

**** NOTE: Your professor reserves the right to make changes to this course syllabus as is necessary while also maintaining the integrity the course and that of the Institution.****

**Southern Polytechnic State University
Department of English, Technical Communication, and Media Arts
ENGL 1102/Sect. 004/CRN # 8638
Fall 2009**

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Office Hours: T 2:00 pm – 3 pm
(and upon request)

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*Change Agents/Agencies: Digging Deep, Striking a Pose
The Ethnography of Community Leaders and Organizations*

Course Description

Welcome! In this course we are active partners in inquiry, utilizing the tools of ethnography as our primary mode of research and discovery. Expect this course to be very different from other English courses you have taken. We will abandon traditional pedagogy that directs us to “read-an-essay-then-write-a-paper” or “go-to-the-library-comb-through-books-write-a-research-paper.” Instead, each of you will become a participant-observer in a local community organization (or sub-culture) that you choose to research. You will write about your chosen sub-culture in a series of assignments, culminating in a final portfolio and mini-ethnography.

Specifically, you should identify a community leader or organization that has impacted at least one community. Following your selection, you will research that leader or organization using the ethnographic/fieldworking strategies of investigation, interviews, locating artifacts, collecting oral histories, etc.

For a more precise definition of ethnography, we will refer to the one given in our text: “*The study of people in cultures; also the text that is written based on that study.*” It is important also to have a clear working definition of the term fieldwork. Again, let’s use our textbook definition for that: “*The process of living and studying among people in their own context, with their permission and cooperation. Fieldworking involves gathering, interpreting, and validating data via notetaking, interviewing, collecting material artifacts, and other methods.*”

The main goal of this course, then, is to help you develop your writing and research skills to the point of becoming a more versatile and reflective writer.

Texts

Reader: *Fieldworking*, 3rd edition, Bonnie Stone Sunstein and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater, Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2007.

Handbook: *The Open Handbook*, 1st Edition. Ann Raimes, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007.

Novel: *Nickel and Dimed*, Barbara Ehrenreich, New York: Owl Books, 2001.

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A good college dictionary (optional but recommended)

Suggested Course Materials

- 3-ring binder
 - folders, crates (or boxes) for artifacts, taped recordings, etc.
 - access to digital, 35 mm or disposable camera (cell phone cameras generally don't provide sufficient image quality)
 - portfolio (as befits your fieldwork material)
 - access to audio recorder, video recorder and/or laptop depending on the nature of individual data collection
 - journal (for use at fieldsite)
 - photocopies of individual selected essays
 - paper clips
 - brightly colored ink pen
 - 1-ream of 8.5x11 copy paper (20 lb wt; donated to class paper supply and used to earn extra credit)
 - access to computer with Internet connection
 - SPSU email account
 - document storage device
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Course Objectives

English 1102 is a reading-based composition course that develops writing skills beyond the level of proficiency required by ENGL 1101. The course also incorporates more advanced research skills than those used in ENGL 1101 and requires one or more research projects.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Demonstrate rhetorical strategies by composing for different audiences, purposes, and contexts.
 - Read and respond to various texts from multiple genres for purposes such as interpretation, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and judgment.
 - Use research strategies that include the location, incorporation, and documentation of sources outside the classroom such as library, Internet, interviews, and so on.
 - Participate in extemporaneous in-class writings that ask students to respond to various prompts.
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Assessment Strategies

- Graded Essays
 - Evaluative Portfolios
 - Reading and Writing Journals
 - Timed Writings
 - Tests/Quizzes
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Regents' Writing Test

Effective fall semester, 2008, **ALL** students who have not satisfied Regents' Writing and Reading Skills Requirements **MUST** take the Regents' Test **EVERY** semester they enroll in classes until they satisfy the

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Regents' requirements. This includes all freshmen, all transfer students, and anyone else who has not previously satisfied Regents' requirements. No longer do the number of semester course hours determine when to take that Regents' test or when a student has to enroll in remediation classes. Mandatory enrollment in remediation classes and/or workshops will be determined by the number of times a student fails the tests.

Students can register now for the Regents' tests in BANNER just like they would register for a course. Students who have not met the Regents' requirements and fail to register for the required test(s) will be assigned a testing date (which they will have the opportunity to change if necessary). **Not taking the test on the assigned day/time will count as a test failure.** Non-native speakers of English must apply in the ATTIC and be approved for testing in order to sign up for the ESL version of the test.

These new policies are being instituted across the University System of Georgia. Information about the Regents' test, including exemption criteria, may be found at

- The Regents web page: (<http://www.gsu.edu/rtp>),
- The SPSU Registrar's web page: (<http://www.spsu.edu/registrar/registration.html>), and
- The ATTIC web page: (<http://www.spsu.edu/home/services/attic.html>).

Course Organization and Requirements

As you read and write throughout this semester, please keep in mind that the readings serve only as a means of opening a door of discovery and conversation. Although the writings that we will read and share from our text are written by "professional" writers, they will not be used by me as examples of "perfect" writings. While many of the writings do serve as examples of good structured writing, it is not my intention to encourage you to limit the flow of your ideas or expressions in your writings. I fully expect the structured writings that we share to serve as a sort of jumping off point, a means of lighting our path as we discover writing in a whole new dimension. The intended audience for all of your writings will be me, your instructor, and the members of our class. The writings and readings that we will encounter will help us to better understand our inner thoughts, ideas, and feelings in relation to our community, our neighbors, and our world.

Frequently, I will guide you in your writing by providing writing prompts, asking questions, and raising issues. In doing so, I fully expect you to take those prompts, questions, and issues and find your way into the writing assignment through your own individual voice. Please know that it is your responsibility as a composition student to conduct brainstorming or prewriting activities, note taking, and whatever else is needed to produce a full draft for the writings and assignments for this course. The course is designed to provide evaluation from both your peers and me so that you will have every opportunity to produce final drafts that reflect your willingness to consider audience, purpose, and tone – foundational keys to good, sound rhetorical skill. In addition, our class sessions will provide opportunities for discussion on samples of our writings. These sessions are meant to help you express your ideas more effectively.

You will be required to complete exploratory writings as well as a minimum of three essays that will be incorporated into a portfolio. In addition, we will have several small-group sessions, whole class workshops, and a research project. As we begin to interact with one another through the readings and writings we share, we will be more able to explore and understand our audiences and purposes for our writing, thus producing more effective written communication.

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Being prepared and on time for each class meeting will make the time we spend together more delightful and productive. I encourage you to make every effort to becoming an effective member of our class writing community. Your writing should demonstrate the use of critical reading strategies that include interpretation, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and judgment. The length of your final mini-ethnography that accompanies your portfolio must be at least 10 to 12 pages. For all of your writing, you will be required to maintain a folder of your original drafts.

Types of Assignments

You will be called upon to do several types of writing for the class that all have different purposes and criteria.

Exploratory Writings: You will be expected to read, annotate, and then respond in writing to every selection you read. These written responses will be referred to as exploratory writings. I am expecting that you will push past interpretation, understanding, and comprehension of each reading. I am looking for you to find your way into the conversation initiated by the writer and to respond by expressing your own ideas, views, and opinions about the writings or issues or ideas brought up through the readings. Each exploratory writing is due at the beginning of each class period for possible class discussion. With that in mind, please remember that your classmates are your intended audience for each of your writings. As with all writings, then, you must be mindful of your audience. Be honest in your writings yet considerate of your classmates and their backgrounds as you work to establish a tone in your writings.

Reflection/Process Memos: On a few occasions you will be required to provide for me a “process memo,” a brief summary on the progression you have made as a writer in light of the assignments given.

In-Class Writings: On some occasions you will be asked to perform in-class writings and/or journal entries. These writings are meant to serve as opportunities for you to become comfortable with the art of writing and to help you to further push your ideas and thoughts on a given topic or idea. Although some of the writings may be timed, all will be informal in nature.

Readings and Annotation: In this class, you will be expected to annotate each reading (student and other). Therefore, you should always read with a pen or pencil nearby so that you can actively engage in conversation with the writings.

Writer’s Notebook: Your writer’s notebook is to be kept and maintained by you, the writer. While I will not specify the exact type of notebook you use, I will require that you use this notebook for nothing else than a writer’s notebook. That means that you should not plan to use the paper there to take notes for this or any other class. You should plan to purchase a notebook that is at least 7 to 8 inches wide by 10 to 11 inches long.

Peer Conferences: For at least two of your papers, you will be required to attend a conference with me and a group of your peers. As we approach your conference date, you will need to provide a copy of your writing to me and each member of the group, and then we will meet later in the week to discuss the papers in your group. You will be responsible for reading each of the other papers and commenting on them to the best of your ability. If taken seriously, this peer review will greatly improve your writing and revision skills.

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Conferences are not optional. Failure to attend your scheduled conference will result in a class absence and a deduction in your participation grade.

Grading Policies and Criteria

If you are like most students, you have two goals in taking this course: to improve your communication skills through writing and to get a high grade. My editing of your documents is critical to both of these goals. For you to improve your skills, you must write frequently and have your documents edited. As the semester progresses and you write more and study the annotations on your documents, you should start to see significant improvement in your writing.

My job as an instructor is to give you clear and informed commentary on your writing. I will not mark or comment on every problem in your writing, because part of the learning process is to learn to identify and correct problems yourself. But I will comment in detail on portions of each assignment.

As I review your documents, I will assess your success in meeting the criteria of writing excellence: honesty, clarity, accuracy, comprehensiveness, accessibility, conciseness, professional appearance, and correctness. The best way to interpret your grades is to pay close attention to the comments I make throughout the document.

One other note: If you are concerned about the grade you received on a document, let it sit overnight, then study the relevant portions of the textbook, notes and other information on the subject that discuss the issues I raise. If after studying the text you do not understand what I am getting at, or you don't see how the comments apply to your document, please get in touch with me, and I will try to help you understand what I wrote.

The following table describes in general terms what the five letter grades from A to F represent for written assignments in this course.

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Bottom Line</i>
A (90-100 points)	An A document is excellent work. The audience analysis is insightful, the topic precise, the organization clear and logical. The document contains sufficient detail, the information is accurate, timely, clear, and comprehensive. The writing is excellent: good use of advance organizers, well-developed paragraphs, graceful and concise sentences, precise word choice. The document is complemented by appropriate, clear, correct, and honest graphics. The design is clear, attractive, and professional.	Your supervisor would be impressed and would pass the document along to his or her supervisors, with little or no revision.
B (80-89.99 points)	A B document is good work. It might have almost all the virtues of the A document, but one or more of the elements is missing. For instance, persistent spelling errors could reduce an A document to a B. Unprofessional design, ineffective paragraphing, awkward sentences--any of these	Your supervisor would appreciate your work but would want to have the document revised before passing it along.

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	problems could account for the grade of B.	
C (70-79.99 points)	A C document is satisfactory work. Although the document satisfies the requirements of the assignment, it is significantly flawed. Usually, two, three, or more problems make it difficult to read or to understand or prevent it from fulfilling its purpose. For instance, a proposal that lacks a project schedule and a list of works cited would receive a C even if it is otherwise excellent.	Your supervisor would be somewhat disappointed with the document and would want it revised significantly before passing it along. In addition, the supervisor would begin to doubt your ability to complete similar assignments successfully.
D (60-69.99 points)	A D document is unsatisfactory. Although some aspects of the document might be well done, there are numerous or significant problems with its conception or execution.	Your supervisor would have another employee re-do the document and would question your basic competence and suitability for your position. This doubt would be reflected in your performance evaluations.
F (0-59.99 points)	An F document is failing work. It is submitted after the deadline, it does not respond to the readers' needs, it is extremely difficult to read, or it is unprofessional in appearance or writing quality.	Work on your résumé.

The grade you get in this course is largely determined by two factors: your current skills in reading, critical thinking, and writing; and the effort you put into the course.

Everybody has unique skills. Some people can read five times faster than others do and understand the material better. Some people find it easier to create persuasive, logical arguments than others do. Some people can write better – more clearly, more correctly, more quickly – than others. Although everyone can improve his or her skills in these areas, some people will find the material in this course quite easy to master; others will find it quite difficult.

Equally important is the effort you put into the course. Many of you work outside of school, and some of you have family responsibilities. These commitments take time. To do well in this course, however, you will need to devote considerable time to it. Here are the five major tasks you will need to perform:

- *Reading the chapters in the textbook and information on handouts.* Most readings will require at least two hours to prepare. You will need to read the information at least twice, taking notes or marking the most important passages.
- *Reading the assignment sheets.* Every assignment explains what I am asking you to do, why I am asking you to do it, how I recommend you do it, and how I will evaluate it.
- *Meeting with other members of the class in preparing collaborative assignments.* Some of the course assignments are collaborative. Although you can carry out many of your meetings electronically, you will, on occasion, have to meet face-to-face. Meetings take time.
- *Planning, drafting, and revising your writing.* Writing is hard. You can do it fast or you can do it well. Throughout the course we will discuss techniques to make the process more effective and more efficient. But there is no getting around the fact that it will take time.
- *Studying my comments about your assignments.* When I return your assignments, I include comments. Read them carefully. Make sure you understand what I am trying to communicate. If you

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don't, ask me. Make checklists focusing on those things you need to pay particular attention to in your writing.

So, how much time and effort do you need to devote to this course? To a large extent, it depends on what grade you want. The typical student who earns an A has probably devoted 10-14 hours per week to the course. That same student could probably earn a B with 8 or 9 hours. A C calls for a smaller investment – perhaps 5-8 hours. A D is easy: 3 or 4 hours. And an F doesn't take any time at all.

But please keep in mind that I am evaluating the quality of your assignments, not the number of hours you spend creating them. A strong writer can get that A with 5 hours per week, whereas a weak writer could spend 20 hours per week and still earn no higher than a C. Just as some students are better at calculus than others are, some are better at writing than others are. I wish I could figure out a way to correlate your effort and your accomplishment, so that if you worked hard you were guaranteed an excellent product, but it doesn't work that way.

I can guarantee two things, though. First, the harder you work, the more your writing will improve. And second, the more your writing improves, the better you will do in your other courses and in your professional career.

Assignment Requirements:

Positioning Paper – This will be a reflection on your knowledge of the subculture you've chosen to study, as well as your relationship to it; 3-5 pages

Artifact/Space Analysis – This will be a paper in which you describe and interpret an artifact and/or a certain aspect of your fieldsite; 3-5 pages

Language/Interview Analysis – This will be a paper that analyzes a particular interview of a particular informant. Specifically, your writing will analyze and reflect upon phrases, jargon, occupational terms, repeated words or phrases, language variations. etc.; 3-5 pages

Mini-Ethnography – This will be your final research report, a piece of writing where you try to make sense out of all the research you have done over the semester. Keep in mind that each of the previous writing assignments will serve as chunks of this final writing; 10-12 pages

Research Portfolio – This will be the collection of your interviews, artifacts, oral histories, reflections, etc. that you have used to help in your research project. The final version that you submit at the end of the semester will contain (at a minimum) your mini-ethnography, a short reflective paper, and a short piece of writing intended for publication in some form. You should keep all of your research materials as the semester progresses. A three-ring binder, crate, box, etc. might be necessary in maintaining your work.

Frequent, Informal Writing Projects – These writings may include any of the following: research plan, annotated table of contents, timed writings, writing prompts, writing exercises, etc.

Frequent and active class participation – Many of each class periods will be devoted to writing that will assist you in completing your assigned essays and in becoming a better writer. During class you can expect to be reading and evaluating invention assignments as well as drafts of essays from peer writers. When you

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are not writing, we will be discussing the assigned readings that hopefully will serve as a catalyst for writing ideas.

Participation includes: purposeful class discussion, engaged group work (including verbal and written responses to the texts of others), attendance, tardies and timely preparedness.

Quizzes – Quizzes will receive number grades from 0-100; the purpose of quizzes will be to allow you to demonstrate that you have completed outside readings and that you are engaged during the class.

The grading scale for essays are as follows:

<i>Grade Equivalent</i>	<i>Numeric Grade</i>	<i>Grade Equivalent</i>	<i>Numeric Grade</i>
A+	97-100	C+	77-79
A	93-96	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
		F	0-59

I round points up. In other words, an 89.56 is a 90.

Distribution of Grades: Your course grade will be determined through the following percentages:

Mini-Ethnography (with Research Portfolio) :	25%
Language/Interview Analysis:	15%
Positioning Paper:	15%
Artifact/Space Analysis:	15%
Informal Writings:	10%
Quizzes:	10%
Participation (in-class work, collaborative work, conferences):	10%

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation: Since a great deal of writing, evaluation, and instruction will occur in class and *online*, face-to-face attendance and online attendance/participation is extremely important. (Everyone is expected to be present, on-time, attentive, prepared, and involved.) Excessive tardiness may result in a class absence and may affect your final course grade. Note that failure to post work or participate online via WebCT by announced due dates may result in a class absence. Remember all work is due at the beginning

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of class or as specified; otherwise, it is late and may not be accepted or may adversely affect your grade for a particular assignment and your overall participation grade. More than 5 absences is grounds for failure.

Let me stress that I do not “allow” any absences. Absences in class will significantly reduce your final course grade and may put you in jeopardy of “failing” the course. Your course grade may be lowered by one letter grade for every three hours of absence. More than five absences is grounds for failure. Again, there are no excused absences other than official college business that is documented prior to class time. Please note that if you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and make up class assignments no later than the following class meeting. I strongly advise you to exchange contact information with someone in the class who you trust to provide detailed, accurate information of what went on in class.

WebCT: This section of English requires a WebCT student account that will be used periodically for online discussion, assignment posting, asynchronous interaction, quizzes, and other assignments.

Late Work: Assignments not submitted by the due dates are considered late. If the assignment is not submitted within a week of its due date, the assignment will receive a grade of zero (0).

Formal Essays: All formal essays and their components must be submitted in order to pass this course.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional representation of another person's ideas or writing as one's own, including any materials taken off the Internet. Students should consult the *Catalog* under Academic Regulations for a fuller explanation of this violation of Disruptive Behavior and Academic Dishonesty. The penalty for plagiarism may be failure of the course or dismissal from the University.

Grammar and Mechanics: I am under the belief that you have spent an inordinate amount of time on grammar and mechanics while in high school; therefore, I will not spend extensive time on grammar lectures. However, if I find that several of you are encountering challenges in grammar and/or mechanics, I may either set aside a brief portion of class time on a certain day of the week for a brief discussion on the grammar/mechanics issue that seems to present a challenge *OR* I will suggest and/or emphasize your need to seek additional help in the ATTIC. You should expect to take mini-quizzes in grammar on a regular basis. Therefore, it is suggested that you spend time away from class brushing up on your grammar skills. Make use of your course handbook for brief grammar reviews. You may also see the text web site at http://college.hmco.com/english/raimes/open_handbook/1e/student_home.html

Submission Requirements: Word-process all assignments using Microsoft Word. Leave at least one-inch margins on all four sides.

Notes:

- Microsoft Works files (.WPS) are not acceptable because I cannot open them.
- If you create your word-processing files using Word 2007 (part of the Microsoft Office 2007 suite), please be sure to save them as Word 97-2003. Otherwise, many other students in the class will not be able to open them. To find out how to automatically save all your files as Word 1997-2003, search for "Word 2007 backward compatible" on the Internet. The process is simple and will take less than 30 seconds.

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- Be sure to keep an electronic copy of all work you turn in.

Place your files in the appropriate dropbox on WebCT.

Portable Storage Device: You will need to bring a portable electronic storage device to class with you for each class meeting. There is no hard-drive space on these computers, so you can only save your work on a portable storage device. Make sure that these personal items are labeled with your name and contact information.

Conversion: You will need to experiment in order to find the best conversion program in relation to the equipment you use out of class. To be safe, save all documents as a “Rich Text File” (RTF). You might lose formatting but at least you will have your text to bring back and forth. You might want to save your documents in several formats to find the best conversion.

Printing: It is your responsibility to print your homework outside of a class. We will use the printer occasionally for in-class writings and assignments but all homework is due in hard copy form before the start of each class period.

Paper Form: Unless indicated otherwise, I expect all writings to be *typed single space with 2 spaces between paragraphs and one-inch margins on both sides using 12-point font. Preferably Times New Roman.* Please include your name, course number, date, and assignment name and number in the header of each page. Additionally, please number each page and staple them together in the upper left corner. In addition to identifying the assignment name and number, please provide a title for each writing. All citation and documentation should follow the MLA style. Please be prepared to occasionally provide photocopies of your writings for your classmates and me. *Note: You are responsible for preserving the original copies (with written responses from teacher or classmates) of all your work. You will resubmit all portfolios and writing at the end of the term.*

Cell Phones, Pagers, and Other Distracting Devices: In an effort to provide an effective learning environment, I am asking that you place all cell phones and/or pagers on silent or vibrate prior to coming into the classroom. While we live in an age of modern convenience, ringing cell phones, cell phone conversations, and other distracting communication devices are not appropriate for a classroom environment.

Civility and Inclusiveness: it is expected that each student will treat his/her peers in a civil and respectable manner. While you should feel free to express your ideas, slurs and epithets based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual preference, religious practice, physical ability, etc., will not be tolerated.

Email Correspondence: Email is generally a good way to communicate with the class, professor, and your group members. Students are required to register their email address with the SPSU Registrar. It is your responsibility to check your email regularly for the class. I will use it to communicate changes in the schedule and to post some assignments and to communicate with you individually. If I happen to miss class (very rare), I will contact you via email. Please make sure your address is up-to-date with the Registrar. Something else to remember: Although email is convenient, it is not foolproof. Do not assume that your audience will always receive your email and/or attachments. This mode of communication should not be used as substitute for timely preparedness.

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University Services

ATTIC: You may be required or find it helpful to do some additional work in the ATTIC (Advising, Tutoring, Testing, International Student Center) if you are have challenges in one or more areas in your writing. Academic assistants help students through the processes of invention, organization, writing, revising, and editing of essays and research papers. The ATTIC also offers Regents' Test preparation instruction. The ATTIC maintains student academic enrichment as its primary mission and students should expect to work to improve their grammar and mechanics. Students should not expect an editorial or proofreading service.

The ATTIC encourages both student "drop-ins" and faculty referrals. Room J-253 -- Phone: 678-915-7361.

Disability Statement: *Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the counselor working with disabilities at 678-915-7361 as soon as possible to better insure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.*

Modification of Syllabus

I reserve the right to modify the syllabus at any time. You are responsible for staying current with the syllabus.