

Siena Heights University

ADVANCED EXPOSITORY WRITING
ENG 341- Fall 2009

O this learning, what a thing it is!
Gremio, Taming of the Shrew

Course Instructor: Dr. Cathy J. Siebert

Instructor Contact Information: Ball State University
802 Teachers College
Muncie, IN 47306
(765) 285-5465 (office)
(765) 285-5489 (office fax)
cjsiebert@bsu.edu

4020 N. Lakeside Drive
Muncie, IN 47304
(765) 282-1252 (home)
(765) 730-1616 (cell)

(517) 372-0927 (ONLY good the Fridays before class and Saturdays of class)

Course Meeting Dates: September 12, 2009
October 3, 2009
October 24, 2009
November 14, 2009

Course Meeting Time: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Required Texts: Course packet
A Writer's Resource: A Handbook for Writing and Research
(2nd ed.), Elaine P. Maimon, Janice H. Peritz, & Kathleen
Blake Yancey)
Frankenstein, Mary Shelley
(Dover Class version = ISBN # 0486282112)*
Hamlet, William Shakespeare
(Dover Classic version = ISBN # 0486272788)*

Please note: It is NOT necessary to buy an additional copy of Frankenstein or Hamlet if you already have a copy of these titles. Nor is it necessary to specifically buy the Dover Class versions. However, if you do NOT own the titles, the Dover Classic versions are typically very cheap (usually \$1.00 for Hamlet and \$2.00 for Frankenstein) and are perfectly acceptable for our use in this class.)

General Introduction to the Course

This course is designed to introduce and deepen your ability to write well-reasoned and documented arguments. The first half of the course focuses on use of expository structures in writing arguments about a contemporary issue. The second half of the course addresses use of expository structures in writing arguments in response to literature. In addition to increasing writing proficiency, we will also concentrate on developing analytical thinking and researching skills. Use of the APA documentation system will be taught and required for use in all papers.

Course Outcomes

- ❖ Students will identify how the Siena Heights University General Education Curriculum has increased their skills in abstract inquiry, creative expression, critical thinking, and logical reasoning.
- ❖ Students will demonstrate their ability to research, comprehend, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas.
- ❖ Students will express an understanding of and ability to utilize the creative process.
- ❖ Students will express an understanding of and ability to utilize appropriate current technology.
- ❖ Students will communicate effectively.

Assessment Strategies

- ❖ Quizzes
- ❖ Research Papers
- ❖ Attendance and Participation

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Academic dishonesty is unethical behavior that in any way violates the standards of scholarly conduct. It includes such behaviors as cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarizing, submitting the same or essentially the same papers for more than one course without the consent of the instructors concerned, misappropriating library materials, or the destroying of or tampering with computer files. Also included in academic dishonesty is knowingly or intentionally helping another violate any part of this policy.

Plagiarism is the failure to give credit for the use of material from outside sources. It includes, but is not limited to, verbatim use of a quote without quotation marks and adequate documentation, submission of a paper prepared by another person as one's own work, using the ideas, facts, words, or data of someone else and claiming them as your own or not documenting ideas, facts, words, or data gathered during research.

Plagiarism is always a serious offence. However, as this is an advanced writing class, it becomes even more reprehensible and will be dealt with to the fullest extent. Representing someone else's words, work, or thoughts as your own is plagiarism. Purchasing a paper and submitting it as your own work is plagiarism.

At a minimum, plagiarism will result an F on the assignment. However, based on individual situations, it can also result in an F in the course.

For further information on the Academic Dishonesty Policy, please refer to page 156 of the Siena Heights University [Undergraduate Catalog, 2002-2004](#).

Students with Special Needs

Siena Heights University is committed to providing a learning environment that benefits all students. Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 all reasonable accommodations will be made to meet the documented needs of students. The Siena Accommodations Policy for Students with Disabilities requires a student to provide written documentation of his/her disability to the Academic Advising Office. If you require special accommodations, it is your responsibility to notify each instructor during the first two weeks of the semester.

In accordance with University policy and the equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may be eligible for as a student with a disability. Please contact me for an appointment to discuss possible accommodations. Students must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities for disability verification and determination of reasonable accommodations. Requests for accommodations must be done in a timely manner and are not retroactive.

Policies for Submitting Assignments

Due to the compressed format of this course, it is imperative that you complete reading and writing assignments on time. Assignments are due on the date indicated on the course schedule. Unless arrangements are made for alternative due dates **in advance** late assignments will be penalized one half grade for every day they are late (e.g., from a 4.0 to a 3.5, etc.). I strongly discourage late submissions and will accept late submissions only in **emergency** situations! They make everybody crazy--students because too many assignments pile up at a time and instructors because we have to find time in our schedules to fit in evaluations of the late submissions.

Attendance and Class Participation

Again, due to the compressed format of this course, missing a day will result in missing a great deal of course content. This course will integrate readings, lectures, presentations, discussion, videos, and research. Your thoughtful participation in class activities and discussions is important not only for your own learning but also the learning of others. You are expected to attend class and to participate collaboratively in the work of the class. Participation includes multiple kinds of contributions. For this course, I expect the following modes of participation:

- ❖ Quality participation for class (readings, journal entries, etc.)
- ❖ Oral contributions in discussions and small group work that reflect careful preparation, careful listening, and sound arguments or questions that move the discussion forward, elaborate on other arguments, etc.
- ❖ Small group interactions that show you are both contributing ideas to the group and helping to support the group work well (making sure everyone is heard, sharing the load of responsibilities, listening carefully to others)
- ❖ Bringing insights, resources, experiences, materials to share with the class or with your groups including actual books, videos, news clippings as well as ideas and observations you may have made in the classroom or in life)
- ❖ Attendance and participation in the activities planned
- ❖ Regular and on-time attendance in class
- ❖ Assignments completed and submitted by their due dates.

I do not believe that this course can be completed as an independent study, nor have I designed the course in a way that would enable you to successfully complete it without attending and participating in the class sessions. The bottom line is that missing more than one class period seriously jeopardizes your ability to complete the course with a passing grade!

Incompletes and Withdrawals

Please be advised that I do **NOT** give incomplete grades. While I understand unexpected things can develop that may effect your ability to attend class or complete the course requirements, Incomplete grades are discouraged and, to be frank, simply a pain. Therefore, in the event you are unable to attend class or complete the assignments, I will strongly recommend that you speak with Jeremy Frew, Site Director, regarding your withdrawal options.

Course Grade Breakdown

Contemporary Topic Research Paper	50 points
Frankenstein Literary Criticism	75 points
Shakespeare Research Paper	125 points
APA Quiz	10 points
Attendance and Participation	<u>100 points</u>

360 points

Grading Scale

324 – 360 = A
288 – 323 = B
252 – 287 = C
216 – 251 = D
Below 215 = F

**Plus and minus designations may be given at the instructor's discretion.*

Extra Credit Options

There will be two opportunities to earn "extra credit" in this course. Details regarding these options will be provided at a later date. Necessary forms are attached.

Live Performance Response

Title of Performance _____

Place of Performance _____

Date of Performance _____

- 1) What elements of spectacle (i.e., costuming, props, lighting, gestures, tone, etc.) did you notice with this performance?

- 2) What did you particularly enjoy about this performance?

- 3) What, if anything did you not like or understand?

- 4) Be honest! After attending this live performance, would you choose to go to another play? Why or why not?

Feel free to write on the back or type your answers on a separate sheet of paper.
Submit your response with the Shakespeare Research Paper. You can earn an additional 15 points toward the Shakespeare Research Paper by completing this assignment. The total points possible remain 125.

WRITING ABOUT CONTEMPORARY TOPICS PAPER ASSIGNMENT

This essay will be a problem/solution or argument (claim of fact, value, or policy) on a topic selected by the student. Students will use and attribute a minimum of **two** sources of information using the APA documentation system.

This paper should be approximately 750 – 1,000 words (3-4 typed, double-spaced pages). Use the APA documentation system for this paper's format. The paper should use parenthetical, internal documentation and a Reference page. The paper should be typed (if at all possible) and double-spaced. Staple the paper to keep all the pages together in the correct order. Content, structure, and style will form the basis of the grade, but mechanics will be taken into account.

This essay is worth 50 points toward the overall course grade.

DUE:

LATE SUBMISSION OF ANY ESSAY WILL RESULT IN A 5 point DEDUCTION PER DAY LATE.

FRANKENSTEIN CRITICISM PAPER

This paper is actually very similar to what you'll be doing for the Research paper; and, therefore, will be an opportunity for you to try this kind of thinking/writing before tackling the more demanding Shakespeare Research Paper. You will need to have carefully read the novel, Frankenstein. Your paper must be approximately 1,000-1,500 words long (4-6, double-spaced pages) and must use a minimum of **three** outside sources.

For this paper, select a question or issue that you find particularly interesting about the novel. Then, locate two pieces of criticism that either support or refute your interpretation. For example, perhaps you're intrigued by Johanna M. Smith's chapter of literary criticism written from a feminist perspective. You may start by developing a thesis that either agrees or disagrees with an aspect of Smith's argument. Then, find an additional piece of criticism that either supports or refutes your argument. Synthesize each of the critics' ideas into your argument. This does not mean that you merely summarize the main points of the critics. Rather, you might need to concisely explain the main argument of each critic as it relates to your argument but do so in such a way that it builds or develops your thesis.

Use the APA documentation system for this paper's format. The paper should use parenthetical, internal documentation and a Reference page. The paper should be typed (if at all possible) and double-spaced. Staple the paper or be sure that it's in some kind of binder or folder that will keep all the pages together in the correct order. Content, structure, and style will form the basis of the grade, but mechanics will be taken into account.

This paper is worth 75 points toward the overall course grade.

DUE:

LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL RESULT IN A DEDUCTION OF 5 points FOR EVERY DAY THEY ARE LATE.

THE SHAKESPEARE RESEARCH PAPER

THE ASSIGNMENT: We will have studied a Shakespearean tragedy—Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. Your task will be to pick an element of the play that you will then research and analyze. Discuss the work in terms of one of the basic elements of literature. Character development, plot design (NOT PLOT SUMMARY), setting, style, symbols, themes, and/or writing techniques may be discussed. For example, you may be intrigued by Shakespeare's presentation of women in Hamlet. You may decide to research what literary critics have to say about women in Shakespeare's plays and/or perhaps the role of women during the Elizabethan age. Or, you may have a definite interpretation of the character of Hamlet and wish to explore various critics' interpretations. You will then synthesize your research reading with your own thoughts and opinions to develop a coherent argumentative essay which raises a question or issue about the work you're discussing and resolves it in some way. Document the article and the story according to the APA principles. Use parenthetical documentation throughout the essay and References at the end of the essay. Study the sample essays about literature for suitable ways to set up such an essay.

FINDING CRITICAL ARTICLES: I have tracked down several articles that are available on an honor system in the Siena Heights office. (Call ahead to make sure someone is available in the office before making a trip to campus.) Feel free to borrow and copy any of the articles that seem applicable to your topic. You will, however, in all likelihood need to do further research to access sources particularly relevant to your specific topic or focus. Do not overlook the LCC library. They have a number of excellent resources available. In addition, the Michigan State University library has a plethora of research materials on Shakespeare and his plays. (And MSU's library hours are quite extensive!) We will also discuss locating literary criticism on-line.

Be sure to keep accurate track of works you consult and the articles that interest you. You will ultimately need complete author and title of article, where it is printed (or reprinted), the date of publication, place of publication, and page numbers. Keep notes on these as you go in order to save time relocating them if necessary (as it often is).

THE TOPIC: Read the articles carefully, taking notes on them just as you would any assigned reading. What does the author say--his/her main point? Supporting evidence cited, reasons given, and so on. Take notes also on any comment that puzzles you, that takes a direction other than the ones raised in class or in your own reading of the original story. Challenge rather than merely accept what the author of the article says--don't dismiss what the article says, but don't accept it unquestioningly either. Your essay may agree or disagree with a critic's position. But be very sure to focus on this: just as you're not merely restating the content of a play when you write about it, you are not merely restating the critic's position. You must include it in your essay. But you must be prepared to show cause why you agree or disagree with the critic. A third approach is possible, one in which you neither agree or disagree, but use a critic's position to clarify something that might otherwise be obscure or unclear in the original play. A fourth possibility is that a critic opens a line of reasoning incidentally but does not pursue it. You may then pursue it in detail. This last approach will ultimately lead you into agreeing or disagreeing with the critic.

ORGANIZING YOUR ESSAY: Once you have notes on your topic, be sure that you limit the scope of your essay. Ask yourself questions about the play and the critical articles. What is the author's position? Is s/he writing merely to inform? If so, how useful is the information? To whom is it useful? If the critic writes to persuade the reader to accept a particular interpretation, is it a convincing argument? Why or why not? Is the point raised by the critic a significant one? Does it address a useful idea, or is it a specialized idea that is of limited interest to scholars? Does the critic's interpretation enhance an appreciation of the play? How? Does it shed light on some structural idea in the play, e.g., the symbolism or imagery, the narrative point of view, the author's view of society, etc.?

These and other questions are open to your imagination and interests. Once you have posed several questions, pick one that interests you and try to answer it. Let that answer serve as a tentative thesis for your essay. Then try to develop it with four or five topic ideas--that is break down your answer into several subordinate ideas. If you have more than four or five, fine. But as soon as you have possible topic ideas, try to develop them in a paragraph each. Be sure to scrutinize each topic idea and ask yourself, "What question does this statement answer? And does that answer in some way clearly and directly clarify the thesis?" As you do so, fill out each paragraph as far as possible. Check to see if perhaps paragraph ideas overlap and require recombination. Then refine thesis and topic sentences so that they clearly integrate. (A useful exercise is to write the thesis sentence

as if it were a topic sentence of a paragraph and each topic sentence as if it were a sentence developing a paragraph. In other words, condense the entire organizational structure of the essay into the form of a single paragraph. See how it reads. If it reads clearly and logically in this form, it should read clearly and logically in the fully developed essay--provided, of course, that each paragraph in the final essay is also consistently developed.)

When you have the middle of your paper roughed out, write an introduction leading in to your thesis. Then write an ending which shows the relationships of your essay to the overall interpretation of the story, or to further interpretations that you have not been able to address in the allotted space, or draw some conclusion, and so on. Avoid, if possible, merely summarizing your points in the conclusion. That's weak.

STYLE: Study the sample essays for clues on style. Remember to use your own voice. Don't try to write like a Hemingway or Tolstoy. Don't use things like "In this paper, I will discuss" (explore, investigate, or other similar hackneyed, unimaginative, routine clauses).

MECHANICS: All the requirements for writing compositions apply here. In addition, just as in the previous research papers, you must document your essay. Here, again, the excerpts from the [APA Style Manual](#) (available in your course packet) should provide examples and explanations. If you're puzzled by something in those handouts, consult the sample essays to see if they clear it up. If not, you're always welcome to ask me for clarification.

The research paper must be approximately **1,500-2,000 words long (5-7 typed, double-spaced page, not including the References page)**. Do not try to pad your writing--with excess quotations and summaries, acknowledged properly and documented or not. They will not fool me about slim content. Develop your ideas. Use quotations and summaries briefly as backups for your assertions, not in place of them.

NOTE: Borrowed material (quoted, paraphrased or summarized) may not exceed one-fourth of the total length of the paper!

Your paper must include a minimum of **4 reference sources** in the final draft, which may include such materials as books, articles, reviews, encyclopedias, literary dictionaries, critiques, etc. There may not be more than one encyclopedia source. You cannot count the Shakespeare plays you reference either (unless you end up reading and referring to a play we do not address this term), but you will need to cite the play(s) on your References sheet. The paper should use parenthetical internal documentation for notes and a References page.

The research paper should be typed, double-spaced. If handwritten, use black or dark blue ink. Staple the paper or be sure that it's in some kind of binder or folder that will keep all the pages together in the correct order. Content, structure and style will form the basis of the grade, but mechanics will be taken into account.

This paper is worth 125 points of your overall course grade.

DUE:

LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.