

General Honors 101, Section 092
The American Dream: The Myths and Realities of Social Class
Spring 2017, T/R, 2:00-3:15 p.m., 120 Simpkins Hall
Professor: Dr. Timothy Helwig
Office: 010 Simpkins Hall
Office Phone: 298-1213
Office Hours: T/R, 11:00-12:00; W, 1:00-3:00; and by appt.
Email: TW-Helwig@wiu.edu

For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us.—John Winthrop

We have no princes, for whom we toil, starve, and bleed; we are the most perfect society now existing in the world.—J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur

Not only does democracy make every man forget his ancestors, but it hides his descendants and separates his contemporaries from him; it throws him back forever upon himself alone, and threatens in the end to confine him entirely within the solitude of his own heart.—Alexis de Tocqueville

Course Objectives

First, the American Dream is built upon the enduring mythologies that America is largely a middle-class society; that America is a land of limitless opportunity; and that America is a nation of self-made men and women. And yet when it comes to analyzing and understanding American identity, class status is often minimized, discredited, or completely ignored. This honors course insists on the importance of class in the shaping of American culture and considers the ways “class matters” in our everyday lives. By studying how class identity is constructed—is it based exclusively on one’s economic status, on one’s social status, on its relation to one’s race, gender, and sexuality—in a series of contemporary essays and in classic American literature, and by analyzing how class identities are represented in popular media today, we will consider the role class has played in the development of American society and in the construction of American identity.

Second, GH 101 is a writing course based on the assumption that writing is a skill and that any skill can be improved through guided practice. GH 101 is designed to give you that guidance and practice so that you can improve the ability you already have and become a better, more confident writer. GH 101 will help you prepare for the kinds of writing you will be asked to do throughout your college career: the identification, construction, and investigation of an issue, crafted with the best possible means of support and expression, given your audience and purpose. In addition, you will learn skills for conducting productive research and incorporating secondary sources effectively into your argumentative prose.

Required Texts

Colombo, Gary, Robert Cullen, and Bonnie Lisle, eds. *Rereading America*. 10th ed. Boston: Bedford, 2016.

Hacker, Diana. *A Pocket Style Manual*. 7th ed. Boston: Bedford, 2015.

NOTE: All additional texts are available as PDFs on our Western Online course site and are listed as (WO) on our reading schedule.

Course Policies

1a. Attendance and Class Participation. Although I will provide background and context for our reading at the start of each class period, the course will rely upon your active participation, including your own analysis and exploration of our texts. Because our class discussions depend upon everyone's thoughtful contributions, it is essential that you maintain regular attendance and that you come prepared to discuss the reading material each day. Each student is allowed *four* absences total in this skills course. I do not expect or require students to explain nor document these absences, and I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Students who have five absences will receive an automatic "0" for their class participation grade (5% of your final grade in the course). Students who have six or more total absences will receive an automatic F for the course. Finally, chronic tardiness and/or absenteeism will negatively affect your class participation grade, so please arrive promptly to class.

1b. Laptop and Cellphone Policy. Typing on a laptop or texting on a cellphone is distracting to me and to your peers. Therefore, unless you have a documented disability that permits the use of a laptop for note taking, you are *not* permitted to use a laptop during class. Cellphones, which can play a valuable role in the event of an emergency, should be set to vibrate at the beginning of class. Cellphone texting during class is strictly prohibited and will result in dismissal from the classroom and the loss of a full letter grade of class participation for each infraction after an initial warning. In the event of a personal emergency, please excuse yourself from the classroom to use your cellphone.

2a. Paper Assignments. Over the course of the semester, you will write three papers in response to specific prompts. Paper One, a rhetorical analysis paper, is worth 20% of your final grade; Paper Two, a research proposal and an annotated bibliography on an approved research topic, is worth 20% of your final grade; and Paper Three, a researched final argument paper directed at a specific audience, is worth 20% of your final grade. With each paper assignment, I will distribute a format sheet to follow, which will detail the guidelines for that particular paper. Deviation from the guidelines will cause your grade to be lowered. Unless you make arrangements with me at least 48 hours in advance, late papers will be marked down one full letter grade for each class period they are late; papers more than three class periods late will receive an automatic "0."

2b. Electronic Submission. Papers will be submitted electronically on Western Online, and the three paper assignment sheets will review how to submit your paper. If you are unsure about how to submit your paper, please speak with me well before the due date. Because you will submit papers electronically, you should save your work in several formats (on a hard drive, on a flash drive, by emailing the paper to yourself). Technology problems are not an excuse for submitting a paper late. You will submit your essays as Word files (.doc or .docx); essays submitted in any other file format or corrupted files will be returned to you and considered late until re-submitted as a Word file.

2c. Peer Review. You will participate in seven peer review workshops, each one worth 1% of your final grade. To participate in a peer review workshop, you must come prepared with a complete draft of your own. You will be graded on your comments to your peers' drafts. Failure to come prepared with a complete draft will result in an absence and in the loss of one full letter grade on your paper. Drafts and draft worksheets will be turned in at the beginning of the class period on the day the paper is due on Western Online. If you are absent, peer reviews can be completed for partial credit, but you must make arrangements with me at least 48 hours in advance of the paper's due date.

2d. Research Project Student Conferences. Before Paper Two is due, you will attend a conference with me to help you conduct quality research and write about your chosen topic. You must bring a completed conference worksheet with you to the conference, which is worth 3% of your final grade. Failure to attend or to come prepared to your scheduled conference will count as an absence, and you will have to reschedule and attend a conference before I will accept Paper Two.

3. Academic Integrity. Academic integrity is an important part of our intellectual community at Western Illinois University; therefore, acts of plagiarism and cheating will result in failure for the course and referral for academic discipline. Please review the university's Student Academic Integrity Policy online at <http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php>.

4. Western Online Discussion Posts. Five times this semester, you will be asked to complete a short writing assignment related to that week's lesson and to post your response to Western Online prior to class. Each assignment is worth 4% of your final course grade and must be submitted on time to receive credit.

5. Quizzes, which cannot be made up due to an absence or tardiness, may occur at the start of any class. Each of the six quizzes will consist of three questions about the day's reading assignment. At the end of the semester, I will drop your lowest quiz score.

6. Office Hours and Email. Over the course of the semester, you are encouraged to visit me during my office hours. They are available to you to use without setting up an appointment, although you are welcome to set up an appointment, too. If you are not able to meet during my office hours, please email me to set up an appointment. The best way to keep in touch with me during the semester is by email: I will respond to email inquiries within 48 hours. Over email you may make appointments to meet with me and you may ask questions regarding the assignments.

7. Please note that **to receive credit for either English 180 or English 280, you must earn at least a grade of 73%** in GH 101. Additionally, you must complete the three paper assignments no later than May 8, 2017 in order to pass this class.

8. University Writing Center. The University Writing Center is available to assist you with general and specific questions on writing assigned in any discipline and at any academic level. The one-on-one assistance available at the University Writing Center is valuable for generating ideas, talking about global-level issues such as organization, and even working through grammatical problems. The University Writing Center is located on the 3rd Floor of Malpass Library and in satellite centers in Simpkins, Bayliss, and Tanner. Call 309-298-2815 for an appointment, and be sure to bring a copy of your assignment.

9. Disability Support Services: In accordance with University values and disability law, students with disabilities may request academic accommodations where there are aspects of a course that result in barriers to inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement. To file an official request for disability-related accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center at 309-298-2512, disability@wiu.edu or in 143 Memorial Hall. Please notify the instructor as soon as possible to ensure that this course is accessible to you in a timely manner.

10. University values, Title IX, and other federal and state laws prohibit sex discrimination, including sexual assault/misconduct, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. If you, or someone you know, has been the victim of any of these offenses, we encourage you to report this to the Title IX Coordinator at

309-298-1977 or anonymously online at:

http://www.wiu.edu/equal_opportunity_and_access/request_form/index.php. If you disclose an incident to a faculty member, the faculty member must notify the Title IX Coordinator. The complete Title IX policy is available at: <http://www.wiu.edu/vpas/policies/titleIX.php>.

11. Please review your **Student Rights and Responsibilities** online at www.wiu.edu/provost/students, and see me if you have any questions.

Breakdown of Final Grade

20% Paper #1: Rhetorical Analysis Paper

20% Paper #2: Research Proposal & Annotated Bibliography

20% Paper #3: Final Argument Paper

20% Western Online Discussion Posts

10% Peer Reviews & Research Project Conference

5% Class Participation

5% Quizzes

+/- Grading Scale

A.....93-100 C.....73-77

A-....90-92 C-.....70-72

B+...88-89 D+....68-69

B.....83-87 D.....63-67

B-....80-82 D-.....60-62

C+....78-79 F.....0-59

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Please note that the assignments are subject to change based upon the needs of our class, and that you are responsible for keeping apprised of announced changes in the schedule.

WEEK ONE

1/17 In Class: J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur and the Myth of American Exceptionalism

1/19 In Class: American Cultural Mythologies; The Myth of the Model Family

Due: **Student Questionnaire in Class.** Read “Thinking Critically, Challenging Cultural Myths,” pp. 1-11; “Harmony at Home,” pp. 16-19; and Gary Soto, “Looking for Work,” pp. 19-24, in *Rereading America*.

WEEK TWO

1/24 In Class: The Myth of Individual Opportunity

Due: **Western Online Discussion Post #1.** Read “Money and Success,” pp. 346-349, and Gregory Mantsios, “Class in America—2012,” pp. 377-396 in *Rereading America*; read Walter Kirn, “Summertime Dues,” pp. 1-2 on Western Online.

1/26 In Class: Rhetorical Analysis Paper Assignment; Three Rhetorical Appeals; What Is Rhetoric?

Due: Read “Three Rhetorical Appeals: Ethos, Pathos, Logos” on Western Online; read “Learning Power,” pp. 100-104, and Jonathan Kozol, “Still Separate, Still Unequal,” pp. 171-186 in *Rereading America*.

WEEK THREE

1/31 In Class: Four Common Topics; Audience Analysis; Practice Rhetorical Analysis

Due: Read “Four Common Topics” and “Inferring Audience” on Western Online; read Andrew Delbanco, “College at Risk,” on Western Online.

*Also, review and rank (1-4) four essays for your Rhetorical Analysis Paper: Sarah Boxer, “Why Are All the Cartoon Mothers Dead?” (p. 86); John Taylor Gatto, “Against School” (p. 114); William Deresiewicz, “Don’t Send Your Kids to the Ivy League” (p. 200); Henrick Karoliszyn, “Precognitive Police” (p. 336).

2/2 In Class: Practice Rhetorical Analysis; Writing About Texts; Small Group Work on Audience Analysis for your Rhetorical Analysis Paper

Due: **Western Online Discussion Post #2.** Read Adam Davidson, “Making It In America,” pp. 333-340 in *Rereading America*; read your assigned essay for the Rhetorical Analysis Paper; read “Writing About Texts” on Western Online.

***Send your Group’s Audience Analysis to me via email attachment by 11:59 p.m. on February 2 for approval.**

WEEK FOUR

2/7 In Class: Small Group Work for Rhetorical Analysis Paper; Organizing the Rhetorical Analysis Paper; Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting Sources; Review Sample Paper

Due: Bring your completed Invention Worksheet for the Rhetorical Analysis Paper to class; review “MLA Papers,” pp. 107-119 in *A Pocket Style Manual*; read Sample Paper analyzing “Making It In America” on Western Online.

2/9 In Class: Peer Review #1 for Rhetorical Analysis Paper; Paragraphing

Due: A typed draft of your introduction and first body paragraph of your Rhetorical Analysis Paper for Peer Review; read “Build Effective Paragraphs” on Western Online.

WEEK FIVE

2/14 **Class canceled: conduct Online Peer Review #2 for Rhetorical Analysis Paper**

Due: A complete, typed draft of your Rhetorical Analysis Paper for Online Peer Review.

2/16 In Class: The Class Accents of Television. Film: *Class Dismissed*

2/17 **Rhetorical Analysis Paper due by 11:59 p.m. on Western Online.**

WEEK SIX

2/21 In Class: Analyzing Television Shows

Due: **Submit your drafting materials for the Rhetorical Analysis Paper in class.** Read Richard Butsch, "A Half Century of Class and Gender in American TV Domestic Sitcoms," pp. 16-32 on Western Online.

2/23 In Class: Analyzing Television Shows; Developing a Research Topic for Final Paper Project

Due: Read Diana Kendall, "Framing Class, Vicarious Living, and Conspicuous Consumption," pp. 424-440 in *Rereading America*.

WEEK SEVEN

2/28 In Class: Meet in Computer Classroom on the 3rd Floor of Malpass Library: Using online databases to locate sources for your final research project.

Due: **Western Online Discussion Post #3 (TV Show Class Analysis).** Read "Research," pp. 91-105 in *A Pocket Style Manual*; bring three possible research topics to Library Day.

3/2 **Class canceled: continue your research to determine a final research topic.**

3/5 **Topic Proposal Memo Due by 11:59 p.m. on Western Online (Western Online Discussion Post #4).**

WEEK EIGHT

3/7 In Class: Research Proposal & Annotated Bibliography Assignment; Points of Conflict

Due: Read Naomi Gerstel and Natalia Sarkisian, "The Color of Family Ties," pp. 45-52 in *Rereading America*; read "Points of Conflict" on Western Online.

3/9 In Class: Practice with Points of Conflict; Signing up for Final Research Project Topic

Due: Read "What Books Should Students Read?": Three Short Essays by Robert Hutchins, Bob Swift, and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., pp. 155-163 on Western Online.

SPRING BREAK: MARCH 13-17—NO CLASSES

WEEK NINE

3/21 In Class: Evaluating Arguments in your Sources; Citing Sources in your Annotated Bibliography

Due: Read "Evaluating Arguments" on Western Online; read Sherry Turkle, "Growing Up Tethered," pp. 236-251 in *Rereading America*; review "MLA Documentation Style," pp. 124-166 in *A Pocket Style Manual*.

3/23 In Class: Literature and Social Class; Review Sample Paper

Due: Read Edgar Allan Poe, "The Cask of Amontillado" on Western Online; read Sample Paper on Western Online.

WEEK TEN

3/28 In Class: Writing Annotations

Due: Read "Writing Annotations" on Western Online; read Alfred Blumstein's "Violence by Young People: Why the Deadly Nexus?", pp. 2-9 on Western Online. **Western Online Discussion Post #5 (a 200-250 word annotation of Blumstein's article).**

3/30 In Class: Peer Review #1 for Annotated Bibliography

Due: A typed draft of one complete entry of your Annotated Bibliography for Peer Review.

WEEK ELEVEN

4/4 Class canceled for Individual Conferences on Research Projects. Bring your completed Conference Worksheet to your scheduled conference.

4/6 Class canceled for Individual Conferences on Research Projects. Bring your completed Conference Worksheet to your scheduled conference.

WEEK TWELVE

4/11 In Class: Peer Review #2 for Research Proposal & Annotated Bibliography

Due: A complete, typed draft of your Research Proposal & Annotated Bibliography for Peer Review.

4/13 In Class: Final Argument Paper Assignment; Exigence; Audience for Final Argument Paper

Due: **Research Proposal & Annotated Bibliography on Western Online (submit your drafting materials and hard copies of your annotated sources in class).** Read Cheryl Harris and Devon Carbado, "Loot or Find: Fact or Frame?", pp. 620-634 in *Rereading America*; read "Exigence" and "Audience Analysis" on Western Online.

WEEK THIRTEEN

4/18 In Class: Writing to an Audience; Parts of a Full Argument; Organizing your Final Argument Paper

Due: Read Deborah Tannen, "The Roots of Debate in Education and the Hope of Dialogue," pp. 253-270 on Western Online; read "Parts of a Full Argument" on Western Online.

4/20 In Class: Further Lines of Argument; Integrating Sources Into Your Own Writing

Due: Read “Further Lines of Argument” on Western Online; read Michael Kimmel, “‘Bros Before Hos’: The Guy Code,” pp. 540-549 in *Rereading America*.

WEEK FOURTEEN

4/25 In Class: Refutation Strategies and Identifying Logical Fallacies

Due: Read “Refutation Arguments” and “Logical Fallacies” on Western Online; read Laurie Penny, “Cybersexism,” pp. 254-268 in *Rereading America*.

4/27 In Class: Peer Review #1 for Final Argument Paper; Review Sample Papers

Due: A typed draft of your Audience Analysis for your Final Argument Paper for Peer Review; read Sample Papers on Western Online.

WEEK FIFTEEN

5/2 In Class: Peer Review #2 for Final Argument Paper; Review Sample Papers

Due: A typed draft of at least three pages of your Final Argument Paper for Peer Review.

5/4 In Class: Peer Review #3 for Final Argument Paper

Due: A complete, typed draft of your Final Argument Paper for Peer Review.

5/7 **Final Argument Paper Due by 11:59 p.m. on Western Online.**

5/8 **Submit your Final Argument Paper drafting materials to the box outside my office door (010 Simpkins Hall) by 4:00 p.m.**