

EN102—Argument, Research, and JFK
Spring 2009

Instructor: Dr. Katherine J. Robinson

Office Hours: Before or after class

Phone: None...I can be reached by email (krobin@ravenndragon.net)

Class Website: <http://www.ravenndragon.net/montgomery/kennedy102.html>

Texts:

Hacker, Diana. *The Bedford Handbook*. 7th ed. New York: St. Martin's.

The Essential Guide.

Strunk & White's *Element of Style* (available at Borders and Barnes & Noble)

Other readings will be in the form of handouts, online readings, and library reserves

The principal text in the course will be your own writing

Other Materials:

- ❖ MC English Composition Folder
- ❖ A college-level dictionary
- ❖ A memory stick for saving your work
- ❖ One manila folder
- ❖ A spiral notebook (single subject)
- ❖ An email account and computer access

Course Philosophy and Objectives:

This class builds upon the skills you acquired in EN101. EN102 emphasizes argumentation based on the thoughtful and discerning use of source material -- the words and ideas of other people. Here you will be introduced to the vocabulary, principles, and methods of argumentative writing. Additionally, we will discuss methods for supporting your arguments with a wide variety of source material.

Finally, it will give you the opportunity to analyze and evaluate the use of these methods and principles to the construction of your own arguments.

Cooperation, conversation, and collaboration are the methodological tools used in this class. We can learn to be passionate and committed without being violent or militant. In doing so, we will participate in what one philosopher has called “discursive democracy” - - using discourse to foster tolerance and respect for dissenting opinion.

This class is also an experiment in rethinking argument. Instead of viewing argument only as a conflict, we will approach it as both a strategy for seeking consensus and a tool for discovery.

Assignments:

You will read and write a great deal in this class, but not all of the assignments will be equally weighted. Nevertheless, please remember that in order to pass this course, you must complete and submit all of these assignments.

Informal Writing (Journal Entries)/Attendance/Class Participation 20%
Assignment—Academic Summary 10%
Assignment—Article Response 10%
Assignment—Review Assignment 10%%
Assignment—Annotated Bibliography 15%%
Assignment—Research-based Argument Paper 25%
Assignment—Final Exam 10%
Total—100%

Assignment Descriptions:

I will provide detailed instruction sheets, but some general requirements and comments will apply throughout the semester.

Assignments are due in class on the assigned day.

All assignments must conform to standard manuscript outlined in the front cover of the MC Composition Folder and in the guidelines that I will distribute.

Peer Review:

Workshops will be scheduled regularly; these will provide an opportunity to discuss with your classmates works in progress before they are due. Revision is an essential part of the writing process. As such, these workshops are not optional. If you miss a scheduled workshop, your final draft will lose 5% of its value.

Evaluation of Major Writing Assignments:

Since this course has a pre-requisite of EN101, you should have mastered basic writing skills by now, and I will assume that you have. If your writing skills exhibit a lack of mastery, I will require that you attend the Writing Center on a regular basis for tutorial assistance.

It is essential that you are able to apply to your own writing the principles, concepts, and strategies we discuss in class.

Generally, I will evaluate your work according to clarity and correctness. Clarity refers to the thoughtfulness and accuracy of your main idea, as well as to such things as organization, development, and internal logic; correctness refers to the mechanics and style of expression.

In addition, I will evaluate your essays in each of the following five areas: Content, Organization, Development, Usage, and Style/Mechanics. Be aware that some kinds of errors are fatal—sentence fragments and run-on sentences, as well as non-standard verb forms, will most certainly damage your essay's credibility, and thus adversely affect its grades.

When I read essays, I usually make written comments in the margins. Some of these comments will be laudatory, some (constructively) critical. I make these comments

because research indicates the best way for writers to improve his or her writing is to get feedback from their instructors. Please take the time to consider these comments; I will be happy to discuss any comments, as well.

Grading:

My grading scale for the course is as follows: A = superior; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = unacceptable. Please see the grade handout for a more detailed explanation of the grading scale.

If at any time you want to discuss a paper or grade with me, schedule an appointment or stop by during my office hours. In addition, you may keep track of your grade easily by writing each paper grade on the inside of your folder. Over the semester, we will meet in individual conferences periodically regarding your progress in the course.

Final Folder:

Your final folder is an important factor in measuring your performance in this course. Assignments must be presented in the folder when requested, and they must be separated from one another with tab dividers. Your folder must be complete in order for you to pass this course.

The folder is your portfolio; it represents your progress in this course. Treat it seriously.

Make-up/Late Work Policy:

All drafts and revisions are due on the assigned day. You are responsible for missed work. You are expected to contact classmates for missed notes and assignments. Any make-up work must be discussed with the instructor. It is unfair to your fellow classmates to try and turn assignments in whenever you feel like. As such, any late papers will be accepted only on the class period following the scheduled due date.

Late assignments will have 10 points deducted from the grade.

Attendance:

You are expected to attend all class sessions. I may fail or drop you if you are absent more than three class sessions. This is serious. If you miss a class, you are responsible for any work assigned or completed during your absence. Students should not expect the instructor to take time from the regularly scheduled class to tell you about work you've missed. I am available to meet with you during my office hours or by appointment. I have included a Contacts space below for you to gather the names, phone numbers, and email addresses of your fellow students.

Note: Since this is a lab class, when I look at absences, I do not see excused v. unexcused. You are absent.

Academic Honesty:

Regarding academic honesty, the Montgomery College Student Handbook states the following information:

“Students who engage in any act [judged] by the classroom instructor to constitute academic dishonesty or misconduct are subject to any and all sanctions deemed appropriate by the classroom instructor, [including] grade sanctions for violations of academic ethics.”

Student Code of Conduct:

Regarding classroom behavior, the Montgomery College Student Handbook states the following information:

- ❖ “If a student behaves disruptively in the classroom after the instructor has explained the unacceptability of such conduct and the consequences that will result, the student may be asked to leave the room for the remainder of the class time. If the student does not leave, the faculty member [will] request the assistance of Security.
- ❖ “The faculty member and the student are expected to meet to resolve the issue before the next class session. If, after a review of the situation and a restatement of the expected behaviors, the student refuses to comply with the stated standards of conduct required, then the faculty member should refer the issue in writing to the dean of student development (301-353-1993) for action under the Student Code of Conduct.”

Additional Codes of Conduct:

We will be constructing a collaborative learning environment in this course. As such, behaviors that disrupt the classroom learning community are not considered appropriate.

These include:

- ❖ Arriving late to class (If you show up after I take attendance, you may not be counted present)
- ❖ Leaving class early
- ❖ Taking frequent unscheduled breaks during class
- ❖ Earning a zero during class participation
- ❖ Any disruption of the positive learning environment
- ❖ Any disrespectful or impolite behavior
- ❖ Any use of profanity or offensive language
- ❖ Any cell phone or pager activity
- ❖ Any disruptive talking
- ❖ Any use of electronic entertainment devices

Support Services:

The Rockville and Germantown Campus Writing Center provides one-on-one tutoring for Montgomery College students on a walk-in and appointment basis to support reading, writing, and language learning. You can sign in at the front desk for tutoring. For information on hours of operation, contact the Writing Center’s website at <http://www.mc.cc.md.us/studentsvc/lrnglabs/display.html>.

A student who may need an accommodation due to a disability should make an appointment to see me during my office hours. A letter from Disability Support Services

(DSS) authorizing your accommodation will be needed. You may contact Disability Support Services: 122CB.

Cancellation of Classes:

Regarding emergency closing of the College, the Montgomery College Catalog states the following information: "If inclement weather forces the College or any campus or College facility to suspend classes or close, public service announcements will be provided to local radio and television stations as early as possible. [Students] can also find out the opening status by calling the College's main information line at 301-279-5000 or by visiting our web site at www.montgomerycollege.edu."

Contacts