

English 494EI (Integrative Experience)

WRITING, IDENTITY, AND ENGLISH STUDIES

University of Massachusetts Amherst, Fall 2019

instructor: David Fleming, PhD course meetings: TTh 11:30-12:45 am office: South College W351 course location: South College E241 phone: 545-2972 (office) office hours: W 2:30 - 4:00, Th 1:15 - 2:15, & gladly by appt.

email: dfleming@english.umass.edu class email: english-494ei-01-fal19@courses.umass.edu

online syllabus: <http://people.umass.edu/dfleming/english494EI.html>

class Moodle site: <https://moodle.umass.edu/course/view.php?id=56164>

1. DESCRIPTION. The Integrative Experience (IE) at UMass Amherst is a required, upper-division course meant to help all students here *culminate* their college careers in a productive, intentional way. It asks students to 1) reflect on and integrate all their learning in college, from their major and General Education courses to their electives and extracurricular experiences; 2) further practice key "Gen Ed" objectives, such as oral communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary perspective taking; and 3) begin to apply what they've learned at UMass to new situations, challenging questions, and real world problems. You can read more about the IE here:

<http://www.umass.edu/gened/objectives-designations/curricular-designations/integrative-experience> .

This course is a writing-intensive version of the IE, designed for English majors. Over the course of the semester, you'll use writing both to look back at the work you've done at UMass, in order to learn more about yourself as a writer, scholar, and person, and to look ahead to your future, thinking about applications of your learning to the rest of the world. You'll review your work in English and assess where you are in that discipline, what projects you have found most meaningful and what you'd like to do more of in the future. You'll connect your work in English with the problems, methods, and discourses of some *other* subject you've studied here, thinking about disciplinary intersections. You'll think about how you might apply the knowledge and skills you've acquired in college to problems, communities, and/or organizations in the "real world." And you'll imagine yourself in some job, program, or situation *after* college. Throughout, we'll use the non-fiction personal essay as the focus of our reading and writing. You'll also practice skills of oral presentation and multi-media composing. And, at the end of the semester, you'll collect your work from this course into an online portfolio, showcasing your knowledge, skills, accomplishments, and aspirations.

Learning goals. In this course, you can expect to

- reflect deeply on where you are at this moment in your educational journey, becoming more self-aware about the skills and knowledge you've gained and the gaps still remaining in your education;

Commented [A1]: This portion of the course description articulates for students how they will achieve the IE learning outcomes throughout the course. The course emphasizes reflection from different levels and perspectives, offering students multiple opportunities to reflect upon and integrate their prior learning experiences.

- develop further your reading, writing, speaking, and listening abilities, using the genre of the personal essay both to continue your studies as an English major and to work through this moment in your life; and
- become an active member of our community, exploring together options for the future, practicing skills of presentation and inquiry, and producing at the end a portfolio showcasing your knowledge, abilities, and accomplishments.

2. ASSIGNMENTS. Work in the course will include:

Reading. Reading is important for writers: for inspiration, for modeling, for centering group reflection and discussion. We'll try to do some reading every week, from both professional writers and one another. I'll occasionally ask you to bring in or post a written response to our reading.

Writing. The main work of the course will be your own writing. We'll do a series of projects, all focused on the IE goals of reflection, integration, and application, each project giving you practice in different kinds of thinking, writing, and communicating. Tentatively, we'll undertake the following projects:

1. **self:** in this project, you'll introduce yourself to others in the class by trying to articulate this moment in your life and education, looking back at how you have arrived here and looking ahead to where you want to go next;
2. **major:** in this project, you'll look back at your work in English Studies, reflecting on the projects that have meant the most to you, that you have struggled the most with, that most tellingly point a way forward for you;
3. **college:** in this project, you'll connect your work in English with the problems, methods, and discourses of some *other* subject you've studied here, thinking about disciplinary intersections and roadblocks, possibilities and problems;
4. **community:** in this project, using both research and reflection, you'll imagine how the knowledge and skills you've acquired at UMass Amherst might apply to some problem, organization, or community in the "real world";
5. **life:** in this project, you'll practice presenting yourself – your knowledge, skills, experiences, productions, and aspirations – to prospective employers, graduate programs, or other potential "sponsors" of your future self.

Exercises in oral presentation and multi-media composing. In addition to traditional, print-based reading and writing, we'll also practice public speaking and multi-media & digital composing, doing at least one exercise per project in one of these "other" media.

Obligations to our writing community. We will do much of our reading, writing, speaking, and composing together; and we'll be sharing our work often in class and in other venues. Your sensitive and sympathetic participation in both small group and whole-class discussions and activities (in-person and online) will be crucial!

Commented [A2]: These projects emphasize reflection and integration at different levels and through varying perspectives. Students work outward, from the micro-level of the self out to the macro-level of life. Halfway through these, Project 3 "College" prompts students direct reflection upon their General Education courses and experience at UMass, in tandem with their other major courses and co-curricular activities.

{For more, see the assignments section for the full Project 3 prompt.}

Final portfolio. At the end of the course, in lieu of a final exam, you'll produce an online portfolio of your work from the semester, including as well work from other courses and extracurricular experiences and a reflective introduction about yourself.

3. TEXTS. In addition to readings available as PDFs or links through our Moodle site, there is a required textbook, listed below:

- Hilton Als, ed. *The Best American Essays 2018*. Boston: Mariner, 2018. ISBN 978-0544-81734-0. List \$15.99. Paper. Available for purchase through eCampus.

4. COURSE POLICIES AND GRADES. Please read the following policies carefully and let me know if you have questions about any of them.

Attendance: Regular attendance in this class is important and thus required. If you must miss class for an unavoidable, legitimate reason – serious illness, death in the family, religious observance, etc. – let me know as soon as possible, and remember that you are responsible for any missed work. Beyond one unexcused absence, your final grade will be reduced 1/3 letter grade for each day missed. Coming to class excessively and/or repeatedly late, or turning in work late, may also result in penalties. For campus-wide expectations about attendance, see the University's *Academic Regulations 2019-20* at <http://www.umass.edu/registrar/sites/default/files/academicregs.pdf> .

Classroom Civility and Respect. “The University of Massachusetts Amherst strives to create an environment of academic freedom that fosters the personal and intellectual development of all community members. In order to do this, the University protects the rights of all students, faculty and staff to explore new ideas and to express their views. . . . While the principle of academic freedom protects the expression and exploration of new ideas, it does not protect conduct that is unlawful and disruptive. The University preserves a high standard for members of the community in terms of mutual respect and civility.” For more, see https://www.umass.edu/dean_students/campuspolicies/classroom . For diversity, see <https://www.umass.edu/diversity/resources> .

Academic Honesty Statement. “Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent.” For more information, see <https://www.umass.edu/honesty/> .

Accommodation Statement. “The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), you may be eligible for

reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements. For more information, consult the Disability Services website at <http://www.umass.edu/disability/>."

Final grade. Your final grade for the semester will be based on the following formula:

Exercises (quizzes, posts, presentations, speeches, group projects, etc.)	20%
Writing projects:	60%
Project 1: self	(10%)
Project 2: major	(10%)
Project 3: college	(10%)
Project 4: community	(15%)
Project 5: life	(15%)
Final portfolio	20%
Total	100%

5. CALENDAR. (tentative)

<u>wk</u>	<u>day</u>	<u>topics and assignments</u>
1	T Sept 03	introduction to class; assign project 1: self
	Th Sept 05	invention workshop
2	T Sept 10	first draft project 1 due: peer response
	Th Sept 12	writing workshop
3	T Sept 17	project 1 due; assign project 2: major <i>[Note: Mon., Sept. 16 is the last day to add or drop the class with no record.]</i>
	Th Sept 19	invention workshop
4	T Sept 24	first draft project 2 due: peer response
	Th Sept 26	writing workshop
5	T Oct 01	project 2 due; assign project 3: college

Th Oct 03 invention workshop

6 T Oct 08 first draft project 3 due: peer response

Th Oct 10 writing workshop

7 T Oct 15 No class: Monday schedule followed

Th Oct 17 project 3 due; assign project 4: community

8 T Oct 22 invention workshop

Th Oct 24 speech due

9 T Oct 29 speeches, cont'd
[Note: Tues., Oct. 29 is the last day to drop with a "W."]

Th Oct 31 first draft project 4 due: peer response

10 T Nov 05 writing workshop

Th Nov 07 project 4 due; assign project 5: life

11 T Nov 12 invention workshop

Th Nov 14 field work

12 T Nov 19 first draft project 5 due: peer response

Th Nov 21 writing workshop

13 11/24 - 12/1 No classes: Thanksgiving

14 T Dec 03 project 5 due; assign final portfolio

Th Dec 05 portfolio presentations

15 T Dec 10 last day of class; portfolio presentations

F Dec 13 final portfolio due