

Engl 120  
English Composition  
Spring 2014  
MWF 8:30 to 9:20 a.m.

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### **Required Textbooks**

*Writing Today* Second Edition, by Richard Johnson-Sheehan and Charles Paine

### **Course Description**

English 120 is a composition course designed to enhance your analytical reading, critical thinking, and academic writing skills. Over the course of the semester we will focus on developing competent research methods, evaluating evidence, critically analyzing source material, and building persuasive arguments.

### **Course Objectives**

This course is designed to help you practice the ways that people in a university setting write, read, and think. Emphasis will be placed on the following:

1. Focus on argumentation/persuasion and research.
2. The difference between making an assertion and building an argument.
3. The awareness of critical audience and the need to earn the assent of that audience through legitimate means of persuasion.
4. Consideration of the actual and possible arguments on the other side as well as one's own position.
5. The framing of counter arguments.
6. Research as an open-minded inquiry.
7. Organization and composition of complex essays.

This course will be focused primarily on content and the way that you use language and your source materials, but you will be expected to write with a basic understanding of appropriate spelling, grammar, and mechanics.

**Assignments:**

During this class you will be responsible for completing three essays in addition to a number of smaller, in-class assignments, and reading assignments. There will be a lot of reading in this course, so it is important that you come to class prepared with your course materials, your readings completed, and your assignments ready to be workshopped or turned in. Failure to do so will count against your in-class work grade.

**Course Grading**

90-100% = A  
 80-90% = B  
 70-80% = C  
 60-70% = D  
 59% and below = F

Detailed individual assignment sheets and grading expectations will be provided for each project as the term progresses.

An in-class work grade depends on your participating in class discussions, reading responses, small in-class assignments, peer review, and group work. I don't expect everyone to talk all the time, but I do expect *everyone* to be engaged during class periods.

For general reading and discussion purposes, you will be responsible for completing the following:

1. List and define all unfamiliar terms.
2. For reading assignments: Comment on *at least* two things you found significant, interesting, etc. This is sort of a general response to the text.
3. For every assigned reading, come up with *at least* one question to be used for possible class discussion.

This class does not have a written final.

**Course Policies**Attendance and Participation

Attendance and class participation are mandatory. You can't expect to learn what you need to when you miss class. Participation is also important. Many days will be spent in discussion of different elements of writing, and in group workshopping, so come to class prepared and ready to talk to each other.

Cell Phones/Laptops

Please make sure that your cell phone is turned off and put away during class time. **Texting during class is not allowed.** If you use a laptop, **social networking sites and e-mailing during**

**class is not allowed.** If I catch you texting or networking in class I will confiscate your electronics and you may have it/them back at the end of class.

### Late Work

In the process of academic writing, a sustained intellectual effort is valuable. Therefore, you must turn in your work on the date it is due. Late work will not be accepted, unless you have discussed the situation with me. If you think you will miss a class when something is due, you are responsible to hand it in to me prior to the assignment's due date.

### Essay Format

Make sure your assignments (except in-class writing) are typed, double spaced, Times New Roman 12, that they have titles (when applicable), the pages are numbered and have your last name on them, and that they are stapled. **Do not change font size, character spacing, or margins to make your assignments seem longer.**

All materials taken from outside sources must be acknowledged using MLA format.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious offense and is met with severe penalties, *including failing papers or failing this course*. Honesty and integrity are critical and create a necessary trust in a community of scholars. Academic dishonesty would include but is not limited to:

- Turning in work that was completed by another individual and claiming it to be your own (whether intentionally or unintentionally).
- Copying and pasting anything from internet or other sources without citing the sources, thus claiming it as your own ideas or words.
- Copying papers you found online, or buying papers from online sources and turning them in as your own work.
- Submitting reports intended to be based on field collection data but which are not.

If you have any questions about what is appropriate in terms of outside sources, consulting internet sources, or about help you have received from someone else on an assignment, please see me. All MSU students are responsible for upholding the code of academic integrity. Please refer to the University Student Handbook for the "Academic Honesty" policy.

### Non-Discrimination Language Policy

According to "Regarding Discrimination" in the Undergraduate Catalog, Minot State University subscribes to the principles and laws of the state of North Dakota and the federal government pertaining to civil rights and equal opportunity. In keeping with this policy, the MSU English Department expressly prohibits all discriminatory language in its classes and programs. A student who uses discriminatory language in a class may be reprimanded, or may be subject to more severe penalties including a lowered grade, a referral to the Human Resource Director, or both.

### Disability Support Services

In coordination with Disability Support Services, reasonable accommodations will be provided for qualified students with disabilities (LD, orthopedic, hearing, visual, speech, psychological, ADD/ADHD, health-related, and others). Please meet with the instructor during the first week of class to make arrangements. Accommodations and alternative format print materials (large print, audio, disk, or Braille) are available through disability services.

### Office Hours and Other Forms of Support

Please don't hesitate to send me an e-mail, make an appointment to see me, or drop by my office. My role as an instructor is to work *with* you and help you with your writing. Your role as a student is to be actively engaged in class discussions and to collaborate with your peers. Please note: You are entirely responsible for your learning experience and for the grades that you earn in this class. If you are frustrated or overwhelmed, you must let me know. **ASK QUESTIONS!**