ENG 101E & F: Grammar and Composition

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I love being a writer. What I can't stand is the paperwork. Peter De Vries

English 101:

Introduction to Expository Writing

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section A--12, 32, 52
section B--13, 33, 53

I. Goals and Objectives. English 101 should—if we both work at it--teach the student
A. to write more clearly and gracefully in a variety of situations and styles;
B. to gain some insight into the correct usages of Standard American English;
C. to use the informational resources at Dordt College;
D. to begin to undertake the kind of research writing required of college students;
E. to read more effectively, especially articles which are focused and academic in nature;
F. to grow, in some limited ways, towards becoming Christians more capable of using their minds as well as their hearts in the Lord's service;
G. to become a part of the "academic conversation."

And it should help me
A. to better accomplish most of the above in the work that I do as a writer;
B. to appreciate and understand the younger generation;
C. to teach better--maybe;
D. to ward off creeping senility.

II. Texts:


III. Methods of Evaluation:

A. Class attendance and participation will play a part in the grading process. English 101, from day to day, isn't always a ball of fire. But skipping class is something of a drug. Lots of students will tell you that once you start, another dose comes quite easily. Only the really pure can be expected to come every last time; but every semester there will be a few who slowly discover that it's harder and harder to come to class. They don't do well. Don't be one of them.

B. The evaluative load for this semester goes as follows:
1-six essays;
2-the first draft of a research paper;
3-the second draft of a research paper;
4-occasional assignments done in class;
5-grammar quiz at the end of the year, plus others when needed.

Writing is easy.
All you do is sit staring at a blank sheet of paper until the drops of blood form on your forehead. Gene Fowler

IV. Syllabus


Friday, January 14: Discussion of "A Nest of Hooks," the first writing assignment. Each of you should bring two questions about the essay to class; we'll spend some time thinking about the issues which the essay addresses, and introduce the nature of the writing assignment. First writing assignment due: Friday, January 21.

Monday, January 17: Twenty most frequent errors on freshman papers. Hand out "What Can We Reasonably Hope for?"

Wednesday, January 19: Begin discussion of the second essay for out-of-class writing assignment, "What Can We Reasonably Hope For?" from First Things. Again, each of you should bring a question about each of the short essays to class; we'll spend some time thinking about the issues which the
essays address, and introduce the nature of the writing assignment. **Second writing assignment due: January 31.**

Friday, January 21: *First writing assignment due.* Conclude discussion of "What Can We Reasonably Hope For?"

Monday, January 24: Read pp. 163-65, on "Report Writing" from *Write for College.* Also, begin grammar and usage exercises; see "Twenty Deadlies," 1, 3, 5, and 17-comma usage.

A NOTE ON GRAMMAR: Grammar is one of the toughest areas to teach in ENG 101 because so many of you come with such different skills. Some of you had grammar until you were tired of it; others have never really studied grammar at all. Our study of grammar will be spotty and piecemeal, in part, because of those differences. We'll stress errors, not grammar, per se. However, in order to understand some of the common errors, it's necessary to understand some basic grammar. Let me warn you ahead of time-each 101 class is different when it comes to grammar. Sometimes I can go really, really fast; other times I have to go much slower. It's difficult, if not impossible, to forecast ahead of time how much we can take in any class time. So when I make an assignment like the above, do all of it. We'll likely not get through it, but we will, eventually, get through with what's assigned. See the attachment to the syllabus.

**Wednesday, January 26:** "Twenty Deadlies," more comma usage and punctuation problems generally.

Friday, January 28: Workshop on first assignment.

Monday, January 31: **Second writing assignment due.** "Twenty Deadlies," punctuation generally. Hand out "Ludwig Story."

Wednesday, February 2: Read "The Wiebo Ludwig Story," the basis for the third writing assignment. We will discuss the story in class; each of you should bring two questions about the
essay for the class. Assignment is due Friday, February 11.

Friday, February 4: "Seven Deadlies," 2, and pronoun usage.


Wednesday, February 9: Workshop on Second writing assignment.


Research Paper Segment of English 101

ASSIGNMENT: Choose an individual from a field of study in which you are interested—agriculture, chemistry, literature, art, history, mathematics, engineering—and write an eight-page paper introducing the reader to the work of that particular person. Create a thesis which argues for the specific contribution that that individual has made to the field. For instance, "Flannery O'Conner's unique contribution to contemporary literature is the combination of a Southern, oral voice with a deep and symbolic Christian world view." That thesis will, of course, become the backbone of your paper.

To complete the paper, you should include at least something of all of the following—something of a biography, a clear account of the nature of the work the individual has done, and some secondary sources to illustrate the way in which others in the field understand the quality of the work of that individual.

You will need to use at least five sources—and cite them—in your work, quoting at least five times.

The purpose of the assignment includes all of the following:

1) to acquaint the student with the information services available to students at Dordt College;
2) to learn the kind of good research techniques which will serve you well in other classes;
3) to become knowledgeable with an individual who has contributed to a particular discipline or field;
4) to be able to bring together different sources and materials into a unified whole, a readable and comprehensive research paper.

Note that I will grade the first draft of your paper, which will
be due before you leave for spring break at the time when you meet with me for a personal conference. Then, after you complete the paper fully, you will once again be graded on the project.

This is the pattern by which you will accomplish the research paper assignment for English 101.

Monday, February 14: Meet in library for tour from Information Services Staff.

Wednesday, February 16: Research paper. Use of sources and plagiarism. Read #51-53 in RFW, as well as #297-299 in WFC.

Friday, February 18: Research paper. Plagiarism and Citing and using sources in writing. #299 in WFC, and #357-360 in RFW.


Wednesday, February 23: Research paper. Final Instructions. RFW, scan #55 & 56; scan 300-434 in WFC.

During this time, I'll be gone to Texas, eating grapefruit and getting tan. Actually, I'm going to a conference. But you'll be able to work on your paper, unimpeded by any other bothers from ENG 101.

Friday, February 25: No class

Monday, February 28: No class

Wednesday, March 1: Individual Conferences—first draft of research paper. **First draft of research paper is due at your conference with me.**

Friday, March 3: Individual conferences—first draft.

Monday, March 5: Individual conferences—first draft.

Wednesday, March 8: Individual conferences—first draft.

**SPRING BREAK**

**March 9-21**


Friday, March 24: Read "Marketing God" essay. Prewriting on fourth essay. **Fourth essay due Monday, April 3.**
Monday, March 27: "Twenty Deadlies," 8, 12, and 18. Read first 47 pp. of Tuesdays With Morrie.

**A note on Tuesdays With Morrie**

Maybe it was a grandparent, or a teacher, or a colleague whose memory you've never forgotten. For Mitch Albom, that person was Morrie Schwartz, his college professor from nearly twenty years ago. Mitch Albom rediscovered Morrie in the last months of the older man's life. Knowing he was dying, Morrie visited with Mitch in his study every Tuesday, just as they used to back in college. Their rekindled relationship turned into one final "class": lessons in how to live.

*Tuesdays with Morrie* is a magical chronicle of their time together, through which Mitch shares Morrie's lasting gift with the world. 

Book description from Amazon.com

Wednesday, March 29: Read Tuesdays with Morrie, pp. 47-68.

Friday, March 31: No class. Prof snorkeling in Lake Michigan.

Monday, April 3: Fourth essay due—"Marketing God." Read pp. 69-109 of Tuesdays With Morrie. Assignment five given. (Look at the reactions of readers on Amazon.com.) Due Tuesday, April 18.

Wednesday, April 5: Complete Tuesdays with Morrie. "Twenty Deadlines," 11 and 16.

Friday, April 7: No class. Prof skiing in British Columbia.


Wednesday, April 12: Workshop on "Marketing God" essays.

Friday, April 14: "Twenty Deadlines," 19.

Monday, April 17: Fifth essay due—Tuesdays with Morrie. Narrative assignment, including examples. Due April 28.

Wednesday, April 19: Grammar and usage-parallelism.

Friday, April 21: Probably grammar and catch-up.

Monday, April 24: Probably grammar and catch-up.

Tuesday, April 26: Workshop on Tuesdays with Morrie essays.
Thursday, April 28: **Sixth essay due-narrative.** Review for final.

The following essays comprise the writing load of the course:

1. An evaluation of the essay "A Nest of Hooks," by the instructor.
2. A summary of "Can We Be Good Without God?" by Glenn Tinder.
3. An analysis of "The Wiebo Ludwig Story" by the David Staples of the *Edmonton Journal*.
4. A descriptive/narrative/reaction to "Marketing God in the New Millennium" by Tyler Thoreson in *Gadfly*.
6. A narrative essay drummed up from your own life's experience.
7. A research essay on a topic of your choice.