Peter Freeman

Final Sustainability Portfolio

Sustainability teaching mission statement - English 101

As an English instructor, one of my goals is to help students understand how language and power work together to create knowledge. In the context of sustainability, I want to help students understand that the words and texts we use to talk about "sustainability" not only influence the way we think about it, but also how they impact the type and scope of actions carried out in its name.

Connecting sustainability to English

One of the tools or methodologies of English is discourse analysis where we examine speech and text for patterns that help create meaning. These patterns are often hidden and often require deep and critical thinking to uncover.

In terms of sustainability, one of the big ideas there seems to be on fostering a sense of interconnectedness between all living things. Like the patterns of speech and text we look for in discourse analysis, these connections are often hidden and often require deep and critical thinking to uncover. However, once these connections are uncovered, they help us understand that the function of any Earth system is inherently connected to every other system and that the meaning of any Earth system is created only in the context of its relationship to every other system.

Thus, like discourse analysis, meaning cannot be created through an understanding of a single Earth system or text. Rather, meaning can only be created through an understanding of how all of Earth's systems or texts work together to sustain life.

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| English 101 outcomes | Sustainability outcomes |
| Demonstrate ability to write in various modes: personal narrative, expository, analytical, descriptive, argument | Apply an ethical perspective in which one views oneself as embedded in the fabric of an interconnected world  Explain how sustainable thinking and decision-making contribute to solutions for current and emerging social, environmental and economic crises |
| Explore sources of writing: reading, thinking, analyzing, discussion | Apply an ethical perspective in which one views oneself as embedded in the fabric of an interconnected world |
| Create a thesis statement that suggests the focus of the paper | Demonstrate technical skills and expertise necessary to implement sustainable solutions in solving problems related to the course |
| Illustrate the concept of audience in your writing | Explain how sustainable thinking and decision-making contribute to solutions for current and emerging social, environmental and economic crises  Apply practical solutions to real-world sustainability challenges |

1. In general, I rely on small group work and in-class discussions in my classes, so I would like to continue to use both in my sustainability-focused class.

3. After reading the Sherman piece, I'd really like to have students investigate the meaning and discourse of sustainability on campus. I think this maps to the "Explore sources of writing: reading, thinking, analyzing, discussion" outcome for English 101 and to the "Explain how sustainable thinking and decision-making contribute to solutions for current and emerging social, environmental and economic crises" Sustainability Outcome.

In terms of a lesson plan, each student would read the Sherman article to help understand the context of the assignment. After that, they would be given a list of questions to ask one or two members of the campus community about the meaning and discourse of sustainability on campus, and would also be given space to ask a question or two of their own choosing.

I think I would use this assignment as a midterm, and it would be graded.

I'd also really like to have students do some kind of commodity chain assignment where they investigate where there food comes from. I think this assignment maps to the "Demonstrate ability to write in various modes: personal narrative, expository, analytical, descriptive, argument outcome for English 101 and to the "Apply an ethical perspective in which one views oneself as embedded in the fabric of an interconnected world" Sustainability Outcome.

In terms of a lesson plan, each student would be asked to pick one or two food items from their home and investigate where it was grown and by whom, the labor practices employed by the company in charge, and what it took to deliver that food to wherever they purchased it from.

This activity could also be a midterm or a final assignment, and it would be graded.

I'm also interested in having students write a dialog between themselves and some of the authors we read about in the class. In it, they could discuss the meaning of sustainability, human kind's role on Earth, and what they themselves can do to encourage others in their communities to adopt more environmentally sustainable lifestyles. I think this assignment maps to the "Demonstrate ability to write in various modes: personal narrative, expository, analytical, descriptive, argument outcome for English 101 and to the "Apply an ethical perspective in which one views oneself as embedded in the fabric of an interconnected world" Sustainability Outcome.

In terms of a lesson plan, each student would be asked to write a dialog between themselves and our authors. To help guide the discussion, they'd be asked to address a set of questions that I'd provide for them.

This activity would most likely be their final project, and it would be graded.

In terms of resources, I'm also interested in using Alisa Smith and J.B. MacKinnon's book called "Plenty" where both authors spend a year only eating foods grown or processed within 100 miles of their home in Vancouver, BC. I think this book could be a nice complement or grounding for the commodity chain assignment where students investigate where there food comes from.

I'm also a really big fan of David Suzuki's book called "The Sacred Balance" where he encourages readers to see and understand the interconnectedness between all living things on Earth, which I think would tie back to Sherman's ideas of interconnectedness, as well.

# English 101 Syllabus

# 1121 2013 Fall

Instructor: Peter Freeman

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Phone: 425-564-2341

Office location: R230K

Office Hours: T and Th from 4 to 5 or by appointment

## Course Information

The primary goal of this course is to introduce you to college-level writing. To do so, we will work on creating strong thesis statements, developing supporting evidence, drawing logical conclusions, and generating awareness of your audience within an interdisciplinary context. We will also cover organization, mechanics, and available resources to help you in the writing process.

In order to provide a context for this work, we will focus our efforts on exploring the idea of environmental sustainability. Questions explored will include, but are not limited to: What is sustainability? What does it mean to be environmentally sustainable? How can we foster and encourage environmentally sustainable behaviors and practices in our communities and beyond?

To help investigate these questions, we will spend the first half of the course developing an understanding of sustainability, while the second half of the course will allow you to apply your knowledge and address a handful of real-world environmental concerns.

**Course Outcomes**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

* Demonstrate an ability to write in various modes, including personal narrative and argument
* Create a thesis statement that outlines the focus of a paper
* Identify the research question, thesis statement, context, and supporting evidence in reading assignments
* Practice good group skills, including how to give useful feedback and how to make use of feedback you receive

**Books and Materials Required**

Smith, Alisa and MacKinnon, J.B. Plenty © 2007 Required

Suzuki, David. The Sacred Balance. © 2007 Required

Zinsser, William. On Writing Well. © 2006 Required

All other reading materials can be found on the course Canvas site under the Files tab.

**Grading**

Essays 160

Class participation 80

Weekly Canvas discussions 50

Office hours visit 10

Total 300

**Essays**

We will be writing two substantial essays over the course of the term. For each, I am more interested in your engagement in the writing process than you coming away with a "perfect" final product. As such, your grade will be largely based on the completion of drafts and participation in peer-review sessions. I will provide more detailed instructions and guidelines for each essay closer to their due dates.

**Class participation**

Because participation is a key element of this course, I thought it would be useful to elaborate on what I mean by "participation." In a nutshell, participation involves being on time for class, constructively taking part in class discussions, engaging with peers during group work and class workshops, listening actively and attentively, reading the required texts for each class, bringing copies of the texts to class, and being able to enter discussions about those texts. Some examples of participation include:

* Asking a classmate or the instructor to elaborate on or clarify a point
* Expanding on a point made by a classmate or the instructor
* Volunteering to lead a discussion
* Connecting a class discussion to a previous reading, discussion, workshop, or lecture

**Weekly Canvas discussions (bellevuecollege.edu/canvas)**

To help prepare for class discussions, we will be using Canvas to help engage with and discuss weekly readings. To help guide these discussions, the instructor will post specific questions to Canvas prior to the start of class, which students are asked to respond to using evidence from the readings. Students are asked to respond in no less than 150 words.

Posts will be graded a scale of 0 to 5; 0 meaning you didn't complete the assignment or didn't answer the question, and 5 meaning you clearly answered the prompt with strong supporting evidence.

Questions will be posted no later than Friday evening, and students will be responsible for responding to them by 11:59pm on Sunday evening. Students are also encouraged to ask questions of each other to help spur the discussion.

**Office hours visit**

Students are asked to meet with the instructor during office hours at least once over the course of the term to check in and discuss how the quarter is going.

**Late work**

Work must be turned in on time. Late work is accepted with a penalty only under special circumstances as determined by the instructor.

The link to the College Grading Policy is located on page 10 of the Course Catalog and also on the web at: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/policies/3/3000_grading.asp>.

**Attendance Policy**

Since *participation is vital for a successful experience*,please *arrive on time for class.*Late arrivals interrupt our in-progress activities and discussions. If you must miss a class session, let the instructor know as soon as possible so that you can make up the work that you miss.