

Kellie D. Weiss

**Developing Pedagogies to Enhance Excellence and Diversity, Summer 2010
Course Restructure: ENG 103: Freshman Composition**

GENERAL INFORMATION

I completely revamped the syllabus for ENG 103, which is now organized around the concept of “diversity.” In addition to the goals and objectives specified by the Writing Program, the goal for my sections will be to enhance students’ sensitivities to diversity issues and how these issues factor into textual production. I have also included a working course outline. The structure of the course will stay the same, but some readings might change.

SECTION I: Writing for College

The writing assignment in this section is an in-class essay that answers one of two questions: explore a time when you felt like “other” (when you were made to feel invisible, excluded, too visible); or explore a time when you perceived someone or some group as “other” (when you noticed someone or some group was outside or excluded). I borrowed these questions from a diversity seminar given by Anne Wiley. This assignment serves two purposes. First, the paper prompts students to begin to think about how communities build allegiances through manufactured perceptions of inclusivity and exclusivity. Second, the paper serves as a “controlled failure.” Students will go through the process of assigning a grade to themselves, using the standard rubric for 103. Then we will meet to compare my completed rubric with theirs. This will make them not only aware of their writing weaknesses and strengths but also of the level of writing expected for a college course. This assignment is intentionally “low-stakes,” since this paper is only worth 10 points as opposed to the usual 100-200 points. My hope is that, by going through the process of a self-assessment of their writing early in the semester, students become more individualized writers and will engage more with the process of writing.

SECTIONS II and III: The Power of Words and Thinking Critically

In these two sections we will break-down the writing process with emphasis on the speaker, the message, and the audience. The “Power of Words” section is comprised of short, thematic reading assignments about diverse groups. We will analyze the language used in these readings and will focus on how examples, anecdotes, words, and facts can be used to craft meaning and manipulate the way an audience might think about a particular topic. In the “Thinking Critically” section we will “read” advertisements for hidden assumptions, agendas, and biases. Special attention will be given to the ways that multimodal elements (color, graphics, photos, etc.) contribute to rhetorical situation. The goal of these sections will be to raise students’ awareness of ethical concerns for writers and diversity issues in writing and to become more aware of how audiences can be impacted by a textual product.

SECTION IV: Our Class as a Diverse Community

This is by far the section with the most innovations. First, I will have two students interview each other and then write a paper about how the interviewee contributes to the diversity of our classroom. At this point in the course, I have spend a lot of time building community, so students will feel comfortable talking about aspects of their lives. Second, in order to encourage intrinsic motivations for writing, I am going to ask the interviewee to grade the interviewer's paper. Interviewees will use the standard rubric for 103 and also write a one page explanation for the grade that they have given. Students will then meet in class to discuss those grades. Finally, I will meet with each student individually to discuss the interviewer's grade, my grade, his/her expected grade and the reconciled final grade.

SECTION V: Final Project, The Millenials

After reading some excerpts from *The Millenials: Americans Born 1977-1994* and discussing the assertions in that text, students will be placed into groups based on their majors and will compile topical research on millenials/next generation/net generation/gen y. I am completely open as to the form that the final project will take. My only requirement is that they publically engage in a conversation that is already happening about millenials. Some possibilities for this assignment might be to create a youtube video, organize a workshop, produce a radio broadcast, create a webpage, or anything else that could/would be made available outside of class.

Wiley, Anne M. "Identity and Diversity: An Exploratory Assignment." *Women's Studies Quarterly* 24.3/4

Kellie Weiss
ENG 103
Working Course Schedule
Fall 2010

I. Writing for 103

- Aug 24 Syllabus, General Discussion about Diversity
Aug 26 **IN-CLASS PAPER 1** (10 points)
Aug 31 iClicker Lecture
What is Rhetoric? (*Inventing Arguments*, pages 3-11)
Sept 2 Argument Structure (*Inventing Arguments*, pages 12-35)
Rubric Discussion, Sample Paper
Student Evaluation of their Writing Using Rubric
Sept 7 Scheduled Meetings to Discuss In-Class Paper (No Class Meeting)
BRING TO MEETING: Your Completed Rubric and the Original In-Class Essay

II. The Power of Words

- Sept 9 Reading Appeals (*Inventing Arguments*, pages 43-63 and 68-74)
Poems by Peter Davis (BB)
Sept 14 Arguing Definitions (*Inventing Arguments*, pages 155-157 and 177-199)
“Ink Inc.: The Tattoo Aesthetic” (BB)
Sept 16 “The Keeper of the Virgins” (BB)
Sept 21 Selection from “The Autobiography of Frederick Douglass” (BB)
Sept 23 *GIMP*, reading quiz
Sept 28 *GIMP*, reading quiz

III. Thinking Critically

- Sept 30 Reading for Hidden Layers (*Inventing Arguments*, pages 81-101)
Three Sample Advertisements, Discussion
Oct 5 Assignment: 1 Inclusive and 1 Exclusive Ad
Oct 7 Continued Discussion
Entering Argument (*Inventing Arguments*, pages 103-112 and 116-135)
Oct 12 Analysis Paper Discussion, Sample Essay
Arguing Value (*Inventing Arguments*, pages 247-249 and 265-290)
Oct 14 Analysis Paper Discussion, Sample Essay
Arguing Crisis (*Inventing Arguments*, pages 293-295 and 317-339)
Oct 19 Writing Day BRING LAPTOP
Oct 21 **PAPER #2 Due** (100 Points)

IV. Our Class as a Diverse Community

- Oct 26 Conducting Interviews, Sample Essays
Oct 28 Interviews During Class
Prompt: How does this student contribute to the diversity of this classroom?
Nov 2 Writing Day (Writing Center Bonus, 2 points) BRING LAPTOP
Nov 4 **PAPER #3 Due**, to Professor AND the Interviewee

MONDAY, November 8th – Interviewee’s Completed Rubric and Short Paper
(Grade Reflection) Due to Professor

- Nov 9 Class Discussions about Grades
Nov 11 Scheduled Essay Meetings (No Class)

V. Final Project (200 points)

- Nov 16 *The Millenials: Americans Born 1977-1994*, In-Class Readings and Discussion
Nov 18 Research in Library (Annotated Bibliography of Three Secondary Sources)
Nov 30 Crafting the Final Project
Dec 2 Work Day
Dec 7 Work Day
Dec 9 Presentation of Final Projects