

**University of Puerto Rico
College of Humanities
English Department**

English 5005: *Seminar in Critical Writing*
Section 0U1 - three (3) credits
Wednesdays 4:30 – 7:20 LPM 310

Robert Dupey, Ph.D.
August / 2008

I. Course Description

English 5005 is an intensive writing course designed to sharpen students' writing and research abilities. Our primary focus is the development of critical and organizational analyses of themes from three areas: English-language literature, linguistics and / or the specific field of the student. The developmental research skills receive attention as they relate to the critical writing process.

II. Objectives

At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to

- a. prepare critical reviews of varied nature
- b. draft thesis statements and organize thesis paragraphs into longer types of academic discourse
- c. conduct formal research based on print literature as well as databases
- e. produce position papers presented in class forums
- f. carry out a formal research project in the student's chosen field
- g. understand and implement standard documentation forms and practices

III. Teaching Strategies

English 5005 includes extensive writing, class discussion, student presentations, assorted assignments and papers prepared outside of class as well as important tasks conducive to the preparation of an investigative research essay.

IV. Requirements and Evaluation

1. The University of Puerto Rico maintains the following grading scale:

A - Excellent 100 - 90 B- Very Good 89 - 80 C- Average 79 – 70
D - Deficient 69 - 60 F- Failure 59 and below

...This grading scale will be considered at all times in the evaluation of each student's academic performance. Each student's commitment to improvement and excellence in each and every aspect is crucial at this stage of his / her academic career.

2. Attendance as well and punctuality are **mandatory**. Due particularly to the fact that we meet once per week, students' commitment to active participation and punctual attendance is crucial. At the conclusion of the semester, students receive a full grade for this aspect. The following scale is utilized:

0 absences:	100
1 absence:	90
2 absences:	80
3 absences:	70
4 absences:	60
5 absences:	50
etc.	

Punctuality is also an important aspect to be taken into consideration. Arriving more than fifteen minutes late constitutes tardiness; frequent tardiness will be considered as absences. This policy will be strictly enforced. Naturally, serious illness (with an official medical excuse) the loss of a family member or other extremely serious circumstances will be considered as a valid excuse for an absence. Naturally in these cases, a student will be allotted additional time to make up missing work. In a course of this nature, maintaining all work up to date is vital!

3. All essays, critical reviews, research work (including drafts), oral presentations / forums presented in class will each have the value of a 100 point grade. Students' responsibility and punctuality in these aspects are vital. Considerable reduction in a student's grade for any of these tasks not completed on the date assigned will result. Any late work must be handed in personally to me, not left in my mailbox nor under an office door!
4. A full (100 pt.) grade based on each student's active contribution to class discussion will be given at the conclusion of the semester.
5. Students are asked to always have the following materials in class: the core text (*Writing Research Papers. A Complete Guide* by James Lester), which is available at Amazon.com, readings, assignments, some loose-leaf paper, a small notebook and a pen.
6. Students must keep their cell phones **off** while class is in session.

V. Course Outline

August 13

Overview of the course

Discussion of course syllabus / core text / course outline - calendar

Writing exercise based on a prompt

August 20

Discussion: Chapter 1 Writing from Research

Chapter 2 Finding a Topic

Chapter 3 Finding and Filtering Electronic Resources

Apply theory of readings to possible topic choices / pre-planning stage

Have notes / informal brainstorming prepared

(copies of key material provided)

August 27

Two (2) research proposal drafts submitted / workshop discussion in class

- Readings for next class: Chapter 4 Gathering Data

Chapter 5 Conducting Research

September 3

Final draft of one research proposal submitted / topic selection stage finalized

Continuation of Chapter 4 and 5 discussion

Chapter 6: Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism

September 10

Preliminary (working) bibliography submitted

100 pt. critical review of an academic article from student's discipline carried out in class (outline allowed)

September 17

Chapter 7: Finding and Evaluating Sources

Emphasis on the annotated bibliography

September 24

Annotated bibliography submitted

Chapter 8: Organizing and Setting Goals

Outlining – Preliminary and Formal

October 1

Preliminary (rough outline) of research paper submitted

Argumentative Writing

October 8

Preliminary outlines returned to students

Argumentative Writing

October 15

Formal outline of research paper submitted / Class discussion and orientation carried out in class

100 pt. position paper carried out in class (outline for work allowed)

October 22

Discussion: MLA and APA Styles

Chapters 10, 11, 14 and 15

Chapter 12: Writing the Introduction, Body and Conclusion

October 29

First drafts of research paper submitted (100 pts.)

Workshop: Writing Styles (special short assignments)

November 5

No class – Recess for Elections

November 12

First drafts of research paper returned to students / orientation and discussion

November 19

Holiday – Discovery of Puerto Rico

November 26

No class – Students working on final drafts

December 3

Presentation of final drafts of research project (100 pts.) / Student research forum (100 pts.)

December 8 (Monday)

Last day of class on UPR campus

**University of Puerto Rico
College of Humanities
Department of English**

English 5005

Robert Dupey, Ph.D.

Student Research Forum Report

Name _____

Date _____

Evaluation

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement	Sub Total
Synthesis					/ 20
Organization in presentation of data					/ 30
Depth in presentation of conclusions					/ 15
Level of critical thinking					/ 20
Overall contribution to the theme					/ 5
Degree of class involvement / participation					/ 10
Total:					/ 100

Comments / Observations / Notes:

VI. Required Texts and References

Birkerts, Sven and D. Hall. *Writing Well*. New York: Pearson Longman 2007

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6th ed. New York: MLA, 2003. (Also see mla.org).

Lester, James. *Writing Research Papers. A Complete Guide*. 12th ed. New York: Pearson Longman, 2007

Loberger, Gordon and K. Shoup Welsh. *Webster's New World English Grammar Handbook*. Indianapolis, Indiana: Wiley Publishing Co., 2002

Strunk Jr, William, E.B. White and Roger Angell. *The Elements of Style*, 4th Ed.

*The *American Heritage Dictionary* appears on-line on multiple web pages. One of the best is education.yahoo.com/reference/dictionary. A wide variety of databases are available through the UPR Library. In addition, there may be additional readings placed on reserve at Copies Unlimited, located on Gándara Avenue adjacent to the UPR campus.

VII. Office Hours

Office #12 Pedreira (English Department – basement)

Mondays: 1:00 - 2:00

Tuesdays: 9:00 – 12:00

Wednesdays: 10:00 – 12:00 / 1:00 – 4:30

Fridays: 1:00 – 2:00

Students are encouraged to make appointments.

Important Notice: In accordance with the recommendation of the Dean of Students Office (Division for Persons with Disabilities), students who are clients of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester in order to make arrangements for reasonable accommodations and for any necessary auxiliary equipment. Other students with special needs who require any kind of assistance or reasonable accommodations should also contact the professor. Alternative evaluation methods will be provided to students with identified special needs.

Investigative Research Tasks by Stages / Point Value

Research Proposal Drafts (2).....	5
Research Proposal Final Draft.....	10
Preliminary Working Bibliography.....	5
Annotated Bibliography.....	10
Preliminary (rough) Outline.....	5
Formal Outline.....	15
First Draft of Paper.....	50
Grand Total:	/ 100
Final Draft of Paper.....	/ 100
Student Research Forum Report.....	/ 100