Greetings! Welcome to First Year Writing. This fall you will do work that will help prepare you for what you’ll be asked to do in college. You will explore the types of reading and writing that you need to do in a more advanced way in your upcoming coursework, including analytical thinking and research. All of this will be under the backdrop of reading like writers and understanding literary devices, in addition to talking about some meaty subjects like identity and selfhood.

You will do quite a bit of reading and writing in this course. You will also be lively participants in class discussion and respectful citizens of our course. I expect that you will be courteous to each other (no talking over each other, interrupting, and undue criticism) and to me (the above, plus no cell phone use). Please remember to exhibit behavior and feedback that you would expect to receive from others, including our “yes, and” principal of classroom engagement.

The course will be divided into three units, each of which will involve writing a different kind of major essay. For each essay, the approach, style, structure, and content will be determined by your audience and purpose. To strengthen your persuasive skills, you will be required to do online and library research for your second essay.

Frequent short papers in response to assigned readings will help you prepare for each major essay, as will the multiple drafts of each paper you will write. Workshops and instructor conferences will give you many opportunities to closely analyze your own writing and thus learn ways to enhance it.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate your ability to write in a variety of personal, academic, and civic genres;
- Use various invention strategies to identify suitable topics for writing projects and to explore, develop, and organize your ideas, information, and arguments;
- Analyze and understand the rhetorical situation, including the purpose, writer positioning, audience, and genre;
- Use various online and library resources to identify and choose appropriate material for your research and writing;
- Evaluate and incorporate information from external sources (both library and web-based) into your own writing and document sources appropriately;
- Develop texts that use grammatical, stylistic, and genre conventions that are appropriate for college-level writing;
- Summarize, analyze, and respond to texts written by other writers, including your peers;
- Revise, edit, and proofread your own texts for maximum effectiveness.
Required Texts

The following books are required and will be available at Durham Book Exchange (36 Main St.; 868-1297) and the UNH Bookstore (MUB; 862-2140).


Course Requirements

You will be expected to:

1. attend all class meetings and conferences (see attendance policy, below);
2. arrive in class on time and well prepared;
3. thoroughly read and reread all assigned texts;
4. provide evidence of that close reading in reading responses and on classroom quizzes*;
5. participate actively and constructively in class discussions;
6. participate in in-class writing exercises;
7. participate in draft workshops and group work (a draft for workshop must be a complete draft: it has a beginning, middle, and end and is ready to share);
8. compose and submit out-of-class exercises and reading responses;
9. conduct various types of research in the library and on the Web;
10. draft and revise three essays of various lengths and purposes;
11. submit all work on time (on the hour and day it is due; see Late Policy).

*Quizzes will be given if a majority of the class is not keeping up with the readings. A quiz will count toward your participation grade.

Individual Conferences/Office Hours

We will meet in office hours on a regular basis, but you may stop by my office during open office hours as well. During our regular visits (three to five meetings), I will meet with you individually or in small groups. These scheduled meetings are mandatory. If you cannot attend a scheduled meeting, please email me at least two hours before our planned time. If you miss a meeting without emailing first, I will count it as one of your three class absences.

Assignments

Your major assignments for the course are as follows:

Critical Analysis (20%), in which you’ll critically examine Sherman Alexie’s The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight In Heaven, evaluating how Sherman Alexie relates a theme to his audience through one or two literary devices (for example, how he depicts religion through tone). Your objective is to gauge the effectiveness of his techniques without revealing your own opinion on the story. To fully understand that effectiveness, you will need to utilize and incorporate at least one additional source.

Persuasive Essay (20%), in which you’ll inquire into a specific research question and then write to persuade your audience that your view on this question is informed and supported. In developing this paper, you’ll need to research the topic thoroughly, using a number of sources. On the basis of these sources, you can develop your own position on the topic, as well as an understanding of the other positions. In writing
the paper, your task will be to present your own position as strongly as you can while also addressing, and trying to refute, conflicting arguments. Using ethical, logical, and/or emotional appeals, you will try to convince your audience to share your position. Your goal will be to get your audience either to adopt your view or, at the very least, to treat your view with greater understanding and respect.

*Personal Essay (20%), in which you’ll explore an idea/event/issue, using your own thoughts/experiences to shape the essay. You will employ techniques that make a personal essay effective, such as narrative, description, dialogue, reflection, creative use of language, etc. You may experiment with structure as well. Your goal is to make your views/experiences clear and compelling to readers.*

The other components that will compose your final grade are as follows:

*Homework* (20%), including responses to and summaries of the readings, components of each final essay, in-classes quizzes, and writing and research exercises to help you improve your skills.

**All homework must be typed and submitted electronically to Canvas by the start of class.**

*Research logs/proposal (10%), consisting of summaries and evaluations of sources for your researched/persuasive essay.*

*Participation (10%)*

**Class Policies**

**Grading Breakdown.** The homework will be graded as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>√+</td>
<td>All components are addressed and the assignment is thoughtful, with evidence of your having done the reading when required (=100 points).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>√</td>
<td>Some elements are missing or problematic. Assignment is mainly on target (=85 points).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>√-</td>
<td>Major parts are missing/the assignment is insufficient but worth some credit (=70 points).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower scores will receive a numerical grade.</td>
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You will receive a letter grade (along with my written feedback) for each of the major assignments. The grade for each essay will be assigned as follows:

- **A = Excellent.** Your essay has a clear purpose and is well organized; it is original and focused, with fully developed ideas and/or very effective use of research. The paper demonstrates your full understanding of the assignment prompt and meets or exceeds all requirements. The style is effective. The strengths of the paper outweigh any weaknesses.

- **B = Very Good.** Your essay has a relatively clear purpose and is organized logically. It is somewhat original and relatively focused. Your ideas are developed for the most part, and/or your use of research is effective. The paper demonstrates your understanding of the assignment prompt and meets or exceeds all requirements. The style is effective for the most part. The strengths of the paper outweigh the weaknesses.

- **C = Average.** Your essay has a discernible purpose, and its organization generally makes sense. The style is somewhat effective. While the paper is not as original or focused as it could be, it demonstrates your understanding of several of the key points of the assignment and meets most, if not all, of the essay requirements.
• **D = Marginal.** A clear purpose may be present in your paper, but the writing is not well organized, original, or focused. The style of the paper is ineffective. The essay demonstrates an understanding of only some of the key points of the assignment and meets very few of the requirements. Overall, the essay’s weaknesses exceed its strengths.

• **F = Failure.** Your essay contains many errors. It is difficult to read and vague. Your essay lacks a purpose and does not meet the paper requirements.

**Late Policy.** Your homework assignments will not be accepted late. Emailing assignments is only acceptable if illness causes you to miss class; students who miss class due to illness must still submit a written copy the day they return (this is the only exception to the lateness policy—I will accept a homework assignment the next class if I received an emailed version from a sick student by class time on the day it was due).

Late essays and the final version of the research proposal will normally be docked one letter grade per day unless you get my approval for an extension before the due date.

Remember that passing the course requires **timely completion** of all of the assignments, long and short, in-class and out-of-class.

**Final Course Grade.** Your final grade will be adjusted for your attendance and participation (see policies below). If you have any questions about a grade, please see me in office hours, and I will be happy to discuss your grade with you.

**Attendance Policy.** All sections of English 401 follow the same attendance policy. Each student is allowed to miss up to three meetings (classes or conferences) for whatever reason: no distinction will be made between excused or unexcused absences. Don’t waste these three absences; save them for times you really need them. Each additional absence beyond the three deductibles will lower your final grade by one grade (For example, if you earned a B but missed four classes, you’d get a B-; if you missed five classes, you’d get a C+). Missing a scheduled conference or more than 50% of a class meeting also counts as an absence. Exceptions to this policy will not be made unless extenuating circumstances can be documented.

It is your responsibility to get the assignments, class notes, and course changes from a classmate if you do miss a class. It is also your responsibility to keep track of and complete the missing work. In-class work cannot be made up. If you miss class on the day a written assignment is due, make arrangements to send it along with a classmate.

It is my responsibility to inform you if and when I will be late or unable to attend a class. In normal circumstances, I will inform you in advance by e-mail and/or on Blackboard. If I haven’t notified you in advance and I am not in class, please send someone to check with the English Office in Conant 113 or call them at 862-1313. I may have left a last-minute message there. If you think a winter storm might have caused a delay or cancellation, you can check the UNH website or the storm information line: 603-862-0000. To receive UNH alerts to your email and/or cell phone, go to https://alert.unh.edu/index.php?CCheck=1.

**Participation.** You will be asked to make formal and informal presentations of your work (primarily as a member of a group) in class. Although these assignments will not be given a letter grade, they will count as evidence of your active participation in the course.

In addition, this course requires a number of drafts for each essay; thoughtful and thorough commentary on your peers’ work is expected of you, just as it is expected of them.
Whereas in high school you may have found yourself sitting silently in a class, in this course thoughtful participation in discussions is a vital part of your work. In fact, the value of class meetings will largely be determined by the conversation you and your classmates create each day. Your participation in this dialogue is expected and will be considered when I assign your final grade.

**Technology Policy.** *Email.* Please note that I will not answer feedback on drafts over email; if you want to discuss an essay, please bring it into office hours or schedule an appointment with me. Please allow a reasonable amount of time for my responses to email; I will not answer emails between 7 p.m. and 8 a.m.

**Phones and computers.** This is a no cell-phone and computer zone. Please turn computers and cell-phones off and put them away out of respect for me and your classmates. If you do use your phone or computer, I will dock your participation grade accordingly.

**Academic Honesty Policy.** In order to make the most out of this course, you are expected to present your own original work. Any attempt at plagiarism or misrepresentation will result in a failing grade for the project and, in some cases, for the entire course. *The University of New Hampshire Student Rights, Rules and Responsibility* defines misrepresentation and plagiarism as follows:

*Plagiarism.* The unattributed use of the ideas, evidence, or words of another person, or the conveying of the false impression that the arguments and writing in a paper are the student's own. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. the acquisition by purchase or otherwise of a part or the whole of a piece of work which is represented as the student's own;

2. the representation of the ideas, data, or writing of another person as the student's own work, even though some wording, methods of citation, or arrangement of evidence, ideas, or arguments have been altered;

3. concealment of the true sources of information, ideas, or argument in any piece of work. (09.3)

*Misrepresentation.* Submitting work originally submitted for one course to satisfy the requirements of another course, without prior consent of the current instructor (it is assumed that the current instructor expects the work to be original). (09.4)

To avoid plagiarism, be sure to acknowledge the source, using the conventions of an appropriate academic documentation style (such as MLA and APA) as specified by your instructor. For more information about plagiarism and how to avoid it, see *Practical Argument* and *Transitions. Please note that we will be using MLA style for this course.*

**Confidentiality.** In a personal essay (your last major assignment for the course), students often write about sensitive experiences, and since these experiences can lead to strong writing, I encourage you to do so if you wish. My responses and your classmates’ will cover your writing, not your life, and I ask all students to respect the confidentiality of these pieces. However, if you mention subjects in your writing that may be harmful to yourself or another person or you mention crimes conducted by yourself or others on this campus, your revelations may have to be reported to university authorities. Please consider carefully what you feel comfortable sharing.
**Services**

**Robert J. Connors Writing Center.** The Writing Center is an invaluable resource for all kinds of writers at UNH. The Writing Center is not only for those who feel they “need help” with their writing. Although you will definitely “get help” at the Writing Center, you should see it as a place to share ideas, work through concepts, and fine-tune your writing. The center also now helps with oral presentations. Please visit the Writing Center by appointment or by dropping in (www.unh.edu/writing/cwc; 862-3272; 329 Dimond Library).

**Disability Services for Students.** If you are a student with a documented disability who will require accommodations in this course, please register with Disability Services for Students for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs. I will be unable to make any accommodations without a letter from Disability Services (201 Smith Hall; 2-2607).

**Additional Services.** Military & Veterans Services (862-0355; http://www.unh.edu/veterans/). Center for Academic Resources (Smith Hall, 2nd Floor, 3 Garrison Ave.; 2-3698). IT Service Desk (2-4242). The Academic Technology Support Center (Dimond Library, Level 3). Counseling Center (862-2090; Smith Hall, 3rd Floor, 3 Garrison Ave). Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program (SHARPP) (Wolff House, 2 Pettee Brook Lane; 24-hour Crisis Line: 603-862-7233).