

Syllabus

Academic Writing and Research 1320—Spring 2014

Service-Learning with the Conway Boys & Girls Club

Instructor: Sophie Dix

Office: Thompson Hall 302

Phone: 450-3464 (note: I cannot make long-distance calls; you're far more likely to reach me via email), but be sure to read "How to E-mail a Professor," *First-Year Writing @ UCA* (152-154).

E-mail: sophied@uca.edu

I live an hour away from campus; if I am unable to make it here, then I will use Remind 101 and email to provide instructions. Additionally, I may email useful and interesting articles and other information from time to time, and, of course, I'm available to answer questions and provide help with writing via email. **Be sure to check your UCA email Daily.**

Blackboard: All the class assignments, grades, and the class calendar can be found on Blackboard (log in to MyUCA, click on My Courses). If you do not have easy access to a computer with internet connection, then print out assignments and the monthly calendar.

Class Times: Transitional Writing 1300 27212 12:15pm-1:30pm TTh Main 113
Introduction to College Writing 1310 22464/27213 12:00pm-12:50pm MWF Thompson Hall 101
Academic Writing & Research 1320 22495 9:00am-9:50am MWF Thompson Hall 203

Office Hours: 10:00am—11:00am MWF, 11:15am—12:15pm TTh, and by appointment.

Instructor Review: If you have questions about your essay, I will happily attempt to provide you with answers (feedback) during office hours, by appointment, via email, and during class once peer reviews have been returned.

Required Text: *First-Year Writing @ UCA*, Department of Writing. The guide is used for both Introduction to College Writing 1310 and Academic Writing & Research 1320)
Registering for the Boys & Girls Intranet

I also require that you download Dropbox and subscribe to Remind 101. Dropbox uses cloud storage, so even if your computer crashes, you will never lose your work—no more my-technology-device-ate-my-homework. Remind 101 is an app that allows me to send texts to your cell phone without us having to share phone numbers. To sign up, send a text to 662-269-1340 with message @thompson9.

Things to write with and on.

There will be times during the semester that bringing your laptop to class will be useful. I will let you know when those times are. However, you may not use your laptop to catch-up with the latest from Facebook, play games, or aimlessly surf the web. Use your time wisely: use your laptop for only writing and research.

I am not going to be the Cell Phone Police. You're adults, so you can make the decision to text during class or not. However, there are consequences to texting during class. You will more than likely miss important verbal information (and class discussions). If you have missed anything because you were texting (and, believe me, I can see students texting—yes, even under the desk) I will not repeat information.

UCA's Catalog Course Description

1320 Academic Writing and Research is part of the general education program and required of all students. The course introduces students to academic argument based on substantiating, evaluating, and proposing claims. Research strategies are central to the course, which will be conducted as a workshop. Prerequisite WRTG 1310 with a grade of C or higher.

Course Objectives

By the end of Writing 1320, students should demonstrate an understanding of writing's relationship to academic inquiry, the benefits of the writing process, the practical value of focused, strategic, and comprehensive revision, the concepts, principles and vocabulary of reasoning and argumentation and how analysis, synthesis, and evaluation work to advance arguments, and their inclusion in and responsibility to the academic community (*First-Year Writing @ UCA 2-4*).

Prerequisite: completion of WRTG 1310 with a grade of C or higher.

Service-Learning is an academic course-based teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities .
(*National Service-Learning Clearinghouse*).

The Boys & Girls Clubs of America's mission is "To enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens."

Why integrate service-learning projects into a writing course?

- Service-Learning allows an alternative context to the traditional classroom.
- Service-Learning develops students' awareness and understanding of community issues and the politics behind them.
- Service-Learning encourages the habit of connecting everyday experience with intellectual inquiry.
- Service-Learning provides the opportunity of working collaboratively with peers and a community partner to solve complex problems.
- Service-Learning provides an occasion for students to strengthen the community by sharing their time, energy, and talent with others.
- Service-Learning encourages civic responsibility.

(*Adapted from Nora Bacon, University of Omaha*).

Learning by Teaching

This Academic Writing and Research 1320 course is designed to extend your intellectual curiosity and build on the skills and rhetorical knowledge established in Introduction to College Writing 1310. There is an increased emphasis in this class on research skills and on assessing the best ways to discover information. While we will read and discuss several texts during the semester, the readings are primarily meant to be starting points for your own writing. You will write both in class and out of class; you will write three essays that include information from research. Most importantly, this section of Academic Writing & Research will offer you a unique opportunity to gain some of your research and ideas first-hand. To help build your research skills, engage you in critical thinking, to immerse you in the complex nature of a community, and because you often learn more about a subject when you teach it to someone else, you will provide at least ½ hour per week of writing mentoring to children at Conway's Boys & Girls Club (February-March). At the club we will have an out-of-school, interactive setting so that young writers can enjoy creating a story or stories in a non-threatening, non-graded way. You can help them develop a love for writing at the same time you reflect on reading and writing issues from our own class.

If you choose to be a part of this service-learning project (**Track A**), then some of your writing requirements will differ from the writing requirements of those engaged in different, mostly library, database, and B&G Intranet-based research projects

(Track B). If you choose Track A, I hope you will find that working as a writing mentor for primarily elementary-school-aged children will be a valuable experience not only if you are interested in, certainly, an education-related field but also fields like public administration, sociology, writing etc. Additionally, if you choose Track A, you will not only know you are giving back to your community but you might also find you are someone who values learning through experience.

This community service project is the heart of the course, but the course itself has three major components. These components will overlap and inform one another throughout the semester, enhancing your learning and helping you achieve the course goals.

First Component: Orientation

The purpose of the orientation phase of the class is to prepare you for the work you will do with children from the Conway Boys & Girls Club. The remaining weeks of January's class time will be given to this preparation. You will get acquainted with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America in general and ways you can help kids enjoy writing. And you will read various texts, respond to those readings through in class discussions and out of class writing, develop questions that will help focus a critical exploration of your community experience, and become familiar with Story Jumper (a website that helps kids create and publish their own illustrated stories)

Second Component: Experience

The experiential portion of the class, of course, consists of your mentoring the B&G Club kids. During this part of the course, you will work with a child to create a story book, guiding them through the processes of writing a story or stories with Story Jumper. In this portion of the course, we may sometimes be in a sort of plan and learn as we go situation! We will need to be flexible in order to work effectively with the Boys & Girls Club.

Third Component: Reflection

What makes a community service experience a service learning experience is the knowledge gained through reflection. In this component of the course, you will reflect on your observations, thoughts, and feelings in reaction to the service experience through discussions and writing. Keeping service log and writing a final reflective essay are two of the concrete activities that will help you think through and communicate your reflections.

This course will require a variety of things from you, but most of all I ask that you bring to class your intellectual curiosity and your unique ideas and opinions. Any class that I teach is a student-centered class, and because of this, your participation is not only vital, but required. The projects and classroom experiences will make necessary your participation. I ask that you help to create a classroom environment in which your voice is heard and in which the voices of others are valued and respected.

Track A: This track will require a service-learning component. For this component of the class, you will work as a writing mentor at the Conway Boys & Girls Club. In order to gain consistent experience and to provide service that will meet a need at the club, you will be required to perform consistent service for approximately 1/2 hour per week from the beginning of February to the end of March 2013. This timing is only approximate, and will depend upon the needs of the Boys & Girls Club). Service-learning experiences will begin during the week of February 3 and will continue through the week of April 4 (this schedule excludes Spring Break from March 24-28). Your final essay will be based upon experiences you have had during the course of the semester. Much of your research will be done through direct experience rather than through traditional library research.

Track B: This track will allow you to take a more traditional approach to research and will require you to familiarize yourself with various library offerings and with methods of finding a variety of resources in the library and on the Internet. Time spent on various writing projects should equal the time spent in service by those on Track A.

Everyone will hear a great deal about service-learning and the Boys & Girls Club during the first few weeks of class. Because you do not want to let down the club's kids, you should be sure you can fulfill Track A's requirements. Scheduled times for mentoring can be changed only if such changes are OK-ed by one of the club's directors and me, because failure to complete the service-learning component, as well as failure to complete any component of the class, will result in a below-passing grade for this class.

POLICIES

Essays

Although directed in-class writing assignments and discussion will help you to formulate theses for your essays, as well as to draft and edit your work, you must be prepared to put in time outside of class as you revise and polish your written assignments. Use *First-Year Writing @ UCA* (and other tools provided on the writing project web pages) to guide you as you proofread and edit your papers. Ultimately, you are responsible for basic grammatical and mechanical knowledge, and so please ask me to work with you on these issues if you know that you have trouble with the basics.

Essays will be written in multiple steps: pre-writing exercises; an outline paragraph or thesis statement, to help you define the topic of your paper; a draft that will be read by other students who will provide you with written feedback (I will, of course, offer you feedback if you would like to meet with me outside of class); and a final draft.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Track A Assignments:

Writing Project #1: You will write an informative essay about a single issue related either to the Boys & Girls Club of America, Service-Learning, or how writing is taught (elementary, high school, or college).

Writing Project #2: You will write an evaluative Progress Report about yourself as a writing mentor.

Writing Project #3: You will write an Analysis/Reflection to the Boys & Girls Club Directors of the service you provided for the Boys & Girls Club kids (use your service-learning journal).

Service Journal—Writing to Learn: The purpose of keeping a journal of your experiences is to present a path for critical reflection on the meaning of your service, both personally and academically. In doing this, you will learn from yourself about the ways concepts and practices combine. This kind of writing may influence your understanding of society and your own values, and it is an opportunity for you to examine your place in the community and over time may help you grow. A journal is neither a diary nor a daily list of activities. Rather, your journal focuses on an incident, a person, or a feeling and it should help you in analyzing and reflecting on that particular aspect of your service-learning.

Track B Assignments:

Writing Project #1: You will write an informative text about a single issue related to one of the following: Boys & Girls Club of America, Service-Learning, or writing is taught (elementary, high school, or college).

Writing Project #2: You will write an annotated bibliography that you would use for an evaluative essay.

Writing Project #3: You will write a solution to a problem you've uncovered during your research of either the Boys & Girls Club of America, service-learning, or how writing is taught (elementary, high school, or college).

Research Journal

The purpose of this journal is to demonstrate your critical evaluation of sources and your process of research.

Grades:

Do not wait until the end of the semester to talk to me about your grade--scholarships are not saved during finals.

Subject to change (additional assignments may be included):

Peer Response Workshop 9 @ 20 points each=180 points

Writing Project #1: 1 @ 100 points

Writing Project #2: 1 @ 100 points

Writing Project #3: 1 @ 100 points

Service Learning/Research Journal: 1 @ 100 points

Your Contribution points: Class participation, Response Journal pass/fail rate, student-led discussion pass/fail rate, class attendance, punctuality, initiative, wakefulness, cell phone absence etc. 100 points

Total number of points possible: 580

If you are unhappy with your grade on either Writing Project 1 or 2, you may revise them to resubmit for a higher grade (in order to earn a higher grade, your paper must demonstrate significant improvement) any time prior to Friday, April 25th.

I neither give extra credit assignments nor give bonus points for attending class.

I do not bump up students' grades (78% is not a B). However, for instance, if you make a 79.50% or above, I'm willing to bump up your grade to a B.

The majority of your grade in this course is based on the quality of your written work, which will be calculated on the typical 100% scale:

90% - 100% = A

80% - 90% = B

70% - 80% = C

60% - 70% = D

50% - 60% = F

Class Policies (*First-Year Writing @ UCA 15-17*)

Attendance: I expect you to attend class. A writing class is not a lecture class. Writing is a process that takes time in class; your contributions and participation are essential to the course and your success in the course. In addition, you are paying (or someone is) a lot of money for your education, so if you choose to miss class, you should consider whether your choice to do so is based on sound reasoning. In addition, there is no difference between "excused" and "unexcused" absences in this class (*First-Year Writing @ UCA 15*).

- The number of absences allowed include all absences no matter the reason. The fall semester policy allows for 6 absences. If you accrue more than the number of days specified, you may not be allowed to continue in the course and may be assigned a WF for failure to attend.
- **If you miss 3 consecutive days of class (without contacting me), I may drop you from the course.** If you accrue more than the number of days specified, you may not be allowed to continue in the course and may be assigned a WF for failure to attend.
- If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate or check Blackboard to find out what you missed--**I cannot and will not reteach class in an email exchange or 5 minute conversation.**
- It is simple common courtesy to email me with a **brief** reason for your absence.
- **I do not accept doctor's notes;** if you fail to email me, I will always assume you were not in class because you were sick--days sick (or emergencies) are why UCA has an attendance policy.
- If you are late 10 or more minutes to 5 class periods you will accrue 1 absence.

Plagiarism: If a student in a Writing Department course turns in a paper that includes an extended passage that has been a) written for him or her by someone else for pay or as a favor, or b) copied from a print or electronic source written by another author, even if some of the words have changed, that student will immediately be dropped from the course, receiving a WF grade. In addition, notification will be sent from the Writing Department office to the Office of the Registrar documenting the academic misconduct.

If a student in a Writing Department course turns in a paper that has borrowed from other sources without giving complete and unambiguous credit to every source (e.g., quotation marks are not included around all direct quotations, in-text citations are missing, the works cited is missing or incomplete), that paper will receive a grade of 0 (zero).

Please sign and return to me the Plagiarism Contract in *First-Year Writing @ UCA (100)*.

Review Everything You Need to Know About Plagiarism (<http://uca.edu/academicaffairs/files/2012/08/Plagiarism.pdf>)

UCA POLICIES

Academic Integrity Policy: The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

Emergency Procedures: Emergency Procedures for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.

Disability Policy: The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the UCA Office of Disability Services, 450-3613. Please feel free to discuss this issue with your instructor, in private, if you need more information.

Sexual Harassment Policy: Harassment by any faculty member, staff member, or student is a violation of both law and University policy and will not be tolerated. Please read the appropriate pages of your Student Handbook for the policies, definition, and procedures concerning harassment. If you have questions or concerns, please contact your instructor or the chair. Individuals who believe he or she has been subjected to harassment should report the incident promptly to the academic dean or to a departmental chair or directly to the university's Affirmative Action officer, legal counsel or assistant vice president for human resources.

Other Policies: You should familiarize yourself with all academic policies in your *Student Handbook*.