ENG 401

English 401: Advanced Composition Fall 2008
Office Hours: TTH 8:30-9:30am or by appointment Dr. Tom C. Hunley
Office Location: CH – 131-A Office Phone: 745-5769 Email: tom.hunley@wku.edu


Course Description (from the course catalog): Theory and performance in the essay of ideas with stress on the essay form and coherence, sentence and paragraph design, punctuation, research paper technique, and other writing conventions.

Prerequisites: Successful completion of ENG100 and ENG300.

Minimal Course Requirements: At the least, you are required to:
• Complete all assigned readings on time;
• Write one 6-12 page lyric essay or appropriation;
• Write one in-class essay;
• Keep a commonplace book containing notes and responses to class readings;
• Write 12-20 pages of linked brevities, flash fictions, or prose poems;
• Give a presentation on a published author of brevities, flash fictions, or prose poems;
• Be respectful and courteous of others in the class at all times. Expect to fail the course as a result of any of the following disruptive behaviors: inappropriate, disrespectful, or uncivil responses to the comments or opinions of others in class forums; threats/challenges to do physical harm; use of abusive language.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism, representing someone else’s words as your own, is grounds for failure in this course. It will not be tolerated.

Attendance: For an absence to be considered excused, you are required to write an outlandish, imaginative, yet somewhat believable excuse (at least 300 words) by the next class session. Failure to do so will result in the loss of one point. Students who miss class more than four times for any reason, excused or not, risk failure on the grounds that they are not active class participants. Arriving late or leaving early will count as 1/3 of an absence. Failure to contribute to a workshop session will count as 1/3 of an absence.

ADA: Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in Garrett 101. The OFSDS telephone number is (270) 745-5004. Per university policy, please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.
Late Work: I’m not going to accept late work in this class. Deadlines are a part of the writer’s life.

Grading: The course will be graded on the following 100 point system:
Portfolio 30 points
Quizzes on assigned reading 20 points
Lyric Essay/Appropriation 10 points
Presentation 10 points
Peer Critique 10 points
Attendance 10 points
In-class Essay 5 points
Commonplace Book 5 points
I will determine your final grade according to the following table:
90-100 A
80-89.9 B
70-79.9 C
60-69.9 D
Below 60 F
I will not change your final course grade except in the case of a mathematical error. Please do not take up my time with last-minute requests for extra credit or tales about how you need a better grade so that you can get into law school, get into graduate school, get back into your parents’ good graces (or other similar irrelevancies). I will not participate in any conversation or answer any email message whose subject is grade grubbing. If you wish for me to reconsider your grade on a given assignment, re-submit the graded copy of the assignment along with a one page note explaining why you believe the grade should be raised. If I find your argument frivolous, I will lower the original grade. That said, I encourage students to come to me – early in the semester – asking for advice on how to raise their performance (and thus their grade) in future assignments.

Weekly Planner

Week One
Tuesday, August 26: Introductions; Read and Discuss Syllabus
Thursday, August 28: “Brief History of My Thumb” by Lucia Perillo (Short Takes 21); “Water’s Edge” by Salman Rushdie (Short Takes 65); “confessions” by Amy Tan (Short Takes 88); “What Sacagawea means to Me” by Sherman Alexie (Short Takes 133)

Week Two
Tuesday, September 2: “The Trains” by Paul Zimmer (Short Takes 139); “Book War” by Wang Ping (Short Takes 166); “Disclaimer” by Ron Carlson (Short Takes 173); “Contributor’s Note” by Michael Martone (Short Takes 176)
Thursday, September 4: “Me Talk Pretty One Day” by David Sedaris (Short Takes 181); “Semi-Colon” by Barbara Mallonnee (Short Takes 188); “Son of Mr. Green Jeans” by Dinty Moore (Short Takes 283); “Margot’s Diary” by S.L. Wisenberg (Short Takes 337)
Week Three
Tuesday, September 9: “Stories” by John Edgar Wideman (Flash Fiction Forward 9); “Jumper Down” by Don Shea (Flash Fiction Forward 17); “Sweet Sixteen” by Gary D. Wilson (Flash Fiction Forward 26); “Currents” by Hannah Bottomy (Flash Fiction Forward 51)
Thursday, September 11: “Three Soldiers” by Bruce Holland Rogers (Flash Fiction Forward 210); “Bullhead” by Leigh Allison Wilson (Flash Fiction Forward 99); “Accident” by Dave Eggers (Flash Fiction Forward 101); “That Could Have Been You” by Jim Heynen (Flash Fiction Forward 127)

Week Four
Tuesday, September 16: “Oliver’s Evolution” by John Updike (Flash Fiction Forward 143); “The Doctor” by Ann Hood (Flash Fiction Forward 146); “The Handbag” by Michael Augustin (Flash Fiction Forward 155); “Map of the Lost World” by James Tate (Flash Fiction Forward 162)
Thursday, September 18: “Test” by G.A. Ingersoll (Flash Fiction Forward 189); “Drawer” by Rick Moody (Flash Fiction Forward 194); “Fruit Series” by Opal Palmer Adisa (Flash Fiction Forward 202); “The Death of the Short Story” by J. David Stevens (Flash Fiction Forward 226)

Week Five
Tuesday, September 23: Drafting Day
Thursday, September 25: Workshop (Lyric Essay/Appropriation)

Week Six
Tuesday, September 30: Lyric Essay/Appropriation Due; “Introduction” by David Lehman (Great American Prose Poems 64); “Humble Beginning” by W.S. Merwin (Great American Prose Poems 101); “Chekhov: A Sestina” by Mark Strand (Great American Prose Poems 114); ”The Pilot” by Russell Edson (Great American Prose Poems 118); “The Taxi” by Russell Edson (Great American Prose Poems 119)
Thursday, October 2: Fall Break Day

Week Seven
Tuesday, October 7: “Three Poems from The World Doesn’t End by Charles Simic (Great American Prose Poems 125); “The List of Famous Hats” by James Tate (Great American Prose Poems 161); “Stereo” by Anne Waldman (Great American Prose Poems 178); “The Colonel” by Carolyn Forché (Great American Prose Poems 217)
Thursday, October 9: “Variations on a Theme Park” by Haryette Mullen (Great American Prose Poems 254); “No Sorry” by Catherine Bowman (Great American Prose Poems 266); “Twelve Epistles from Letters to Wendy’s by Joe Wenderoth (Great American Prose Poems 291); “The Page Torn Out” by Anselm Berrigan (Great American Prose Poems 304)

Week Eight
Tuesday, October 14: “Marcus Tullius Cicero,” “John the Baptist,” Ah Balam,” “Anne
Boleyn,” “Walter Raleigh,” “Marie Antoinette,” “Chicken,” “Nicole Brown Simpson,” “Tyler Alkins,” and “Robert Olen Butler” (from Severance)

Thursday, October 16: In-class essay

Week Nine
Tuesday, October 21: Presentations: ____________________________, ____________________________, ____________________________, and ____________________________

Thursday, October 23: Presentations: ____________________________, ____________________________, ____________________________, and ____________________________

Week Ten
Tuesday, October 28: Presentations: ____________________________, ____________________________, ____________________________, and ____________________________

Thursday, October 30: Presentations: ____________________________, ____________________________, ____________________________, and ____________________________

Week Eleven
Tuesday, November 4: Presidential election day
Thursday, November 6: Presentations: ____________________________, ____________________________, ____________________________, and ____________________________

Week Twelve
Tuesday, November 11: Workshop
Thursday, November 13: Workshop

Week Thirteen
Tuesday, November 18: Workshop
Thursday, November 20: Workshop

Week Fourteen
Tuesday, November 25: Drafting Day
Thursday, November 27: Thanksgiving Break

Week Fifteen
Tuesday, December 2: Workshop
Thursday, December 4: Portfolio Due