

College Writing I - 16257 - ENG 11011 – 051

Instructor: Mr. Jason W. Ellis

Meeting Place and Time: SFH 211, TTh @ 3:45PM – 5:00PM

Office and Office Hours: SFH 203-E, Tuesdays @ 2:30PM – 3:30PM

Contact: dynamicsubspace@gmail.com

## 1. Introduction: Mapping the Brain, Writing the Mind

In this course, you will develop your writing in accordance with a number of requirements established by the Kent State University Writing Program. These goals include writing a minimum of 20 pages of graded writing, using writing as a tool to further your overall composing acumen, communicating across media, and developing critical thinking and research skills. We will accomplish these goals by thinking about the human brain. In particular, we will discuss how important our brains are to constructing our personal reality and how we can work with the biological wiring of our brains to maximize our personal development. You will learn valuable and interesting things about how the human brain works. Additionally, we will read nonfiction and fictional accounts of brain trauma that affect the lives of those injured and those close to the injured. During this exploration of the human brain, we will endeavor to learn more about our own brain through semester-long writing assignments. Of these writings, there will be several major essays that you will have the opportunity to revise throughout the semester to submit for final grading as a portfolio at the end of the semester. It is important for you to realize that your grade in this class is dependent upon the amount of work that you put into it in addition to the quality of your writing. Along the way, I will guide the class as a whole and I will provide individual feedback to each student to improve her or his writing. It will be your responsibility to ask me questions relevant to the course and your writing, and it will also be up to each student to track her or his own progress in the course and see me during my office hours or by appointment regarding grades.

## 2. Required and Recommended Texts

Required:

Galchen, Rivka. *Atmospheric Disturbances*. New York: Picador, 2009. Print.

O'Shea, Michael. *The Brain: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford UP, 2006. Print.

Sacks, Oliver. *An Anthropologist on Mars: Seven Paradoxical Tales*. New York: Vintage, 1996. Print.

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Recommended:

Wysocki, Anne F. and Dennis A. Lynch. *The DK Handbook (2nd Edition)*. New York: Longman, 2010. Print.

### 3. Class Materials

Loose leaf paper and pen. On exam days, you are required to bring a Blue Exam Book—these may be purchased in the campus bookstore. You may bring your laptop to class for many assignments, or you may use the computers available in our classroom. Many of your assignments and additional course information will be available online on our course website located at [vista8.kent.edu](http://vista8.kent.edu).

### 4. Assignments

Daily writing, first 15 minutes of class.

Assigned readings, quizzes, and exams.

5 major essays, revised all semester, turn in at the end as final portfolio.

Other readings and short writing assignments to augment course objectives.

### 5. Grading

100% = 20% Participation, Readings, and Quizzes; 20% Daily Writing; and 60% Final Portfolio.

### 6. Attendance

It is extremely recommended that you attend class daily. Some in-class assignments cannot be made up, and the schedule below is tentative. Much of the work in class will be submitted online to me, so I would hope that there are no difficulties with meeting deadlines even if you cannot attend class. Since we meet only twice a week, it can be very easy to fall behind quickly. Keep track of your absences, and ask me if you are uncertain about the number of days that you have missed. I understand that you are all adults with adult responsibilities, so I am perfectly willing to give students latitude for taking care of important life events. You are allowed to miss four classes in my class without any need for documentation or excuse. More than four absences,

without proper documentation and notification of the instructor in advance, may result in a significantly lower grade or failure of the course.

## 7. Writing and Reading Expectations

You are required to complete all readings and assignments in this course. The readings will provide you with models for your own writing, and the material covered in the readings will give you something to actively think about. Your writing in the course is meant in part to challenge you to think critically on a given subject and to intelligently and professionally present your thoughts through writing. You will do a lot of writing in our class, because it has been shown that intensively writing over an extended period of time will lead to better overall writing expertise. The kinds of writing that you will do in our class will vary, but the overall emphases include clarity of thought, ample explanation and supporting evidence, professional tone, and development of your individual writing style. We will also dispel some writing misconceptions that you may have encountered before taking this course.

## 8. Exams and Quizzes

You will be tested on your ability to use professional standards for writing as well as your ability to recall your assigned readings. These exams allow me to assess your progress in the class as well as to help you reinforce class material in your memory. I realize that you may not enjoy tests, but I assure you that your brain will benefit from them.

## 9. Daily Writing and Journals

In addition to other assignments in our class, you will be required to regularly do these assignments on a daily and weekly basis. First, you will login to vista on a classroom computer or your own laptop and go to the Daily Writing folder where you will find a discussion topic to respond to for the first 15 minutes of class. These writings should average more than 250 words. Second, you will need to write more than 500 words each week in your Weekly Journal also on vista. In your weekly journal, I want you to write about the kinds of writing that you have done in our class, your other classes, and outside of school. Think less about the content of your writing and more about how you are doing the writing.

## 10. Writing Portfolio

The primary goal of this course is for you to produce a minimum of 20 pages of graded writing. You will do this with five major essays, which you will revise through the writing process over the semester. It has been shown that students earn higher grades with writing portfolios than through assigned grades on individual assignments. However, it will be up to each student to gauge his or her development over the semester and to see me during my office hours to inquire on his or her progress in the course.

#### 11. Classroom Preparedness

Bring paper and a blue or black pen to every class even if you also bring your own laptop to class. Take notes on my lectures and about any changes to the class schedule. If you miss class, you will want to ask other students in class for a copy of their notes. You will need paper occasionally for quizzes. Please remember to hand in any in-class written assignments on clean paper without any torn edges.

#### 12. Office Hours and Meetings

I hold office hours once a week for students before our class. I am also available by appointment if that time does not fit your schedule. I would suggest that you email me with a short note about what you would like to discuss before stopping by to see me. Additionally, you should carefully consider how you email me and your other professors: Please be professional. Also, I am happy to respond to your work via email if you send me short excerpts copy-and-pasted into the body of an email, or you may attach your work as a Word doc file (no other formats are accepted). I will respond to your inquiries as soon as possible.

#### 13. Registration Requirement

The official registration deadline for this course is January 23, 2011. University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Each student must confirm enrollment by checking his/her class schedule (using Student Tools in FlashFast) prior to the deadline indicated. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the deadline. NB: The last day to withdraw with a grade of W is March 20, 2011.

#### 14. Student Accessibility Policy

University Policy 3342-3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services (contact 330-672-3391 or visit [www.kent.edu/sas](http://www.kent.edu/sas) for more information on registration procedures).

## 15. Student Cheating and Plagiarism

All students are required in this class to complete the Library's Plagiarism Quiz, which I have added to our Vista page. We will also discuss plagiarism throughout the semester. We will follow the University's official cheating and plagiarism policy available here: [http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/policydetails.cfm?customel\\_datapageid\\_1976529=2037779](http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/policydetails.cfm?customel_datapageid_1976529=2037779). If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, you should talk to me BEFORE you turn in an assignment that you are unsure about. If I discover plagiarism in your work, I will speak with you about it before proceeding with any punishment, which may include zero credit, an F in the course, and a finding of plagiarism proceedings with the English department.

## 16. Tentative Schedule

### Week 1

- A Introduction, Library Learning Modules
- B MLA Exercises

### Week 2

- A Take all Library Quizzes on Vista before class, MLA Exercises
- B MLA Exercises

### Week 3

- A MLA Test, Bring a Blue Book to class.
- B Brain Lecture, Writing, Introduce Essay 1, Your Brain

### Week 4

- A Brain Lecture, *The Brain* chapters 1-4
- B Brain Lecture, *The Brain* chapters 5-8

### Week 5

- A *The Brain* Test, Bring a Blue Book to class.
- B Essay 1 Development

Week 6

- A Essay 1 Peer Review
- B Essay 1 Peer Review, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* Part 1

Week 7

- A Essay 1 Due, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* Parts 2 and 3, Introduce Essay 2, Trauma
- B *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* Part 4

Week 8

- A *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* Test, Bring a Blue Book to class.
- B Essay 2 Peer Review

Week 9

- A Essay 2 Due, *An Anthropologist on Mars* Preface-Chapter 2, Introduce Essay 3, Research
- B *An Anthropologist on Mars*, Chapters 3-4

Week 10

- A *An Anthropologist on Mars*, Chapters 5-7
- B *An Anthropologist on Mars* Test, Bring a Blue Book to class.

Week 11

- A Research Exercises
- B Essay 3 Research and Development

Week 12

- A Essay 3 Research and Development
- B Essay 3 Peer Review

Week 13

- A Essay 3 Due, *Atmospheric Disturbances*, Introduce Essay 4, Book Review
- B *Atmospheric Disturbances*, How to Write a Book Review

Week 14

- A *Atmospheric Disturbances*
- B *Atmospheric Disturbances*

Week 15

- A Essay 4 Development
- B Essay 4 Peer Review, Introduce Essay 5, Personal Reflection on Writing

Week 16

Finals Week: Your Final Portfolio (includes your final copies of all five major essays) is due electronically to [dynamicsubspace@gmail.com](mailto:dynamicsubspace@gmail.com) by Thursday, May 5, 2011 at 12:00PM. Your final portfolio must be attached to your email as a Word doc file. No other formats will be

accepted. I will respond to your email with a confirmation that I successfully received your final portfolio attachment.