

English 101.009---Composition  
Brenda Black  
Fall2006, MWF 10:30-11:20, Robinson Hall A125

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### What's Love Got to Do with It?

“Love Makes the World Go Round,” “Love is a Many Splendored Thing,” and “All We Need is Love” are beautiful song titles echoing from a past that we can only vaguely recall. Today the prevailing question seems to be, “What’s Love Got to Do with It?” In this course, we will explore the concept of love in many manifestations and disguises. We will read, discuss, and write responses to selections about love for country, family, pets, cars, sports, food, and other objects of affection. Finally, through a research project, we will explore contemporary social debate associated with love and loving, such as euthanasia, same-sex marriage, and American foreign policy.

#### **Textbook and Materials:**

The Bedford Guide for College Writers 7<sup>th</sup> ed.  
Materials on Reserve in Fenwick  
Floppy disk, CD-R, or flash drive to save work

**Methods of Instruction:** Learning activities will include group discussions, peer reviews of student writing, student-teacher conferences, student presentations, and a grammar/editing workshop. Students will write in-class and multiple out-of-class drafts for a total of five (5) papers, each 3-4 double-spaced pages (750-1000 words) and will complete one or more preliminary drafts for each formal paper. The course centers on readings, which will serve as a springboard for class discussion and writing assignments.

#### **Course Requirements and Grading Percentages:**

10% Five first drafts (20 pts.each)	100 points
50% Five portfolio drafts (100 pts. each)	500 points
20% Research and Final Project	200 points
20% Active Class Participation: Includes class discussion, peer review, response/reaction writing, practices/quizzes	200 points
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Final Grade	1000 points

**Course Goals:** ENG 101 focuses much attention on helping students learn to meet the expectations for writing in U.S. academia. The course goals include helping students

- use writing as a tool for exploration, discovery, and/or reflection as well as more transactional goals (exposition, persuasion)
- employ strategies for writing as a recursive process of inventing, investigating, shaping, drafting, revising, and editing
- understand the basic principles and strategies for conducting college-level research, for evaluating sources and for incorporating other voices into their writing
- use a range of available technologies to support their reading, writing, and thinking, including but not limited to email, word-processing, and database searching
- improve critical thinking skills, as reflected in substantive discussion of reading and writing
- cultivate an awareness of audience and purpose in their writing and in the writing of others
- increase effective organization and idea development skills
- use appropriate style, diction, and voice in their writing
- employ skillful argumentation, including use of detail and supporting evidence
- expand the ability to thoughtfully evaluate and productively revise their own work
- progress in the ability to edit their own writing for usage, mechanics, and academic conventions
- progress in the ability to judiciously read and analyze works by professional writers and peers

**Completion Policy:** To satisfy the requirements of this course, all assignments must be completed and submitted for evaluation and/or credit.

**English 101 Grading Policy:** Students in ENGL100/101 receive a final letter grade of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, or NC (no credit). These are the only university courses that have NC as a grade option. A grade of NC reflects the philosophy that learning to write in an academic setting is a developmental process and that some students may require more time in this development. Since this grade does not appear on the student's transcript or affect the student's GPA, the student is not penalized for requiring one or more additional semesters to meet the course requirements in ENGL100/101. Because of the NC option in ENGL100/101 and because of the consecutive nature of these required composition and literature courses, instructors cannot give ENGL100/101 students grades of IN (Incomplete).

**Course Grading Policy:** When grading essays and the research project, I will look for progress in these areas: 1. Organization 2. Content 3. Supporting Details 4. Mechanics 5. Diction 6. Style

**The “A” Paper: Excellent (91-100 points)** A joy to read. Excels in all areas numbered above. It need not be perfect, but any errors will not detract from the author's purpose.

**The “B” Paper: Strong (81-90 points)** Excels in some areas, but not in all. This paper is usually lacking in style or diction. It is a good paper, but not excellent.

**The “C” Paper: Adequate (71-80 points)** Exhibits basic understanding of good composition, but does not excel. On average, it has more mechanical and content problems than the “B” paper.

**The “D” Paper: Limited (61-70 points)** Generally, the “D” paper has major organizational and mechanical problems. Fails to meet one or more of the basic requirements. May be off-topic, underdeveloped, and/or lacking outside sources or a Works Cited page.

**The “F” Paper: Fundamentally deficient** (below 61 points) Central idea is unclear. Ideas are underdeveloped, and organization is confusing. Grammar and usage errors are highly distracting.

**Submitting Class Work:** Unless otherwise noted, all formal assignments should be typed using a standard font and size (Times New Roman 12 or 14 point is commonly acceptable), and double-spaced. Assignments should be stapled. Put your name, the instructor's name, the class session, and the date at the top of the first page. Unless otherwise stated, all assignments must be turned in as hard-copy. You should keep all of your assignments as they are handed back to you. Handwritten assignments should be neat, legible, written in black ink, on lined paper. No ragged edges, please.

**Late Work Policy:**

Late assignments are those arriving any time after the beginning of class on the due date. If you are late, you may place an assignment in my mailbox in Robinson A487. Late assignments will automatically lose 10 points.

**Class Participation:** You may earn 20% of your grade in this broad and general area. Students who are regular, energetic, thoughtful participants may earn additional credit. Consistent and punctual class attendance is a given. Students who miss a class are responsible for turning in any required work on time and will not be able to "make up" for missed participation. Make sure you are actively participating. Students who are sleeping, reading the newspaper, carrying on private conversations, answering or texting on cell phones, or working on assignments for other classes (etc.) are not wholly, actively present and thus may lose class participation points. If you are seriously unprepared for class or group work—having absolutely no draft for a peer revision session, for example—you may lose class participation points.

**English Department Statement on Plagiarism:** To avoid plagiarizing, be sure to give credit to the sources you use. On a first infraction of this policy, I will return plagiarized work to you to be redone. Any second infraction will be reported to the Honor Committee.

Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another source without giving that source credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or end notes; a simple listing of books, articles, and websites is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting.

Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions to this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research—what has been called common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious; what is common knowledge for one audience may be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being "reader friendly."

In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will not be guilty of plagiarism. Consult the George Mason Honor Code for more information.

**Students with disabilities:** If you are a student with a disability, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703.993.2474. I will work with you and the DRC to arrange fair access and support.

**University Writing Center:**

The University Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>), located in Robinson A114, is one of the best resources you will find on campus. It has an outstanding website that offers a wealth of online resources for student writers. You can schedule a 50-minute appointment with a trained tutor to help with any phase of the writing process. You can even obtain assistance with papers by visiting the online writing center at <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/owl/index.html>> Try to plan ahead and allow yourself at least two days to receive a response. Make an appointment by calling 703-993-1200, or stop by and schedule a session.

**Important dates for semester:**

Last day to drop with no tuition liability	September 12
Last day to add a class	September 12
Last day to drop a class	September 29
Midterm grade reporting	Sept. 25-Oct. 20
Columbus Day	October 9
Elective Withdrawal Period	Sept.30-Oct.27
Last day of classes	December 9
Reading day	December 11
Exam period	December 12-19