



WRITING FOR MEDIA
LITERARY MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS
DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF ARTS

MR.OYEDEJI (ROOM EIGHTEEN)

WE WELCOME YOU TO THE DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS LITERARY MEDIA and COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT, WHERE OUR MISSION IS:

The Literary Media and Communications Department's (LMC) goal is singular, to train its student in the different strands of communication (written, verbal and new media), considering how this translates to the marketplace. This department necessitates interdisciplinarity, including, but not limited to LMC, Theater, Museum Studies, Visual Arts, and TDP (recording studio). Our aim is to dismantle the sometimes self-indulgent, and strictly cathartic workshop model of writing and leave in its place a department that imparts to its students the notion that they are writing to work, rather than just writing to write. The department has five strands, that are product driven, products that range from performance, to print, archival, to design, research to debate, and within the strands, culminating work both within the Duke Ellington School of the Arts (copy and content for the Ellington website, developing archives of Ellington work, creating script in the areas of performance/performance marketing, writing copy and public service announcements, serving as viable extension/support mechanism of and for Ellington Fund, to name a few), and outside the context of the school.

Strand One – Research, Public Speaking, Speech, and Debate (within this formation of an interdisciplinary, Ellington Debate team that competes within the District of Columbia, eventually, nationally) —this discipline would encompass LMC, Museum Studies, and Theater

Strand Two – Dramatic Writing and the Construction and Understanding of Character —this discipline would encompass LMC and Theater

Strand Three – Magazine, Newspaper, and Online (borrowed from Syracuse Graduate Program in New Media studies), in addition to serving as the magazine, print and online face of Ellington, this strand could also liaison/serve the parent community through blogs, and work in conjunction with Ellington Fund to market and deliver Ellington brand to outside/funding communities –this discipline would encompass LMC, Museum Studies, and Visual Arts

Strand Four – Film and New Media, in addition to the screenwriting component, this strand could serve as the archiving entity for Ellington, pod casting that would complement strand three and also in conjunction with branding for the institution/Ellington Fund. Additionally copy/psa writing/content writing across discipline—this strand would encompass LMC, Museum Studies, and TDP, Theater

Strand Five – Internship (across discipline)

Writing for Media

Tutor: Mr. Koye Oyedeji

Room: 18

Contact: phone- 202 282 0123 ext 2645; email- koyeoyedeji@gmail.com

Course Description

Students will examine the principles of writing, from grammar to composition. Students will then learn the technical approaches to writing through while working along two strands: the theoretical approach, and the workshop approach.

The course will consist of a series of seminars written assignments of which essays and non-fiction writing will emerge. To compliment this, students will have a series of workshops and practical exercises, designed to be a fun alternative to exploring their writing.

UNIT ONE

1. THEORY: PRE-WRITING

Steps to prepare you for writing essays and general non-fiction

- Combating Procrastination
- Preparing ideas and learning how to effectively communicate ideas
- The Burden of Communicating Thoughts: Writing for a reader, communicating opinions clearly and persuasively
- Time management
- Creative the writing environment: Finding the space in which to write
- Choosing your subject, purpose and focus, exploring primer techniques
- Identifying your audience

2. THEORY: THESIS STATEMENT

- Understanding what a thesis is and how it works for you
- Guidelines for writing a good thesis
- Avoiding common errors in Thesis Statements
- Outlining an Essay Map

3. THEORY: THE BODY OF AN ESSAY

- Planning the body of your essay
- Paragraph Development
- Paragraph Unity and Transitions

WORKSHOP STRAND:

1. WRITING EXERCISES

2. PROJECT: Project: Me (The Reinvention of the American Teenager)

3. BOOK STUDY: William Strunk Jr & E.B. White, *The Elements Of Style*

UNIT TWO

THEORY: WRITING THE INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSIONS

- Writing a good lead-in & avoiding common errors
- Writing a good concluding paragraph
- Finalizing a good essay title

THEORY: DRAFTING AND REVISION

- Understanding Revision
- Preparing to redraft
- The revision process
- Developing critical thought
- Proof reading
- Final Checklist for your Essay

WORKSHOP STRAND:

1. WRITING EXERCISES

2. PROJECT: Project: Me (The Reinvention of the American Teenager)
3. BOOK STUDY: Grammar Girl's Quick & Dirty Tips for Better Writing and Ultimate Writing Guide for Students

UNIT THREE

THEORY: CONTENT – CREATING EFFECTIVE SENTENCES

- Sentence Content / Specification
- Word Order/ Constructions and Predications
- Avoiding redundancies and passive verbs
- Specificity and precise modifiers

THEORY: WORD LOGIC

- Using the appropriate word
- Understanding idiomatic phrases
- The use of formal, informal and colloquial language
- Understanding vague nouns, vague verbs and vague modifiers

WORKSHOP STRAND:

1. WRITING EXERCISES

2. PROJECT: The Invisible Man – A Literary Installation

3. BOOK STUDY: *Rick Bragg, Somebody Told Me: The Newspaper Stories of Rick Bragg*

UNIT FOUR

THEORY: UNDERSTANDING THE READER–WRITER CONNECTION

- Developing a critical eye
- Becoming an analytical reader

WORKSHOP STRAND:

1. WRITING EXERCISES

2. PROJECT: The Invisible Man – A Literary Installation

3. BOOK STUDY: Junot Diaz, *Drown*

Projects

Project: Me (The Reinvention of the American Teenager)

Through a series of exercises, workshops, discussions and lectures, students will consider race, culture, gender and identity as they move towards making an attempt to define themselves as American Teenagers. Students will consider the role that media, peers and adults play in attaching labels to youth.

The Invisible Man – A Literary Installation

Students will study the introduction to Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and participate in a series of workshops and writing exercises based on what they read. As a group project students will then recreate a literary installation of the *Invisible Man*'s living quarters, bringing together their written work with a visual representation of their ideas.

The installation will be housed in the corner of Room 18.



COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Signed agreements – Class Rules, Student Information and Agreement to acquire key texts (Return of agreements goes towards Classroom Participation and Quality of contribution grading, failure to return agreements leads to deduction.)
- Current functioning e-mail address.
- Students must have a flash drive.
- Students must contribute to the class by way of verbal communication.
- Computer, Printer and Internet accessibility outside of Duke Ellington School to dialogue with instructor on ways to improve work and presentations.
- Respect for the works and classroom contributions of others and the willingness to learn how to critique constructively.
- Attendance and promptness are essential for all classes.
- Timely completion and submission of assignments, late work will not be accepted and student will be marked as failed assignment.
- Maintenance of course notebook in compliance with periodic notebook checks.
- Regular and comprehensive note-taking

THE USE / CHARGING OF CELL PHONES WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN CLASS; ANY PHONES VISIBLY SEEN SHALL BE CONFISCATED AND DELIVERED TO FATHER PAYNE FOR COLLECTION.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Binder with college-ruled paper
Suitable portfolio case
Writing instruments
Notebook

GRADING

Students will be graded in three primary areas:

- Classroom Participation and Quality of Contribution/Return of written agreements.
- Writing Assignments.
- Final Portfolio.

Standards

- Discussion
- Questioning, Listening, and Contributing
- Oral Presentation
- Vocabulary Development
- Text – Expository, Document and Procedural Text, Argument and Persuasive Text
- Connections
- Genre, Theme
- Fiction, Literary Nonfiction
- Poetry
- Drama
- Style and Literature
- Traditional Narrative
- Imaginative/Narrative Writing
- Revision

Methodology

The course utilizes the “Triangle Method,” a methodology of learning. The methodology references the triangle as a shape, in that all sides of a triangle are equal and equidistant, and in this methodology the sides are Character/Context, Compassion, and Citizen. The “Triangle Method” does this because it is our contention that we need to produce students who understand that knowledge, language, information, indeed art, are not privileged spaces. The idea, within the “Triangle Method” is that the student makes no decision about which part of learning, which part of the “Triangle” is more important, but rather how each, in concert, produces lifelong learners.

A Note on Grading: For Students and Parents

A grade is final. I will not change grades on the result of a discussion. I am available to discuss any concerns that you might have, but will not be able to change the grade for any work submitted and marked.

A Note on Absence and Tardiness

You will be marked tardy if you fail to show up in class before the bell rings.

It is important to note that the school has implemented a policy whereby **five unexcused instances of tardiness equal an absence** per advisory. Five unexcused absences from a class in any single advisory will **result in automatic failure of that class** regardless of the level of work submitted. **This is an automatic process that takes place on our administration system. As teachers we are in no position to overturn this process/grade.**

Five unexcused tardiness = 1 absence.

Five unexcused absences = failure.

LMC Code of Conduct Policy

In the Literary Media & Communications Department we believe in holding our students to a very high standard of conduct. It is our belief that an early understanding of how you are expected to carry yourself in the working world will instill a valuable set of tools; soft skills that will serve you well for years to come.

In light of this we have created a simple code of conduct and grievance procedure that will enable both faculty and students alike to maintain a professional learning environment.

We expect students, faculty and guests:

- To be respectful of one another, and to carry themselves with both intelligence and humility.

We expect students:

- To dress appropriately.
- To hand in completed assignments on time. Late and incomplete work is unacceptable.
- Absence and tardiness will not be tolerated.
- Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
- Poor participation will not be tolerated.
- To respect the individual classroom rules of all teachers, both arts and academics (For example, no food and drink around the computer equipment in the lab).

Students who fail to comply with the above will be subject to a penalty scoring system:

Five-Point Penalty System

There will be two soft warning before a student accumulates their first penalty point.

1pt: Mediation and possible detention.

2pts: Parent contacted.

3pts: Parent/Teacher conference with Chair.

4pts: Student placed on probation list, consultation with Father Payne.

5pts: Student is placed on Transfer list.

LMC Grievance Procedure

We believe that students are entitled to a voice and want to give them that space to air any concerns they might have. However we believe it's important that students express their grievances in the correct manner, to ensure that there is no conflict and that their complaints are both heard and handled appropriately.

We believe that this formal procedure will help create a healthy environment in which to learn, as well as eliminate any potential conflict and miscommunication.

Complaint with Member of Staff

If a student believes they have a concern or complaint with a member of staff, we ask that students not confront that person but rather, in the first instance, seek out another member of staff in the department. That member of staff will act as a mediator to resolve any dispute.

If they feel as if their grievance has not been resolved at that first stage, students have the recourse to then put their complaint into writing and discuss the issue with the department Chair.

We do believe we can resolve most disputes internally in a professional manner and will work hard to achieve this, however if students still feel as if the matter has not been tackled to their satisfaction, it is within their right to:

- Request a parent / teacher conference with Chair present
- Put their concerns into writing to the Dean of Arts / Dean of Students
- Put their concerns into writing to the Principal.

Complaint with Fellow Student

If a student believes they have a concern or complaint with a fellow student, again, we ask that you do not confront that student. You should seek out a member of staff who will in the first instance attempt to mediate on your behalf. If the complaint cannot be resolved at this stage, students have the right to follow the same steps they would take with a staff grievance.