COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this course on college writing you’ll develop critical thinking abilities, increase your rhetorical strategies, practice writing processes, and learn textual conventions. Includes formal and informal writing, responding to a variety of readings, sharing writing with other students, reflecting on writing, and revising individual pieces for a final portfolio of work. Our theme for the course will be dreams and inward journeys, so we’ll be focusing on ways that writing draws on the dreams, symbols, and images of the unconscious mind. Our class will run as a workshop in which you’ll be collaborating with other students throughout phases of both your and their writing processes.

COURSE MATERIALS:

*Dreams and Inward Journeys, 4th ed*, by Marjorie Ford and Jon Ford, available at PSU bookstore

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

In this course we’re going to be exploring some new approaches to writing and looking at our own writing in depth, so I want you to be free to take some risks with your work. Therefore, I won’t grade your papers separately. Instead, at the end of the course you’ll give me a portfolio of your best writing, process, and participation work, which will be worth 60% of your total course grade. Rough and final drafts, however, will be done periodically throughout the course, and along with other process work, will be worth 20% of your grade. You’ll receive commentary from your colleagues on rough versions and from me on final versions. All drafts—rough and final—must be completed and turned in on time. You’ll meet with me at mid-term to discuss your progress in the course. During the last weeks of the quarter, I’ll give you time to work in class on revising papers a third time before they go into your portfolio.

In addition to completing three formal papers with reflective memos, you will need to read and come to class prepared to discuss material from assigned readings, and to provide thorough commentary on the work of group members. All three papers must be completed in order to pass the course. Drafts should be typed. Each final paper should be placed in a folder along with your invention work and evidence of participation. SAVE EVERYTHING. DON’T THROW ANYTHING AWAY.
WORK:

Final Portfolio (60%): Consists of your best work, including the whole paper tail of drafts, invention work, group commentary, and final reflective letter.

Process Work (20%): Informal writing done towards an assignment, including reflective memos for each draft. Rough and final drafts complete and turned in on time. Plan on writing extensively for each paper. Some of what you wrote will be work I will assign to stimulate thinking about your topic and to focus workshop activities. In addition, you’ll want to do invention work of your own or your workshop group’s devising, such as trees, maps, and freewrites that help you develop your ideas. Your invention work should be placed in a folder and turned in with each of your papers. It does not need to be typed.

Participation (20%): Consists of participating in class discussions, workshop activities, and a conference with me—showing up for class prepared, contributing oral and written comments on the work of others, getting drafts and invention work in for conferences on time, various group and individual presentations, and the results of your group evaluation of your contribution to its success.

A word to the wise: This is not the kind of writing course in which only final texts of papers count towards your grade. Forty percent of your grade in this process/workshop writing class is determined by process work and participation, both of which require you to do two things—show up for class and show up prepared. You will torpedo your grade if you try to get by without coming to class regularly. If you must miss a class, let me know in advance, if possible, so that we can rearrange deadlines.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Paper #1 (3-4 typed pages): Describe your own writing processes with reference to the accounts of writing processes we are reading.

Paper #2 (4-5 typed pages): Write about a favorite childhood story from the perspectives of both child and adult using the theories of myth and fairy tale we are reading.

Paper #3 (4-5 typed pages): Write a dialogue on an issue about which you are of two minds. Let your “self” and “anti-self” converse on the subject.

GRADING:

Final Portfolio:

B: Final portfolio satisfactory quality; in participation, depth and thoroughness in your contribution to your workshop group and the class; keeping up with the class by not missing workshops and one-on-one conferences with you; doing all process work, including invention, preliminary drafts and final portfolio complete, developed, and turned in on time.
A: Everything you need for a B; final portfolio of excellent quality; evidence of working with rhetorical issues through different assignments.

C: A mix of satisfactory and unsatisfactory quality of the portfolio, participation, and process work; meeting the minimum requirements.

D/F: Portfolio, participation, process work of unsatisfactory quality; not meeting the minimum requirements.

Informal Writing/Process Work:

I’ll skim through to get a sense of length and depth. Then I’ll sample a few entries to get some idea of the thoroughness of your responses. You may want to include a note if they have any particular piece you would like for me to see and comment on, or, if there is something you would rather I didn’t see.

A: Exceptionally thorough, imaginative, thoughtful work. All assignments completed.
B: Good work, above and beyond satisfying the basic requirements
C: All assignments complete, acceptable work
D: Some assignments complete
F: Few or no assignments complete

Participation:

The grade of C means showing up and doing the minimum to get by. Grades below C indicate you have missed workshops and conferences, not provided a minimum contribution to your group and the class. Grades of A and B indicate depth and thoroughness in your contribution to your group and the class.

OTHER POLICIES:

I hate to be a stickler for rules, but we all need to agree to the following for the class to work:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism means misrepresenting as your own work any part of work done by another or submitting the same paper or substantially similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of all instructors concerned. It is a serious offense that is grounds for failure. It is not worth the risk.

Attendance: Regular attendance is expected. You are allowed two absences in case of illness or emergency, but with over one week’s worth of absences, your grade may be lowered; with over two weeks’ worth, you may fail the course. If you absolutely must miss class, contact me ahead of time to rearrange deadlines and be aware that you are responsible for completing missed assignments. If you know you’ll need to miss class in order to perform at PSU athletic or cultural events or for religious observances, let me know during the first week of class.
Late Work Policy: You must turn in all work on time (including rough and final drafts, reflective memos, comments on the work of others, etc). I reserve the right to lower grades one grade per day for late work.

Incompletes: In order to pass the course, you must complete all the assigned papers and must turn in your final portfolio. I rarely give Incompletes, and will only do so in special cases.

Learning Disabilities: Be sure to let me know the first week of class if you have any documented learning disabilities for which you need any special provisions to help you in this class.

TENTATIVE WRITING DUE DATES:

This gives a rough overview of workshop and workshop due dates. Specifics will change as we go along. You need to be responsible for changes that we make as we go along.

Tues 10/1: Introduction
Thurs 10/3

Tues 10/8
Thurs 10/10 RD #1 due; mock workshop

Tues 10/15 Workshop # 1
Thurs 10/17 FD # 1 & process/participation work due

Tues 10/22
Thurs 10/24

Tues 10/29 RD # 2 due; Mid-term conference with me
Thurs 10/31 Workshop # 2

Tues 11/5 FD # 2 & process/participation work due
Thurs 11/7

Tues 11/12
Thurs 11/14

Tues 11/19 RD #3 due
Thurs 11/21 Workshop # 3

Tues 11/26 FD # 3 due; Final Portfolio Workshop
Thurs 11/28 Happy Thanksgiving Holiday!!

Tues 12/3
Thurs 11/5 Wrap-Up; Final Portfolios due