SYLLABUS FOR ENGLISH 123

Catalogue Description

A continuation of English 113 with particular emphasis on argumentation, research, documentation, and writing essays based on inductive analysis.

Statement of Aim

All course activities in English 123 are directed toward the students’ application of the formal skills and rhetorical principles learned in English 113 to the more complex and purposeful goals of generating persuasive research-oriented texts.

I. Types of Writing

A. Argumentation:
   Students will learn the basic rhetorical strategies necessary to the development of a sound thesis statement and the formal skills necessary to presenting their ideas to a specific audience. As well, students will identify, classify, evaluate, and arrange logically evidence related to their position. They will then work to develop a viable persuasive essay using that information to support the thesis.

   Part of the 123 learning experience is to help students realize that all writing is done for a purpose and that purpose is ultimately related to audience. It is from this basic comprehension of purpose and audience that a deeper understanding of genre and writing-in-the-disciplines will accrue.

B. Analysis:

   Students will write response-essays based on the analysis of printed matter.

   While many assignments in 113 are structured to enable students to write from personal experience, in 123 the aim of the assignments is to move them beyond their previously explored world to an understanding of textual experience. Toward this aim, printed material from diverse areas – from the literary to the scientific – ought to be presented for discussion and analysis and used as material for assignments aimed at developing sound and responsible analytical writing and a clear sense of style.

C. Research:
Students will write papers in which they draw together materials from primary and secondary sources on a given topic and develop and support conclusions based on an analysis of these materials.

At least three to six of these writing assignments will be formally documented. Some of these papers can be based on primary and secondary sources drawn from the course’s subject matter. Assignments requiring the use of the library and the internet for research are especially valuable training now, not only because they provide research experience in the classical setting, but also because they familiarize students with the library and the internet as vast reservoirs of information. Therefore English 123’s primary research project will be based on significant library and qualified internet research.

II. Number of Papers:

Students will write a substantial number of pages dedicated to informal writing for the purpose of writing-to-learn, reader-response exercises, and invention strategies. In their move toward a formal product, students will generate a substantial number of pages dedicated to the process-oriented drafting and revision of the various assignments related to argumentation, analysis and research mentioned above.

Suggested number of pages per semester:
- Informal writing, 15 - 20 pages
- Process-oriented writing (with revisions), 20 – 30 pages
- Formal finished writing 15 – 20 pages

Because writing is an exercise in process, instructors are advised to offer, in conjunction with take-home assignments, in-class writing assignments in such preparatory exercises as use of notes, outlines, development of thesis statements, textual analysis and synthesis of sources.

III. The Principles of the Research Process

A. Compiling Sources:

Students must be made aware of the extensive research aids available in the library and must be taught to collect a diverse and substantial list of possible sources of information related to a specific topic. They should be brought to see the importance of both primary and secondary sources, the necessity of evaluating sources for such things as authority, obsolescence, and bias, and they should understand the need to compile sources representative of a variety of viewpoints.
B. Paraphrasing:

Students must discover efficient ways of saying what they found in a research source, both to achieve a unity of tone and style in a piece of writing and to increase their understanding of the source material. Care must be taken to insure that students understand the difference between paraphrase and plagiarism.

C. Summarizing:

Students should be taught the good judgment necessary to determine what can be omitted from a source without losing or distorting the author’s idea.

D. Quoting

Students must learn to achieve a balance in their use of quotations; they must also learn when quotations are appropriate and why.

E. Documenting

Students must gain facility in implementing at least the most basic forms to be used in documented papers and must know where to find and how to use information relating to the less commonly used forms of documentation. MLA and APA forms of documentation must be presented in all sections of English 123.