

In 1981 I developed IUP's 1st WAC program, at the Armstrong Campus. I gave workshops to faculty that year and developed the attached booklet, which you may copy & distribute if you wish. I have presented nationally (NARDSPE, CCCC) on composition theory and WAC and published in such journals as Teaching English in the Two-Year College, the Writing Center Journal, & TFCOL Vol 13

LSC # 77
Action 4-10-24-91

well..

COVER SHEET: Request for Approval to Use W-Designation

TYPE I. PROFESSOR COMMITMENT

(X) Professor Malcolm Hayward Phone 2322

(X) Writing Workshop? (If not at IUP, where? when? _____)

(X) Proposal for one W-course (see instructions below)

(X) Agree to forward syllabi for subsequently offered W-courses?

TYPE II. DEPARTMENTAL COURSE

() Department Contact Person _____ Phone _____

() Course Number/Title _____

() Statement concerning departmental responsibility _____

() Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

TYPE III. SPECIFIC COURSE AND SPECIFIC PROFESSOR(S)

(X) Professor(s) Malcolm Hayward Phone 2322

(X) Course Number/Title EN 381 Poverty & Class in Literature

(X) Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

SIGNATURES:

Professor(s) Malcolm Hayward

Department Chairperson James T. Craig

College Dean R. Sawyer

Director of Liberal Studies CD [Signature] 10-24-91

COMPONENTS OF A PROPOSAL FOR A WRITING-INTENSIVE COURSE:

- I. "Writing Summary"--one or two pages explaining how writing is used in the course. First, explain any distinctive characteristics of the content or students which would help the Liberal Studies Committee understand your summary. Second, list and explain the types of writing activities; be especially careful to explain (1) what each writing activity is intended to accomplish as well as the (2) amount of writing, (3) frequency and number of assignments, and (4) whether there are opportunities for revision. If the activity is to be graded, indicate (5) evaluation standards and (6) percentage contribution to the student's final grade.
- II. Copy of the course syllabus.
- III. Samples of assignment sheets, instructions, or criteria concerning writing that are given to students.

one copy

Provide 12 copies to the Liberal Studies Committee. Please number all pages.

WRITING SUMMARY: EN 381 POVERTY AND CLASS IN LITERATURE

EN 381 Poverty and Class in Literature is proposed for identification as a "W" course. The course is an English Major elective; students may be sophomores through seniors. Class size is limited to 25 students.

The writing in the course will take the following forms:

1. Writing to deepen a response to a text. The students will be asked to keep a "readings log" in which they are to respond to each of the texts that they read for the course as well as to write about events in their lives or other readings they may be doing that bear directly upon the issues raised in the texts. This assignment will be graded, but it will not be evaluated for specific writing skills (ie, grammar and organization will not be checked). Evaluation will be on the basis of cogency of analysis and both breadth and depth of the students' writings about the texts and issues (for example, can the student respond at more than one level to the texts? Can the student find connections between texts or between texts and life events? Is the student able to bring to bear on the texts work in other courses?) The assignment is designed to help the students think about the ways that the texts that they are reading may be integrated into issues in their lives. The writing will also help the students develop ideas for other types of writing assignments, such as the critical paper. 30% of final grade.

2. Writing for professional purposes. The students will be asked to complete a critical paper of 8 to 12 pages in which they will apply critical theory to a work they have read either in or out of class. The writing here is of a formal nature and they will be expected to adhere to standard conventions of written English and to present the work in a polished form, using an appropriate organization. The work will go through several drafts, with the instructor responding to the initial draft in a conference with the student. The purpose of this type of writing is to help the student learn to write in a professional setting. The papers will be modeled upon the type of writing found in scholarly journals. The writing in this form is particularly important for those students planning to pursue a career in English, as most of the students in the class will. 40% of final grade.

3. Writing for personal awareness. There are a number of exercises in the course that are designed to help the students become more aware of their own personal stakes in the issues of poverty and class in present day America. The exercises demand a personal engagement with the issues through such means as interviews and observations. Here the focus is on using writing as a way to help students think seriously and consistently about the world around them and the ways in which class affects others and themselves. Writing will be evaluated according to the students' abilities to present a comprehensive and well organized report of the things that they have seen. 30% of final grade.

4. Writing for creative purposes. Several of the exercises in the class are designed to allow the students to express themselves creatively through such means as poems, drama,

or short stories. I feel it is important for students in literature classes to have the creative as well as the critical experience of producing in forms that the authors that they are reading do. The writing here will be shared with members of the class both through oral presentation and in a published form.

5. Writing for evaluation. The students will be asked to take an exam at the end of the course. Here the purpose of the writing and of the exam is to help students put together many of the ideas that they have come into contact with in the course. The writing will be judged on their ability to organize consistent arguments in favor of positions that they wish to take in regards to the issues raised in the questions. 10% of final grade.

EN 381 Poverty and Class in Literature Dr. Hayward Spring 1992

Course Objectives. The purpose of this course is to examine literary works that document the effects of class and caste division upon people. It also examines some of the theoretical grounds by which we can understand the nature of such divisions. More specifically, I would like for us to reach the following objectives:

1. To read and respond to a number of literary works in different genres and from different cultures in which the effects of poverty and class are described. In one way this will be an opportunity to seek for certain invariants in the nature of poverty as it is portrayed in literature, as well as to find cultural differences in the literature of class.
2. To come to a theoretical understanding of some of the forces that shape a system of class and caste today and that have acted in the past to form such a system.
3. To see in what ways the portrayal of caste and class in literature may be found to be an actual reflection of the ways that society is shaped now, through the observation of our own environment.
4. To appreciate how we ourselves may be complicitous or resistant in elements of class and caste within our own lives.

Texts. Required:

Stephen Crane. Maggie, a Girl of the Streets. Norton.

Charles Dickens. Oliver Twist. Oxford UP.

Terry Eagleton. Marxism and Literary Criticism. U of California P.

Nikki Giovanni. My House. Morrow.

Nikolai Gogol. Dead Souls. Airmont.

Arthur Morrison. Tales of Mean Streets. Academy Chi.

Cathie Pelletier. The Beans of Maine. Macmillan.

Tennessee Williams. A Streetcar Named Desire. NAL.

Optional:

Karl Marx. Class Struggles in France. NY Labor News.

---. The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. International Publishers.

Raymond Williams. Marxism and Literature. Oxford UP.

Assignments.

There are five categories of assignments:

1. The readings log. I would like you to respond to each of the texts that we read for the course as well as to write about events in your lives or other readings that bear directly upon the issues raised in the texts. This assignment will be graded, but it will not be evaluated for specific writing skills (ie, grammar and organization will not be checked). Evaluation will be on the basis of cogency of analysis and both breadth and depth of your writing about the texts and issues (for example, can you respond at more than one level to the texts? Can you find connections between texts or between texts and life events? Are you able to bring to bear on the texts work in other courses?) The assignment is designed to help you think about the ways that the texts that you are reading may be integrated into issues in your lives. The writing will also help you develop ideas for other types of writing assignments, such as the critical paper. You should write approximately 400 words per week. 30% of final grade.

2. A critical paper. You should complete a critical paper of 8 to 12 pages in which you will apply critical theory to a work you have read either in or out of class that has to do with the subject matter of the course. The writing here is of a formal nature and you will be expected to adhere to standard conventions of written English and to present the work in a polished form, using an appropriate organization. The work will go through several drafts, with your instructor responding to the initial draft in a conference. The purpose of this type of writing is to help you learn to write in a professional setting. The papers will be modeled upon the type of writing found in scholarly journals. The writing in this form is particularly important for those students planning to pursue a career in English, as most of the students in the class will. 40% of final grade.

3. Exercises. There are a number of exercises in the course that are designed to help you become more aware of your own personal stakes in the issues of poverty and class in present day America. The exercises demand a personal engagement with the issues through such means as interviews and observations. Here the focus is on using writing as a way to help you think seriously and consistently about the world around you and the ways in which class affects others and yourself. Writing will be evaluated according to your ability to present a comprehensive and well organized report of the things that you have seen. 30% of final grade.

4. Creative work. Several of the exercises in the class are designed to allow you to

express yourself creatively through such means as poems, drama, or short stories. I feel it is important for students in literature classes to have the creative as well as the critical experience of producing in forms that the authors that you are reading do. The writing here will be shared with members of the class both through oral presentation and in a published form.

5. A final exam. This exam is to help you put together many of the ideas that you have come into contact with in the course. The writing will be judged on your ability to organize consistent arguments in favor of positions that you wish to take in regards to the issues raised in the questions. 10% of final grade.

Weekly assignments.

Week Number	Assignment
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Throughout the first six weeks of the course, please be reading Terry Eagleton's text. We will be making reference to the ideas developed therein as they may arise in the course of our discussions.

Novelists interpretations of poverty:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1-2 | Introduction. <u>Oliver Twist</u> . Children and poverty. Institutional basis of the class system. Exercise: Prepare a brief report (300-500 words) on poverty among children in American society. Are there children starving in America? What kinds of effects might we expect class to have on them? If you can include any personal knowledge, so much the better. |
| 3 | <u>Dead Souls</u> . Marxist analyses of economy and class structures. |
| 4 | <u>Maggie, a Girl of the Streets</u> . Women and poverty. The role of class in determining the position of women in modern society. Exercise: Prepare a brief report (300-500 words) on the effects of poverty and class on women. If you can combine your own ideas and readings with personal knowledge of someone in this position, so much the better. |
| 5-6 | <u>Tales of Mean Streets</u> . The working poor. Living conditions. Exercise: Go to and observe a poor part of either this town or a larger city, such as Johnstown or Pittsburgh. How many elements of this area are determined by poverty? Are there city services that are determined by the area (for example, in what condition are the streets and sidewalks)? Produce as complete and detailed a description of the area as possible and then create an analysis that |

links the conditions to class. You may wish to observe a wealthy part of the same town for comparative purposes and you may use descriptions of this area as well. How do you react to what you have seen? I do not mean this to be a voyeuristic exercise, so please take care during your observations. (500 words)

- 7 The Beans of Maine. Rural poverty. Exercise: Go to an area of rural poverty and observe life in this area, just as you did in the previous assignment. Explore the same sorts of questions. (500 words)
- 8 Regroup and prepare for the rest of the course. Topics for the critical paper due this week.
- 9 View The Grapes of Wrath. The class system and migrant workers. Opportunities for resistance. Religion--complicity or resistance?
- 10 View El Norte. The class system and the third world.
- 11 A Streetcar Named Desire. Read and view movie. Hollywood and class. Exercise: view a movie from the list to be provided. How does the movie engage your sympathies with those who have been dispossessed? Are there ways in which the movie tries to hold itself away from you? (500 words)
- 12 My House. Race and poverty.
- 13 Conferences in preparation for the final paper.
- 14 Paper due. Brief oral presentations of paper.

WRITING AND LEARNING:

AN OUTLINE ON THE USES OF COMPOSITION

Main Points

1. Composition can be an important learning tool beyond its value as communication.
2. Recent research suggests new approaches to structuring assignments and responding to student writing.
3. Detailed in this outline are several strategies for making use of composition in a course.

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September 1982

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WRITING AND LEARNING: A BRIEF OUTLINE ON THE USES OF COMPOSITION

I. BACKGROUND

- A. Traditional approaches to college composition have found the following to be most important functions of writing:
1. Recording important facts, dates, theories, and other materials for the future.
 2. An aid in the memorization of key ideas.
 3. A means of formal communication with the teacher for the purposes of evaluation.
 4. A preparation for future professional communication.
- B. Recent composition theory, while not rejecting the above, emphasizes the following:
1. Writing as a means of helping the students assimilate materials or to accommodate their ways of thinking to ideas, assuring better learning through active, personal involvement.
 2. Writing as a means of generating ideas that are given shape even as they are written down.
 3. Writing as a cognitive process, obeying its own set of internal rules, distinct from both speech and other forms of cognition.
- C. This shift in theory has several implications for the way writing is taught:
1. Writing is student-centered and/or process-center, not product-centered.
 2. Correctness, especially correctness of surface features such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling, has been de-emphasized as a goal, or at least put into perspective as belonging to an editorial or proof-reading stage of composition.
 3. Pre-writing activities (things done before the first draft), particularly invention, have been emphasized.
 4. A composition is to be seen as a part of a context, rather than an independent object.

D. In general, therefore, composition can be seen not just as an example of communication to evaluate by formal criteria, but as a powerful learning tool whose dynamics help the student grow. As such, composition may find wide pedagogical uses in all disciplines. The potential benefits of composition in any discipline are:

1. Integrated learning (rather than facts in isolation).
2. "Deeper" learning (fuller personal understanding).
3. Greater interest (through active involvement) in materials.
4. Broader learning (students go beyond specific materials and learn processes of thought).
5. More rapid learning.

II. STEPS TO USING WRITING AS A LEARNING TOOL

A. Define course objectives. Different types of writing assignments will best be suited to different objectives. Goals might be set:

1. For short term and long term learning.
2. In terms of course content.
3. In terms of general awareness of the discipline.
4. In terms of motivation and general attitude.
5. In terms of professional development.

B. Choose appropriate types of writing assignments. There are numerous types of writing that may have some benefits. Many of these are of course familiar, though others may be new:

1. Journals. Daily records emphasize a student's personal involvement with the material. Students may be asked to respond to readings, to class work, or to specific questions, or the journals may be left open to course ideas. Correctness is not crucial. Assignments are generally given in terms of word count. A student may be expected to write at the rate of 100 words the first 15 minutes, and about 100 words for each 20 to 30 minutes thereafter.
2. Logs. A log records work as it is being done. Often these are quite informal and used for later analyses. They teach exact description and attention to detail.
3. Analyses and other critical papers. These let students work with larger units of ideas and teach, generally, systematic ways of thinking. It is useful to detail the specific task to be accomplished (define, compare and contrast, find the causes or effects, etc.). They may be as brief as 100 words, as long as 1000 (but at the upper limits, for freshmen, the work becomes exceedingly difficult).

4. Primary research. This pushes students to try out ideas for themselves. Among the types frequently used are:
 - a. Experiments. These emphasize following specific formats for the verification of ideas.
 - b. Case studies. These show an interplay between an idea and description.
 - c. Interviews. These are helpful for broadening perspectives, for students to see how their ideas relate to those of others, and how to adopt another person's point of view.
 - d. Surveys. As with interviews, surveys help students get out of narrowly egocentric perspectives.
 5. The precis. This asks students to understand material well enough to condense it and retain the original tone and approach. It is a valuable adjunct to teaching careful critical reading.
 6. The review of a book or article. This seeks an interplay between analysis and evaluation, and so puts into perspective two different ways of dealing with information.
 7. Secondary research. The traditional research paper puts students in contact with ways of gathering information and organizing it. (But students at the freshman level are still very unsure of how to present their findings or document them and won't receive this instruction until English II.)
 8. The casebook exercise. The presentation of a professional problem, including data, audience, and a full rhetorical context, is highly motivational, giving students a strong sense of "real life."
 9. Free writing. Students are given a topic and asked to spend a set amount of time, often five or ten minutes, freely associating ideas on paper. The exercise is pleasant and may help generate new ideas.
- C. Fit the course objectives to the writing assignments. Some of the factors to be considered are:
1. Sequence the assignments. It is helpful to begin with simpler, more direct writing tasks.
 2. More frequent shorter assignments are more manageable for students than one or two long ones.
 3. Use the assignments to help students learn the terminology of a discipline or its methodology or its conventions or its particular patterns of inquiry.
 4. Clearly explain the purpose of each assignment and the intellectual demands to be made on the students.

- D. Define assignments with as full a rhetorical context as possible. The full context would include:
1. Purpose. What will this piece of writing seek to accomplish? Is it for information? Exploration? To direct an action? To persuade? To evaluate?
 2. Audience. Who is it to be written for? The layperson? The specialist? The teacher? Fellow students? The student him or her self?
 3. Topic and scope. It helps to be as precise as possible in defining the scope of the topic, the length in words, and the amount of detail to be used.
 4. Method of organization. Many freshmen lack organizational skills. Models or outlines will help.
 5. Conventions of the form. Many students have had little experience with some of the academic forms such as the critical analysis, the book review, or the research paper, for example. It will save time to define all aspects and expectations carefully.
 6. Criteria for evaluation. If the paper will be graded, students will want to know the basis of the grading system.
- E. Create Response Strategies. As the importance of the writing is in the process, rather than the finished product, a wide variety of responses are possible. Not all papers need to be read and marked for grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Alternatives include:
1. Noting the assignment as completing a certain number of words.
 2. Having other students read the assignment (and perhaps respond to it) in or out of class, in one to one exchanges or in small groups, with or without discussion.
 3. Having students read their own papers out loud to one another, to a group, or to the class.
 4. Reproduce, put on the screen, or read aloud selected student papers for discussion.
 5. Respond to the papers "holistically"; that is, state a single unified impression of the writing.

Although grammar, punctuation, and spelling may ultimately be important, excessive attention to these surface details may inhibit other, more important, stages of the composition process.

- F. Be willing to offer instruction along the way. Students may not know enough to ask the necessary questions when the assignment is first given. Give opportunities at various stages for questions to be raised. One important part of the instruction should be in invention, ways to help students generate ideas. Each discipline has evolved appropriate strategies to form ideas.

G. Respond to writing. There should be some sort of a "payoff" for completing the writing. The payoff can be in terms of grade, comment (by the instructor or other students), or completion of course requirements. Some of the best recent research emphasizes the following if you wish to write things on the students' papers or say things to them in person:

1. Use a limited number of criteria (and those should be clearly stated when the assignment is first made).
2. Be positive. Looking for the good in the writing will help you see the main points the student is trying to make.
3. See the writing as a process (for a large project, this may mean responding to the writing several times before the final product is complete).
4. Critical responses should offer the means of improvement--ways students can make changes for the future. Students need to be encouraged to succeed.
5. Avoid contradictory messages (this is not always easy; a student paper may have written on it both "Get to the point" and "Use supportive examples," or "diction--use a simpler word" and "vague word choice--be precise." All these are good advice, but a student will wonder, do I shorten or expand? Do I use the easier word or head for the thesaurus?).
6. Keep the comments brief and to the point. Overloading a paper with advice discourages students and gives them more than they can handle. Instead choose to make a few key points. Trying to mark everything is frustrating, very time-consuming, and ultimately, not very useful.

III. TYPES OF COMPOSITION DIFFICULTIES TO EXPECT, THEIR CAUSES, AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM. The freshmen in your classes may have some serious writing problems, particularly in the first semester. This does not mean that writing should be avoided. Writing is a powerful learning tool. Moreover, many studies suggest that quantity is an important factor in writing improvement, no matter what kind of responses are given. Some students will however not be able as yet to create the clear prose or lucid analyses you'd hope for. We have a number of students with SAT verbal scores in the 200's and 300's and little high school experience in writing. Some of the problems that may be found are:

A. Grammatical and punctuational problems. The causes may be complex, from dialect, to a weak mastery of the "print code" (the formal conventions of written discourse. Some errors, for example, result from misapplications of the print code or misunderstandings of some of its fine points. This is not all bad, for it shows students trying consciously to deal with our system of communication), to laziness, to developmental stages (for example, some sentence fragments are the result of a natural movement towards a more complex style and thus are "good" fragments). Some generalizations on dealing with these are:

1. When faced with a great mass of error, don't try to tackle everything; be selective.

2. Be upbeat. Grammatical error is not a perverse moral fault.
 3. Offer alternatives, particularly for errors involving complex syntax.
 4. Be willing to overlook error. Excessive attention to error will hinder your ability to respond to what students are trying to say.
- B. Spelling errors and words omitted. Occasionally we have cases of true dyslexia, but more often students must invest so much energy in mastering larger, more complex elements of the writing that they find it impossible to focus on details of the surface. Even when a student's attention is directed to a particular word or phrase, they may find it difficult to see any problem with it. A student asked to read aloud a sentence with a missing word will frequently replace the word when reading, but may still be unable to state which word is missing. This is a result of normal processes of learning to read. You might help students discover patterns of spelling errors or individual words consistently misspelled. The concern with spelling should, however, take into account the formality of the assignment; that is, you might have higher expectations for a research paper than a journal.
- C. Poor organizational techniques. Organization is an important focus for the English I course, but many students have trouble with the formal demands of organizational patterns. Students may be helped by detailing a clear-cut organization for the piece to be written ("write it in four parts; first the background, then the problem, etc."), or by exploring alternative examples of similar cases, or by offering models before the paper is to be written.
- D. Weak cognitive abilities. Some students are still at the stage, in Piaget's terms, of concrete operational thought, particularly in areas that are new to them. They may find it literally impossible to conceive of the problem in the ways you would like or to perform the necessary symbolic manipulations of ideas to achieve a satisfactory result. Some possible solutions include:
- a. Breaking the writing task down into discrete, unified steps.
 - b. Providing models of successful assignments that the students may pattern their work after.
 - c. Being as specific as possible in the assignment.
 - d. Putting the assignment in as simple terms as possible.
- E. Poor reading skills. What appears as a writing problem, particularly in organization and diction, and sometimes in syntax, may be the result of an inability to master the ideas from a text--or even from an assignment. No easy solution exists to improve reading, but discussions of note-taking techniques and of ways to master the particular text in your course may help. Assignments phrased so to be easy to read and understand will help students achieve a successful assignment.