

Tamar Christensen M.A.

English Comp 3: Fall 2015

Office: 101 Humanities Building

Office hours:

Wednesday 12:00-1:30 pm

Thursday 2:00-3:30 pm

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TEXTS:

1) Randall Fallows: *Exploring Perspectives: A Concise Guide to Analysis*.

**This text is available at:

<http://catalog.flatworldknowledge.com/catalog/editions/97?section=authors>.

2) Articles Available on Course Web Page: <https://ccle.ucla.edu>

DESCRIPTION:

In this course you will learn how to analyze and write about various aspects of your life and culture. We will begin by exploring the nature of analysis in general. Your first essay will be an analysis of a song or advertisement; the second will be about a specific aspect of a television show or film; the third essay will be a creative examination of a personal event, decision, or relationship in “grammar b.” In general, the course will function as a workshop in which we discuss the nature of analysis, look closely at particular examples related to the readings, discover our own perspectives and examine ways to effectively convey them. In the process, I hope that you will discover that writing analysis can be fun. In past classes you may have received the mistaken notion that analytical writing involves finding the one and only meaning of a text, usually the teacher’s meaning, and then reporting that back with a factual, impersonal tone. Though easy and clear, this usually strips you of your personal insights, creativity and voice. Writing analysis is more uncertain, more messy but much more exciting and empowering when seen as a process of discovering your own interpretations and expressing them with an appropriate, unique style. To aid you in doing so, I will question, challenge and prod you to break through the obvious and explore your own ideas and reactions, but I will NOT write your papers for you by providing you with a readymade interpretation or by copy-editing each of your drafts.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS:

1. Attendance:

- This is a discussion class, so you can’t make it up by borrowing someone’s lecture notes. If you miss more than two classes, or are late more than three times, your grade will be lowered. Furthermore, attendance does not simply mean that you are present; you should always be prepared to participate in class discussions and take part in small group activities.
- It is also important for you to show respect for other members of the class. Listen to each other and do not talk while others are speaking. When you respond to someone else’s writing, do not use mean or loaded terms. Always phrase your responses as suggestions for

growth. For instance never simply say, “your descriptions are too vague,” but rather: “this paragraph could use more specific details of...”

2. **Reading Responses:**

- When reading *Exploring Perspectives*, keep a reading response journal. Along with any personal commentary you may have in response to the reading, you should also write out the key points and terms as well as complete all of the exercises. Your journal for each chapter should be at least one page in length (with standard academic formatting). I will collect your reading response journal for each chapter at the beginning of class on the day we will discuss it.
- I have also added sample essays to the course web page to give you an idea of how to complete each of the assignments. We will discuss each of these briefly so please print, read, and annotate them before the corresponding class meeting.

3. **Essays:**

- You will write at least three drafts of three essays. First drafts can be tentative plans that you will discuss with your peers in small groups during class. The second draft will be around three pages of more polished writing and will be shared with the class as a whole or with me in an individual conference. You will revise all three papers afterwards, but you will get to choose which of the two you wish to submit for a grade (six pages each), and which to turn in for “credit” (three pages). All together you should have fifteen pages of revised, polished writing by the end of the class.
- During week nine, I will not hold class, but have individual conferences on both class days. You should have decided which two of the three papers you will submit for a grade and have extended them to a full draft before this conference. In our conference, we will discuss how you might improve them further. I will also be available on the first day of week ten to look at specific additions or areas of concern but not to evaluate a complete draft.
- Make certain that these essays are your own. Don’t plagiarize! I read the academic journals, I know my way around the web, and the chances are very good that I will be able to discover if you have stolen your essay from another source. I take these cases seriously and will report them to the Dean of Students. If you have any questions about the fair use of a source that you’ve consulted in preparing a draft, be sure to talk to me before turning in that draft.

GRADES:

As a means of motivation, grades are often counter productive, for when you worry too much about how your writing will be received, you are more likely to get frustrated and angry that your paper doesn’t yet measure up to your ideals. This usually leads to writer’s block, which can cause your final product to be just as bad as you were afraid it would be. It’s only when you get

so involved in the process of discovering and presenting your ideas and temporarily forget you are writing for a class that you are likely to produce something with which you will be pleased.

The second problem with grades is that they are often seen as a permanent, objective statement about your ability to write in general when in fact they are only an informed though necessarily subjective opinion of how developed a particular piece of writing is at a given point in a process. They also tend to mean something different to the various teachers who assign them, so to give more meaning to those vague little letters, keep the following in mind:

1) For the Essays (worth 80% of the Final Grade):

- An “A” paper makes me forget I’m a teacher because I can hear your voice as you discuss your ideas thoughtfully and deliberately. You have no recurring problems with the grammar, spelling or structure to distract me from your ideas. I may not agree with everything you write, but I find that your point of view is supported, clearly focused and reasonably argued with a strong balance of all the elements of AXES. Your organization is logical and conveyed through effective transitions. You provide a variety of sentence structures and use an effective, precise but not needlessly complicated vocabulary.
- To get a “B” you must write a very good essay. By that, I mean that your essay should have most of the qualities of an “A” paper but might be somewhat lacking in one or more of the areas listed above. For example, you might have a clear focus, but you may not have explored one of the elements of AXES, leaving the main ideas lacking in development. Most often, “B” papers are not as carefully crafted as they could have been; your vocabulary could have been more precise, the sentence patterns more varied. Nonetheless, a “B” paper demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of both audience and purpose.
- A “C” paper provides an adequate response to the assignment and demonstrates competence in writing at the college level. However, your essay may have completely ignored one of the elements of AXES and/or you may have more noticeable problems in focus, structure, development, or editing. Most often a “C” paper develops a point of view that is too general and too obvious to provide a unique, thoughtful perspective. However, for your paper to be considered a “C,” it should not have any major limitations.
- If a paper receives anything less than a “C,” it means you need more improvement in order to pass. This could come from a misunderstanding of the assignment, inexperience with academic writing, or from being too overwhelmed with work and other classes to devote adequate time to your writing. Whatever the reason, if you receive the mark “NP” on your paper, you should make an appointment with me to discuss it.

2) For Participation (worth 20% of your Final Grade):

- To get an “A” in participation, you must attend regularly (see attendance requirements above), actively participate in class and small group discussions, turn in all assignments on time, and come to all conferences fully prepared and on time. If any of the above proves to be lacking, your grade will be lowered accordingly.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Assignments below should be completed BEFORE the corresponding date.

Zero Week		Introduction, Course Overview, Writing Diagnostic
Week 1	Day 1	<i>Exploring Perspectives</i> : Chapter 1
	Day 2	<i>Exploring Perspectives</i> : Chapter 3
Week 2	Day 1	<i>Exploring Perspectives</i> : Chapter 4
	Day 2	Assign Writing Project 1 “Soft and Dry Advertisement” “Mad World”
Week 3	Day 1	Writing Project 1 Workshop (classroom publishing & individual conferences)
	Day 2	Writing Project 1 Workshop (classroom publishing & individual conferences)
Week 4	Day 1	Bring Writing Project 1 to class. <i>Exploring Perspectives</i> : Chapter 5 Assign Writing Project 2
	Day 2	“Fantasy is not Always What it Seems” “The Theology of South Park” Writing Project 2 in-class drafting workshop. Bring your source for analysis to class.
Week 5	Day 1	Writing Project 2 Workshop (classroom publishing & individual conferences)
	Day 2	Writing Project 2 Workshop (classroom publishing & individual conferences)
Week 6	Day 1	Assign Writing Project 3 Grammar B: See course website (CCLE) under “Week 6”
	Day 2	Grammar B: See course website (CCLE) under “Week 6” Bring topic & plans to utilize three forms.
Week 7	Day 1	Writing Project 3 Workshop (classroom publishing & individual conferences)
	Day 2	Writing Project 3 Workshop (classroom publishing & individual conferences)
Week 8	Day 1	<i>Exploring Perspectives</i> : Chapter 2 Editing workshop (bring full drafts of two essays to class)
	Day 2	Individual Conferences (bring full revisions of two essays)
Week 9	Day 1	Individual Conferences (bring full revisions of two essays)
	Day 2	***No Class*** Thanksgiving Holiday
Week 10	Day 1	Extended Office Hours for specific questions.
	Day 2	Final drafts due at beginning of class.