, notes and research log.*
- *One folder for drafts and returned writing. Please keep all returned writing.*
- *SEE BLACKBOARD FOR ASSIGNMENT DETAILS, HANDOUTS.*

COURSE DESCRIPTION: According to NEIU's *Academic Catalog*, this three-hour course is a “continuation of practice in composition with emphasis on a variety of forms of writing and longer essays, culminating in the annotated research paper.”

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Research and writing exercises will break down the research paper production process into a manageable sequence of steps. This involves bringing students' critical thinking, reading and writing skills up to the college level. To support this development, a brief grammar review is part of the early coursework. Department objectives include:

- To demonstrate competence in a range of research writing tasks;
- To demonstrate the construction of successful arguments;
- To skillfully incorporate research materials into these arguments;
- To respond to sources;
- To improve analytical skills;
- To learn to revise essays and edit them for grammatical error;
- To produce an extended research essay according to a major academic research style. This class will demonstrate the MLA style. (If needed by an individual student, APA and CMS can also be accommodated with notice.)

Anyone with a certified disability should make me aware of any necessary accommodations A.S.A.P. Special needs are addressed at the HELP/Accessibility Office (A-118) at x5495. “Non-certified” issues which directly affect your work should also be brought to my attention, to find a reasonable academically sound work makeup, as absences do not make coursework responsibilities go away. Through the term, I'd like to touch base with each of you individually, to answer your questions regarding class progress.

INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ADJUST THIS SYLLABUS, WITH NOTICE.
--

ATTENDANCE: I expect students to come to class on time and prepared to work. (That is, all assigned readings done and written work in hand.) Latecomers are distracting and disrespectful to each and every one of us. Late arrivals are responsible for seeing me at the end of class to confirm their attendance.

As the *Academic Catalog* states: "Students are expected to attend all regularly scheduled classes and examinations. If a student has more than three unexcused absences, the instructor may lower the student's grade or require additional work, and/or impose other sanctions as appropriate." In this once-weekly class, more than three (3) absences can be grounds for failure.

For students observing religious holidays, family emergencies, court dates. etc. please notify me IN WRITING (e-mail is fine). Religious dates should be known by the first two (2) weeks of class; notice for other dates should be given as soon as you know, so as to allow for mutually convenient make up of any and all missed work. Absences without such prior arrangement, these are counted as unexcused absences; notes and all work for time missed is the student's responsibility. For due dates, work is expected before you leave.

Unless you are ordering us all a pizza, please turn all electronic distractions "OFF." If newspaper reading or any of the above is more important than class, you will be asked to leave and be marked "absent," so as to better pursue these activities.

PAPERS: Revisions – Any graded paper may be rewritten for a higher grade; the higher grade stands.

EXTENSIONS are only given up to 48 hours BEFORE a due date and requested in writing, for good reasons. If writing is not your strong suite, I suggest the Writing Center, available to you free of charge. Also, I would be happy to go over any drafts of upcoming papers during office hours. An extra "grammar draft" is allowable, if helpful.

El Centro also has their own excellent writing tutors, including Jim O'Connor. Sign up for time with them at the front desk.

Papers are due at the top of the class they are due, typed, in MLA manuscript style. Paper copies only: no e-mails or late papers. The Writing Lab is in CLS 2046 (773/442-5480).

DUE TO TIME CONSTRAINTS, LATE PAPERS WITHOUT EXTENSIONS BY PRIOR ARRANGEMENT WILL NEITHER BE ACCEPTED NOR GRADED. PLEASE KEEP ALL PAPERS RETURNED TO YOU UNTIL THE CLASS IS OVER. STAPLE DRAFTS TO REVISIONS.

Reference librarian, Ms. Mary Thill, is available for 1-1 appointments – at the main campus library (773/442-4571).

- The article analysis paper (2 pages) will be a summary/analysis/response paper on an article of your choice, and will receive a letter grade.
- Assignments will culminate in one long (10 page/final paper) with full documentation, drafts and outlines.

@The final paper will also have a written research proposal (2 pages) and @ annotated bibliography (6 academic sources min.). Students will develop an original research project based on the text. Revised versions of these papers will receive a letter grade; drafts will get my written feedback and peer review. There are brief final and midterm quizzes.

- Article analysis (2 pages) (15%)
- In-class video review of documentary (Expo). (2 pages) (5%)
- Annotated bibliography & working outline (2-3 pages). (10%)
- Final research paper (10 pages) (45%)

(A passing final paper is required to complete this class)

Class participation (25%)

(reading discussion, attendance, pop quizzes, reading journal and a positive attitude.)

GRADING SCALE:

- A = Excellence in developing strong original ideas**
- B = Very good. Brings skill to competence**
- C = Good. Meets the assignment's basic requirements with basic competency /is on time.**
- D = Not passing, do over. Weak control of argument, mechanics and/or documentation.**
- F = Failing, do over. Lack of clear argument and/documentation.**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: All work presented as your own will be from your own efforts and done for this class. (We will discuss in detail the responsible use of sources vs. plagiarism.) *If plagiarism occurs, student receives zero credit and risks expulsion from NEIU. All acts of blatant plagiarism will be reported to the Registrar and Chair of the English Dept. I have little interest in the perfection of some other writer's web-published essay: YOUR OWN thinking and writing is what counts.*

COURSE CALENDAR**Week 1: (8/29) INTRO. to ENG 102 –Writing Sample**

Course overview/syllabus. Writing sample prompt: author interview.

Week 2: (9/5) Documentation

- (MLA) style – review Hacker. Larson's use of primary & secondary materials.
- Discussion of NEIU plagiarism policy. Quotation marks.
- Discuss "Evils Imminent" and "Prologue" of The Devil in the White City.
- Begin reading/research journals.
- Begin viewing Expo.

Week 3: (9/12) Analysis of Argument/Library Research Methods

- Discuss Ch. 1 of The Devil in the White City.
- [Online HANDOUT] Paper proposal
- Effective on-line research
- Finish viewing Expo.
- DUE: in-class review.

Week 4: (9/19) Topic Brainstorming for First Research Paper.

DUE: Paper 1 proposal. Discussion and peer feedback. [SEE online handout]

- Discuss ch. 2 of The Devil in the White City.

Week 5: (9/26) Research Questions and Problems

DUE: Draft of short research paper with outline. Peer review workshop

Evaluating sources. Using an outline effectively. (Hacker)

Creating an MLA-style works cited.

- Discuss ch. 3 of The Devil in the White City
- [Online HANDOUT] On-line citations

Week 6: (10/3) Beyond Google & Wikipedia

DUE: In-class article analysis. Bring one of your sources.

- Discuss ch. 4 of Devil in the White City

Week 7: (10/10) Annotated Bibliography

DUE: Revision of Paper 1 with documentation (in-text citations and works cited).

- Discuss “Epilogue” to Devil in the White City
- [Online HANDOUT] for annotated bibliography
- Mid-term evaluation

Week 8: (10/17) Annotated Bibliography/Outline

DUE: Your Reading Journal for Devil.

DUE: Annotated bibliography and working outline for final paper

Week 9: (10/24) Exposition/Explication. Coordinating narration, information, and analysis.

Week 10: (10/31) Topic Brainstorming.

In-class summaries and discussion of sources. Small group project brainstorming.

Week 11: (11/13) Rev. of Development Techniques (Last day to withdraw with “W”)

DUE: Project Proposal (2 pages). Peer group workshop.

Proofreading techniques for documentation

Week 12: (11/14) Narration, Interviews and Graphs

DUE: Draft of final paper/peer review workshop.

Week 13 :(11/31) Persuasion and Argumentation Review.

(Thanksgiving campus holiday 11/26-29)

WRITING WORKSHOP

Week 14: (12/5) Final revision questions and discussion of projects.

Course evaluation/LAST WRITING WORKSHOP

Week 15: (12/12) Discussion of projects.

Hand in paper to me in person. Brief student roundtable. Party?

Documentary film TBA. Brief quiz on 3 of your own sources.

PAPER CALENDAR

9/12 In-class documentary film review

10/3 In-class analysis of student-chosen source article

10/17 Working outline and annotated bibliography for final paper [see Hacker and handout].

11/7 Final paper proposal (SEE handout) approx. 2 pages, to formally plan your final research project. This may be turned in for approval earlier, if you want additional time.

11/14 Draft of final paper (10 page/6 sources on approved topic.) No Wikipedia sources.

12/12 Final paper w/works cited, draft with notes, and revised outline attached.

AUTHOR INTERVIEW

What drew you to this story?

I first came across the killer Dr. H. H. Holmes during the early phase of my search for *Isaac's Storm*. I found his story immediately compelling, but only when I began reading about the glories of the World's Columbian Exposition did the story take on the larger resonance that I look for in a book. Taken together, the stories of how Daniel Burnham built the fair and how Dr. Holmes used it for murder formed an entirety that was far greater than the story of either man alone would have been. I found it extraordinary that during this period of nearly miraculous creativity there should also exist a serial killer of such appetite and industry. The juxtaposition of the architect and the murderer seemed to open a window on the forces shaping the American soul at the dawn of the 20th century. The fair drew so many of history's brightest lights, from Buffalo Bill to Susan B. Anthony, that doing my research was like crashing a very classy Gilded Age party.

The Devil in the White City is rich with detail. How did you do your research?

First I should say that I always work alone. No researchers, no assistants. I need first-hand contact with my sources—for example, I found it infinitely valuable to be able to touch the original postcards on which Patrick Prendergast revealed his insane delusion, one that would bring the fair to such a tragic end. The obvious pressure he placed on his pencil as he wrote brought his part of the story vividly to life. I love a good archive. Call me boring, but to me every book is a detective story, every archive a misty alley full of intrigue and desire. Tracking Daniel Burnham was relatively straightforward, as Chicago has several marvelous archives full of fair material; tracking Holmes proved far more difficult. I pieced his story together from bits of evidence in far-flung places, much as a prosecuting attorney forges an iron-clad case out of bits of forensic evidence. One high point was coming across the actual death decree for Holmes in the files of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, complete with its ribbon and gold seal. Another occurred when I paid a visit to Holy Cross Cemetery outside Philadelphia and saw the original entry for Holmes's plot in the cemetery's death registry. As I stepped onto the grass in the vicinity of his unmarked grave, under dark clouds, a thunder-clap boomed through the sky. It was a little too spooky, actually, given the Holmes curse. I left soon afterward.

Why was the Columbian Exposition (Chicago World's Fair of 1893) so important to our country at the time?

In the Gilded Age, America was a prideful place, aware of its growing strength as a world power. The fair became an expression of that pride, and a vehicle for redressing the nation's earlier humiliation at the hands of the French at the Exposition Universelle of 1889, which gave Paris the Eiffel Tower and showed off France's self-proclaimed superiority in art, manufacturing, science, and engineering. The creators of the Chicago fair resolved from the start that no matter what the cost, they would build a fair bigger and more glamorous than the Paris exposition. That they succeeded, against amazing odds, is one of American history's great forgotten miracles. But the fair also was Chicago's redemption. The city had long felt itself to be lacking the refinement of New York—a condition New York flogged at every opportunity. Part of what drove Daniel Burnham to build so grand a fair was his own, and Chicago's, yearning to show the world that the city could do much more than butcher cattle and hogs.

What lasting impact did this fair have on Chicago and on America?

In the hands of Daniel Burnham, the fair became a dream city, so lovely it was immediately nicknamed the White City. It showed how beautiful and safe and clean a city could be, and in so doing caused millions of Americans to reevaluate the aesthetics of their own local worlds. Suddenly every municipality wanted a building that evoked the miracle of the White City—much to the dismay of architect Louis Sullivan, who believed the fair had killed an emerging, uniquely American brand of architecture. That the fair did cause a shift back to classical styles is beyond argument, but in the end this shift opened the national psyche to the power of architecture and in so doing may well have paved the way for the work of the greatest 20th century architects, including Frank Lloyd Wright and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Because of Burnham's success in building the White City, many cities, including Cleveland, Washington, Manila, San Francisco, and Chicago, asked him to create citywide plans. One result is Chicago's open, appealing lakefront and its glorious "Miracle Mile." It was Burnham, by the way, who persuaded a railroad tycoon to remove his tracks and depot from the heart of what is now the lovely unobstructed expanse of grass and reflecting pools that stretches from the U.S. Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. His fame gave him important later commissions, such as the Flatiron Building in New York and Washington's Union Station.

Why do you find Daniel Burnham and Dr. H. H. Holmes so fascinating?

I find each compelling in his own right, but especially compelling when taken together as cultural antipodes that each embodied some element of the forces then propelling America toward the 20th century. Burnham designed buildings that previously had never been attempted—with his partner John Root, his firm built the first structure ever to be called a skyscraper, despite soil conditions that should have made the task impossible. I find it nothing short of miraculous that he was able to lead the fair to completion in so short a time, against obstacles that would have stymied a lesser man. Meanwhile, here was Holmes, himself something of an architect, building a hotel that was a parody of everything architects held dear—yet that in its own way was equally, if darkly, miraculous: a building designed for murder. I found it so marvelously strange that both these men should be operating at the same time in history, within blocks of each other, both creating powerful legacies, one of brilliance and energy, the other of sorrow and darkness. What better metaphor for the forces that would shape the 20th century into a time of monumental technical achievement and unfathomable evil?