

English 367.05: The U.S. Folk Experience

Joking Matters

Instructor: Susan Hanson

Term: Winter 2006

Course: English 367.05

Section: 08150-9:00 am M/W: 1:30-3:18 DE 268

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Description

English 367.05 is an intermediate writing course that extends and refines skills in critical thinking, research methods, academic writing conventions, and matters of style. This particular section focuses on how humor and joking work in everyday life.

During the first half of the term we will concentrate mostly on reading and responding to case studies as a way to familiarize ourselves with folklore research practices and theory. During the second half we will concentrate on fieldwork and writing.

You will contribute to what we learn about joking by working on a research project of your own choosing related to the theme and direction of the course. Research project portfolios that meet all of the requirements will be accessioned to the Folklore Archives at OSU at the end of term.

Goals

- To provide you with extensive experience in expository writing.
- To develop skills in field and library research and analysis.
- To extend abilities in reading, listening, and speaking.
- To occasionally laugh till it hurts.

Requirements

All of the reading assignments are available electronically through OSCAR under “Reserves by Professor” at <http://library.osu.edu>. I expect you to download and print the readings, and bring them with you to class so that you can refer to them during discussion. You must also buy (or borrow) and always bring to class *The Pocket Wadsworth Handbook* (Third Edition).

This course requires a substantial amount of reading, research, and writing. Slacking is not an option; plan your schedule accordingly. The written assignments are due at the start of class on the dates indicated. They must be double-spaced in Times or a similar serif-style 12-point font, with one-inch margins on all four sides. The first page needs a heading (top-left) with your name, instructor, course, and due date; subsequent pages need your last name and the page number in the top-right margin. All citations (paraphrasing as well as direct quotations) must be formatted according to MLA style.

The quizzes and writing assignments will be graded based on an A - E scale that includes pluses and minuses. (There will be no make-up quizzes for students who are late or absent.) As a rule, “A” work is excellent; “B” work is above average, which is to say “very good”; “C” work is satisfactory; “D” work satisfies the objectives in the lowest acceptable manner; and “E” spells trouble—I recommend not letting it come to that. Final Grades will be based on the following:

Quizzes: Best 4 @ 5% each

Field Research

Annotated Bibliography

20%

20%

20%

Reflective Essay

Oral Presentation

Final Paper

10%

10%

20%

If you have any questions about my expectations or your progress, or whatever, you should definitely talk to me. The best time is immediately following class or by appointment, whichever works best for you. You may also contact me by email. Or you may call me at home. Really! It’s okay, as long as it is not too late, too early, or during *My Name is Earl* and *The Office*.

Policies

- **Assignments:** Consider yourself forewarned: *You must complete ALL of the assignments in order to pass.* All assignments are due at the start of class on the dates indicated unless other arrangements are approved by me *in advance*. In the event that an *excused* absence coincides with a Due Date, you must submit in your assignment within 24 hours.
- **Attendance:** *You are allowed two unexcused absences* from our regularly scheduled classes except on days when attendance is mandatory. For each unexcused absence beyond the

second, your final grade will be lowered by one full letter (for example, from A to B). If you accumulate five or more unexcused absences, you will fail.

- **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own: it includes the unacknowledged paraphrasing and/or word for word use of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas, and/or the use of unauthorized materials. *All cases of suspected plagiarism and/or the use of unauthorized materials will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.*
- **Student Work:** You may collect work that you want returned during the first week of the following quarter. Work that is not collected at that time will be kept on file for two quarters.

Resources

Research and writing are often painstaking processes, but plenty of help is available. I encourage you to take full advantage of your resources, myself among them.

The Writing Center, 485 Mendenhall Lab - This is the place to go for *free* feedback and advice on your writing. All you need is an appointment: 688-5865. For more information, check out: <http://cstw.osu.edu/>.

The OSU Libraries - There are umpteen libraries on campus (nineteen, last time I checked). I recommend getting well-acquainted with OSCAR at <http://library.osu.edu/index.php>.

UTS, Equipment Loans - Video camcorders and audio recorders can be checked out free-of-charge from UTS. Loans are based on availability *and my signed permission*; several working days advance notice is recommended for camcorders. Visit 11 Lord Hall or call 292-3131.

The Writing Programs Ombud - Matt Cariello mediates conflicts between teachers and students in English 110 and 367. All conversations with the Ombud are strictly confidential. You can contact him for an appointment at cariello.1@osu.edu.

The Office of Disability Services, 150 Pomerane Hall - If you have a documented disability and need accommodations, let me know or have Disability Services (292-3307) contact me.

The Daily Grind

W 1/04

- Syllabus, introductions, etc.
- In-class writing assignment

M 1/09

- "Adolescent Humor during Peer Interaction," Stephanie Sanford and Donna Eder

W 1/11

- "The Magic of the Boy Scout Campfire," Jay Mechling

M 1/16

- **NO Class** - Martin Luther King day NO CLASS-MLK Day

W 1/18

- **Project Proposal** PROJECT PROPOSAL

M 1/23

- “The Favorite Jokes of Max Trzebiatowski,” James P. Leary

W 1/25

- “Dying for a Laugh,” Gary Allen Fine

M 1/30

- **Library Research:** Class meets in DE 316

W 2/01

- “We was always pullin’ jokes,” Richard Bauman

M 2/06

- **Field Research**

W 2/08

- “Fracturing the Language of Biomedicine,” Anne Burson-Tolpin

M 2/13

- **Annotated Bibliography**

W 2/15

- “Marching to Vietnam,” Carol Burke

M 2/20

- “Class of Clowns,” Christopher Holcomb

W 2/22

- **First Draft—Final Paper:** Bring three copies to class.

M 2/27

- **Peer Group Meeting**

Location _____ Time _____

W 3/01

- **Reflective Essay**

M 3/06

- **Oral Presentation**

W 3/08

- **Final Paper**

English 367.05 Writing Assignments

- **Project Proposal**

Propose a research project. Describe *in detail* what you already know about the particular social group and its members or the situation and its participants, develop a research question related to the theme of the class, and briefly discuss your expectations.

- **Field Research** (No page limit)

Choose the method of research that best suits your research interest:

Participant-Observation

Process: Closely observe and take notes during a specific group event or situation.>

Format: Introduce your research interest and explain your methodology; describe the situation and characterize the participants; and recount the particulars *in detail*.

Oral History

Process: Record a conversation-style interview with an individual or small group.

Format: Introduce your research interest and explain your methodology; describe the context of the interview; characterize the participant(s); and transcribe the recording.

Text Collection

Process: Collect examples of performances as they occur over time within the context of specific group or location.

Format: Introduce your research interest and explain your methodology; describe the

participants and location; and recount each performance as exactly as possible in narrative form, including what was said, by and to whom, and under what conditions.

- **Annotated Bibliography**

Process: Find and evaluate scholarship that is specifically related to your research interest.

Format: Identify the theme or direction of your research, annotate a minimum of five (5) scholarly works, and reflect on what you found.

- **Reflective Essay** (3-4 pages)

Process: Think back; reflect on how far you have come and what you accomplished.

Format: Describe your original research goals, discuss how your project evolved, explain what your analysis revealed, and compare what you knew at the outset to what you know now.

- **Oral Presentation** (Approximately 500 words)

Process: Reread and synthesize all of your research writing assignments.

Format: Write a 5-minute presentation: introduce your project, explain your methodology, describe what your analysis revealed, cite an example or two, and reflect on your findings.

- **Final Paper** (8-10 pages plus Works Cited and possibly an Appendix)