ENGL 250-01

Intermediate Composition: Land, Region, Environment

Fall 2018 – M – 4:00-6:30p

**Professor:** Dr.Ross K. Tangedal, Ph.D.

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**Meeting Place:** CCC 238

**Office:** CCC 426; TR-9:00-10:00am

F-1:00-2:00pm

**Course Catalog Description:** Practice in exploratory, expository, and persuasive discourse.

*“The first draft of anything is shit.”*

-Ernest Hemingway

*“To write a poem you must have a streak of arrogance—not in real life I hope. In real life try to be nice. It will save you a hell of a lot of trouble and give you more time to write.”*

-Richard Hugo

*“I am glad I will not be young in a future without wilderness.”*

-Aldo Leopold

*“I am haunted by rivers.”*

-Norman Maclean

*“In nature nothing exists alone.”*

-Rachel Carson

*“Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed . . . We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in.”*

-Wallace Stegner

*“This grand show is eternal. It is always sunrise somewhere; the dew is never dried all at once; a shower is forever falling; vapor is ever rising. Eternal sunrise, eternal dawn and gloaming, on sea and continents and islands, each in its turn, as the round earth rolls.”*

-John Muir

***Welcome to ENGL 250-Intermediate Composition.*** In this class, we will spend time together writing, reading, talking, and becoming. That is the state of the writer: always becoming. As a catalyst for our course we will be reading various pieces centered on Land, Region, and Environment, featuring selections, essays, stories, and poems by Ernest Hemingway, Aldo Leopold, John Muir, Toni Morrison, Richard Hugo, Leslie Marmon Silko, Lorine Niedecker, James Weldon Johnson, Gary Snyder, Norman Maclean, Wallace Stegner, Rachel Carson, Annie Dillard, Natasha Trethewey, Michael Martone, and Bonnie Jo Campbell. Together, we will create an environment where the *process* of writing takes precedence over product. I want you to write about things that move you, scare you, inspire you, and hurt you. We will write in multiple genres (essay, story, poem, research paper, etc.) and tackle the issues at the heart of writing: pre-writing, idea-generation, structure, content, emotion, voice, audience, and passion. We will listen to and learn from each other, as well as from those writers who have come before us. You will give feedback on each other’s work, and we will workshop regularly. Writing is a part of you, whether you know it or not. So welcome to Intermediate Composition: YOU ARE A WRITER.

**Required Texts (Purchase)**

Leopold, Aldo. *A Sand County Almanac*. Oxford UP, 1949.

ISBN: 978-0195007770

Maclean, Norman. *A River Runs Through It*. U of Chicago P, 1976.

ISBN: 978-0226472065

**Required Texts (Rental)**

Rawlins, Jack & Stephen Metzger. *The Writer’s Way*. 8th Ed. Wadsworth, 2012.

ISBN: 978-0495911449

**Course Goals**

1. Become stronger writers and communicators.
2. Learn to discern the differences in written expression (genre, style, audience, etc.).
3. Gain an understanding of the environment as a catalyst for written expression.
4. Develop voice as a key component of written expression.
5. Strengthen critical thinking, critical reading, and writing skills.

**Grading Scale:**

**A** 100-93% **B+** 89-87% **C+** 79-77% **D+** 69-67%

**A-** 92-90% **B** 86-83% **C** 76-73% **D** 66-65%

**B-** 82-80% **C-** 72-70% **F** 64-0%

**Assignments:**

1. **3 Short Papers, 3-4 pp (15% each; 45% total)**: Short Paper #1 (Memoir/Personal Essay), Short Paper #2 (Series of Creative Pieces), Short Paper #3 (Issue Paper). More details will follow as the due dates approach.
2. **Final Project, 6pp (25**%)**:** The Final Project will be a research paper on course themes requiring both primary analysis and secondary support. More details will follow.
3. **Short Presentation (10%):** At the end of the term each of you will give a five-minute retrospective presentation on your writing journey during the course. More details will follow.
4. **Participation (20%)**: You will be graded daily on your level of participation during class discussion and other class activities. I base your daily participation grade on a number of criteria: 1) speaking up in class; 2) actively participating in group work; 3) being on time to class and missing as few as possible; 4) turning in homework and assignments on time; 5) Seeing me during office hours; 6) being respectful and professional during class. Participation is vital to your final grade. Not only do I want you to attend my class, but I want you to have something of value to say and do when you arrive. However, if you have a hard time speaking up in class, please talk to me and we will arrange an alternative method for you to share your thoughts.

**Class Policies:**

1. **Discussion Etiquette**: On day one we will establish our discussion ground rules as a class. Some things to consider:
   1. Our readings will bring up controversial subject matter. As college students and newly minted members of the academy, I expect you to hold yourself with professionalism, good humor, and respect. Degrading others’ opinions, stances, or remarks for any reason at any time will not be tolerated.
   2. I want you to disagree with each other. I want you to disagree with me. But disagreement does not mean denigrating, teasing, or hurting one another. Let’s be adults.
   3. I want your voice to be heard, and to some that means speaking with me outside of class rather than in class discussions. I am always available for a good chat. Communicate!
2. **Attendance:** ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. It is extremely difficult for me to do my job if you are not here. Not only will I be unable to give insight and experience to the class, but your classmates will not be able to help you develop ideas and techniques. **I allow one unexcused absence throughout the semester**. This is NOT negotiable. If you do not attend my course you will not pass. Period. If you are on an athletic team, you are required to show me documentation from your coach of the days you will be absent. Athletes who miss class because of away games are required to turn their work in prior to leaving for their event.
3. **Preparing for Class:** At the end of each class period I will assign either a reading from the text or a short writing assignment (or both). You are expected to read the assigned texts carefully and thoroughly. DO NOT come to class if you haven’t read the text. You will only hinder the discussion.
4. **Late Work:** All homework is to be turned in ON TIME. Late work will result in grade deduction (partial letter grade per day late, i.e. – A becomes an A-, C+ becomes a C) **NOTE:** You must turn in all assignments to pass the class. Failure to turn in any assignment as scheduled will result in an ‘F’ for the class.
5. **Tardiness:** I expect you to be on time to class. I begin and end class promptly. I will NEVER keep you over class time. Excessive tardiness will result in absences, and since we only have one day a week together, we need to stay on course. Be on time.
6. **Plagiarism:** Use of the intellectual property of others without attributing it to them is considered a serious academic offense. **Cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the work or for the entire course.** If you think you might be plagiarizing, you probably are.Don’t be the person who cheats. If you are having problems come talk to me about what we can do to help you avoid the cardinal sin of writing. For more detailed information regarding Academic Misconduct please consult: <http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Academic-Misconduct.aspx>.
7. **Electronic Devices/Video**: Electronic devices are distracting and their use while others are speaking is impolite; unless you are asked to use them for a class activity, turn off your cell phones, laptops, Ipads, etc., and put them away. Laptops are not allowed unless we are workshopping, and you must have an Accommodations Request requiring use for a disability. Take notes with pencil and paper. I like pencils, and I like paper. To respect the privacy of those in the class, students may not make audio, video, or photographic recordings of lectures or other class activities without written permission from the instructor. Anyone violating this policy will be asked to turn off the device being used. Refusal to comply with the policywill result in the student being asked to leave the classroom, and possibly being reported to the Dean of Students.
8. **Accommodations:** If you require special accommodations for any reason please let me know. I will do my best to facilitate and arrange the proper accommodation.
9. **Emails**: Email is both a blessing and a curse. Please respect the fact that I am teaching several classes per semester, which means that I will do my very best to respond to your emails within 24 hours during the week (48 hours over the weekend). However, I will not recap entire class periods for you via email (stop by my office instead for some coffee and a chat), nor will I repeat information available on this syllabus or in a class handout (consult course materials before shooting off that email about essay page count). Also, I firmly believe in correspondence etiquette. Email may be informal, but I expect your messages to be polite and respectful. Include a salutation (Dear Dr. Tangedal, Hello Professor Tangedal) and conclusion (sincerely, best, thanks,). Be a pro. If your tone becomes an issue, we will have a talk.
10. **Office Hours**: I hold office hours for your benefit**. Come see me any time.**

**Course Schedule**

**September**

10: Course Introduction; “The Wilderness Letter”, Wallace Stegner; “Degrees of Gray in Philipsburg”, Richard Hugo

17: Chapter 1-“Learning to Write”, *WW*; “The Flatness”, Michael Martone; *A Sand County Almanac*, Aldo Leopold(3-39)

24: Chapter 12-“Personal Writing”, *WW*; “Pilgrim at Tinker Creek”, Annie Dillard (from *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*); *A Sand County Almanac* (40-57); Workshop

**October**

1: Short Paper #1 Due (Memoir/Personal Narrative); Chapter 2-“What Makes Writing Effective?”, *WW*; “Indian Camp” & “The End of Something”, Ernest Hemingway (from *In Our Time*)

8: Chapter 4-“Choosing Topics and Getting Started”, *WW*; *A Sand County Almanac* (58-94); “Winter Life”, Bonnie Jo Campbell

15: *A Sand County Almanac* (101-124); *A River Runs Through It*, Norman Maclean (3-59)

22: *A River Runs Through It* (60-119); Three Poems, Lorine Niedecker; Workshop

29: Short Paper #2 Due (Series of Creative Pieces); Chapter 13-“Writing to Inform”, *WW*; “The American Forest”, John Muir; *A Sand County Almanac*, “The Land Ethic” (237-263)

**November**

5: Chapter 14-“Writing an Argument, Stage 1”, *WW*; “A Fable for Tomorrow” & “The Obligation to Endure”, Rachel Carson (from *Silent Spring*); *A Sand County Almanac*, “The Round River” (188-201)

12: Chapter 15-“Writing and Argument, Stage 2”, *WW*; “Out Under the Sky”, Leslie Marmon Silko; Workshop

19: Short Paper #3 Due (Issue Paper); “Four Changes”, Gary Snyder; selections from *Beloved*, Toni Morrison; “Deep in the Quiet Wood”, James Weldon Johnson

26: “Liturgy”, Natasha Trethewey; *A Sand County Almanac*, “Wilderness” (264-279)

**December**

3: Presentations; Workshop

10: Presentations; Workshop

EXAMS: 17-21 (Final Research Paper Due)