

English 102 Composition – Course Policies
Section 046, LA 104
Tuesday, Thursday 4:40 – 5:55

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Office: English Annex 201D

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Required Texts:

- 1) *The Curious Researcher* by Bruce Ballenger.
- 2) A spiral bound notebook.
- 3) Additional readings and handouts on Blackboard and elsewhere

Course Description: When you were a kid, did you ever forget your ham sandwich in your coat pocket only to discover it weeks later wearing a blue and green beard? My god, you said, what's happened? What has my sandwich become? It's incidents and questions like these that this class is all about. Here you will be using research to investigate the origins of things and presenting your findings to a variety of audiences. In particular we will be looking at how our environment and culture make us who we are. The research in this class will move beyond just the library and internet to include observations, personal experimentation, surveys and interviews. The presentations will move beyond boring 5 page papers to dazzling bread beard hats (I mean 10 page papers)!

Goals and Objectives

The BSU English department expects students who pass English 102 to demonstrate the following competencies:

- Write papers that build well-organized arguments by making claims and providing supporting evidence.
- Do more than simply report information from outside sources.
- Make assertions that are supported by appropriate evidence gathered from experience, reading, observations, or conversations with others.
- The ability to take charge of their own investigations, formulate the questions that will drive the research, and make their own conclusions based on the information discovered.
- The ability to read critically, including the ability to discern what an author is asking the reader to believe, and to evaluate the evidence and means of persuasion.
- The ability to use library reference sources to find information.

Basic Course Requirements:

Reading and Writing

Writer's Notebook/Journal: You will need to keep a notebook, one with a spiral binding and standard sized paper. Your notebook will include pre-writes for your essays, various in-class writing activities, doodles, prophecies, etc. I want you to treat your notebook like an extension of your mind. Whatever goes on up there should be captured in the notebook. I expect you to use this notebook in class and on your own time. I'm especially interested in you capturing everyday moments that for one reason or another seem significant on any given day. From time to time, I may ask you about this.

Assigned Readings: Generally you can expect 2 readings per week (roughly 25-30 pages).

Reading Responses: Reading and responding to what you read is very important. These responses will give you the chance to analyze and react to works you read for class. They will help you prepare for in-class discussions about the readings and will also help you become a better, more active reader. I expect your responses to reveal that you actually *read and understood* the reading or if you don't understand a reading this is the place to articulate your questions. Reading responses are worth 5 points.

Drafts of Essays: We will be writing three essays over the course of the semester. These essays will be discussed thoroughly as each is assigned. You will have considerable freedom in choosing subjects for these essays. You will be given specific due dates for each essay as the semester progresses. In class we will discuss all aspects and stages of these essays – proposals, drafts, revisions, etc. Be prepared to discuss and share your ideas and drafts with the class.

For each essay you will receive feedback from me on your strengths and weaknesses. I will assess each draft as either, Early, Middle or Late, indicating where I feel your draft is in the writing process. Final grading of your essays will not occur until the end of the semester, when you hand in your final portfolio.

While these drafts and proposals will not receive a letter grade, evidence of laziness or lack of effort (such as not meeting page requirements, failure to spell check, etc.) will result in zero to partial credit for the assignment. Proposals are worth 5 points. Drafts are worth 10.

Daily work – reading responses and essays will be worth 25% of your grade.

Participation

You are expected to be an active and thoughtful participant in class discussions and workshops and conferences with me. Participation requires that you have done the work required for the day. It also requires you be a good listener, fully present, as well as a contributor to class discussions.

Conferences: Throughout the semester I will arrange to meet with each of you in a conference, during which we will discuss works-in progress and revision ideas. Come prepared and be on time. On the days we have conferences, regular class will not meet. These conferences will be intensive and helpful to you. They also will take time out of both our schedules so *Failure to attend a conference will count as two absences.*

Workshops: You will be required to share your writing with one another on a regular basis and at various stages of your writing process. These in-class workshops will not only provide you with valuable feedback from your peers but will also allow you to share your own insight with them as well. *It is expected that you will utilize the feedback you receive in workshops and revise your drafts accordingly.*

I will go over workshop etiquette in more detail when we do one, but know this: We are all trying to become better writers. Your comments should be constructive and you should be able to provide evidence for your opinions and comments. Likewise, if it is your paper that we are discussing, the comments you receive will concern the ideas and language set forth in your paper. Be prepared to receive both positive and negative comments and know that they are not directed at you as a person but toward your writing. We are trying to help each other.

Workshops make up a healthy portion of your participation grade. Missing class when a workshop is scheduled automatically results in a zero as does coming to workshop without a draft to share with your group. On workshop days you will be held responsible for bringing copies of your draft to share with the group.

Participation will comprise 25% of your final grade.

Portfolios

The bulk of your grade (50%) will be determined by your final portfolio—at least 25 pages of your semester’s best writing. Due at the end of the semester, your portfolio will comprise your revised essays and reading responses you feel best represent you as a writer. Also you will need to include a reflective essay which reveals what you have learned about your work, the writing process and the class in general. Additionally, you may include rough drafts and peer feedback received in workshops, so I advise you to keep until the end of the term every piece of writing that pertains to the course. We will discuss your portfolio in greater detail as the semester progresses. *Remember your portfolio is 50% of your grade. You may not include work from other classes in your portfolio. Doing so is plagiarism.*

Final Grade Breakdown

<u>Class Participation:</u> (Workshops, Conferences, Attendance, & Class Participation)	25%
<u>Reading & Writing:</u> (Drafts of Major Essays, Daily work, and Other Assignments)	25%
<u>Portfolio:</u> _____	50%

Course Policies

Attendance: Attendance is required. As a class we will aim to create a community of writers through on-going group work, sharing of works in progress, and open, uncensored discussion of texts. Sporadic attendance signals, among other things, that you don't take your membership in this community or yourself as a student seriously. Furthermore, insights about your writing process emerge from discussion with other writers. These discussions most often occur in class. If you miss them, you'll be missing a crucial component of the course.

In accordance with BSU's Writing Program's Attendance Policy:

- Your absence is permitted for official absences (participation in official university-recognized activities). To learn more go to <http://english.boisestate.edu/writing/courses.htm>.
- You are allowed 4 unofficial absences. Upon the 5th absence you fail the class. This is the BSU Writing Program policy. Do not expect me to give you warnings regarding absences. It is your responsibility to show up for class. Frequent absences will count against your grade.

*Tardiness: If you are consistently tardy, I will start adding the time up and treat it like an absence.

Cell Phones: Shut them off. Absolutely no texting will be tolerated in class. Students who text will be counted absent for the day.

Come Prepared: In order to get credit for the day, you have to do more than show up. Don't sleep. Don't work on homework for other classes—this isn't study hall. Don't use your laptop to surf the web or play a game. If you can't resist, I'll ask you to leave and count the day as an absence.

Plagiarism: Undocumented use of someone else's writing or ideas are prohibited and will be grounds for instant dismissal from the course. We will devote class time during the semester to discuss and clarify this important issue. If I catch you plagiarizing you will be reported to the authorities and the incident will show up on your permanent record.

Late Work: Assignments are due the day they say they are due. For the major essays you write, you will have weeks of preparation, therefore it is expected that these will be handed in on-time. If you are absent the day an essay is due, it is expected that you will email the essay to me before class. Work that is over a day late will receive half credit. Work that is over a week late will receive zero credit. Students who fail to hand in a major essay will fail the course.

Research Practices: During this course we will be doing some field research. That is research outside of the classroom such as observations and interviews. This research must be conducted safely and it must be legal. You cannot participate in or research any illegal activities. You are responsible for your own actions. Your data must protect the privacy and confidentiality of your research subjects, and can only be used within the context of *this* class.

Other Helpful Things

- For writing help contact: The Writing Center, LA 200, Phone: 426-1298, www.boisestate.edu/w_center.
- If you have any special needs or disabilities contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Administration Building Room no. 114, 426-1583, or contact Wendy Turner: wturner@boisestate.edu.
- If you want to know about the rules of the land, see the Student Code of Conduct, www2.boisestate.edu/studentconduct

Helpful Websites

I will not be spending a lot of time discussing grammar and punctuation in class, so I strongly recommend you make use of these websites if you have questions about grammar.

- The Grammar Guide, <http://www.writingcenter.emory.edu/grammar.html>.
- BSU's Online Student Anthology, <http://english.boisestate.edu/writing-anthology/>
- Purdue's Online Writing Lab, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Tentative Due Dates (more concrete weekly schedules will be available soon)

Thursday, September 3 : Mini-Essay, Shaping Encounters with Nature

Thursday, October 8: Exploratory Essay (unit one, following the chapters of the *Curious Researcher*)

Thursday, November 5: A Study of Place (unit two)

Tuesday, December 1st : ReGenre / RePresent (unit three)

Friday, December 11 : Portfolios Due