1. **What does it mean to be “normal”?**

How do we decide something is (or is not) “normal”? What’s your personal “normal,” and what strengths does it offer you? When you know your “normal,” how can you use it to learn more about other people’s personal “normal”s – and see the world differently as a result?

This semester, we’ll explore these questions in the texts we read, the music we listen to, the videos we watch, and the activities we’ll try. You’ll also be asked to explore them in different ways through writing in four major genres: the personal narrative, persuasive writing, research writing, and a genre of your choice.

Asking “what does it mean to be ‘normal’?” will require us to talk about what we view in ourselves as “normal” – and, by extension, what we view as “not-normal.” As someone with multiple disabilities, I understand that disclosing what is “not-normal” about oneself can be difficult.

Therefore, this class will follow the Vegas Rule: “What happens in the 1050 classroom stays in the 1050 classroom.” You may talk about your own participation, but you may **not** “out” a classmate without that classmate’s permission. If you prefer not to “out” yourself in class on any topic, you may frame your experiences in the third person (“I have a friend who….”).

**Speaking of disabilities:** If you need accommodations in order to access any of the class materials or activities, talk to me after class or send me an email as soon as possible. Although **you do not need to be registered with Disability Services in order to request help with access,** if you have a documented disability, you may find it helpful to work with Disability Services in addition to speaking to me about this class.

2. **What do I need for this class?**

You will need:

- **Books and Print Materials**
  - A notebook with at least 60 pages (your choice).
  - $5 copy fee card (available from the bookstore). I will **not post your Project 1 grade until I have your copy card.**

- **Technology**
  - Computer access – your own, or any computer lab on campus
  - A flash drive with a **minimum** of 2 GB storage space. **Back up all your work to your flash drive as you write.**
  - eLearning access and familiarity. If you’re not currently familiar with eLearning, start exploring it **immediately.** We’ll use eLearning extensively this semester.
  - Email. I use your wmich.edu email to communicate with you about class. **Check it daily.**
3. **I am serious about earning an A in this class. Where should I focus my effort to make that happen?**

Your grade breaks down into four major categories:

**The Four Big Projects: 50 percent.** These include:

- **Project 1: Personal Narrative.** This assignment asks you to explore an ordinary day in your life in an unusual way.
- **Project 2: Persuasive and Public Writing.** In this assignment, you’ll write a letter to the editor, using your best persuasive techniques to make your case.
- **Project 3: Research Essay.** In the research essay, you’ll expand your persuasive piece into a full-length research paper, complete with facts, citations, and research-paper formatting.
- **Project 4: Unfamiliar Genre.** This is the final project. You’ll explore something you’ve learned about what “normal” means, picking a genre unfamiliar to you in order to tell your story.

**The Five Out-of-Class Activities: 20 percent.** Throughout the semester, you’ll have five opportunities to explore the question of “normal” outside of class. You are required to write **four** of the five papers. If you write all five, I will count the lowest-scoring paper of the five as extra credit points.

**Participation: 20 percent.** Participation includes being mentally and physically present in class and giving every activity and assignment your best effort. See “3. What if I miss a class?”, below.

**Presentation: 10 percent.** During our last week of class, you’ll give a short presentation on **any one** paper you’ve written during the semester. You may choose one of the four “big” projects or one of the five out-of-class activities to present on. There is no final exam in this class.

At the end of the semester, I add up these categories, calculate the percentage of total class points you’ve earned, and assign a letter grade according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: 93-100%</th>
<th>C: 73-75.99%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BA: 87-92.99%</td>
<td>DC: 65-73.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: 83-86.99%</td>
<td>D: 60-66.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CB: 76-82.99%</td>
<td>F: Below 60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **What if I miss a class?**

Here’s what you should do if you miss class:

- **Check eLearning.** All class materials – slides, handouts, and readings – are posted to eLearning.
- **Do the “daily journal” writing listed in the slides for the day you missed and email it to me.** You may earn back up to **half** the participation points for the day you missed by sending me this journaling assignment within 48 hours of the missed class date.

**I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.** Whether you are out sick or choose to skip, your classmates and I miss out on the benefit of your contributions to class when you are not here. **The only way to regain any** participation points for days missed is to do the journal writing, as described above.

It is also possible to lose participation points even if your body is in the classroom. Sleeping, excessive lateness, getting lost in your cell phone, or being unprepared for class will cost you participation points. Remember, “participation” requires you to be mentally here as well as physically here.
If an extended illness or other emergency forces you to miss several days of class, please email me as soon as possible so we can make arrangements to keep you caught up on work. Waiting until the crisis has passed is a bad idea – your make-up workload will be tougher, and due dates will be less flexible.

If you miss multiple classes or appear to be at risk of failing this class, I will report my concerns to the WMU registrar’s office. The registrar may contact your residence hall director, resident assistant, or other student support person at the university.

5. What happens if I turn in an assignment late?

I deduct ten percent per day for late work. Even if you miss a due date, it is better to turn in your work late than not to turn it in at all.

6. Where do I find the handouts from class? How do I turn in my work?

All the handouts, slides, and assignment sheets for this class will be posted on eLearning, and you can review and download them at any time. It is your responsibility to ensure your work is uploaded to eLearning on time, in the right format, and in the correct folder. Work that is in the wrong format or is not in the correct folder will not be graded. Always double-check to make sure your work uploaded correctly – don’t trust the confirmation email!

Upload work in .doc, .pdf, .rtf, or .txt formats only.

Homework, rough drafts, and final projects are due by midnight on the due date (i.e., before the next day begins).

7. Can I rewrite any of my papers for this class?

You may rewrite any or all of the papers for this class. If you want to rewrite, email me to schedule a one-on-one meeting, so we can talk about where your rewrite should focus. We will also set a deadline for your rewrite at that meeting. I will not accept a rewrite unless you meet with me one on one first.

Rewrites can bring your grade up, but not down. If for some reason your rewrite scores lower than your original paper, your original grade is the one you will keep.


You may bring food and drinks to class. Keep cell phones silent and out of sight during class. If I see your cell phone during class time, you will lose your participation points for the class. Do not let your personal items distract me or your classmates.

9. What is plagiarism, and how do I avoid it?

Western Michigan University defines “plagiarism” as “intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one’s own (i.e. without proper acknowledgement of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the ideas, information, etc. are common knowledge.” This semester, we’ll talk about WMU’s plagiarism policy and what it means for your college career.
Read the academic honesty policy here: [http://www.wmich.edu/conduct/academichonesty/definitionsofviolations.html](http://www.wmich.edu/conduct/academichonesty/definitionsofviolations.html). Spend time thinking about it. The University and your professors will expect you to know what the policies say.

If you’re not sure whether something “counts” as plagiarism or academic dishonesty, ask me before you turn in the assignment. It is much better to ask than to face the consequences of an academic dishonesty charge.

10. How will I know if class is canceled?

If class is canceled for any reason, I will e-mail you as far in advance as possible. Check your e-mail before you come to class.

11. I need disability accommodations, and/or I have other concerns that might affect my ability to keep up with this class. What should I do?

Come talk to me or send me an email! As I mentioned above, you do not have to be registered with disability services to discuss your access needs.

If you have questions about campus disability policies or services, these offices might be able to help:

- **Disabled Student Resources and Services (DSRS),** 387-2116. DSRS offers help with documented disabilities, including learning disabilities. They can also help you figure out what you need.
- **The Office of Services for Students With Learning Disabilities (OSSLD),** 387-4411. OSSLD serves students who have documented learning disabilities and related emotional issues.
- **The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE),** 387-8880. OIE handles legal issues related to disability law and services.

12. I have a question!

You are always welcome to email me with questions about class work. However, be aware that if a question is answered on the syllabus or in the class materials posted on eLearning, I will not answer it. Save your valuable time by checking the syllabus and class materials before you email me.

13. (Tentative) SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS FOR ENGLISH 1050

(If the schedule changes, I will upload an updated version to eLearning.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week 1   | **01** What is “normal”?  
HOMEWORK: Bring your copy card to class on Thursday. Start reading Bartleby. | **02** Useful skills for 1050: close reading, perspective-taking.  
HOMEWORK: Finish reading Bartleby. Bring Bartleby to class on Tuesday. |
| Week 2   | **03** Using sensory details in writing. Intro to Project 1.  
DUE: SHORT PAPER #1.  
HOMEWORK: Read “Hills Like White Elephants,” by Ernest Hemingway. |
| Week 3 | 05 Dialogue that isn’t: nonverbal and “no” dialogues. Narrative structure.
| HOMEWORK: Bring what you’ll need to work on Project 1 in class on Thursday. | 06 Project 1 in-class work day.
DUE: PROJECT 1 Rough Draft. |
| Week 4 | 07 Project 1 Peer Review. Intro to Project 2.
HOMEWORK: Work on Project 1, Short Paper #2. | 08 Choosing a topic and structuring the letter.
DUE: Project 1 Final Draft.
HOMEWORK: Read Kassiane Sibley, “Walking in My Shoes” |
| Week 5 | 09 Considering opposing viewpoints.
HOMEWORK: Work on Short Paper #2. | 10 The art of negotiation.
DUE: Short Paper #2.
HOMEWORK: Bring what you’ll need to work on Project 2 to class on Tuesday. |
| Week 6 | 11 Project 2 in-class work day.
DUE: Project 2 Rough Draft. | 12 Project 2 peer review day. Intro to revision and expansion workshop.
HOMEWORK: Bring the piece you plan to revise and expand in class on Tuesday.
Read “Shitty First Drafts,” by Anne Lamott. |
| Week 7 | 13 Revision and expansion workshop.
HOMEWORK: Work on Short Paper #3. | 14 Intro to Project 3: How to expand your arguments and where to start looking.
DUE: Revised paper.
HOMEWORK: Work on Short Paper #3. |
| Week 8 | 15 Citations and annotations.
DUE: Short Paper #3. | 16 Plagiarism, thesis statements, outlines.
HOMEWORK: Over break, work on your annotated bibliography and outline. |
| **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES** | | |
| Week 9 | 17 Writing the research paper.
HOMEWORK: Bring what you’ll need to work on Project 3 in class on Thursday. | 18 Project 3 in-class work day.
DUE: Project 3 Rough Draft.
| Week 10 | 19 Project 3 peer review day. | 20 Intro to Project 4.
HOMEWORK: Listen to John Cage, 4’33”, and Jimi Hendrix, “The Star-Spangled Banner” |
| Week 11 | 21 What’s “normal” in a genre?
DUE: Project 3 Final Draft.
HOMEWORK: Read Luna Lindsey, “Meltdown in Freezer Three” |
| Week 12 | 23 Incorporating perspective and “your (not-) normal” into unfamiliar genres. World-building. | 24 One more genre: the presentation.
DUE: Short Paper #5.
HOMEWORK: Bring what you’ll need to work on Project 4 and/or your presentation to class on Tuesday. |
| Week 13 | 25 Project 4 work day, peer review.
DUE: Project 4 Rough Draft. | 26 In-class presentations. |
| Week 14 | 27 In-class presentations. | 28 In-class presentations. |

Final Exam Week. We DO NOT meet as a class during the scheduled exam period.
Final grades will be posted May 2, 2015.