

English 367.05: The U.S. Folk Experience

Summer Quarter 2006

Tuesday & Thursday 3:30-5:18, Denney Hall 202

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Office: 029 Denney; Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 2:30-3:30, 5:18-6

Overview

The overall goal of English 367 is to build on the skills you obtained in English 110 and to further improve your writing and critical thinking skills. This particular section, 367.05, is designed to employ the core concepts and methods of the field of folklore as the basis for reading assignments and writing projects. Because the theme of this course is “The U.S. Folk Experience,” we will begin with a brief introduction to basic concepts of American folklore and ethnography, including folk groups, tradition, and fieldwork methodology, focusing on how these concepts and methodologies contribute to the development of critical reading, writing, and thinking skills. Along the way, we will explore the diversity of experiences of different groups in the U.S. both through course readings and through your writing assignments and projects.

Throughout the quarter we will work on a variety of formal and informal writing assignments, each designed to add skills to your writing toolbox while fostering discussions about the strategic purposes of different kinds of research methodologies and genres of writing. The final project will require that you conduct ethnographic fieldwork that you will then analyze and present in a final paper.

Goals and Objectives for the General Education Curriculum

Writing and Related Skills

Goals/Rationale:

Writing courses across the disciplines develop students' skills in writing, reading, critical thinking, and oral expression.

Learning Objectives:

1. Students apply basic skills in expository writing
2. Students demonstrate critical thinking through written and oral expression
3. Students retrieve and use written information analytically and effectively

Required texts

Bonnie Stone Sunstein and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater, *FieldWorking: Reading and Writing Research*, Second Edition, New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2002.

Tad Tuleja, ed., *Usable Pasts: Traditions and Group Expressions in North America*, Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1997.

A grammar/usage handbook of your choice.

Assignments

Writing Projects 1, 2, & 3

You will receive detailed instructions on each of the three major assignments. However, you should begin thinking about the topics that you might write about immediately.

Writing Project 1 (4-5 typed pages): In this assignment you will write about a behavior, belief, narrative or artifact that is significant to a folk group (family, community, peer or other) with which you are familiar.

Writing Project 2 (6-8 typed pages) & *3* (8-10 typed pages): Writing Projects 2 & 3 are separate parts of a larger collection project that you will conduct. You will choose a group, community, tradition, place, or other topic relevant to this course and conduct primary and secondary research. In Writing Project 2 you will describe your project and discuss relevant secondary research that you have conducted in preparation for your own fieldwork on this topic. In Writing Project 3, the final paper, you will present the results of your fieldwork on this topic, including your own analysis and reflection. **Because such a large portion of your final grade hinges on this two-part project, you are strongly encouraged to discuss your topic ideas with me before getting started. The choosing of a promising and interesting topic is key to a successful project.**

Drafts

Writing is a *process and good writing takes time*. One major goal of this class will be the formation of habits of writing as a multiple-draft process. You will be required to bring multiple copies of the drafts of each of the three writing projects to class on the date drafts are due, for peer response activities and to turn in to me. I will return drafts (ungraded) with comments about the major revisions that you should make before submitting your final paper. You should plan to work your way through *multiple* drafts on your own and/or with me during office hours. All drafts and peer feedback must be turned in with your final papers. **Failure to submit a draft will result in the lowering of your final grade on that paper by one full letter grade.**

Informal writing

This course will involve extensive informal writing in order to practice the skills that we are working to develop. This writing will take place both during and outside of class. For *each* of the readings in *Usable Pasts* you will be required to post a response to guiding questions I will provide on our course Carmen site (carmen.osu.edu). You must post your response by **10 a.m. of the day of the class period for which the reading is assigned** and you will be expected to read the responses posted by your classmates, and come to class ready to participate in a discussion of the readings. Additional informal homework and in-class writing assignments will be provided throughout the quarter.

Group presentations

You will be assigned to a small group responsible for one reading from *Usable Pasts*. Groups

should use the discussion questions that I post on Carmen, and the responses posted by your classmates, as a *starting point* for a presentation followed by the facilitation of a class discussion about the readings and related issues. You must not, however, limit yourself to these questions, but should come prepared with a summary of the article, and additional discussion questions based on the related concepts we are dealing with and any other relevant issues of interest to the group. Every group member must participate in the presentation (everyone must have a speaking role).

Participation

Critical thinking and writing skills are most successfully developed through the sharing of ideas through both oral and written means. Therefore, a major requirement of this course is that you come to each class ready to discuss the readings and written assignments with an open mind and a desire to engage with the class.

Evaluation

Writing Project 1:

Writing Project 2:

Writing Project 3:

Collection materials:

Informal writing:

Group presentation:

Participation:

15%

20%

25%

10%

15%

5%

10%

Course Policies

I will not accept papers, neither drafts nor final papers, via email.

Attendance is important to the success of this class and to your development as a writer. Therefore, *each unexcused absence after two* will result in the lowering of your final grade by a third of a grade. Excused absences, such those for documented illness, family tragedy, religious observance, or travel for inter-collegiate athletics, will not affect your grade if you bring me written documentation the next class. **It is program policy that five unexcused absences will automatically result in failure for the course.**

Tardiness is disruptive to the classroom environment, and prevents you from fully participating

and assimilating the information and materials discussed in class. Excessive tardiness will lower your participation grade.

Plagiarism is the unauthorized use of the words or ideas of another person. It is a serious academic offense that can result in referral to the Committee on Academic Misconduct and failure for the course. Please remember that at no point during the writing process should the work of others be presented as your own.

Class Cancellation Policy: In the unlikely event due to emergency, I will contact you via email and request that a note on department letterhead be placed on the door. In addition, I will contact you as soon as possible following the cancellation to let you know what will be expected of you for our next class meeting.

Resources

The **Ombudsman of the Writing Programs**, Matthew Cariello, mediates conflicts between teachers and students in 110 and 367. His office is Denney Hall 533; office hours for Summer 2006 are by appointment only. Please contact Dr Cariello at 292-5778 or cariello.1@osu.edu to make an appointment. All conversations with the Ombud are strictly confidential.

All members of the OSU community are invited to discuss their writing with a trained consultant at the **Writing Center**. The Center offers the following services for free:

- Help with any assignment (ranging from lab reports to dissertations) at any stage of the writing process (brainstorming, thesis development, revising, etc.)
- One-to-one tutorials at 475 Mendenhall (Monday-Friday 8:30-5:30) or the Younkin Success Center (Monday-Thursday 5:30-7:30)
- One-to-one online tutorials via an Internet Messenger-like system (no ads or downloads)
Online appointment scheduling (available 24 hours a day)
- Please visit www.cstw.org or call 688-4291 to make an appointment.

The Office for Disability Services, located in 150 Pomerene Hall offers services for students with documented disabilities. Contact the ODS at 2-3307.

Additional Resources for this course are available on our Carmen site at: <http://carmen.osu.edu>.

Daily Schedule

Tuesday, June 20 *Introduction*

Introduction to the course, in-class writing exercise.

Thursday, June 22 *Introduction to Ethnographic Writing*

Introduction to Writing Project 1

Sign up for Group Presentations

READ: *FieldWorking* 1-24 & “What is Folklore?” at

<http://www.afsnet.org/aboutfolklore/aboutFL.cfm> (link on Carmen)

Tuesday, June 27 *Reading Self, Reading Cultures*

Strategies for Writing Project 1

READ: *FieldWorking* 105-116, 118-120, 128-141

Assignment: Complete the writing exercise in “Box 9” on 113-115; bring this in written form to class

Thursday, June 29 *Researching People*

DRAFT of Writing Project 1 due in class; Bring two copies

Peer work on drafts

READ: *FieldWorking* 345-365

Strategies for revision

Tuesday, July 4: No class

Thursday, July 6 *Writing Ethnography*

Introduction to Writing Projects 2 & 3

READ: *FieldWorking* 24-51 & *Usable Pasts*: Mechling, “Newell’s Paradox Redux,” 140-155

Assignment: Respond to questions on Carmen

Group Presentation #1

Strategies for revision

Tuesday, July 11 *Fieldwriting*

Writing Project 1 due in class

READ: *FieldWorking* Chapter 2

Thursday, July 13 *Reflexive and Responsible Writing*

READ: *FieldWorking* 122-128, 147-154; *Usable Pasts* Montaña, “Appropriation and Counterhegemony in South Texas: Food Slurs, Offal Meats, and Blood,” 50-67; & “A Statement of Ethics for the American Folklore Society” <http://www.afsnet.org/aboutAFS/ethics.cfm>

Assignment: Respond to questions on Carmen

Group Presentation #2

Library research methods and citation formats

Tuesday, July 18 *Researching Place*

READ: *FieldWorking* 217-244 & *Usable Pasts* Williams, “‘Up Here We Never See the Sun’: Homeplace and Crime in Urban Appalachian Narratives,” 215-231

Assignment: Respond to questions on Carmen

Group Presentation #3

Thursday, July 20 *Folklore and Media*

DRAFT of Writing Project 2 due in class; Bring two copies

Peer work on drafts

Film: *Number Our Days*

Tuesday, July 25 *Colonized Spaces*

READ: *FieldWorking* 265-273 & *Usable Pasts* Grider, “How Texans Remember the Alamo,” 274-292

Assignment: Respond to questions on Carmen

Group Presentation #4

Thursday, July 27 *Interviewing Skills*

READ: *FieldWorking* 368-391 & *Usable Pasts*: Gregory, “‘May the Work I’ve Done Speak for Me’: African American Women as Speech Community,” 96-119

Assignment: Respond to questions on Carmen

Group Presentation #5

Tuesday, August 1 *Researching Language*

Final Writing Project 2 due in class

READ: *FieldWorking* 293-315

Thursday, August 3 *Verbal Performance*

READ: *FieldWorking* 310-315-341 & *Usable Pasts* Saxe, “The ‘Giving’ of Yiddish Folksongs as a Cultural Resource,” 120-135

Assignment: Respond to questions on Carmen

Group Presentation #6

Tuesday, August 8 *Drafting Your Drafts*

READ: *FieldWorking* 417-437 & *Usable Pasts* Tuleja, “Closing the Circle: Yellow Ribbons and the Redemption of the Past,” 311-331

Assignment: Respond to questions on Carmen

Group Presentation #7

Thursday, August 10 *Thickening Your Draft*

DRAFT of Writing Project 3 due in class; Bring multiple copies

Peer work on drafts

READ: *FieldWorking* 437-445

Tuesday, August 15 *Crafting Your Text*

READ: *FieldWorking* 447-462

Thursday, August 17 *Revising and Finalizing Your Project*

Second DRAFT of Writing Project 3 due in class; Bring multiple copies

Peer work on drafts

READ: *FieldWorking* 462-470

Wednesday, August 23

FINAL PROJECT DUEFALL 2006