Course Overview

In this class, we will learn to read closely and write critically, and construct clear arguments based on academic texts. We will analyze personal narratives as well as persuasive and argumentative texts. We will discuss what makes texts of both genres personally affecting, thoughtful, and successful. We will use those tools to write our own, original work. By the end of this course you will be able to write a thoughtful essay with a clear and original thesis.

Course Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

• Read and write critically
• Summarize, analyze, and synthesize information from a variety of sources
• Construct persuasive and cohesive essays
• Express ideas—both orally and in writing—coherently and persuasively
• Edit and revise their writing using peer and instructor critiques
• Use appropriate conventions of language, including correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation

Required Materials

1. Freshman Common Reading: Michelle Obama, *Becoming*
2. Course Packet: available online at [https://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/c.php?g=858673&p=6908417](https://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/c.php?g=858673&p=6908417)
3. Grammar resources: Visit the Purdue Online Writing Lab [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/)

Course Expectations

Attendance & Punctuality: Attendance is mandatory. That being said, should you find yourself ill or for whatever reason cannot come to class, please notify me in advance. You are allowed up to 3 excused absences. For the next 2 absences your final grade will be dropped by half a letter. If you miss more than 5 classes, you will not pass the class. Two late arrivals will count as one absence, and a pattern of lateness will affect your grade negatively. Arriving more than 20 minutes late counts as an absence.

Participation & Reading: Discussion is an essential part of this class. Please make every effort to contribute to class discussion, listen and respond to peer review and group activities. Read every text closely and critically. You are expected to come to class having done the reading, and with questions, observations or commentaries. If you find that you have little to nothing to say about a text, chances are you have not read it carefully. Print and bring every assigned reading to class. If you have difficulties accessing technology, notify me in advance and I will bring a copy for you.
Cellphones must be silenced and put away during class.

Assignments:

**Essays & Other Writing:** you will write the following:

- A personal narrative in response to *Becoming* (750-1000 words)
- Two summaries, one in class and one take home (250-500 words)
- an argumentative essay (1000-1250 words)
- a compare and contrast essay (1000-1250 words)

**Final Exam:** English 1010 students must take a final exam. The exam is based on responses to two pieces of writing: one 5-7 page essay, distributed one week before the end of the term, and a second 1-2 page piece, distributed along with the question on the day of the exam. The exam will count for 20% of the final grade for the class. We will discuss this later in the semester.

**LOOP workshop:** All students in English 1010 will complete the required Brooklyn College library orientation, which will introduce them to the services and resources of the library, including access to and ethical use of its print and electronic resources.

**Grading:**

The Brooklyn College policy on grading for English 1010 is as follows:

Grades for English 1010 are: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, NC or F. Note that the minimum passing grade is C-.

Students who have completed all the course work but are not yet writing at the college level will receive a grade of NC; students who have not completed the course work will receive a grade of F.

Students who do not pass English 1010 must repeat it the following semester. The course may not be taken more than three times; students who receive three grades of F, NC and/or WU may be dismissed from the college.

**Grading Breakdown:**

**Essays:** 60%
- Personal Narrative: 10%
- Summaries: 10%
- Argumentative Essay: 20%
- Compare and Contrast: 20%

**Final Exam:** 20%

**Other Assignments:** 10%
- This includes take-home assignments and in-class writing.

**Attendance & Participation:** 10%
- This includes attendance, promptness, participation in class discussions and group work, etc.
Late Work: Essays turned in late will be penalized a letter grade for each class meeting they are late. Late work will not be accepted after one week has passed from the original due date.

If you miss a class during which an essay is to be submitted, you are still responsible for submitting (e-mailing) the essay on the same day AND bringing a hard copy of it the next time you attend class. Otherwise, the assignment will be treated as a late submission. If you do not submit a certain essay, you will receive the grade of F for that essay.

You are required to submit a revised draft unless you receive an A (A-, A, A+) letter grade on your initial essay assignment. If you receive an A on your first submission, the assignment would be optional but you are encouraged to revise. You will not receive a grade lower than the original from revising your essay.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is not tolerated at Brooklyn College and will not be tolerated in this class. If you are found handing in work that you have plagiarized from any source, you will fail the assignment in question, possibly the entire class, and may be subject to disciplinary action by the college. Brooklyn College's statement on plagiarism is as follows:

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site: http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/be/policies.

Non-attendance Because of Religious Beliefs: Please inform me in advance if you plan to be absent due to religious observance. Brooklyn College’s statement on non-attendance because of religious belief is located on page 66 of the Brooklyn College Undergraduate Bulletin: http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/off_registrar/2017-2018_Undergraduate_Bulletin.pdf

Students With Disabilities: In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services, please provide me with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with me.

Office Hours and Writing Help: Please visit me during office hours to discuss any questions or concerns you have regarding your work. You can also email me to set up appointment if you are unable to come during office hours. If you have questions about MLA formatting, including how to properly cite sources, the Brooklyn College Library website is a useful resource: http://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/cite. I also strongly encourage you to visit The Learning Center (http://lc.brooklyn.cuny.edu, 1300 Boylan Hall). It is easy to schedule a session with a writing tutor; writing tutors will help you with the mechanics of essay-writing.
Important Dates:

Monday, September 2  
Last day to add a course

Thursday, September 5  
Conversion Day – Classes follow a Monday Schedule

Tuesday, November 5  
Last day to withdraw from a Fall course with a “W” grade

Friday, December 13  
Reading Day

Saturday, December 14  
Final Examinations Begin

Friday, December 20  
Final Examinations End / End of Fall Semester

NOTE: English 1010 is an Academic Foundations course. Students are not permitted at any time to delete, drop, or withdraw from an assigned Academic Foundations course without obtaining permission of the academic department involved and consulting the Center for Academic Advisement and Student Success.

The full academic calendar, including many other important dates, and the undergraduate final exam “grid” are available on the Office of the Registrar’s website.

Course Schedule (subject to revision)

Week 1:

8/28, course Introduction & syllabus

Weeks 2

9/2, No Class, college closed

9/4, Becoming Part I (Chap. 1-8)

9/5, Becoming Part II (Chap.9-18) & Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, "Real Food"

Week 3

9/9, Becoming Part III & Frederick Douglass, “Learning to Read and Write”

9/11, Ocean Vuong, “A Letter to My Mother That She will Never Read”

Week 4

9/16, First draft of personal narrative due; Discussion on revision

9/18, Lars Eighner, “On Dumpster Diving”
Weeks 5
9/23, Edward Dolnick, “Deafness as culture”
9/25, Take home summary; Jamaica Kincaid, “The Ugly Tourist”

Week 6
9/30 No Class
10/2, Roxane Gay, “Peculiar Benefits”; Second draft of personal narrative due

Week 7
10/7, Rachel Carson, “The Obligation to Endure”;
10/9, No Class

Week 8
10/14, No Class - College Closed
10/16, David Foster Wallace, “Consider the Lobster”

Weeks 9
10/21, First draft of argumentative essay due. Bring 3 copies for peer review
10/23, James Baldwin, “Stranger in the Village”

Week 10
10/28, Teju Cole, “Black Bodies: Rereading James Baldwin’s Stranger in the Village”
10/30, George Saunders, “The Braindead Megaphone”; In class summary

Week 11
11/4, Second draft of argumentative essay due; George Orwell. "Politics and the English language"
11/6, Edwige Danticat, “Another Country”

Week 12
11/11, Cormac Cullinan, “If Nature Had Rights”
11/13, First draft of comparative essay due. Bring 3 copies for peer review

Week 13
11/18, Bill McKibben, “Curbing Nature’s Paparazzi”

11/20, Nicholas Carr, “Is Google Making Us Stupid?: What the Internet is doing to our brains”

**Week 14**

11/25, Final draft of comparative essay due; Mona Eltahawy, “Twitterholics Anonymous”

11/27, In class contrast and contrast essay practice (will hand out prompts)

**Week 15**

12/2, Essays from previous final exams, sample exams

12/4, Exam prep; reading TBD

**Week 16**

12/9, In class discussion on exam grading

12/11, Last Class. Students discuss final exam essay in groups.

* Final Exam – Date & Room TBD *