Trajectory of an Assignment

Draft two due.
Class Workshop: Style.
Meet with Professor.

Draft three due
in Portfolio.
Student writes
reflection.

Draft one due.
Class Workshop:
Structure of a paper.
Meet with Peer
Writing Tutor.

Assign paper.
Discuss choice
of topics.

Pre paper:
on-line &
class
discussions

First paper: *Northanger Abbey*

FYSE 1144   **Jane Austen & Film**

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Fri.   9/15   workshop-paper #1 due (3 copies)
Write a well-organized, well-argued **three-page paper** on *Northanger Abbey* using one of the topics below. Your paper should have a coherent thesis statement that you support with specific references to the text. Do not use secondary sources for this paper.   .
Bring three copies of your paper to class Friday, and upload your paper on our SEGUE site.

1. One of the main problems Catherine Morland faces in Northanger Abbey is the difficulty of knowing the truth. The ability characters have to see, imagine, perceive, remember, understand and interpret often is linked with their chances for happiness. In Northanger Abbey, discuss the problem of knowing and the effects this problem has on Catherine. You might find it helpful to consider how and by whom she has been educated and whether her education has helped or hindered her ability to know, perceive, imagine, interpret, remember or understand.

2. Jane Austen does not use a first person narrator in her novels; yet, as readers we are often intimately acquainted with the inner workings of her heroines' minds. Even so, Austen often chooses to put distance between her heroines and ourselves by pulling herself back from these heroines and allowing us to look at them fairly objectively. How does she achieve this? In Northanger Abbey, investigate the role of the narrator. How does Austen move us into and out of the heroine's mind? When and why does she address her readers directly? What is the effect of Austen's style or narration on our involvement with Catherine?

3. Jane Austen's use of language, particularly her use of irony, distinguishes her from her contemporaries. Choose one passage in Northanger Abbey (1 or 2 paragraphs or about a half page of dialogue), and demonstrate how Austen's use of language, her choice of particular words, her juxtaposition of unexpected phrases and use of humor and irony convey her true meaning to the reader, or, consider the language used by and about any one character. How does the language used by or about that character reveal that character to the reader?

- **Papers are due at the beginning of class. Avoid computer crises by printing out the night before a paper is due and by uploading your paper on Segue by midnight.**
- **Pay close attention to due dates and to special instructions, such as the number of copies of your paper to bring to class.**
- **Papers should be double-spaced and printed in a 12 pt font.**
- **Do not ask for an extension on a paper or miss a workshop unless you or a member of your immediate family is hospitalized.**

INTRO paragraph should hook the reader's interest-does it?
Write thesis statement here:

THESIS STATEMENT

- Establishes a *boundary* around the subject that keeps the writer from wandering from the subject--**about this--not about that.**
- Can chart an *orderly course* for the paper and make it easier to write--not just about this--but **HOW** it is--about this.
- Gives the reader an idea of what to *expect*, makes it **easier for the reader to follow.**

All topic sentences should relate to the thesis statement.

TOPIC SENTENCE

evidence- <-

evidence- <-

evidence- <-

analysis <-

Does the next paragraph build directly on the one before?

How?

TOPIC SENTENCE

evidence- <-

evidence- <-

evidence- <-

analysis <-

Does the next paragraph build directly on the one before?

How?
Repeat for every paragraph

Date: Paper Title:

Post Paper:
Revision/review/editing/conferencing/reflection (Rhetorical Concern #7)
Editor:_____**Writer:**_____

Does the next paragraph build directly on the one before?   How?

Reviewing the paper-- THESIS STATEMENT: _____
TOPIC SENTENCES--List all

Concluding paragraph

1) should develop from thesis statement, does it?

2) should build on the information/ideas in topic sentences, does it? Show how.

3) should take the reader one step further, does it? Show how.

Make further suggestions for improvement here:

Date: Paper Title:

Keep in mind the following as you move from draft two to draft three:

1. To make your writing stronger, try to eliminate constructions that begin *It is*, *This is*, *There is*, unless *This* or *It* refers to a specific noun or pronoun.

How would you change the following sentence?
It is only then that she begins to read the basic novel, and the heart of her socializing **was** always done in the company of her newfound friend.

_____

_____

2. Make your subject do the action. Use the active voice, and avoid using the passive voice whenever possible.

How would you change the following sentence?
However if her actions **are truly analyzed** almost everything she says turns out to be a white lie or a device to draw attention to herself.

_____

_____

How would you change the following sentence?
Instead, she **could always be found** playing cricket as rough as any boys, or painting her face with mud instead of make-up.

_____

_____

3. Make your verbs carry the action. Avoid the use of nominalizations (nouns derived from verbs or adjectives).

How would you change the following sentence?
Mrs. Allen is a minor character who doesn't receive much **description** or **analysis** by Jane Austen.

_____

_____

How would you change the following sentence?
Despite her lack of **knowledge** of General Tilney, and his cordial treatment of her, she imagines and eventually **concludes that** he must have murdered his wife.

_____

_____

How would you change the following sentence?
Her early years brought nothing of great **significance**, nothing that would lead anyone to believe she was headed in the **directions** of becoming a heroine.

_____

_____

Post Paper:
Revision/review/editing/conferencing/reflection (Rhetorical Concern #7)
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Keep in mind the following as you move from draft two to draft three:

For more practice, change the following sentences to eliminate passive voice and to be verbs:

- Austen's additional comment in matters concerning Catherine **could be conceived** as necessary in this point of Catherine's development, for on top of being ignorant and uninformed, Catherine **is** not prone to reflect on her own character or that of others.

  _____

  _____

  _____

  _____

- This overstatement draws an image of an overly excited, somewhat flighty, very talkative woman who does not care that her affection **may be doubted** merely because she communicates it so much.

  _____

  _____

  _____

  _____

- It is only with the objectivity that exists in a lot of the narration that the reader can see situations at a viewpoint from which they can accurately **be judged.**

  _____

  _____

  _____

- Catherine had noted earlier that when Isabella and James' engagement **had been prolonged**, Isabella seemed more upset by the amount of James' living than by the postponement of the marriage.

  _____

  _____

  _____

Post Paper:
Revision/review/editing/conferencing/reflection (Rhetorical Concern #7)
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Name: _____

Mid Term Portfolio

1. *NA* paper: Title_____

- What changes have you made on this paper from draft to draft?

- What did your peer editors suggest?

- What did your Peer Writing Tutor suggest?

- What did Mrs. B. suggest?

- What have you learned from working on this paper?

- What would you still like to work on in this paper?

Post Paper:
Revision/review/editing/conferencing/reflection (Rhetorical Concern #7)
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Building a Better Beginning

by Mary Ellen Bertolini, Lecturer, Tutor in Writing and Assistant Director, Writing Center

Teaching a first-year seminar affords faculty the opportunity to explore their interests and expertise and to connect with first-year students in a way usually associated only with senior-level work. Part of the challenge of teaching a first-year seminar is balancing the seminar's distinctive blend of subject matter, writing instruction, and advising. As faculty members teaching these courses, we often struggle to find the time to fit together the content we love, the writing goals we know are essential, and the advising moments vital to the academic lives of our students. The trick to finding the time for so many worthy goals is not to have the three aspects of the seminar compete with each other, but rather to have them work together. For the last two years, I have found a way to begin to do this even before a single first-year student has arrived on campus.

As advisors, first-year seminar faculty get to know their students well in a matter of weeks. I wanted to speed up the process and get to know my advisees before they came to campus. Thanks to Middlebury College's own course-management tool, SEGUE, the students in my last two "Jane Austen and Film" seminars learned about each other, discussed the content of our course, and displayed their writing skills on line before they packed their bags and left home. (SEGUE site: https://segue.middlebury.edu/sites/fyse1144a-f06).

Because of the ease of the SEGUE interface and because most of the entering first-years are computer savvy, my instructions for entering the on-line discussion were brief:
Log onto our SEGUE site with your Middlebury user name and password. Once you are on the SEGUE site, click on Summer Assignment, click discuss, and then new post, and then you can type in the box or upload a file with your response. After you have responded yourself, check back and try responding to two other students' responses.

In early August, I wrote to my students (both by e-mail and by snail mail), and asked them to respond on line to four questions before they came to campus, and to respond to each other's answers before they came to class. The questions ranged from academic to personal. Here are the questions I asked this year:

1. Tell us what you know about Jane Austen. Do you know anything about her life or when she wrote? If you don't know

> *"Part of the challenge of teaching a first-year seminar is balancing the seminar's distinctive blend of subject matter, writing instruction, and advising."*

anything about her, that's fine--just say so. Why was Jane Austen & Film one of your first-year seminar choices?

2. Which novels by Jane Austen have you read before? Did you read them in school? On your own? As part of a book group or club? If so, which of the novels did you like best, or find most entertaining or provocative? Why? If you have never read a Jane Austen novel before, tell us another novel that you like or that you have found entertaining or provocative, and why.
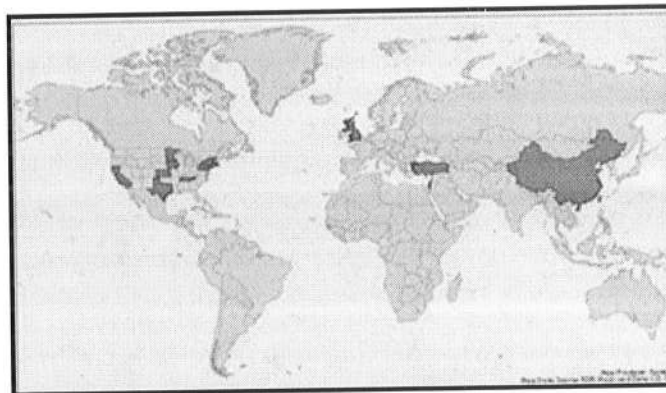
3. Have you seen any of the film adaptations of Jane Austen's novels? Have you seen any modern film adaptation of Austen novels, such as *Clueless* or *Bridget Jones's Diary*, or *Pride and Prejudice*? If so, which did you like best, or which did you find most entertaining or provocative? Why? If you have never seen an adaptation of a Jane Austen novel, tell us another film that you like or that you have found entertaining or provocative, and why.

4. Now tell us a bit about yourself. Where do you come from, and how did you end up coming to Middlebury? How would a family member, close friend, special teacher or mentor describe you? What are some subjects you want to study at Middlebury? What are your interests and passions outside of class? What do you wish you could bring with you to Middlebury that you cannot bring? Tell us anything else you want about yourself that will help us get to know you better.

The three-week electronic discussion that followed these questions revealed students' prior knowledge of Jane Austen and prior knowledge of film and novel genres as well as their academic aspirations and personal interests. From across the country and around the world, my students debated the merits of the 1995 and the 2005 film adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* and vowed to attend each other's games and to debate each other about politics, the NFL and Keira Knightley's performance when they hit campus. While students posted with each other, I wrote to them on our course blog, where I was able to track them checking in on our blog from across the globe. (Course Blog: http://mt.middlebury.edu/middblogs/mbertoli/jafilm6/).

This year, reading my students' comments allowed me time to make changes in my syllabus and move some of my film showings around because I knew which Jane Austen novels most of my students had read in advance. My students' 59 summer posts helped make our class a community before any of us met face to face. Now that we have put faces to names, our discussions about Jane Austen, writing and life continue in the classroom, in my office, over a movie, in the dorms, and yes, they continue on line, too.