

## Syllabus for English 1302: Composition and Rhetoric

Brenda Dillard, Ph.D.

### Textbooks

Bullock, Richard, Michal Brody and Francine Weinberg. *The Little Seagull Handbook*. 5 2nd edition. W.W. Norton, 2014. Print. ISBN-13:978-0393935806 ISBN-10:0393935809

Strout, Elizabeth. *Olive Kitteridge*. New York: Random House, 2008. Print. ISBN-13: 978-0812971835 ISBN-10: 0812971833

Contact the Brazosport College Bookstore, 500 College Drive, Lake Jackson, TX, 77566, Phone: 979-230-3651, Fax: 979-230-3653 with a credit card for these materials, which are available on campus or online at <http://www.brazosport.edu/bookstore>. A student of this institution is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college bookstore. The same textbook is/may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

### Course Description

The course, delivered using Desire2Learn, is designed to aid students in developing skills in reading, thinking, and writing as well as in working collaboratively. Students learn research methods, using the MLA (Modern Language Association) format and parenthetical documentation. Students must read and comprehend college-level material and then write a reasoned analysis that includes a clear thesis and argument, sometimes based on sources. Students must recognize reliable sources and use those sources properly, avoiding plagiarism, presenting all work according to the rules of the MLA format. Students will also write critiques of classmates' essays. Students who choose to do so can participate in group work: see Course Requirements below for more on group work.

### Prerequisites

Satisfactory completion of English 1301.

### Course Goals

Students learn to read material in a way that encourages a thoughtful, considered response, and then organize that response into a coherent, convincing essay. Students learn to choose written words carefully and assemble a logical thesis and argument. They also refine research skills and familiarize themselves with the use of the MLA (Modern Language Association) format for presenting written material.

## Instructor Information

Students can contact me on Mondays through Thursdays most readily through the email inside Desire2Learn. Students can also send an email message to [brenda.dillard@brazosport.edu](mailto:brenda.dillard@brazosport.edu) or leave a message at 979 230 3367, which is the telephone number for my office at the college, B213. My home phone number is 713 417 6294.

Technical help is available at the collegeIT Helpdesk, 979-230-3266 or [helpdesk@brazosport.edu](mailto:helpdesk@brazosport.edu).

## Students with Disabilities

BC is committed to providing equal education opportunities to every student. BC offers services for individuals with special needs and capabilities including counseling, tutoring, equipment, and software to assist students with special needs. Please contact Phil Robertson, Special Populations Counselor, 979-230-3236 for further information.

## Academic Honesty

BC assumes that students eligible to perform on the college level are familiar with the ordinary rules governing proper conduct including academic honesty. The principle of academic honesty is that all work presented by you is yours alone. Academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion shall be treated appropriately. Please refer to the BC Student Guide for more information, available online at <http://www.brazosport.edu>. Click on the link found on the left side of the homepage.

The information below is taken from [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org)

### What is Plagiarism?

- Using someone else's writing structure by slightly changing key words & phrases
- Using charts, illustrations, graphics, etc. without crediting the source
- Turning in someone else's work as your own
- Failing to put a quotation in "quotation marks" to show it is taken word-for-word
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.
- Presenting as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source
- Recycling an old paper for a new assignment. It is dishonest because the instructor assumes you put in the work, time, and research for the current class assignment. *Always ask first to see if recycling an earlier paper is permissible.*
- Having a works cited page but not showing *internal* citation. In other words, it's impossible to tell where the sources were used within the essay.
- Having internal citation but no *works cited page*. In other words, it's impossible to find the complete source information such as title, volume, issue, date, etc.

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### Attendance and Withdrawal Policies

Students must attend class. A student who misses four classes will fail the course. In addition, I expect students to explore our class website and familiarize themselves with the class email, discussion board, calendar, glossary and other functions. A chat room is available, but not required. Posting on the discussion board is required as noted on assignment instructions found on the calendar. Official due dates for assignments are on the calendar. This course demands class attendance plus a great deal of time spent online reading material and responding to instructions.

Students who decide to withdraw from the course must contact the Registrar's Office at the college and they will provide instructions. Each semester has a withdrawal date, after which a student cannot withdraw. Students who do not withdraw before the last day to withdraw receive a grade of F for the course. It is the student's responsibility to check on the withdrawal date for the semester. The Registrar's Office can provide the date or it will be listed on a college calendar.

### Course Requirements and Grading Policy

The course requirements consist of three short (at least two pages each) written assignments and one long research paper (at least six pages). Each assignment requires reading, thinking, and writing, most often resulting in a five-paragraph essay with a clear thesis and argument. Some assignments also include written critiques of peers' essays.

Since the modern workplace often requires collaboration, students are welcome to work in groups. Students who choose to do so can put together a group of two or three students from the class. The group will write one essay, while each group member writes her/his own critiques. The grade for each student in the group will be based on the quality of the essay and the quality of that student's critiques. Group work can be beneficial when each member contributes equally. Frustration results when members fail to carry their share of the workload. Students are responsible for forming their own groups with my permission: I do not assign or require any group work. It is voluntary. If students want to work as a group, they must let me know.

In grading written work, I expect college-level skills in diction (word choice), sentence structure (no fragments or incomplete sentences) and grammar (no errors in subject/verb agreement or pronoun number or other grammatical issues). Students with weak mechanical skills can seek help with a tutor at no charge in the Student Success Center or they can study appropriate sections of our class text, *The Little Seagull Handbook*.

In addition to college-level skills in Standard English, I expect written work in our class to demonstrate original, fresh thinking that moves beyond our class discussions. I

expect essays to be organized according to instructions given for the five-paragraph essay, including a clear thesis and argument. Work based on sources must include parenthetical citations, presented in MLA format.

I expect written work in our class to follow three sets of rules: the rules for Standard English, the rules for the MLA format, and the rules that I have established for our class.

Each short assignment carries equal weight, with the research paper counting double. A student's grade for the course will be the average of the grades earned on each assignment.

The official due dates for assignments will be posted. Late work will be accepted up to one week after the due date, with the penalty that the highest grade possible on late work is a grade of C.

## Testing

A student's grade for the course is the average of the grades earned on the essay assignments and the research paper. The course does not have quizzes or tests. The final exam is an essay assignment.

## Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to fully participate in the course. The following criteria are intended to assist you in being successful in this course.

### Computer Skills:

This course requires basic computer skills in navigating the Desire2Learn site and the web. Students must be able to post messages on the discussion board, to use the email function in Blackboard, to produce documents in Microsoft Word (or saved as rich text if using another word processing program). Students must have a fast, reliable Internet connection, and a compatible web browser like Mozilla Firefox (available at no charge).

### Time Management:

Some students sign up for a course thinking that it will be easy: this is not the case. This course requires class attendance plus a great deal of time spent alone in front of a computer reading material, thinking, and writing.

### Understanding the Syllabus Requirements:

Students must read and understand the syllabus. Ask questions about unclear items.

### Utilizing Desire2Learn Components:

Students must familiarize themselves with and use components like the email function inside Desire2Learn, the class glossary and such.

### Communicating with the Instructor:

Ask questions. Let me know about issues that arise.

### Completing Course Work:

To earn a passing grade, students must complete all course work.

### Assignments:

Each semester, students will complete three short essays and one longer research paper. Assignments include reading and comprehending college-level material like short stories and poetry, and then writing an informed response to the reading. The response is a five-paragraph essay with a clear, reasoned thesis and argument, often supported with research requiring a student to recognize credible sources and use those sources correctly. Essays must follow the rules for MLA format.

The research paper requires students to recognize, comprehend and use scholarly sources. Students select and study a minimum of five scholarly sources that analyze a literary topic. The information from the sources is then assembled to form a coherent research paper with parenthetical documentation in MLA style.

Some assignments also include writing critiques: after completing her/his essay, a student will read essays written by other students in the class, answering a series of questions about the essays, producing written critiques that contribute to the student's grade for the assignment.

### Student Services Information

This list is provided to assist students locate available services. Information about the BC Library is available at <http://www.brazosport.edu/~lib/Information.htm>, or by calling 979 239 3310. Tutoring for Math, Reading, Writing, Biology, Chemistry, and other subjects is available in the Student Success Center. To contact the English Department, call 979 230 3224.

The Student Services area provides the following services: Counseling and Advising, 979 230-3040; Financial Aid, 979 230 3294; and Student Activities, 979 230 3355.

To reach the Information Technology department for technical assistance, call the Helpdesk at 979-230-3266 or email [helpdesk@brazosport.edu](mailto:helpdesk@brazosport.edu).

## Assignment Schedule

All work--except critiques, which are written during class--is due before class begins on due date: your work should be posted on the discussion board before class begins.

Week one: Post your contact information on the discussion board. Read material posted under Content. Choose the topic for your Research Paper. (Possible topics include the work of Joel and Ethan Coen, Cormac McCarthy, Quentin Tarantino; Guillermo del Toro) Locate five scholarly sources for the Research Paper. Post copies of the sources, copied and pasted into a Word or rich text file, as attachments to a message on the discussion board. We want your source material readily accessible so we can check your use of sources while reading your paper. During class, begin formatting and assembling your works cited page for the research paper in MLA format. Show your five sources to me: make sure that they are scholarly and fresh (they must have a publication date of 2000 or later). Ask any questions about your works cited list which is due next class. Begin reading *Olive Kitteridge*.

Week two: Before class begins, post the complete works cited page in MLA format for the Research Paper, compiled from the five sources and saved as a Word or rich text file, as an attachment to a message on the discussion board. During class, find the Works Cited Page Checklist (Content) and write and post five critiques of works cited pages on the discussion board. When you are certain that your works cited are in the correct MLA format, show your works cited list to me. We are writing the works cited list first so that you will know what to put inside the parentheses of the in-text citations in the paper. The first word of the works cited entry appears inside the parentheses of the in-text citation in the paper. Write your name on the whiteboard so that you can go over your works cited page with me (required). Make any necessary revisions to your works cited page.

Week three: Post the Biography Section of the Research Paper on the discussion board for workshop. You will find the description of the Biography Section posted under Content/Research Paper. Copy and paste your Works Cited list (be sure to add any sources that you cited for the biography) at the end of your Biography Section. Write and post five critiques of Biography Sections. Write your name on the whiteboard so you can go over your Biography Section and Works Cited page with me. After you go over your work with me and I give you permission, put the Biography and the Works Cited into one file, carefully check this new file (proofread) and then drop the file into the dropbox, along with ten critiques (five for Bio and five for works cited), a total of 11 files, for grading. This section of the research paper is worth 25 points. We are assembling the research paper in stages.

Week four: Before class begins, post the plan for the Criticism Section of the Research Paper on the discussion board. Go over your plan with me and I will let you know if I think it will work. I am happy to help you figure out how to understand and use your sources. This Criticism Section of the research paper is difficult: allow ample time to understand your sources, figure out which material you want to use in your paper, organize the material and then write this section of the paper.

Week five: Criticism Section of Research Paper due for workshop. Put your Criticism Section in the same file as the Biography, after the Biography Section and before the list of Works Cited (put everything into one file and post it on the discussion board under Criticism Section). Go over your section with me and write and post five critiques of Criticism Sections.

Week six: Influence Section of Research Paper due for workshop. Five critiques. Complete, proofread Research Paper due for workshop. Put all of the sections of the Research Paper into one file (be sure to include the Works Cited list at the end of the paper). Write and post five critiques.

Week seven: Read the material posted under Content that discusses how to analyze a Short Story. We will treat each chapter of *Olive Kitteridge* like a short story, using the same principles of analysis. Discuss "Pharmacy," "Incoming Tide" from *Olive Kitteridge*.

Week eight: Discuss "The Piano Player," and "A Little Burst" from *Olive Kitteridge*.

Week nine: Post thesis and argument for Essay I on the discussion board. Go over your thesis and argument with me. You can choose to analyze one of the stories we have discussed thus far.

Week ten: Essay I due for workshop. Five critiques.

Week 11: "Starving," "A Different Road," "Basket of Trips," "Ship in a Bottle" Thesis and argument for Essay II due.

Week 12: Essay II due for workshop. Five critiques.

Week 13: "Winter Concert," "Tulips," "Security""Criminal," "River" Thesis and argument for Essay III due.

Week 14: Essay III due for workshop.

Week 15: Grade check. Essay III counts as our final exam. Make sure you have a grade for each of the three short essays and for the Research Paper. Contact me via email, text or phone if you have questions. You can text me at 713 417 6294.

## English 1302 Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of individual and collaborative research processes.

Assessment: Participation in peer editing, draft workshops, and group discussions. 1-4 compositions incorporating research (passing with at least 70%)

2. Students will develop ideas and synthesize primary and secondary sources within focused academic arguments, including one of more research-based essays.

Assessment: 1-4 compositions incorporating research (passing with at least 70%)

3. Students will analyze, interpret, and evaluate a variety of texts for the ethical and logical uses of evidence.

Assessment: Students support their opinion about theme and characters by using logical appeals. 1-4 compositions (passing with at least 70%)

4. Students will write in a style that clearly communicates meaning, builds credibility, and inspires belief or action.

Assessment: quizzes, tests, and/or other assignments (passing with at least 70%)

5. Students will apply the conventions of style manuals for specific academic disciplines (E.g., APA, CMS, MLA, etc.)

Assessment: 1-4 compositions incorporating research (passing with at least 70%)