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English 103 Proposal

Fondness and Fanaticism: The Many Forms of Devotion

Blurb: Do our identities come from the things we love? This class is designed to have students investigate the formation of individual identity in relation to the thing or things a person loves and values.

Course Description: What does it mean to devote oneself? Why are some forms of devotion sanctified while others are dismissed? This class is designed to have students investigate the formation of individual identity in relation to the thing or things a person loves and values. Do our identities come from the things we love? Some people love the south. Some people love their spouse or partner. Some people love Alabama. What do these “loves” mean? Although the connection between the two major texts in this class (Warren St. John’s *Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer* and Paul Monette’s *Borrowed Time*) might not seem readily apparent, both texts deal with the notion of devotion and how one’s identity is inextricably tied to the things that one invests themselves in. For St. John, his focus is being a fan of The University of Alabama football team. For Paul Monette, it’s his love for his partner Rog. Students will look at these and other texts to analyze the relationship between an individual’s identity and their respective devotions.

Goals: This class is intended to have students focus on the three essential aspects to becoming a better writer: reading, research and writing. To this end, this class will concentrate on rhetorical theory in order to have students foster an understanding of their role as creators and consumers of culture. In addition, students will develop a strong understanding of the rhetorical triangle, the Toulmin model of Argumentation, and the roles they play as author and audience. Students will also develop an understanding of themselves as participants in academic writing for the extended college community. After completing this course, students will be able to:

- understand and use the writing/revision process as tools for analyzing topics and evaluating their own writing;
- revise their work with attention to purpose, development, style, grammar, punctuation, and spelling;
- collaborate productively with their peers and instructor;
- use a variety of rhetorical strategies and processes of analyzing;
- use writing strategies and processes to write for different audiences and purposes;
- understand their part in the university discourse community and how its written conventions operate;
- understand and apply the principles of formal argumentation in their writing;
- locate, evaluate, and synthesize source material in order to write extended papers incorporating source material;
- use at least one citation format correctly and understand that there are different formats for different disciplines;

- summarize, paraphrase, and quote source material accurately and ethically;
- reflect on their own development as writers.

Possible Texts:

Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer: A Road Trip in to the Heart of Fan Mania

By Warren St. John

Borrowed Time: An Aids Memoir by Paul Monette

A Brief Guide to Writing Academic Argument, Stephen W. Wilhoit

A Writer's Reference, Diana Hacker

Possible Films:

Catfish

Possible Writing Assignments:

Definition Essay – What does it mean to be a fan?

Rhetorical Analysis – Selected essays on Identity Formation

Evaluation Analysis – A Comparison essay of some aspect of the two major texts

Research Paper – This essay will ask students to analyze their own interests/devotions to help guide and structure their paper topics. Such topics could range from proposal arguments looking at local Alabama issues to health and science concerns on the national level.

Final – Movie Review of *Catfish*

Journal Entries

Computer Technologies:

E-Learning: Students will submit 10 journal responses throughout the semester. These responses are intended to have students reflect upon the texts we read. Some of the journals will be made public to the entire class (as discussion threads) so that students can share their ideas with each other (in a sense "publish" themselves) and respond to the observations of the other students in an organic fashion.