Syllabus - ENG 202 - **Research Writing –** Fall 2007
Dr. Kenneth Sherwood
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www.sherwoodweb.org/students
Office: Sutton 340; MWF, 10:10am, W 5-6pm, 9-10pm.
See web page for any schedule changes;
Email for personal appointments

Digital Life
Avoiding the usual "research topics" that send too many students first to Google
and then WorldBook, we will start our research closer to home--scanning our
daily lives (through the lenses of some key critical concepts) to understand more
about the nature and effects of the digital revolution. You will find yourself
thinking about such issues as privacy, surveillance, power and politics, citizen
journalism, the press, copyright/left, open source, intellectual property,
creativity, work/play, identity, social relationships (dating, family, peers), child
psychology, consumerism, entertainment , music, new media, research, study,
education, and the economy. Through fieldwork (primary) as well as traditional
(secondary) research, you will inquire into topics relating to digital life and
produce an informative, persuasive essay that conveys your deepened
knowledge. This theme has a number of advantages: one being that it invites
interdisciplinary inquiry; another that it relates directly to the research process,
as search engines and the like have altered how and when we do research!

Class Format
My ideal class is always discussion based, but the interchange of ideas through
dialogue is even more important in research writing. For the good researcher
can not only find appropriate sources but must be able to evaluate and analyze
what she or her has found.   The way we spend our class time will vary:
discussion and analysis of common readings, information searching workshops,
peer commentary, in-class writing, group conferences, collaborative mini-
projects. I hope you will not only gain the skills of effective google searching –
but a deeper understanding of how we gain knowledge and share it with others.
In short, my aim is to make you real researchers.

Books to Purchase (Coop or online)
McLuhan, Marshall. Medium is the Massage.
Spratt, Brenda. Writing from Sources

Additional Tools:
USB Flash/thumb drive (256MB or more; $15 or less)
IUP email, network and reliable internet access

Additional Readings:
The books above will be central to our class discussion and group collaboration. In addition, I will select and scan or link brief topical readings as we move into our research. But as the semester progresses, you will be locating and producing additional sources (many of them texts) to fold into your own writing.

Requirements and Grading

Web Log / Process Portfolio Almost daily informal writing. Regular, informal postings to your personal web log (blog) which discusses the steps you're taking as well as discoveries, road-blocks, and changes of course in your position and approach. Many posts will be specifically assigned; the best blogs include extra posts of consistently high quality. (At the end of the semester, you will collect your printed blog posts in a portfolio; it may also include a pocket for additional written work, such as you individual wiki contributions.)	20%
Participation and Preparation Completion of readings; engagement in class discussion; contribution to group activities; may also include announced or unannounced reading quizzes, or other miscellaneous assignments. You may also have the chance to do some significant collaborative work on a Wiki, by participating in fieldwork, and recording interviews. Students who fall behind will not be able to contribute to class or complete in-class work efficiently.	20%
Mini-Essay A short, multi-paragraph essay (300-500 word) explaining a key digital concept and drawing on at least one source (though summary, direct quotation, and paraphrase). It may be adapted from a student's blog, and it will be contributed to the class wiki as well as submitted on paper.	5%
Research Essay A well-developed, 10-12 page document investigating a research question which is consonant with the course theme and carefully developed by the student. An early, graded draft will be revised for the primary grade. Several milestone assignments (20% of RE; or 5% of final grade) in the development of your research, such as the Topic Statement, Field Report , and Research Proposal will also count towards this category. These may be posted to your blog, but will generally also be separately collected for individual grades. At the close of the semester, paper-copies of these must be edited, cleanly formatted, and submitted in a folder with your final draft.	50%
Final Exam Brief, in-class conclusion to the research process, taking the form of cover-letter for your blog portfolio. It involves self-reflection and evaluation. At the option of the instructor, it may also include in-class essay questions on common course readings and films.	5%

Technology and Other Materials and Resources
Students may be required to print some course materials. Regular computer access will be required so that you can make use of the Class Web Page (www.sherwoodweb.org/students), library resources, Blog, handouts or electronic reserves of support materials.

The changing nature of "research" requires students to develop fluency with digital technology. I will provide basic instruction, but it will be your job to use technology responsibly: including obtaining and **keeping track of your usernames** and **passwords,** saving back-up copies of work on disks, etc. Additional IUP computer help is available at the the library. If you don't consider yourself computer-literate, please try to think of the technology component of this course as an opportunity to gain added skills.

Attendance (The stick and the carrot)
Presence in class is assumed. Each student is allowed four absences, beyond which the student's final average will be reduced 5% points per absence. Fairness requires that no exceptions be made; please do not submit doctor's notes, etc. Students who **anticipate missing more than five** classes for health, family, or other personal reasons should consider taking the class at another time. Students attending IUP sponsored events (eg. athletes) should notify the professor in advance via email; a typed, 350-word discussion of any assigned reading will be expected within one week of such absences; any pre-scheduled assignments should be submitted in advance. Credit may be withheld from students who arrive late or leave early. On days when assignments are due, students must arrive promptly with work completed, posted, and/or printed out as required. A student with **perfect recorded attendance** will receive a **5% bonus** to his/her semester grade.

Late Enrollment
Students are responsible for completing the full work of the course, regardless of the date of enrollment. Attendance will be computed from the first class meeting, unless the student presents proof of a late addition. Late enrollees have the responsibility of meeting all pending class deadlines for readings and assignments and **one week** from the date of enrollment to make up missed work.

Preparedness
It will be crucial that you consistently complete readings and assignments throughout the semester. I don't particularly like the phrase "project management," but it describes part of what this course aims to teach; avoid skipping steps along the way.

Workload and Help
I hope you will find this to be an enjoyable but challenging course. We will discuss major readings during class, but I will expect that you have closely read and reflected upon them in advance. Your ability to participate in class discussion depends on this. Unlike some other courses, writing classes at IUP

tend to require daily activities, and significant group-work, including peer-critique; your contribution to group activities will not only benefit your classmates but also help you to become a better thinker, editor, and writer.

I have carefully planned a calendar that distributes the work as evenly as possible, but you should be aware that each essay is revised (as the calendar sometimes is). Observing the writing "process" is nearly as important as the quality of the product, so please do not plan to skip steps in the process!

Make-up Work, Computer Breakdown, and Other Exigencies

Successful mastery of course material requires students to complete assignments in a timely fashion. Make-up work does not serve the learning process and so will not generally be permitted. Writing assignments should be handed-in (or submitted electronically, when appropriate) at the beginning of class on the day due; the grade of a late paper will be reduced by a 1/2-letter-grade for each day or portion of a day it is late; after one week, a grade of F will pertain, though the student should still submit a paper in order to avoid getting a zero. Should you unavoidably miss a class, be sure to convey any assignment to me: leave it in my English-office mailbox; use a classmate as courier or email it (sherwood@iup.edu).

Computers have not saved us from Murphy's Law: anything that can go wrong will. Make paper and back-up copies of work done on computers in least two different locations (learn how to save to a flash drive and your student "h:drive;" do this today if you're not computer literate). Keep written notes, but also print and save intermediate drafts (d:/comp-essay1-draft-001, d:/comp-essay2-draft-002, etc.) If you begin work in advance of deadlines, you will have more time to troubleshoot disk errors, virus alerts, and printer problems. I know intimately how unreliable technology can be, but you are responsible for submitting work despite the gremlins.

Research Essay Expectations (more...*This will be more important to you around week 10*)

The exact topic and purpose of this project will be yours to decide as you work through the research process. Key skills will include: gathering, evaluation and effective incorporation of quality sources of several types in service of a defined purpose The broad course theme of the Digital Life and the critical concepts we develop as a class (through reading, discussion, and collaboration) will guide you towards a specific research focus (see research proposal).

It may also help you to consider that I will grade essays wholistically on the basis of four broad categories: 1) Content - degree of thoughtfullness, richness of information provided or strength of claims made; 2) Organization - effective presentation, including thesis, detail or support, paragraph form, transitions, and coherence; 3) Mechanics - essay format and such sentence-level elements as punctuation, spelling, and word choice; and 4) Revision - evidence of effort and quality of changes made to preliminary drafts, especially in response to peer-critique.

I will collect your rough drafts several weeks in advance, comment, quickly grade and rate the four areas above on a 10-point scale to give students an idea of those areas in which I judge the paper to be stronger/weaker. Generally, an "A" paper should be strong in all four areas; a "B" paper is strong in at least three areas and not poor in any; a "C" paper should be adequate in at least three areas; a "D" paper is inadequate in two areas; and "F" paper is inadequate in three or more areas.

Cell Phones
Please silence cell phones and beepers during class time. If you will need to respond to a call for some emergency reason (e.g. a relative near death, a pregnant spouse), you should discuss it with me in advance.

Cheating, Plagiarism, and Collusion
Academic Dishonesty is a serious matter. I am savvy and vigilant in detecting students who use unattributed web sources , "collaborate" with fellows students, or utilize other "clever" methods to enhance their grades. Take the grade you honestly earn on an assignment. Should a classmate attempt to use your work, refuse; I make no distinction between cheaters and those who aid them. A plagiarized assignment will earn you a zero for the assignment. In order to help enforce academic honesty, I may require the submission of electronic copies of formal work to Turnitin.com[1]

Catalogue Description: "Teaches students to read, analyze, and evaluate nonfiction sources and to present the results of their analysis in clear, organized, carefully documented research papers. The focus of reading and research in each section will be determined by the instructor."

Objectives (syllabus of record):
"1. Be primarily a writing course which teaches composition skills.
2. Teach report and research writing skills, especially the ability to read and evaluate resource material and synthesize it into a form appropriate to the writer's goals.
3. Emphasize general rather than discipline-specific research skills, although some instructors may choose to address topics generated by students' majors.
4. Teach students to use library sources to the extent required to accomplish the other goals of the course.
5. Provide students with ample opportunities to develop their writing skills; in addition, students must have a minimum of 3500 words of their prose reviewed and evaluated by their instructor;
6. Assign mainly non-fictional reading as a source for ideas, discussion, and writing activity."

Reading Calendar and Assignment Deadlines
(The calendar will be distributed to separately to students. Every attempt will be made to make revisions on the daily course web page.)

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[1] From Turnitin.com: "Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com site."

WK		Deadlines		Wk		Deadlines	
1	27 Aug		Digital Culture (theme)	9	22	**RF-Field Report**	
	29				24		
	31				26		
2	3 Sep – No Class			10	29		
	5		Critical Reading		31		
	7				02 Nov	**RE-Draft**	Documentation
3	10		Summary	11	5		
	12		Quotation		7		
	14	**Mini-Essay**	Paraphrase		9		
4	17			12	12		Revision
	19	**RE-Topic**	Finding Sources		14		
	21				16		
5	24		Developing a Res Question		**19 Thanksgiving Recess Begins—No classes**		
	26	**RQ-Res Question**	Disciplinary Conversations	13	26		Copy-editing
	28				28	**RVD – Revision**	
6	01 Oct	**RP-Proposal**	Topic Narrowing		30		
	3		Evaluating Sources	14	03 Dec	**RE-Final**	
	5				5		
7	8	**Blog Portfolio**	Fieldwork		7		
	10				10	**Blog Portfolio**	
	12		Integrating/Sythesizing				
8	15						
	17				Weds Dec 12, 8-10		
	19		Planning/Drafting		Weds Dec 12, 10:15-12:15		