

English Composition 105: Expository Writing
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
Northeastern Wisconsin Lutheran High School
Spring 2009, 3 undergraduate credits

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Course Description: **Expository Writing** is a follow-up course to **College Writing**. It is offered to those students who have successfully completed their first semester college writing class. It again emphasizes writing as a process that involves prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. The course focuses on both reading critically and writing well. In each unit, students will be introduced to a variety of essays or excerpts from the works of professional writers. These will include autobiography, reflection, explanation, speculation about cause and effect, proposal to solve a problem, and argument for or against a position. Students will first read and discuss each essay for meaning and then read it again through the eyes of a writer. These essays will serve as models to the student writers, who will concentrate on invention and research, drafting, reading a draft critically, revising, editing and proofreading, and, finally, reflecting on what they have learned. Vocabulary study will be a part of each unit. Peer review will be an important part of the course.

Required Text and Materials:

Text:

Axelrod, Rise B., Charles R. Cooper, Alison M. Warriner. *Reading Critically Writing Well: A Reader and Guide 7th Edition*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2005

Other Materials:

You will need a separate writing journal (a spiral notebook is fine) and a 1 in. 3-ring binder with an inside pocket. You will use the e-mail through UWGB.

Course Objectives

The students will. .

- learn how to analyze the content and craft of successful writing and apply what they have learned to their own writing;
- view writing as a process and become adept at working through that process;
- learn to move smoothly from critical reading to effective writing;

employ a variety of strategies from annotating and summarizing to exploring the significance of figurative language and judging the writer's credibility;
learn to examine and assess the effectiveness of a writer's choices in light of the purpose and audience;
engage in constructive peer critique of their classmates' writing;
learn to evaluate sources, integrate them smoothly with their own writing, and cite them properly, using the most current MLA and APA styles
increase their vocabulary through the identification and study of unfamiliar words.
gain confidence in themselves as critical readers and effective writers.

Course Outline

Unit One: Autobiography

A Guide to Reading Autobiography
Anne Dillard, "An American Childhood"
Luis Rodriguez, "Always Running"
Amy Wu, "A Different Kind of Mother"
A Guide to Writing Autobiography

Unit Two: Reflection

A Guide to Reading Reflective Essays
Brent Staples, "Black Men and Public Space"
Brent Staples, excerpt from *Parallel Time*
Nancy Gibbs, "Free the Children"
Katherine Haines (student), "Whose Body is This?"
A Guide to Writing Reflective Essays

Unit Three: Explaining Concepts

A Guide to Reading Essays Explaining Concepts
Howard Gardner and Joseph Walters, "A Rounded Version: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences"
Deborah Tannen, "Marked Women"
Linh Kieu Ngo (student writer), "Cannibalism: It Still Exists"
A Guide to Writing Essays Explaining Concepts

Unit Four: Taking a Position

A Guide to Reading Evaluations
Richard Estrada, "Sticks and Stones and Sports Team Names"
Brent Knutson, "Auto Liberation"
Christine Romano, "Children Need to Play, Not Compete"
"Similitude"
Guide to Writing Position Papers

Unit Five: Speculating about Causes or Effects

A Guide to Reading Essays Speculating about Causes or Effects

Stephen King, "Why We Crave Horror Movies"

Natalie Angier, "Intolerance of Boyish Behavior"

Jonathan Kozol, "The Human Cost of an Illiterate Society"

La Donna Beaty (student writer), "What Makes a Serial Killer?"

A Guide to Writing Essays Speculating about Causes or Effects

Unit Six: Proposal to Solve a Problem

A Guide to Reading Proposals

Robert J. Samuelson, "Reforming Schools through a Federal Test for College Aid"

Mark Hertsgaard, "A Global Green Deal"

Patrick O'Malley, "More Testing, More Learning"

A Guide to Writing Proposals

Chapter Nine: Position Paper

A Guide to Reading Position Papers

Richard Estrada, "Sticks and Stones and Sports Team Names"

Stanley Kurtz, "Point of No Return"

Jonathan Rauch, "Who's More Worthy?"

Randall Kennedy, "You Can't Judge a Crook by His Color"

A Guide to Writing Position Papers

Writing Requirements and Expectations

For one class period, five days a week, you are a student of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and, as such, much will be expected of you. These are things you should know about a college course:

- ~ It is expected that you will do all of the work that is assigned and that you will come to class prepared to participate.
- ~ All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period for which they were assigned. They must be turned in on or before the due date. **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR CREDIT** except under very unusual circumstances. If you are absent, you should email your assignment to me.
- ~All final drafts are to be typed, double-spaced, and contain all appropriate bibliographic data. Consult your handbook for the correct format. When using information from the Internet, you must attach the printout of the material with the cited information highlighted.
- ~ You are expected to hand in work that is mechanically and grammatically correct. Errors in spelling, punctuation, usage, etc., are unacceptable. Edit your work carefully and, when In doubt, check your handbook.

- ~ Daily participation in class discussions, daily writing/notebook, minor and major papers, and your finished portfolio will determine your grade.
- ~ All work in the course must be your original work. The consequences of plagiarism can range from a failing grade for an individual assignment to removal from the class and a zero for the course. Do not put yourself in the position of having your integrity questioned.

Special Organizational Criteria:

All essays must be computer-generated, using a 12 font and 1-inch margins. The header should appear on the right side and should include name, assignment title, and date (single-spaced). Example:

Leanne Lange
Narrative Essay
Date

Writing Portfolio:

Your assignments need to be organized in your binder by unit and clearly labeled.

Example of binder organization:

Unit One: Critical Thinking through Reading and Writing (title page or divider p.)

- Page 1: Notes from unit readings
- Page 2: Writing assignment one
- Page 3: Writing assignment two
- Page 4: Writing assignment three
- Page 5: Reflection

Final Portfolio Assessment:

From among all of the writing you have done, choose your best work (at least three pieces) and write a short defense (approx. 1 page) of each work. In conclusion, write a final reflection paper that covers the entire semester. You do not have to note each piece of work that you have done; instead, write a summary of your growth as a writer. Please include specific examples to show the areas in which you have experienced the most improvement (as well as areas where improvement is still needed). Please feel free to give me constructive criticism about the class.

Conferences:

You will be required to meet with me twice during the semester for a one-on-one review of your writing progress. You must take the responsibility for scheduling these conferences (preferably before school or during PLC). Begin scheduling conferences after the fourth week of class.

Student-generated Vocabulary Study:

Vocabulary study will be part of each unit. As you read, you will be expected to enter unfamiliar words into your notebooks and look up the meaning of the words as they were used in the context of the work. On alternate Mondays, you will be encouraged to give your instructor a list of words that you would like to see included on the vocabulary quiz that you will take on the following Friday. Each quiz will consist of twenty words that were suggested by students. You will be given the words to study at least one week prior to each quiz.

Assessment:

You will be given due dates for all assignments. Work must be completed prior to the beginning of class. If you are going to be absent, you may e-mail the assignment to me on or before the due date (langel@uwgb.edu). All e-mailed work must be submitted in a compatible format, and your name needs to be typed in the memo line.

When evaluating your papers, I will consider the following:

- ~ content
- ~ logic
- ~ voice
- ~ your individual progress in writing
- ~ documentation
- ~ mechanics, including grammar and sentence structure
- ~ specific assignment requirements

Keep a file (I will have a file drawer available) of all your written assignments, including copies of each draft. At the end of each unit, you can choose the writings that you think reflect your progress in the course and place them into your portfolio. At the end of the semester, I will evaluate your portfolio and class participation to determine your grade.

We will follow the UWGB guideline (as listed below) for grading. Please keep in mind that most universities do not accept transfer credits with a grade lower than a C.

UWGB Grading Scale:

A	100 - 93.5
AB	93.4 – 89.5
B	89.4 – 84.5
BC	84.4 – 79.5
C	79.4 -69.5
D	69.4 – 59.5
F	59.4 & below

Attendance and Participation:

Because this writing course is student-centered, your consistent attendance and active participation is crucial to your success. More than five absences, therefore, will result in a lower course grade and ten or more absences may result in a failure. Please do not make your scheduled appointments during our class time. An unexcused tardy will count as an absence for the day.

Do not bring work from other classes into your college writing class. The entire time must be spent on the writing process or participating in class discussions. This cannot happen if you are studying for a test or completing an assignment for a different class. Failure to abide by this rule will lower your grade.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any special needs or concerns. My goal as your instructor is for you to become a competent and confident writer, one who is well prepared for a successful college experience.

Expository Writing Assignment Guide
Spring Semester 2009

Unit One: Autobiography

Objectives: By reading and studying examples of autobiographical writing, you (the student) will learn to explore your own past experiences, immersing yourself in the sights, sounds, and other sensations of memory. You will realize that autobiographical essays center on a single event that occurred over a short period of time or on a person who played a significant role in your life. You will recognize the importance of choosing words and details that will evoke a vivid and lasting impression in the mind of your reader. You will practice and become adept at using two of the most basic writing strategies—narration and description—to convey the autobiographical significance of certain events and/or people in your life.

Date	Assignment
January 21	Introduction to Expository Writing 105
January 22	Read chap. 1 and chap. 2 through p. 15. Write a response to “Thinking About Your Experience with Autobiography,” p. 15.
January 23	Read “An American Childhood.” Notebook Assn.: Do the three activities suggested under “Reading for Meaning,” pp. 20-21 (Read to Comprehend, Read to Respond, and Read to Analyze).
January 26	Read and study the strategies for critical reading in Appendix 1, pp. 647-670. Now, re-read “An American Childhood,” this time using the eyes of a writer. Be prepared to contribute to group discussion. In class: Working with a partner, do all of the exercises under “Reading Like a Writer.” You will share the results in class on Tues.
January 27	Class discussion of “An American Childhood.” Be prepared for a notebook check.
January 28	Read “Always Running” and take notes on all of the suggested activities under “Reading for Meaning.” Student-led discussion (Max B.)
January 29	Read “A Different Kind of Mother,” taking notes on suggested activities pp. 56-58. Instructor-led discussion.
January 30	Read at least one of the remaining autobiographical works. Choose a selection that you found especially effective. Be prepared to work with a group in analyzing the reasons for its effectiveness. Each group will choose one person to report to the class. Each of you will then do the writing assn. at the bottom of p. 69 (due Monday).
February 2	Notebook check (include today’s assn.).
February 3	Unit paper due for peer review: Choose a topic from one of the suggestions Under “Considering Ideas for Your Own Writing,” which follows each of the six unit essays (2-3 pp.).
February 4	Read “A Guide to Writing Autobiography,” pp. 70-81. Choose a topic and begin developing it into an essay.

February 5	Writer's lab
February 6	Have your autobiographical essay ready for peer review.
February 9	Write a unit reflection following the guidelines on p. 82 (you may use the class period to do this and to organize all of your unit papers and notes into a portfolio). All notes must be clearly labeled by essay title, sub-heading, and p. number. They may be typed or hand-written (or a combination of both), but all should be in the order in which they were assigned. Your completed portfolio must be in your file by the end of class tomorrow (Feb. 10).

Unit Two: Reflection

Objectives: In this unit, you will take what you learned in unit one a step further as you write about your experiences in order to explore their possible meanings. You will learn to use vivid description in your writing so that your reader can imagine it clearly and become mentally and emotionally involved in your experience. You will study model essays that examine social change, cultural customs, and traditional values. In your own writing, you will be encouraged to take a new look at even the most familiar people and events in your life and examine the impact they have had on how you view yourself, your community, and society at large. Finally, you will come to think of reflective writing as a lively conversation in which you question and explore your own and your reader's beliefs and values in an ever-changing society.

Date	Assignment
February 11	Read the intro. to chap. 4. Take notes on your experience with reflection and be prepared to share your thoughts in class.
February 12	Read "Black Men and Public Space" and work through the "Reading for Meaning" exercises, pp.165-167. In class, work with a partner on the "Reading Like a Writer" section. In your notebook, respond to the four "write" sections on pp. 168-170.
February 13	Student-led discussion on "Black Men and Public Space." (Sam)
February 16	Read the excerpt from Brent Staples' autobiography <i>Parallel Time</i> . Write an essay in which you compare/contrast this work with "Black Men and Public Space." (You will find helpful tips for this assn. on p. 171.) approx. 2 pp. Peer review.
February 17	Work day
February 18	Read "Free the Children," working through both the "Reading for Meaning" and the "Reading Like a Writer" exercises. Student-led discussion on the essay (Kaitlyn).
February 19	Read "Whose Body Is This?" and do the writing assn. under "Reading for Meaning," p. 210.
February 20	Work day on unit paper: Choose one of the suggested topics under "Considering Idea for Your Own Writing," which follow each of the essays in this chap. (approx. 2 pp.)
February 23	Peer review of unit paper. Revise.

February 24	Read "A Guide to Writing Reflective Essays," pp. 212-223. Choose a topic and begin to plan your reflective essay (work day).
February 25	Writer's lab
February 26	2-3 page Reflection Paper ready for peer review.
February 27	"Reflecting on What You Have Learned," pp. 222-223.
March 2	Unit Two Portfolio due. Include all notes arranged in order, your Staples' Comparison paper, Unit paper, Reflection paper, and unit reflection. This is due at the beginning of class today.

Unit Three: Explaining Concepts

Objectives: In this unit, you will learn strategies for critically reading the textbooks and other concept-centered material in your college courses. You will practice and become adept at writing a commonly-used type of essay assignment and exam. You will become better acquainted with the basic modes of development used in all types of explanatory writing: definition, classification, comparison and contrast, process narration, cause and effect, and illustration. Furthermore, you will be able to recognize what makes explanatory writing interesting and informative and will come to realize that such writing must be incremental, always keeping the interest and the knowledge of the audience in mind as you attempt to explain or clarify a concept.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
March 3	Read intro. to chap. 5. In your notebook, respond to "Thinking about your experience with explanatory writing," p. 226.
March 4	Read "Marked Women," with written response to the strategies under "Reading for Meaning." Student-led discussion (Kelsey).
March 5	Work day to prepare for "A Rounded Version: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences."
March 6	No school!
March 9	Having taken thoughtful notes on all of the suggested strategies following "The Theory of Multiple Intelligences," be prepared to participate in a student-led discussion (Jesse).
March 10	Read "Cannibalism: It Still Exists" and write a one-page summary of the essay (tips on bottom of p. 306). Student-led discussion (Max G).
March 11	Work on Unit Paper. Choose one of the suggested topics under "Considering Ideas for Your Own Writing," which follows each of the essays.
March 12	Peer review of Unit Paper. Revise
March 13	Read pp. 314-325. Choose a topic for a 2-3 p. paper in which you explain a concept.
March 16	Peer review of major paper (explaining a concept).
March 17	Work on revisions

- March 18 Write a unit reflection paper. Follow guidelines on pp. 324-25.
- March 19 Unit Three Portfolio is due at the beginning of class. Again, it must include All notes as well as minor and major papers, carefully labeled and in order. The class will begin watching "Similitude," in preparation for Unit Four.
- March 20 "Similitude"
- March 23-27 Spring Break! Enjoy!!

Unit Four: Taking a Position

Objectives: You will learn to use reasoned argument in order to make a point that you feel strongly about. You will come to realize that, although it is not possible to prove that a position on a controversial issue is completely right or wrong, it is often possible to convince others to consider a particular position seriously through reasoned argument. You will see the importance of giving your readers strong reasons and solid support while also anticipating opposing arguments. Finally, you will recognize the important role that position papers play in college, the workplace, and civic life. From reading and studying a variety of position papers, you will garner many ideas for writing effective position papers.

- March 30 Read the intro. Material for Position Papers. Write a response to "Thinking About Your Experience With Position Arguments," p. 573.
- March 31 Read "Sticks and Stones and Sports Team Names" and respond in writing to the suggested strategies under "Reading for Meaning." In class, work with a partner to complete "Reading Like a Writer" activities in your notebook.
- April 1 Student-led discussion on "Sticks and Stones. . ." (Andrew)
- April 2 Read "Auto Liberation" and complete the exercises under "Reading for Meaning." In class, work with a partner on analyzing Knutson's use of the counter-argument, pp. 625-26.
- April 3 Read "Children Need to Play, Not Compete." Take notes on activities on p. 632 ("Reading for Meaning" and "Reading Like a Writer") in preparation for discussion. Student-led discussion (Stephen).
- April 6 Read "A Guide to Writing Position Papers," pp. 634-645. Begin work on the 2-3 p. Unit Paper: Using both *Frankenstein* and "Similitude" as references, write a position paper about the moral implications of cloning. You may include other sources, as well.
- April 7 Peer review of Unit Paper. Revise.
- April 8 Choose a topic for your position paper. You may use one of the many ideas generated by this unit or choose a totally different topic about which you feel strongly.
- April 9 Work day
- April 10 – 13 No school. Happy Easter!!
- April 14 Peer review of position paper.
- April 15 Write a unit reflection paper, based on ques. 1 & 2, pp. 645-46.

April 16 Unit portfolio due at the beginning of the class period.

Unit Five: Speculating about Causes or Effects

Objectives: In this unit, you will read and write speculative essays about causes and effects that cannot be known for certain. You will come to see that such writing plays an important role in almost all aspects of life and is especially important in college study. From the readings and from the ideas for writing that follow each reading, you will get ideas for your own essay speculating about causes or effects, which will involve some of the most challenging problem-solving and decision-making situations you will face as a writer. You will learn to speculate about probably causes and then argue with relevant facts, statistics, or anecdotes to support your opinion. Furthermore, you will continue to gage your readers' knowledge and attitudes, thus anticipating their objections and discovering ways to convince them to take your speculations seriously.

- April 20 Read the intro. Material to chap. 7 and Stephen King's "Why We Crave Horror Movies." Do the writing activities under "Reading for Meaning." In class, work with a partner to analyze King's writing, using the activities under "Reading Like A Writer."
- April 21 Student-led discussion on King's essay (Ashley)
- April 22 Read "Intolerance of Boyish Behavior." Do the exercises under "Reading to Comprehend," p. 417 and "Reading Like a Writer," p. 418-19. Student-led Discussion (Aaron).
- April 23 No class. Service Day!
- April 24 Read "The Human Cost of an Illiterate Society." In your notebook, complete "Read to Comprehend," and "Read to Analyze Underlying Assumptions." In class, work with a partner in analyzing Kozol's proposed effects ("Analyze" and "Write," p. 461.
- April 27 Read "What Makes a Serial Killer?" and do the "Reading for Meaning" activities that follow the essay. In class, discuss the points under "Reading Like a Writer" with a partner.
- April 28 Student-led discussion of "What Makes a Serial Killer?" (Meghan) Choose any essay in this unit and review its effectiveness with a small group. Then, do the writing activity on p. 477. (Due Thurs.)
- April 29 Work day to complete the writing assignment and to read pp. 478-491.
- April 30 Discuss the written assignment and the reading assignment. For your 2-3 p. unit paper, choose one of the topics under "Considering Ideas for Your Own Writing" that follow each reading. (Due Mon.)
- May 1 Work day
- May 4 Peer review of unit paper. Revise.
- May 5 Choose a topic for your "Speculating about Causes and Effects" paper. Do the Necessary research and write the 2-3 p paper. (Due on Thurs.)
- May 6 Work day.

- May 7 Peer review of paper. Revise.
- May 8 “Reflecting on What You Have Learned,” p. 491
- May 11 Unit portfolio is due at the beginning of class. It must include all notes and minor papers, the unit paper, the major paper, and the reflection.

Unit Six: Proposal to Solve a Problem

Objectives: In this unit, you will learn to write an effective essay in which you propose a solution to a problem affecting a community or group to which you belong. After analyzing the problem and determining that it is serious enough to warrant solving, you will offer a solution that will remedy the problem or at least help to solve it. You will realize the importance of taking into account your readers’ likely objections to your proposal as well as their alternative solutions. Furthermore, you will develop a critical questioning attitude as you study various approaches to bringing about change, puzzling over how a goal might be achieved, questioning why a process unfolds in a particular way, or posing challenges to the status quo. You will recognize that this type of writing demands creativity and imagination and the willingness to look at problems and solutions from new perspectives.

- May 12 Read the introductory material and “Reforming Schools through a Federal Test of College Aid” and do the activities under “Reading for Meaning.” Work With a partner or a group on the “Reading Like a Writer” activities, pp.502-06.
- May 13 Student-led discussion on “Reforming Schools. . .” (MacKenzie)
- May 14 Read “More Testing, More Learning.” Complete the “Read to Respond” Activity, p. 550 and the “Analyze” and “Write” activities on p. 551. In class— Student-led discussion on the essay (Dylan).
- May 15 Read “A Global Green Deal” and do the “Analyze” and “Write” activities on p. 534. Student-led class discussion (Kalin). For Monday, read “A Guide to Writing Proposals,” pp. 558-570. Choose a topic for your own proposal and begin writing it, keeping in mind the points listed on p. 557.
- May 18 Work day
- May 19 Peer review of proposals. Revise.
- May 20 Unit Six portfolio due (this will contain only the notebook entries and your Proposal paper).

Final Portfolio

- May 22 Semester portfolio due (this must include the three papers from the semester that reflect your best work along with any revisions that you’ve made, a defense of each paper, and a final reflection on the semester).

Congratulations! You have achieved your goal and are well-prepared for college writing assignments.