

Loyola University Maryland
WR 100.19—Effective Writing
Fall 2014 Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Craig Medvecky

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Office hours: T/TH 11:00–noon (or by appt.)

Moodle URL: <http://moodle.loyola.edu/course/view.php?id=9425>

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Class Time: T/TH 12:15-1:30, KN 007

Course Description

WR100 presents writing as a complex activity that requires ongoing practice and guidance. During the semester students will learn to develop their own original ideas, pursue the implications of ideas, use language effectively, and conduct inquiry (including basic library research). In the process of these activities, students will use writing as a meaning-making activity and as a tool for communication of that meaning to others. The course explores how writing strategies, expectations, and criteria for success change depending on the context for writing, such that *effective* writing depends on a writer's ability to understand and address audience, purpose, and context. WR100, therefore, focuses on higher order activities, not remedial or basic skills. The goal is to teach students to approach writing as a rhetorical activity, not as a set of rules or conventions. In achieving this goal, the course attends to writing as both process and product within a community of writers. Accordingly, students will develop a full writing process—planning, drafting, revising based on critical feedback from peers and instructor, and editing. This course provides a foundation for students to build upon as they write and study across the curriculum.

Learning Aims

Over the course of the semester, students in Effective Writing will:

- Use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communicating to
 - 1) demonstrate complex understanding and the ability to find and assess data about a given topic using general repositories of information, both printed and electronic; 2) show awareness of the multiplicity of perspectives that bear on the human experience, and the importance of historical, global, and cultural context in the way that we see the world; 3) explore how genre shapes reading and writing as they write different types of contemporary American essays; 4) analyze and respond to different rhetorical situations by adopting appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality; and 5) formulate an original thesis, focus, or controlling idea and support it by using a variety of strategies, including analysis and the integration of ideas and information gathered through research.

- Use flexible strategies for generating ideas, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading to
 - 1) critique their own and others' work (balancing the advantages of working with others with the responsibility of doing their part); 2) develop an effective writing process that encourages later invention and re-thinking to revise their work; 3) use multiple drafts to create and complete an effective text, and; 4) generate texts that conform to conventions of edited American English.

Required Texts

For this class you will need the following **required** textbook available at the [Loyola University Bookstore](#), located in the Andrew White Student Center, 4501 N. Charles Street. (410) 617-2291.

1. Ramage, John D., John C. Bean, and June Johnson. *The Allyn & Bacon Guide to Writing, 6th Edition, Brief Edition*. Boston, MA: Longman, 2012. ISBN 13: 978-0-205-82315-4

The above-listed text will be used regularly in class and in homework assignments. You cannot complete this course without a ready copy of this book. The approximate cost of the book is \$70.

Class Participation and Preparedness (20% of final grade)

Students are expected to arrive on-time, to be prepared, and to *engage in a focused discussion* with their classmates about the readings and assignments. Attending the classes in silence equates to C performance. Regular and meaningful contributions to the discussion will constitute a significant part of a student's final grade. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous and professional manner at all times—that includes turning off your phones and portable devices for the duration of class. Class participation begins with timely attendance. Arriving late or unprepared to class will result in a lower course participation grade. If you aren't on time, you interrupt and distract others. If you don't have the required textbooks or class work, you won't be able to participate in daily activities. Attendance at all class meetings is required. More than three unexcused absences during the term will interfere with your progress as a writer and negatively affect your course grade. After three absences, each absence will lower your final course grade 3 points (e.g., from 90 to 87). Any student with six or more unexcused absences will receive an "F" for the course. Absences can only be excused if the excuse is reported to me through the Office of Academic Services (x5547). Student athletes must follow the Athletic department protocols for absences and are expected to complete scheduled assignments and/or tests in advance of any excused absences.

Occasionally student-teacher conferences may be held in place of class meetings. Missing a scheduled conference will be counted as an absence.

Students who arrive late or miss class are expected to turn in work on time, catch themselves up on missed work, including handouts and homework assignments. To help in this regard, the course Moodle site will provide convenient, 24-hour access to the course assignment dropbox as well as all past and present handouts and assignments. Please be advised, *absence is not an excuse for late work*. Buy extra ink cartridges and paper for emergencies. Unless otherwise indicated, **e-mail is not an acceptable form of submission for course work**.

Homework Assignments (20% of final grade)

Homework assignments are due at the beginning of the class specified by the instructor and/or the course calendar (see attached). When assigned to turn in hard copy, assignments are to be printed or type-written in a suitable typeface at a reasonable size on clean sheets of paper with one inch margins. When assigned to post on Moodle, deadlines will be included in the instructions for the assignment. **Email is not acceptable as a means of submitting homework**. If you have to

miss class please turn your work into the appropriate Moodle folder before class on the day that it is due. Late assignments may not receive written comments, but they will be graded.

Major Milestone Essay Assignments (50% of final grade)

Paper I: An Image Analysis Essay, 3-5 pages (10%)

Paper II: A Exploratory Research Essay, 5-7 pages (10%)

Paper III: An Autobiographical Narrative Essay, 5-7 pages (10%)

Paper IV: Final Portfolio and Reflective Essay, 10-14 pages (20%)

Reading Quizzes (10% of final grade)

Period reading quizzes will be distributed in class and measure comprehension and attention to detail in the assigned reading.

A Note About The Final Portfolio and Reflective Essay

Of the three primary essays you write this term, you will choose **one** to carefully revise and edit for a portfolio that you will submit at the end of the semester. This portfolio should **a)** represent your best work as a writer and **b)** demonstrate the progress you've made (as a reader, writer, and critical thinker) through various drafts and revisions. To fulfill the second requirement (**b**), your portfolio will also include a *self-evaluation* in the form of a reflective essay that you compose after you have revised your work. The reflective essay should address the ways in which your portfolio selection speaks to the course goals, specific assignment criteria, and the goals you set for yourself.

The final portfolio will be due on *Tuesday, Dec 16, 2014, at noon in my office*. The portfolio submitted at that time will take the place of a timed exam. As such, late work cannot be accepted.

General Policies

Labeling/Formatting of Written Work: Please label all written work with MLA style headers, including your name; WR100; date; and, when appropriate, "draft," "revision," or "final." All drafts and revisions should be word-processed (double-spaced, 10 or 12-point type) as per MLA style. Revisions should include titles and page numbers. Multi-page assignments should be stapled or clipped together.

Public Nature of Course: Writing for this course is public writing. You will be asked to provide copies of drafts and revisions for small-group workshops and, possibly, for the purposes of whole-class discussion.

Completion of All Major Milestone Assignments: Though you will not submit all of your major milestone projects for your portfolio, you must complete drafts and revisions of all four projects in order to pass the course.

Plagiarism: The students of Loyola University are citizens of an academic community that conducts itself according to an academic code of honor, following the Jesuit ideal of *cura personalis* and keeping within the school motto, "Strong Truths Well Lived." As noted in the school honor code, plagiarism is a very serious matter for young writers to consider. Plagiarism occurs when one person presents

another person's words or ideas as her/his own. It involves using the ideas or exact words of others without giving that person/source credit. It also includes failing to provide proper documentation, handing in a paper from a previous class, engaging in sloppy paraphrasing, having your friend or relative revise your paper, pulling a paper off the web, or using *parts* of a paper pulled off the web, etc. Any form of plagiarism may result in an F for the course as well as further disciplinary action. Please read the section on plagiarism in your handbook and see me if you have additional questions.

Students with Disabilities: It is the policy and practice of Loyola University to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and state and local requirements regarding students with disabilities. If you have questions, or to request academic accommodations due to a disability, *please contact Disability Support Services (DSS), Newman Towers West 107, at DSS@loyola.edu or call (410) 617-2750/2062. If you have already registered with DSS and requested an accommodations letter (and DSS has sent the letter to your professors via email), please schedule a brief meeting to discuss the accommodations you might need in this class.*

The Loyola Writing Center: The Writing Center offers free one-to-one help on papers for any class at any stage of the writing process. Located in Maryland Hall 057. Students may sign up for appointments in person, by phone (617-410-5415), or by email (lwc@loyola.edu).

Questions: I am happy to answer any questions you may have about your work. I encourage you to approach me before or after class, during office hours, and by email. The more questions you ask, the more successful you will be. The most reliable way to reach me is by email. Please bring any questions you have about grades or policies to me privately. I prefer not to discuss a grade in the public forum of the classroom, so please wait until after class, my next available office hour *or* email me to make an appointment.

Add/Drop and Withdrawal Dates:

The final day to add/drop a course without penalty is September 5th by 5:00 p.m. The final day to withdraw formally from a course is Friday, November 10th.

Final Grading Scale

At Loyola an A stands of excellence of the highest order. A is not the norm; it is the exception. The grade of C rewards a successful academic performance. Grades of C+ and above measure additional gradations of accomplishment, while grades of C- and below describe degrees of unsatisfactory performance. *Note well:* No grade adjustments are made after final grades have been recorded. The time to concern yourself with your final grade is every day throughout the semester. If, as we work through the course materials and assignments, you have questions about how to improve your performance, you should make a point to speak with me. I am always available in my office and via email, and I am delighted to work with eager students to help them improve.

Grade Scale: 93.00 - 100 = A, 90.00 - 92.99 = A-, 87.00 - 89.99 = B+, 83.00 - 86.99 = B, 80.00 - 82.99 = B-, 77.00-79.99 C+, 73.00-76.99 C, 70.00-72.99 C-, 67.00-69.99 D+, 63.00-66.99 D, 60.00-62.00 D-, Below 60 = F