WRIT100, section D

An article by Jeffrey R. Young in the current issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* describes the response of a student whose copyright was violated:

"A graduate student has sued three term-paper Web sites, accusing them of selling one of her papers without her permission. The case could be the first of its kind.

The student, Blue Macellari, filed suit on Wednesday against both the operator of the term-paper Web sites, Rusty R. Carroll, and a company he owns called R2C2 Inc., arguing that they violated her copyright, invaded her privacy, and damaged her reputation. Ms. Macellari, who is enrolled in a joint graduate program offered by Duke University’s business school and the Johns Hopkins University, is asking for more than $100,000 in damages."

**Classes**

Classes will be held in Memorial Hall, Room 301
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 11:30 am to 12:20 pm

**Texts**

Three books are required for this course, all of which should be available in the bookstore:

- *Welcome to the Monkey House* by Kurt Vonnegut
- *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* by Ken Kesey
Other readings will be provided throughout the semester.

Links

*The Bedford Handbook* has an [associated website.](#)

Course Objectives

This course introduces writing as a communication process that is central to learning and life. Through it, students should

- regard writing as a way of thinking and
- understand that in the act of writing on a particular subject for a particular audience, a writer will construct new knowledge.

This course helps students

- write in varied styles for varied audiences,
- use research materials and cite them appropriately, and
- use technology as a tool for research and writing.

Students will work collaboratively in workshop settings and will practice both oral and written communication. The subject area focus of each section of Writing 100 will involve reading and discussion of ideas and styles. Because Writing 100 focuses on college-level reading and writing, you will begin to sharpen the critical reasoning skills needed for success in any academic discipline at Moravian.

The Writing Process

(These are the guidelines prepared by the English department. I haven’t changed them much because those folks know their stuff: listen to what they have to teach you about writing.)

By practicing a set procedure for writing, we hope that you can eventually become your own teacher/editor and be free to use writing as a way of learning. Writing is more than simply a report of what you know and see; it’s also an important way of exploring a subject. Working through the stages of writing can deepen your understanding of the world and yourself in a way that reading and thinking by themselves cannot. Here is a brief review of the essential steps. They are based upon what we know about how successful writers actually work.

**Prewriting** is the work you do before composing and includes those important early decisions about purpose, your audience, and a style to fit. Prewriting also means reading, taking notes, talking to others, outlining, or freewriting - in other words, gathering together your information and thoughts.

**Writing** those first words on a blank page is sometimes the most difficult step, often preceded by procrastination and anxiety that the writing will not work and that you might fail. Beginning writers should remember that it is neither natural nor possible for the words to
come out just right the first time. Trying to make each sentence perfect before going to the
next is one of the worst things to do. Writing takes time and often trial and error to become
exact. The process we follow at Moravian allows time for your unique mind and your store of
language to work together.

Therefore, writing the first draft should be the fastest part of the process. You should write
freely and without concern for style or mechanics in order to probe your ideas and let the act
of writing help you discover what needs to be said. This first draft should be an open
conversation between you and the writing. But for this conversation to move forward, you the
writer must continue to put words on paper and respond to those words by writing more.
Most any words will do to start the ball rolling, to set up this dialogue between you and the
page. You are simply using writing to make yourself think in a sustained way about your
topic. You aren't even sure yet what you wish to say. What comes out may surprise you. But
at least give yourself a chance to let your thoughts flow in writing without trying to make each
sentence correct before going to the next.

The best advice is not to fret over a first draft. Simply get something on paper to work with.
Concentrate on filling up on the pages with words. If you get stuck, reread what you've
written or consult your outline and then force yourself to start moving the pen or the keys on
the keyboard again, even if you have to write, "I'm stuck and I don't know why. What I wish to
say is ...." Most of all, make a mess. Paper is cheap, but the price is dear of trying to get
everything right on the first draft.

Revising is the crucial stage. Indeed, it has often been said that "good writing is rewriting." It
is through multiple drafts that the piece slowly becomes more and more of what you wanted.
You may add paragraphs and sentences while deleting old ones, or restyle flabby sentences
and sharpen word choice now that the ideas are clearer. You may even "trash" much of what
you've written in a first draft as you purpose and your sense of yourself in relation to your
audience becomes sharper. In this stage you are shaping each part of the essay to fit your
precise aim and audience. At this time, working on a computer can be of great advantage.
You can produce clean multiple drafts quickly and painlessly, in addition to using such aids
as automatic style, spelling, and grammar checkers. Do be careful to save earlier drafts of
your essay, as your instructor may wish to see the various stages of your work. Also, some
instructors may ask you to provide copies of earlier drafts to some of your fellow students for
their suggestions for improvement.

The secret to writing successfully is, above all else, the willingness to revise and pride in
doing so. Professional writers expect to revise words, sentences, and paragraphs. Always
ahead in this stage of revision are several opportunities to get it right.

Final editing and proofreading await you at the end of the writing process--at the very end.
For the first time the writer becomes a police officer, inspecting and verifying the grammar
and spelling and punctuation. Good writing is much more than good grammar, but for most
academic essays, the two go together. So writers at this point become anxious that no
spelling or grammatical blunder will interfere with a reader's ability to understand and enjoy
what was written.

You won't always have as much time as you would like for every essay. All of us, students
and teachers alike, must learn to live within the limitations of this special version of life called
college. But you can still practice this process of writing, learning to anticipate each stage
and the writing problems that are a part of it. Someday your future will almost certainly
depend, at least in part, on your ability to write meaningfully and to write with style. This semester is the time to start to get ready for that moment.

Course Policies

Attendance

I expect that you will make every effort to attend each class session. We have very little time together, and much of it will be spent helping each other, so when you miss a class you've denied some of your classmates a chance to learn. If you must miss a class, please let me know in advance if at all possible. It's a question of respect, both for me and for your fellow students.

From a more mercenary viewpoint, poor attendance will affect your final grade in this course.

Grading

Here is how I will weight the several components of the course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papers</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(three at 15% each, but I reserve the right to decide which three: don't think you can blow one off and not suffer for it)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(includes attendance, preparing vocabulary contributions, reading, and taking an active role in discussions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing groups</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary quizzes and grammar exercises</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here is the grading scale I use in all my classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeric Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93.3 - 100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.0 - 93.2</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86.7 - 89.9</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83.3 - 86.6</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.0 - 83.2</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76.7 - 79.9</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73.3 - 76.6</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Just to review, this is what the Student Handbook has to say about grades:

A and A-
These grades are given for achievement of the highest caliber. They reflect independent work, original thinking, and the ability to acquire and effectively use knowledge.

B+, B, and B-
These grades are given for higher than average achievement. Evidence of independent work and original thinking is expected.

C+, C, and C-
These grades are given when the student has devoted a reasonable amount of time, effort, and attention to the work of the course and has satisfied the following criteria: familiarity with the content of the course, familiarity with the methods of study of the course, and active participation in the work of the class.

D+, D, and D-
These grades are given for unsatisfactory work, below the standard expected by the College. They indicate work which in one or more important aspects falls below the average expected of students for graduation. The work is, however, sufficient to be credited for graduation, if balanced by superior work in other courses.

**Late Assignments**

Late assignments are bad. We're on a tight schedule, and you need to stay on top of the assignments. Anything you hand in late disrupts my schedule as well as the schedules of your classmates. Late assignments will be penalized one full letter grade (10 points) for each day (or fraction thereof) that they are late. This also applies to assignments that simply aren't up to snuff: if you hand in two hand-scrawled pages and expect that to count as a draft, you are going to be disappointed!

**Reading**

It is important that you do the reading assigned for any given session (see the Syllabus) in advance. Discussion of the material is a critical part of the course, and if you haven't read that day's material, you're depriving yourself and your classmates of your most informed and considered opinion.

**Studying Together**

Working together is a Good Thing. I encourage you to talk with friends in and out of this course about what you're doing, how effective your writing is, whether the approach you've chosen to take makes sense, whatever. There is no aspect of this course that can't be improved by working with other students on it.
Academic Honesty

I adhere to the Academic Honesty policy of the College. There is nothing more important to me than personal integrity - not good grammar, not exquisite punctuation, nothing - and I conduct myself and all of my classes in that spirit. If you're not familiar with College policy, you should be.

This syllabus is currently accurate but minimal; it is not immutable. For example, I guarantee it will change as I add readings from The Bedford Handbook to address issues as they arise over the semester. I will make every effort to let you know when I add things, but you are ultimately responsible for checking it as needed.

Course Components

- Journals
- Papers
- Peer Review
- Class Discussions
- Vocabulary and Grammar
- Conferences with me
- Writing Center

Journals

I expect each of you to keep a journal for this class. It must be (at least in part) a notebook; it may also contain a series of computer files, for example. It should contain your class notes, notes on your readings, notes on your research, your thoughts, ideas, and reflections on any and all of the above, all of your drafts, your thoughts on the drafts, your thoughts on your peers' comments (more on that below), your thoughts about their drafts, you get the idea. (Although you should think of your drafts as part of your journal, you don't need to re-submit them to me with the rest of the journal.)

I'm not looking for self-conscious reflection on Deep Issues because you think that's what belongs in a journal: I intend this to serve as both a (semi-organized) record of your progress through this course as well as a tool for you to use to become more comfortable with and proficient in the writing process.

Please note that I want this to be a reasonably coherent artifact as well: I will not accept a haphazard collection of napkins, notepaper, and floppy disks as a "journal." It's up to you to maintain some sort of order. Note that putting dates on each page is a Very Good Idea - so good in fact, that I require it.

Papers

There will be four major writing assignments for this class: a research paper, an opinion piece, a literary analysis, and an example of creative writing.

Peer Review
Pretty much every week a draft of your current assignment will be due on Wednesday, or a draft on each of Monday and Friday (see the Syllabus). You must provide a copy for me and for each member of your writing group (and you will receive a copy of each of theirs). At our next meeting, the class will break up and your group will meet to offer suggestions on each of its members' drafts. This is absolutely central to everything we're doing in this course! If your goal is to communicate with someone, who better to help you do so than members of your intended audience? And by the same token, by offering solid advice to your peers you are not only helping them to become better writers, you are strengthening your own skills.

Class Discussions

We will be reading a number of texts looking at madness from several perspectives. An important part of writing is having something to write about, and to that end we will be discussing these readings in class. On the day of each discussion I'm going to select two of you to lead it, so every one of you must be prepared with at least 2 questions about the reading for that day so that you can get the ball rolling.

Vocabulary and Grammar

It's crucial for a craftsman to know his or her tools. Almost every Friday I expect each of you to supply one new word which you came across in your reading of the previous week. It doesn't have to be from a reading in this class, but you'll need to be prepared to supply a basic definition, and it should be a reasonably useful word. Think about why I'm doing this: the more words you're familiar with, the more you will have available to you in your own writing. What's the point of trying to come up with the most abstruse, sesquipedalian, recondite terms? (Believe me, we're going to run across some lulus in this class, words that haven't been used in common speech since before even I was born.) I will have vocabulary quizzes, announced in advance, with detailed rules to follow.

As to grammar, I will give short assignments from Bedford on those aspects I think will be most helpful, either individually or to the whole class. We will talk about these items from your writer's toolbox in class as well.

Conferences with me

I will set up individual conferences with each of you at least twice during the semester, to talk about your writing, the course, and whatever else strikes our fancy. Don't feel you have to wait, though: any time you want to discuss your work with me, let me know and we'll set something up.

Writing Center

You will be required to go to the Writing Center at least twice during the semester. If you want to take the initiative and set up an appointment with a tutor when you feel that you need a little help or a fresh perspective on what you've got, that's wonderful. Knowing when you're in control and when you need advice, in any arena, is key to becoming your own person. The Writing Center is a valuable resource, and one which you should take as much advantage of as you need. It's not just for "D" students who want C's on their papers: it's also for "A" students who want to become better, more fluent writers and everyone in between. You're going to be writing a lot, not only in college but in the world beyond. Learn to become proficient at it.