

Comprehensive Course Syllabus

Literary Explorations I Composition and Rhetoric

Course Description:

Extended Course Description:

The primary goal of this course is to help you become a better writer. This course recognizes that writing is an essential skill that will benefit you throughout your life and career – whether as a student (writing for teachers), as a member of the workforce (writing for supervisor or staff) or as a human being recording and communicating thoughts, ideas, and emotions for yourself and others.

Literary Explorations I understands that writing is a continuing process of thinking, of discovery, of learning, and of communication, and that you will need all of these skills as you continue at IMSA and as you enter the world at large. The course offers you the occasion to explore purposes, intents, and audiences of expressive, persuasive, and analytical writing, as well as the rhetoric of visual and electronic communication.

Course readings will cover a variety of subjects, and challenge you to think critically about the rhetoric – spoken, written, and visual – that you encounter on a daily basis, sometimes without realizing.

Because this course is always interested in practical and current applications for your writing skills, some reading assignments may be substituted with readings on current events from various sources such as newspapers or the Internet.

Instructor:

Dr. Kotlarczyk
Office A126
Telephone number: 907-5888
Email address: akotlarczyk@imsa.edu

Meeting Days, Time and Room(s)

TBA

Text(s) / Materials:

Bullock, Richard, editor, et al. *The Norton Field Guide to Writing*. Fourth Edition. (2016).

Kendi, Ibram X. *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*. New York: Nation, 2016.

Note: These texts may be supplemented with online readings.

Essential Content/SSLs and Outcomes:

- Students will understand conventions of poetry, drama, and fiction as genres and be able

- to explain their uses and effects [English A.1-3, B.2-4, E.1; SSL IV.A-D].
- Students will evaluate the influence of historical context on form, style, and point of view [English A.4, A.7-8; SSL II.A].
 - Students will work collaboratively to come to an understanding of readings [English A.5-6, C. 1-2, E.2, E.5; SSL I.A-B].
 - Students will develop greater autonomy as readers and writers by generating and responding to their own substantive questions about authors and literary works [English B.1, D.1-3, E.3; SSL I.B].
 - Students will experience writing as an incremental and recursive process by drafting, critiquing, and revising creative and expository works [C.3-5; SSL I.A, II.A, III.A, IV.A-D].
 - Students will reflect upon literacy learning as a lifelong endeavor and set goals for themselves as literacy learners based on their strengths, needs, and aspirations [English E.3; SSL II.A, III.B, V.C].

Instructional Design and Approach:

You learn to read and write better by reading and writing regularly, not by listening to lectures about writing. Consequently, this will be a workshop course where we will write regularly. We will spend significant time not only in individual writing, but also in small groups where we will work collaboratively, sharing and responding to each other's writing. This is your community. By the end of the semester, you will produce a portfolio of essays, with a total of about 5000 words. Along the way, however, you will produce many times that amount of text – notes, lists, scribbles, drafts, and more.

Student Expectations:

To succeed in this class, you must: arrive on time, be prepared by having read AND prepared to discuss or ask questions about the assigned materials (not just online summaries), be active in small group **and** classroom discussion, and demonstrate originality, thorough research, and comprehensive thought on papers and assignments. Being funny doesn't hurt, either.

Revision

You may revise up to three papers this semester, including one required revision. To do so, you must complete a "Plan for Revision" document (available on Moodle) and attach it to your original and revised drafts. The revised paper must be turned in no more than two weeks after your graded original is returned to you.

Late Papers

I will accept, with penalty, late papers up to two weeks after the due date. In the first week, late papers receive a letter grade deduction. In the second week, late papers receive a two-letter grade deduction. **After two weeks, you will receive no credit on your paper;** you may still turn it in for feedback.

Participation

My expectation is that, at least once per class, you voluntarily respond to a question or comment from your teacher or another student. As to why participation in class is important beyond your grade, consider these statements from some of today's business leaders:

“We are routinely surprised at the difficulty some young people have in communicating: verbal skills, written skills, presentation skills. They have difficulty being clear and concise; it’s hard for them to create focus, energy, and passion around the points they want to make.”

-- Mike Summers, VP for Global Talent Management at Dell

“I want people who can engage in good discussion—who can look me in the eye and have a give and take. All of our work is done in teams. You have to know how to work well with others. But you also have to know how to engage customers—to find out what their needs are. If you can’t engage others, then you won’t learn what you need to know.”

-- Clay Parker, engineer and president of the Chemical Management Division of BOC Edwards

“People who’ve learned to ask great questions and have learned to be inquisitive are the ones who move the fastest in our environment because they solve the biggest problems in ways that have the most impact on innovation.”

-- Mike Summers, VP for Global Talent Management at Dell

All quotations taken from “Rigor Redefined” (2008) by Tony Wagner of the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Notes...

I expect you to take notes in this class. Frequently, material that comes up in class discussions will appear on exams. If I think a topic is important enough to put on the board, or to have groups research and present, it’s probably important enough to be on an exam and something I expect you to know.

...and Laptops

The default position for your laptop in this class is closed. This means, from the moment class starts, unless I ask you to use it, I don’t expect to see it open. We will use the laptops frequently for in-class work and even for online readings, but to the greatest extent possible, this will be a laptop-free class. Here’s why:

Researchers have repeatedly found that students who use laptops in class learn less than their “disconnected” peers (see Cornell’s 2003 study “The Laptop and the Lecture”). Studies at Princeton and the University of California have found students who take notes on laptops performed worse on evaluations such as quizzes than those who took notes by hand “even when laptops are used solely to take notes, they may still be impairing learning because their use results in shallower processing” (“The Pen is Mightier than the Keyboard,” 2014).

But laptop use in class harms more than just the user – it also negatively impacts students seated nearby. Sana, Weston, et al (2013) found that:

participants who multitasked on a laptop during a lecture scored lower on a test compared to those who did not multitask, and participants who were in direct view of a multitasking peer scored lower on a test compared to those who were not. The results demonstrate that multitasking on a laptop poses a significant distraction to both users and fellow students and can be detrimental to comprehension of lecture content.

Therefore, I will require that you please keep your laptop closed during class unless you have been specifically asked to use it, and I would encourage you to keep it closed in other classes, as well.

If you have a special need that requires accommodation in this area, please see me.

Technology Excuses:

Hard drives crash. Printers go down. These facts should come as a surprise to no one who has lived in the 21st century. You live on a campus inundated with technology, and your IMSA Google Drive account lets you back up your work automatically. If you aren't working in Google Docs or another program that automatically saves your work, use Google Backup & Sync to make sure you always have a current backup of your work.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your papers in this class are backed up and that you have allowed adequate time for printing. To that end, technological failures (crashing or failing printers, computers, hard drives, etc.) will *not* excuse late or missing work.

Assessment Practices, Procedures, and Processes:

Thesis Practice	5%
Personal Narrative (First Draft)	5%
Personal Narrative (Second Draft)	10%
Persuasive Essay	10%
Annotated Bibliography	10%
Research Paper (First Draft)	20%
Final Portfolio	30%
Participation/Quizzes/Presentations	10%

Details of assessment will vary by assignment and be explained on individual prompts.

Items on this syllabus are subject to change.

Sequence of Topics and Activities

The Basics: Thesis, MLA, the Five Paragraph Essay

Week One (short A,B): *March*

Week Two: “Se habla Espanol” by Barrientos, from “Mother Tongue” by Tan

Week Three (no I): “Is Google Making us Stupid?” by Carr, “Anti-Intellectualism” by Penrod

Week Four: “Our Fear of Immigrants” by Smith, “Don’t Make English Official – Ban it Instead” by Baron

Building Arguments: Personal Narrative and Literary Analysis

Week Five: “Us and Them” by Sedaris, “The Myth of the Latin Woman” by Cofer

Week Six: Poetry by Hughes, “‘They’ll See How Beautiful I Am’: ‘I, Too’ and the Harlem Renaissance” by Morstan

Rhetorical Techniques and Fallacies

Week Six: “Fremont High School” by Kozal, “Finland’s School Success” by Partanen

Week Seven: “The Singer Solution to World Poverty” by Singer, “Living Simply in a Dumpster” by Hamblin

Week Eight (short C, no D): “Black Friday” by Leonard

Beginning Research: Topics and Sources

Week Nine (DIAD): Prologue, Chapter 1 by Kendi

Week Ten: Chapter 6, Chapter 7 by Kendi

Week Eleven: Chapter 12, Chapter 13 by Kendi

Week Twelve: Chapter 20, Chapter 21 by Kendi

Research Drafting

Week Thirteen: Chapter 29, Chapter 30 by Kendi

Week Fourteen: Chapter 37, Epilogue by Kendi

Revising and Reflecting

Week Fifteen (A, short D): TBD

Week Sixteen: TBD

Week Seventeen: TBD

Week Eighteen: FINALS WEEK