**Mindy Altman**

**First Year Writing (FYW) Committee – Spring 2018**

**English 110/Creativity**

**Course Overview and Course calendar**

**Note:** The readings in the course calendar by Ruszkiewicz, Atwood, Kaufman, Bohm and Lightman are available as PDFs. Other readings are available through links.

**ENGLISH 110 – COLLEGE WRITING 1 TOPIC: CREATIVITY TERM:**

**Class meeting time and conference hour**

**Instructor:**

**Email: Office:**

**Phone/voice mail:**  **Office hours:**

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

In English 110, which fulfills the College Writing 1 requirement, you will write extensively to explore questions about creativity. What is creativity? What does it mean to be creative? Where do new ideas come from, or is there even such a thing as a new idea? In addition to the arts, creativity is now considered a vital component of many areas or domains, including business, technology, science and medicine. Through a selection of readings, writing assignments and class discussions, you will address and debate the nature of creativity in a variety of contexts. You will write in response to the material you read, and, so that you can discover useful strategies and express your thoughts clearly and effectively, your writing practice will include various exercises, essay drafts, revisions, and homework responses, with an emphasis on a set of skills that will both strengthen your writing and also increase your awareness of the choices you make when you write. Along with helping you produce clear and effective writing, these practices will give you the opportunity to pay close attention to what you read, develop your ideas, analyze the ideas of others, and evaluate your own creative potential. Altogether, in this course you will develop the critical thinking and writing skills that you will need in college and beyond, and gain confidence as a writer and reader who will be able to:

* Use writing techniques to respond to readings and to discover your own ideas on assigned topics
* Practice some conventional forms of essay writing that support a thesis and reflect the logical organization of paragraphs
* Develop close reading and analysis skills in response to assigned texts
* Develop an awareness of audience through peer response to essay drafts
* Distinguish between primary and secondary sources and integrate sources in an essay by paraphrase, summary and quotation and by documenting sources in MLA documentation style
* Develop editing skills that focus on correct grammar and punctuation

Additionally, as you assess ideas about creativity through a variety of readings, writing assignments and class discussions, you will

* Gain knowledge of a variety of perspectives about creativity as they have developed over time
* Strengthen your ability to make connections among ideas and readings as they relate to creativity

**Conference Hour (CH):**

English 110 includes a weekly conference hour that is scheduled for the last half hour of every class meeting, and which will focus on specific elements of academic writing and reading. Part of your final grade is based on your active, engaged participation during this conference time. You will be assigned either to Group A or Group B and must attend the conference dates to which you are assigned, in addition to whole class conferences,which everyone attends.

**COURSE MATERIALS:**

* Hacker, Sommers, *A Pocket Style Manual* 8th ed. (Macmillan) ISBN: 978-1-319-05740-4
* Ruszkiewicz, John. *A Reader’s Guide to College Writing* (Bedford/St. Martin’s) ISBN: 978-1-4576-4258-6
* Other readings will be available in Blackboard or from links. You **must** print these and bring them to class.

**COURSE POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS:**

**Attendance and decorum:**

It is important to attend class regularly and to arrive on time. Because of the interactive and progressive nature of the work for this course, your presence is essential. If you miss more than three classes without providing a reasonable explanation, you are in danger of receiving a lowered grade, since your participation will be compromised. To do the work, you need to be here, as we will often begin assignments in class. If you are unavoidably absent, check with a classmate about the work you missed; be sure that you have the contact information of a classmate. Emailing me is also a good way to get your questions answered. Additionally, classroom decorum is important and can affect your participation and your grade: please refrain from speaking to each other while others are speaking; turn off or silence all cell phones; **no texting! and no laptops permitted, except under special circumstances.** Good participation requires full attention and respect for others.

**Participation and homework:**

You are responsible for all assignments whether or not you are present when they are assigned. An unprepared student cannot adequately participate, especially in group activities: in this class there will be a considerable amount of group work and engagement, and one aspect of doing well will mean contributing constructively to group activities. Overall, participation is based upon your coming to class having done the assigned readings and homework. Written homework will give you the opportunity to respond to the readings and develop your ideas in a thoughtful way. **All written homework should be treated as a quiz. On any given day for which there is written homework, I will either check it or collect it. Late homework and work of poor quality will result in a lowered grade.**

**Grades and Assignments**

Grading will be broken down as follows. Missing a graded assignment will be equal a “zero.”

* **All essays = 50%** (Essay 1 =10%; Essay 2 = 10%; Research essay = 20%; Reflective essay = 10%)
* **Other work = 20%** (Summary = 5%; Annotated Bibliography = 10%; Peer Reviews = 5%)
* **Homework = 20%**
* **Class and Conference Hour Participation = 10%**

**Formal Assignment Sequence**

*Essay 1: Rhetorical Analysis & Close Reading*

In this assignment, you will have the opportunity to build an argument based on a close reading of the essay “Nine Beginnings” by Margaret Atwood. Your assignment is to write an analysis that can help to unlock or unpack Atwood’s essay and discover what she’s trying to do or say. You can do this by addressing one or a combination of several key questions, such as:

Why does she structure the essay as she does? How does the structure contribute to her argument?

Does she answer the question that is the basis of her essay (“Why do you write?”)?

What does her essay say or imply about creativity?

**In this essay, you will:**

* Identify an issue or area of tension within the reading that is worth addressing
* Formulate an arguable thesis while synthesizing ideas from the reading
* Analyze internal evidence from the reading to support your thesis
* Structure your essay using transitions to guide your reader from one point to the next
* Develop a conclusion that reflects rather than (only) summarizes

**Readings for this assignment:**

Atwood, Margaret. “Nine Beginnings”

Harvey, Gordon. “Elements of the Academic Essay”

Ruszkiewicz, John J. *A Reader’s Guide to College Writing.* Bedford 2014, especially Ch. 6, “Critical Reading” and Ch.13, “Make a Point”

*Essay 2: Lens Analysis*

For this assignment, you will continue your practice of close reading by exploring the relationship between two essays that address different aspects of creativity. Specifically, you will use James Kaufman’s “Theories of Creativity” as a lens to evaluate/analyze “The Fifty Greatest Breakthroughs Since the Wheel” by James Fallows, discussing what Kaufman’s essay (the “lens text”) reveals about ideas presented by Fallows (the “target text”). Some of Fallows’ ideas that Kaufman can help you analyze include the functional categories of innovation, the possibility that innovation is slowing down, the methodology behind the list and the list itself.

**In this essay, you will:**

* Continue the goals of the first assignment
* Orient the reader as to the relationship between the readings and identify key terms as necessary
* Conclude by addressing “so what” or by “drawing out an *implication* of the wider significance of the argument” (Harvey - #9)
* Use MLA format to create a Works Cited list

**Readings for this assignment:**

Fallows, James. “The 50 Greatest Breakthroughs Since the Wheel.” The Atlantic, Atlantic Media Company. Nov.2013. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/11/innovations-list/309536/>

Kaufman, James. “Theories of Creativity” from Creativity 101, 2nd ed. Springer 2016

Harvey, Gordon. “Elements of the Academic Essay”

Ruszkiewicz, John J.A Reader’s Guide to College Writing. Bedford 2014, especially Ch. 6, “Critical Reading” and Ch.11 “Discuss”

*Essay 3: Researched Argument*

Choose a current controversial issue involving creativity about which you can take a position and construct an argument. Some of these controversies have emerged from our reading, for example, whether or not we are entering a period of less innovation. Some other possibilities include:

Whether or not smartphones enhance or diminish creativity (how/why)

Whether or not creativity can be taught to children and should be included on a school curriculum

Whether or not A.I. can be creative

Whether or not incremental creativity represents “true” creativity

Whether our persistent use of technology undermines the opportunity to be creative

Whether or not creativity needs an ethical component

**In this essay, you will:**

* Continue the goals of the first two assignments
* Use framing devices for sources in order to introduce and incorporate them into the essay
* Consider and respond to credible counterarguments
* Evaluate the claims made by the sources and contextualize them in relationship to the argument

**Readings for this assignment:**

Harvey, Gordon. “Elements of the Academic Essay”

Ruszkiewicz, John J.A Reader’s Guide to College Writing. Bedford 2014, especially Ch. 6 “Critical Reading,” Ch.15 “Evidence,” Ch.16 “Frame Ideas and Quotations,” Ch.14 “Structure” and Ch.9 “Dispute, Concede, and Rebut”

Bohm, David. On Creativity (selection)

Kaufman, James. “Is Creativity a Good Thing or a Bad Thing?” from Creativity 101, 2nd ed. Springer 2016

Lightman, Alan. In Praise of Wasting Time (selection) Simon & Schuster/ TED (May 15, 2018)

**Essay Process and Presentation:**

Your essays will go through several steps before you hand them in. This will include a draft for a **Peer Review (PR)**, a process by which you share and comment on each other’s essays. Drafts for PR should be **fully developed essays** and have to be **typed**, and PRs are expected to be thoughtful and helpful. It is expected that you will make changes to (revise) your essays as a result of both the PR and your own critical analysis, and that your final draft will not be identical to your earlier drafts.

* **Attendance is required** for PRs. Being absent on the day a PR draft is due will create extra work for you and your classmates, as you will have to make up the PR.
* **Final drafts with peer review** must be turned in on time; the **grade will be lowered by a whole letter for each day a** **paper is late**. An absence on the day a final draft is due is not an acceptable reason for handing it in late.
* You must contact me prior to the date a final draft is due if you need to hand it in late.

Final drafts are to be printed on standard 8 1/2 x 11 paper, with a regular margin provided. **Double space all typing**. Single spaced papers will not be accepted. Don’t use any fancy fonts (script, etc.) or tiny type sizes (8, 10). Do not use cover sheets, plastic covers/folders, etc. Final drafts of essays must be turned in on time as a clipped (one paper clip in the upper left corner) packet that includes previous drafts and a PR. **PRs are required** as part of the packet. Clearly label all drafts (Ex: 1st draft, final draft, etc.). I will not accept loose or unlabeled work. **Title your essay.**

Don’t hesitate to contact me if you have a problem with your writing or with an assignment.

**Academic Integrity**:

We will discuss academic integrity and plagiarism more extensively later in the term, but for now, let it be clear that the **unacknowledged borrowing** of any material or ideas, including those from websites, will not be tolerated and will result in an F for the work in which it occurs, including your homework journal, and possibly an F for the course. See <http://web.cuny.edu/academics/info-central/policies/academic-integrity.pdf>

for more information on policies regarding plagiarism.

**OTHER INFORMATION:**

**FYI**

Our class is part of an FYI (Freshman Year Initiative) community. This is a Queens College program that will provide you with interesting and useful opportunities, both social and academic, including special community events and greater connection among your courses, two of which will be linked. You will also have the benefit of working with an FYI mentor, an upper classman who has participated in FYI and who can answer many questions you have about QC. The FYI office is Honors Hall, Room 5. Keep in mind that dropping one of your linked courses will mean that you have to drop both.

**The Library**

We will be going to Rosenthal Library as a class to meet with a librarian, where you will gain the tools and information you need for using the college library to do research for any college course. For instance, you will learn how to effectively use the library’s online catalog to find a book, as well as to physically locate a book or journal issue in the library. You will also learn to use search systems, such as databases and understand the difference between them and search engines.

**Writing Center/Tutoring**

There is free tutoring available at the Writing Center, Kiely 229 (997-5676). Sessions are once a week for 50 minutes. Tutors respond to your writing, assist with problems in grammar, and provide useful feedback for the purpose of revision. E-tutoring is also available. You can get more information by visiting the website at <http://writingatqueens.qc.cuny.edu/the-writing-center/>

There is also subject specific tutoring in Kiely 131. You can get more information at: <http://www.qc.cuny.edu/Academics/SupportPrograms/SupportCenter/Pages/default.aspx>

**Writing Resources**

In addition to the Writing Center, Queens College offers students many other helpful writing resources,

that can be found through one central link: <http://writingatqueens.qc.cuny.edu/for-students/> Use this link to discover information on avoiding plagiarism, developing an essay, using sources, understanding the writing requirements at QC and more.

**Technical Support and Resources**

The general website for support is at: <http://www.qc.cuny.edu/computing/Pages/New.aspx> Additionally, the

Queens College Helpdesk is located in the I-Building, Room 151 and provides technical support for QC

email, CUNY portal, Blackboard and CUNYFirst. The helpdesk can be reached at 718-997-4444 or

[helpdesk@qc.cuny.edu](mailto:helpdesk@qc.cuny.edu) or check out the website: <http://www.qc.cuny.edu/computing/HelpDesk/Pages/Welcome.aspx>

Altogether you will need access to:

* **Blackboard**

Blackboard is an online classroom management system that will enhance your course experience. You should check Blackboard regularly for new course material. We can also use it to post discussion comments and for other interactive activities. To use it, you will need a college account. Go to <https://cunyportal.cuny.edu/> to set up a CUNY Portal account, which will allow access to Blackboard.

* **Email**

It is important for you to check your email account, as I will often use email to communicate with you

using **whatever email address you have listed in CUNYFirst.** Additionally, it is useful for you to have **a college email account** in addition to whatever other service you use. All college announcements will be sent by way of your college email address. Go to <http://www.qc.cuny.edu/Computing/Pages/Office365.aspx> to set one up.

* **Computer Labs and Printing on Campus**

See: <http://www.qc.cuny.edu/Computing/Computer_Labs/Pages/Welcome.aspx> for lab information and schedules.

**Special Accommodation:**

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should register with and provide documentation to the Office of Special Services in Frese Hall, Room 111. The Office of Special Services will provide a letter for you to bring to an instructor indicating the need for accommodation and the nature of it. This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to QC students, contact the Office of Special Services at 718-997-5870 or visit their website: <http://sl.qc.cuny.edu/oss>

**COURSE CALENDAR**

**For any given term, see the QC calendar** to get information about school holidays, closings, and conversion days (when a different day’s schedule is followed). Go to <http://www.qc.cuny.edu/pages/calendar.aspx> and indicate “Academic” in the drop down for “Select Category.”

**In the calendar below, CH refers to “Conference Hour.”** The class will be divided into groups for reading and writing related activities. CH is flexible and may be used for either the whole class, part of the class or for individual conferences.

The **“reading and writing”** for any given class is generally homework that should be brought to class that day, although it can sometimes can represent work that you will begin in class during conference hour or sooner. Specific homework assignments will be available in Blackboard.

The course is organized around the following essential writing and reading skills:

**I: Critical Reading/Marking Up a Text**

**II: Summarizing**

**III: Analyzing**

**IV: Using a thesis and support**

**V: Understanding Structure**

**VI: Outlining**

**VII: Documenting in MLA8 Format**

**VIII: Revising**

**IX: Finding Sources**

**X: Editing**

**COURSE TOPIC AND OVERVIEW**

**Class 1:**

Course intro and overview

**CH - all:** Writing diagnostic: What is creativity?

**Class 2:**

In class freewriting to discover terms and ideas related to creativity (e.g. innovation); class brainstorming on creativity ideas; developing a list of terms related to creativity

**CH – Group A:** In class reading: James Kaufman, “What is Creativity?”

**ESSAY I: RHETORICAL ANALYSIS**

**Class 3:**

**Essential Skill I: Critical Reading/Marking Up a Text**

**Reading:** Ruszkiewicz pp.75-82 (Ch. 6 “Critical Reading”) and the first section of “The 50 Greatest Breakthroughs Since the Wheel” by James Fallows

**Writing:** Mark up the section of Fallows’ article both by highlighting and writing notes in the margins as suggested by Ruszkiewicz

**CH – Group B:** In class reading: James Kaufman, “What is Creativity?”

**Class 4:**

**Essential Skill II: Summarizing**

**Reading:** Ruszkiewicz pp. 119-124 (Ch.10 “Summarize, Annotate and Paraphrase”)

**Writing:** Summarize the marked up section of Fallows’ article

**CH – Group A:** Continued work on summarizing a text; use of Isaac Asimov’s “How Do People Get New Ideas?” at <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/531911/isaac-asimov-asks-how-do-people-get-new-ideas/>

**Class 5:**

**Essential Skill I: Critical Reading/Marking Up a Text**

**Reading:** Ruszkiewicz pp. 85-95 (Ch.7 “Claims and Contents”) and Margaret Atwood’s “Nine Beginnings”

**Writing:** Mark up Atwood’s text using Ruszkiewicz’s suggestions and answer: What possible claims does Atwood make?

**CH – Group B:** Continued work on summarizing a text; use of Isaac Asimov’s “How Do People Get New Ideas?” at <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/531911/isaac-asimov-asks-how-do-people-get-new-ideas/>

**Class 6:**

**Essential Skill III: Analyzing**

**Reading:** Ruszkiewicz pp. 55-60 (“Read Arguments” part of Ch.4, “Genres”). Reread Atwood’s essay

**Writing:** Write a response to Atwood in relationship to the essay assignment and Ruszkiewicz’s comments on arguments.

**CH – Group A:** Continued analysis of Atwood’s essay by discovering internal evidence to support a thesis

**Class 7:**

**Essential Skills IV: Thesis and Support and V: Understanding Structure**

**Reading:** Ruszkiewicz pp. 161-166 (Ch. 13 “Make a Point”) and Harvey’s “Elements of the Academic Essay”

**Writing:** Discovering what makes an essay “academic.” Additional writing about Atwood’s essay: formulating a tentative thesis and finding possible ways to support it; use of transitions

**CH – Group B:** Continued analysis of Atwood’s essay by discovering internal evidence to support a thesis

**Class 8:**

First paragraph of essay 1; list ways to support it.

**In class and CH writing:** Pre-draft of essay 1

**Class 9:**

Formal first draft of essay 1 for peer review

**ESSAY II: LENS ANALYSIS**

**Class 10:**

**Essential Skills I: Critical Reading/Marking Up a Text and III: Analyzing**

**Reading:** James Kaufman’s “Theories of Creativity”

**Writing:** Highlight the text and make critical comments in the margins. On a separate sheet of paper note: What is Kaufman’s goal or point in this chapter? Which of Kaufman’s ideas present you with the most difficulty? What strikes you as most interesting?

**CH – Group A:** Begin to develop a formal outline of Kaufman’s text

**Class 11:**

**Final draft of essay 1 due with 1st draft and peer review**

**Essential Skills V: Understanding Structure and VI: Outlining**

**Reading:** handouts on outlining and lens analysis; essay 2 assignment

**CH – Group B:** Begin to develop a formal outline of Kaufman’s text

**Class 12:**

**Essential Skills I: Critical Reading/Marking Up a Text and III: Analyzing**

**Reading:** the article “The Fifty Greatest Breakthroughs Since the Wheel” by James Fallows at <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/11/innovations-list/309536/>

**Writing:** Highlight the text and make critical comments in the margins. On a separate sheet of paper, write about the relationship between Fallows’ essay and Kaufman’s chapter.

**CH – Group A:** Continued analysis of the relationship between articles

**Class 13:**

**Essential Skills III: Analyzing and IV: Using a thesis and support**

**Reading:** Ruszkiewicz pp. 131-145 (Ch.11 “Discuss”)

**Writing:** What ideas in this section best help you to read and understand Fallows’ article?

**CH – Group B:** Continued analysis of the relationship between articles

**Class 14:**

**Essential Skill IV: Using a thesis and support**

**Writing:** Begin your essay by filling in the seed templates for lens essays on the handout (borrowed from the Pomona College resource: <https://www.pomona.edu/administration/writing-center/student-resources/general-writing-resources/writing-%E2%80%9Clens%E2%80%9D-essay>

**CH – Group A:** Choosing a lens strategy

**Class 15:**

**Essential Skills VII: Documenting in MLA8 Format and VIII: Revising**

**Handouts:** MLA Format – the Basics and Revision exercise; use of *A Pocket Style Manual*

**Writing:** Tentative first paragraph of essay 2

**CH – Group B:** Choosing a lens strategy

**Class 16:**

Formal first draft of essay 2 for peer review

**Class 17:** See below

**Class 18:** Final draft of essay 2 due with 1st draft and peer review; see below for additional work

**ESSAY III: RESEARCHED ARGUMENT**

**Class 17:**

**Essential Skills I: Critical Reading/Marking Up a Text and II: Summarizing**

**Reading:** Kaufman: “Is Creativity a Good Thing or a Bad Thing”

**Writing:** highlighting the text and making critical comments in the margins. On a separate sheet of paper, write about (list) the issues about creativity that are raised in the reading.

**CH – Group A:** Choosing research topics

**Class 18:**

**Essential Skills I: Critical Reading/Marking Up a Text and II: Summarizing**

**Reading:** David Bohm, “On Creativity” (selection) and Alan Lightman, *In Praise of Wasting Time* (selection) and the research essay assignment

**Writing:** highlighting the text and making critical comments in the margins. On a separate sheet of paper, write about (list) the issues about creativity that are raised in the reading.

**CH – Group B:** Choosing research topics

**Class 19:**

**Essential Skill IX: Finding Sources**

**Library Session**

**Class 20:**

**Essential Skills II: Summarizing, III: Analyzing and IX: Finding Sources**

**Reading:** Ruszkiewicz pp.185-193 (Ch.15 “Evidence”);

**Writing:** Exs.45-47, pp.192-3 on finding sources

**CH – Group A:** Continued exercise in finding sources

**Class 21:**

**Essential Skills II: Summarizing and III: Analyzing**

**Reading:** Ruszkiewicz pp. 195-208 (Ch.16 “Frame Ideas and Quotations”)

**Writing:** Bring one source/annotation to class

**CH – Group B:** Continued exercise in finding sources

**Class 22**:

**Annotated Bibliography due**

**Essential Skills III: Analyzing, IV: Using a thesis and support and V: Understanding Structure**

**Reading:** student sample essays

**Writing:** note the following for each: What thesis is presented? What evidence supports the thesis? Which evidence is most effective? What transitions (words, phrases and sentences) are used and where? What framing devices are used?

**CH – Group A:** Exercise in framing

**Class 23:**

**Essential Skills III: Analyzing, IV: Using a thesis and support and V: Understanding Structure**

**Reading:** Ruszkiewicz pp.167-183 (Ch.14, “Structure”)

**Writing:** The first two paragraphs of the research essay

**CH – Group B:** Exercise in framing

**Class 24:**

**Essential Skill IV: Using a thesis and support**

**Reading:** Ruszkiewicz pp.107-117 (Ch.9, “Dispute, Concede, and Rebut”)

**In class writing:** Counterargument paragraphs

**CH – Group A:** Outlining exercise

**Class 25:**

**Essential Skills IV: Using a thesis and support, V: Understanding Structure and VI: Outlining**

**Writing:** The first two pages of the research essay and an outline of the rest

**CH – Group B:** Outlining exercise

**Class 26:**

**Formal first draft of essay 3 for peer review**

**Class 27:**

**Essential Skills VIII: Revising and X: Editing**

**Reading:** Ruszkiewicz pp. 221-231 (Ch.18 “Clarity and Economy”)

**CH - all:** Revision and Editing exercises

**Class 28:**

**Final Draft of Essay 3 due with draft and peer review**

Summing up and in class reflective essay