Instructor: Holly Pappas
Office hours: TBA
Email: holly.pappas@bristolcc.edu
Course blog: http://bccenglish11.edublogs.org

Course description (from catalog): This college-level composition course provides students an opportunity to develop their writing through various stages of composing, revising, and editing. In addition, students learn how to formulate and support a thesis using a number of rhetorical strategies, to conduct research, and to integrate a variety of sources according to the Modern Language Association guidelines. Students write in Standard English with consideration given to audience, purpose, and context. Prerequisite: Satisfactory performance on the writing skills test or “C” or better in English 10. Passing score on the college’s reading placement test or concurrent enrollment in/prior completion of RDG 10.

Course readings:
Bishop, Wendy. On Writing: A Process Reader. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2004. (Apparently the bookstore has ordered a more recent edition; this will be fine as well.)

Please get some sort of folder to store your work (separate from any notes you might take for the class). SAVE ALL OF YOUR WRITING (from doodles and lists and freewriting to rough and final drafts of all paragraphs and essays). Also, please get something that can serve as a writer’s notebook, either an actually bound notebook or a folder with loose-leaf paper, to use for pre-writing activities, note-taking, and reflection. (Or you may keep these notes online on your blog, an option you may want to consider esp. if you have a laptop.)

Course objectives:
• to write focused and developed essays that indicate an understanding of the interplay between general propositions and specific details
• to formulate appropriate organizational patterns (use of the paragraph as “chunk” of meaning, transitional devices, effective lead and concluding paragraphs)
• to use language with care (at the word level, that nouns be specific, verbs active, adjectives concrete, adverbs minimal; at the sentence level, that thoughts be clear, concise, coordinated/subordinated appropriately)
• to develop critical reading skills
• to find and evaluate source material, then ethically integrate such material with original thought
• to become conscious that writing is both process and product
• to review grammar and usage matters as necessary
Approach: Class work will combine some lecture and discussion with a good deal of in-class writing and, of course, out-of-class writing assignments. Think of this as a shop class: we are crafting sturdy bookcases (or ornate coat racks, or elegant nightstands) out of common materials that we cut and shape, fasten together with appropriate tools according to a flexible plan, then finish with loving care. You will not become a better carpenter unless you dare to make that first cut, swing that hammer. Or, for an alternate comparison, you will not become physically fit by watching someone else do sit-ups or run laps. In order to improve as a writer (and to successfully complete this class), you will need to spend time reading and thinking and writing. Many people (including me!) have a hard time starting out on writing projects. We will talk in class about strategies to avoid procrastination and get started, but if you find that you are still having problems, please talk to me or go to the Writing Lab for help.

The main work of the course is five essays. You will also keep a writers’ notebook to collect up ideas for essays, to record notes from the class text, and to reflect on your growing understanding of your own writing process. At the end of the class you will turn in a portfolio of three essays (see portfolio information later in this document), as well as a reflective essay/letter that introduces the essays and describes your development as a writer over the course of the semester.

For this class we will be using, as an electronic extension of the classroom, a course blog, where I will post assignments, links to writing-related sites, and additional reading. You will also be able to post comments or questions on the blog. In addition, you will each set up an individual blog on which you will post drafts of writing for peer review and comment by me. (As I mentioned earlier, you may wish to use this blog as an electronic version of a writer’s notebook.) You do not need to be familiar with blogs ahead of time. I will demonstrate their use in class, we will have time in a computer lab for you to practice, and I’ll be available during office hours to help out anyone who’s still having problems.

Coursework:
- five essays @ 10% each
- portfolio
- short exercises, informal work, writer’s notebook
- participation (both in-class and on fellow writers’ blogs)
- final

50%
30%
10%
5%

Course policies: Regular attendance is expected. Students who miss more than six classes without excuse may be withdrawn from the class.

Late work essays will be penalized one grade (for example, from A- to B+ for each day, not each class, late). Papers may be submitted by email (as attached files if you have
Microsoft Word; in rtf format if using another word processing system); if received by midnight of day due paper will be considered “on time.” Work submitted on time may be revised and resubmitted if you are not happy with a grade or you would like to work further on a piece. I especially encourage you to revise the work that appears in your final portfolio.

Intentional plagiarism (work submitted that is not your own, copied either from a friend or online source) may result in failure of the course. Unintentional plagiarism will be handled on a case-by-case basis (usually I will ask students to revise and resubmit paper). We will discuss these issues thoroughly in class.

The English 11 Portfolio Assessment Project

As a member of this class, you will participate in the English 11 Portfolio Assessment Project. You will benefit by being in a small class and by knowing that in order to pass this course your writing will demonstrate a level of skill that is consistent with that of students taking this course with other instructors at BCC.

Your portfolio will include four pieces of writing: a reflective cover letter plus three essays previously submitted for this course (one of these pieces must be an essay that uses research incorporating MLA notation). Two English faculty other than the instructor for this course will assess this portfolio.

Portfolios will be scored “pass” or “fail.” If your portfolio passes, the grade you have earned for your coursework will be issued. If your portfolio fails, but you have earned a passing grade for your coursework, an “I” grade will issued. If you receive an “I,” the Coordinator of the Portfolio Assessment Project will contact you, and he or she will help you develop and carry out a plan for working on the aspects of your writing that need strengthening. Then you will rework and resubmit your portfolio. When your portfolio passes, the grade you earned for your coursework will be issued. This “I” grade will not prevent you from moving on to English 12, but you will not receive credit for English 11 until your portfolio passes and your course grade is released. It is important that you follow this procedure, as a passing grade in English 11 is a graduation requirement.

If you do not attempt to revise your portfolio within one semester of receiving a “fail,” the Incomplete (“I”) may turn into a Fail (“F”) for the course. In this case, you will need to take the entire course over in order to receive credit.
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week 1 (Sept. 7–Sept. 11): Intro to course
**Reading:** “Introduction: To the Writing Student” (pp. xv–xxi) and “Writers and Ways of Writing” (pp. 2–6).
**Writing:** Classmate snapshot and literacy narrative (see blog for more info).

Week 2 (Sept. 14–Sept. 18): The personal essay; writing from memory. Brainstorming and prewriting. Specific details.
**Reading:** Anne Lamott’s “Index Cards (pp. 217–222), Donald Murray’s “Trying on the Essay” (pp. 460–469), and Wendy Bishop’s “Try This” (pp. 469–478); sample personal essays from Internet (links will be available on blog)
**Writing:** In-class exercises to generate ideas; notebook entry on reading from text

**Writing:** Personal essay draft due at end of week.

Week 4 (Sept. 28–Oct. 2): Responding to others and revising. Introduction to ethnography.
**Reading:** Richard Straub’s “Responding—Really Responding—to Other Students’ Writing” (pp. 289–298) and Toby Fulwiler’s “A Lesson in Revision” (pp. 265–279)
**Writing:** Notebook entry on reading from text; Personal essay final due at end of week.

Week 5 (Oct. 5–Oct. 9): More on ethnography
**Reading:** Anne Lamott’s “Shitty First Drafts” (pp. 259–262) and Kurt Vonnegut’s “How to Write with Style” (pp. 563–566); “Living the Virtual Life: A Second Life” (pp. 403–408), Susan Orlean’s “The American Male at Age 10,” and selections from Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater’s website (see blog for more info)
**Writing:** Notebook entry on reading from text.

Week 6 (Oct. 12–Oct. 16): More on revision and proofreading (including—yikes!—grammar)
**Writing:** Ethnography rough draft due at end of week.

**Reading:** Melissa Goldthwaite’s “This, Too, Is Research” (pp. 377–384) and Deborah Coxwell Teague’s “Making Meaning—Your Own Meaning—When You Read” (pp. 178–184)
**Writing:** Ethnography final due end of week.

Week 8 (Oct. 26–Oct. 30): Elements of research process (evaluating sources; summary, paraphrase, quotation, response; documentation); introduce text-wrestling and annotation assignments
**Reading:** Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff’s “Writing a Research Paper” (esp. pp.
359–365); choose article for text-wrestling assignment (see blog)

**Researching:** Decide on annotation image, generate research questions, and find information

**Week 9 (Nov. 2–Nov. 6):** More work on summary-and-response

**Writing:** Annotation preliminaries due at beginning of week; Text-wrestling rough draft at end of week.

**Week 10 (Nov. 9–Nov. 13):** Integrating source material and handling multiple sources

NO CLASSES ON WEDNESDAY

**Reading:** Gay Lynn Crossley’s “Making Peace with the Research Essay—One Teacher’s History” (pp. 365–377)

**Writing:** Text-wrestling final due at end of week.

**Week 11 (Nov. 16–Nov. 20):** More on revision

**Reading:** Annie Dillard’s “Transfiguration” and “How I Wrote the Moth Essay—and Why” (pp. 279–288)

**Writing:** In-class workshops and conferences on annotation project.

**Week 12 (Nov. 23–Nov. 27):** Thanksgiving Week—keep up the good work!!!

Introduction to argument (brainstorming possibilities for argument essay)

**Writing:** Annotation project final due before Thanksgiving.

**Week 13 (Nov. 30–Dec. 4):** Argument (thesis, evidence, organization)

**Reading:** Stuart Greene’s “Argument as Conversation” (pp. 391–403)

**Week 14 (Dec. 7–Dec. 11):** Tying up loose ends (in-class conferences)

**Writing:** Argument due at end of week

**Week 15 (Dec. 14–Dec. 17):** Final revisions and portfolio cover letter

**Writing:** Portfolio cover letter and portfolio due at last class