English 1302 - Rhetoric II - Spring 2002 Course Syllabus

Sections 22, 23, 24, 25 - MWF – Youth and Age

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Course Description: This seminar is an exploration of the concepts of “youth” and “age”: what they mean; what stereotypes they imply in our culture; how we both shape and are shaped by them as human beings; how the terms shift and change along a continuum. Students are given the option of volunteering fifteen hours of their time during the semester in an area nursing home for the elderly. Their experiences at the nursing home should enhance and inform their reading, writing, and discussion in the seminar.

Course Objectives: This second-semester of the first-year Rhetoric Program extends and develops further the skills practiced in English 1301; that is, through a sequence of directed reading and writing practice, you will:

* further develop your critical reading, thinking, and speaking skills;
* further develop your expository, analytic, and argumentative writing skills;
* become more familiar with the composing process and learn to adjust it to accomplish various writing tasks;
* become familiar with scholarly research techniques;
* reach a fuller understanding of the use of writing as an aid to learning;
* practice collaborative learning.

Texts and Materials:
Mitch Albom, Tuesdays with Morrie.
Amy Tan, The Bonesetter’s Daughter.
Various short familiar essays and poems.
Films: Tuesdays with Morrie, Harold and Maude, Tender Mercies, and Chain Camera.
Any good dictionary.
A regular-sized (not legal-sized) manila folder.
One or two 3 - inch disks to save and backup work generated on computer.
Workload, Procedures, and Policies: This seminar is a reading, writing, and discussion workshop. The writing assignments introduced in class will emerge from the readings and our discussions of them both in class and on-line. Reading assignments, in-class writing exercises, collaborative learning activities, whole-class and small group discussions, and draft workshops will help you produce your best work. You are expected to provide copies of your drafts for members of your writing group during workshops, and you should be prepared to read your work aloud to others as well as to allow them to read it silently and give you feedback. You are expected to have all reading assignments read by the day designated for our discussion of them, and all writing drafts ready for review on their due dates.

Come to class prepared to engage in discussion about the readings and about your writing. Come to class prepared to write. You should expect to respond to various writing prompts during the semester (Daily Responses) growing out of assigned readings, class discussions and/or mini-lectures.

This is a learning environment, so turn off all pagers and cellular phones; they break into your and the other students’ concentration. Unless you or someone in your immediate family suffers from a life-threatening disease or faces a catastrophic event, pages and phone calls will not be tolerated during the fifty minutes you are in this classroom.

All essays and other work you turn in to me for evaluation and response, with the exception of daily responses and in-class writings, must have a professional appearance: typed or computer-printed, double-spaced, on substantial paper. Use word processors to ease revision. Remember to save and backup your work on separate disks in case of a computer meltdown.

Reading Responses: Formal Reading Responses will be due approximately a week after we conclude our reading and discussion of each of the three major texts: Tuesdays with Morrie, excerpt from The Journey of Life, and The Bonesetter’s Daughter. I’ll provide a more detailed assignment sheet later setting out format.

Film Responses: Formal responses to each of the four films we’ll watch this semester will be due after our viewing and discussion of them. I’ll provide a more detailed assignment sheet later and the forms as needed.

Writing Logs: Keeping logs on your essays should help you pinpoint specific areas in your writing that need work. The logs should also help you begin to recognize your strengths as a writer. I’ll provide a more detailed assignment sheet later and the forms as needed.

Oral Progress Report: Twice during the semester (I’ll provide sign-up sheets), you will give the whole class an up-date on your progress in writing either the first or second essay assigned before spring break and in writing the third essay, your researched paper, which you will write after spring break. Each short oral report will last about five minutes. We’ll discuss evaluation criteria for the reports later.
Disability Accommodation: If you need academic accommodation for a disability, you must first contact Ms. Rebecca Marin, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities (214-768-4568), to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodation. Then, you should make an appointment with me to make the appropriate arrangements. Your notification will remain confidential.

Attendance and Punctuality: Rhetoric departmental policy stipulates that if a student has more than three unexcused absences from a MWF section, his or her grade should reflect those excessive absences. If a student has more than six unexcused absences, she or he should expect to fail the course. Only absences due to illness, some University functions, and family emergency are excusable. Further, late arrival to or early exit from class meetings is discourteous and disruptive. Missing several minutes of class at either end will count as an absence. Note: You are responsible for work that is due and for material covered or assigned in class in your absence, whether excused or unexcused.

Deadlines and Make-Ups: I’m not inclined to accept late work, so check with me if you know in advance that you will miss a class when something is due, and make arrangements for turning in the work on time. You are expected to meet due dates for reading responses, film responses, and for essay drafts at each stage of the writing cycle; your course grade will suffer if you don’t. Daily written responses to the readings may not be made up; if you are absent, you simply miss that day’s written response. You may, however, make up an in-class essay that you miss because of an excused absence; make-ups should be scheduled as soon as possible.

Course Work, Evaluation, and Grading: The breakdown of course work as it applies to the final grade you earn in this class is as follows:

- Essay #1 - 10%
- Essay #2 - 10%
- Essay #3 - 15%
- First Drafts of Essays #1, #2, #3 (2% each) - 6%
- Research Topic Proposal for Essay #3 – 2%
- Annotated Bibliography for Essay #3 - 3%
- Two in-class essays (4% each) - 8%
- Two Oral Progress Reports (4% each) - 8%
- Three Reading Responses (2% each) - 6%
- Four Film Responses (1% each) – 4%
- Four Writing Logs (1%each) - 4%
- Numerous Daily Written Responses to Readings - 4%
- Final Examination Essay - 10%
- Daily Grade - 10%
  (Attendance, Preparation, Participation, Timeliness)
Grades earned on your writing in this class are in conjunction with the standards for evaluation set out on page 166 of *Criteria 2001-02*. I will use these standards to evaluate and grade your in-class essays, your three process essays, and your final examination essay.

Successful completion of this course requires a grade of C- or better. To be eligible for a grade of C- or better, students must attend and participate, complete all assignments in a timely manner, and take the final exam. This course cannot be dropped.

**Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:** It is academically dishonest, and often illegal, to present someone else’s ideas or writing as your own. You cannot use even short phrases or parts of sentences obtained from other sources unless you properly document those sources. Documentation includes marking quotations, as well as providing notes, citations, and a reference list. In addition, it is academically dishonest to submit your own previously written work for a current assignment or to submit an assignment in more than one class without the prior permission of the instructors.

You are responsible for furnishing upon request all the sources and preliminary work (notes, rough drafts, etc.) that you use preparing written assignments. If you cannot produce these materials upon request, the assignment will be considered unsatisfactory and given a failing grade. You are also responsible for protecting your own work. It is your responsibility to ensure that other students do not copy your work or submit your work as their own. Allowing your work to be used inappropriately makes you guilty of academic misconduct and subject to sanctions as set out in the Honor Code of SMU.

**Community Service Volunteers:** Those of you who decide to volunteer fifteen hours of your time during the semester to a local nursing home for the elderly will earn fifteen course points for doing so. Additionally, you will write only one formal Reading Response and only two formal Film Responses. You will give one oral report before spring break, and you will not be required to give one after break. Finally, instead of being allowed three unexcused absences without jeopardizing your course grade, you may have six unexcused absences, so long as those days off do not coincide with your group workshops. You will be expected to keep a detailed volunteer log of your time spent with nursing home residents and staff, and your researched essay should be informed by your experiences at the nursing home in some way.