

English 101.71 Syllabus – College Composition

English 101.B71 10445
Monday and Wednesday, 6:00 to 8:45PM
Classroom: Building 83, Room 319
Instructor: Greg Souza (Available by Appointment)
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Overview

Welcome to English 101! Three Rivers officially describes this course as follows:

College Composition engages students in critical observation, reading, and writing. This course prepares the student for the exposition, analysis, and argument required in college writing, and for meeting the conventions of college English. Writing assignments require that students develop their own points of view and demonstrate understanding of complex ideas and issues. Methods for research, including use of the library, appropriate documentation, and incorporation of sources in original papers will be taught during assigned readings.

Textbooks

- Barrios, Barclay. *Emerging: Contemporary Reading for Writers*. 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford-St. Martin's, 2013. Print.
- Faigley, Lester. *The Brief Penguin Handbook*. 4th ed. New York: Longman, 2011. Print.

Writing Requirements

This course will require **weekly writing assignments** (to be defined in greater detail in class) in addition to **four essays**, which varying in length from about four to eight pages, for a total of **20 pages**. The essays will be:

- A 3-4 page rhetorical analysis essay. Due 2/7
- A 4-5 page persuasive “synthesis” essay written in response to multiple texts. Due 2/19
- A 5-6 page persuasive “synthesis” essay, which includes independent research. Due 3/7
- A 7-8 page research essay (a project to be worked on throughout the semester). Due 3/28

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to...

Respond to Rhetorical Situations

- Adapt writing as audience and purpose requires
- Develop and apply an independent writing process that includes generating, revising, editing, and proofreading

- Reflect on and explain writing choices regarding audience and purpose

Engage with and Use Authoritative Sources

- Use the reading process to differentiate between supporting points, evidence, and reasoning in complex texts (texts that engage with multiple perspectives and use a variety of rhetorical strategies and evidence)
- Employ effective annotation skills to the reading of complex texts
- Locate and evaluate sources appropriate to the rhetorical situation
- Interpret and analyze argument, evidence, and rhetorical strategies in complex texts
- Evaluate information in complex texts for accuracy, validity, and relevance, with particular attention to the type and purpose of source material
- Demonstrate critical and evaluative reading comprehension
- Write accurate summaries and paraphrases of complex texts and differentiate these from student's own writing
- Respond to an argument in a complex text and synthesize perspectives in multiple texts
- Integrate complex texts to fulfill the rhetorical purpose

Craft Logical Arguments

- Produce essays with clear thesis statements (or controlling ideas) and logical support for assertions
- Compose unified, coherent, and fully developed paragraphs with attention to transitions and signal phrasing for source material
- By the end of the semester, write at least one thesis-driven, text-based essay of 1500 words demonstrating competent argumentation using complex texts

Apply Language Conventions

- Apply Standard English language conventions (diction, tone, or level of formality) consistently, with particular attention to college-level writing situations
- Cite varied sources in MLA citation style

Behaviors for Success in English 101

I want to begin by expressing a golden rule to succeed in this course, and very likely every other course you'll ever take: **if you have a problem, come and see me as soon as possible**. Together, we can probably work it out. Don't panic. Don't vanish from class. Ask me for help. "Help" is my job.

The golden rule aside, there are three essential habits for success in every class session.

- Always arrive to class having done all the reading
- Always arrive to class with the relevant texts in-hand
- Always arrive with something to write with.

I also want to emphasize two behaviors that are just about making sure class is a safe place free of distraction.

- Demonstrate respect for one another during class discussion. Lively discussion is important, and our ideas may often conflict, but we can disagree tactfully in order to advance our thinking. You may be surprised what you will learn from those who disagree with you.

- Turn off your electronics. If you have a special need for a cell phone, (translation apps, for instance) please approach me before or after class to discuss possible exceptions.

Since this will be a technology-centric course, there are certain computer-related behaviors that are also essential.

- Check your official TRCC student email daily. All of my official electronic contact with you will take place through either Blackboard and / or your official student email.
- Sign up for MyCommNet Alert. MyCommNet Alert is a system that sends text messages and emails to anyone signed up in the event of a campus emergency. Additionally, TRCC sends messages when the college is delayed or closed due to weather. Copy and paste / transcribe this URL below into your internet browser if you wish to proceed through the tutorial.

http://www.trcc.commnnet.edu/div_it/educationaltechnology/Tutorials/myCommNetAlert/MIR3.html

Finally...

- **Plan ahead.** I can help you in many ways, but I can't budget your time for you. The difference between a very successful paper and every other kind often comes down to how much time a student dedicated to writing drafts. Even for strong writers, good writing just takes time.

Participation and Attendance

We learn best when we're all contributing a voice, so participation will therefore count for 10% of your final course grade. "Participation" broadly refers to the degree to which you demonstrate engagement with the course. This can take a few forms, but the easiest way to demonstrate this is to make an effort to speak during each class session. Express your ideas, respond to those of others, ask questions, and generally help the class discussion to progress.

If you're less comfortable speaking in class, I also consider visits with writing center tutors or private discussions / tutorials with me examples of a meaningful attempt to engage with this course. In other words, there are many ways to satisfy this portion of the grade just as long as you're turning in an effort. I will continually update your participation grade based on your behavior throughout the semester, and you will be informed of this and other portions of your grade at mid-term. However, you're welcome to approach me regarding the matter sooner.

Your participation grade could be reduced by some of the following common scenarios, and I reserve the right to determine your participation grade on a case-by-case basis.

- Missing multiple class sessions without valid documentation.
- A consistent habit of lateness.
- Any unauthorized use of electronics.
- Finally, hostility or general rudeness towards your instructor or your classmates will absolutely result in a reduction of your final participation grade. Proceed with tact and respect.

Regarding attendance: in order to ensure that you earn a high participation grade, you must attend class regularly. This 7.5 week class is designed to move very quickly, and the length of each session means that two absences is the same as missing two full weeks of most other courses. Therefore, **I will allow you to have one unexcused absence without any penalty.** Beyond that, you will need to work out

arrangements with me in advance or provide documentation to excuse your absence (like a medical note or an obituary). If you have more than one unexcused absence, your participation grade will cap at a C+ (78).

Finally, please remember that **absence is not an excuse not to turn in work**. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to:

- Turn in your work by whatever means you can, which is usually electronic.
- Follow the syllabus
- Contact me for further information, as needed.

The Assignments

Short Writing Responses:

Every week, you will be expected to have done a little bit of reading and a little bit of writing. Sometimes this will take the form of brief assignments designed to practice particular skills and lay some groundwork for the full-length essays. You can expect a new prompt for each assignment.

Rough Drafts:

The college requires each of you to complete a minimum of 20 pages of revised academic writing in order to pass this class. Every major assignment will ask you to produce a rough draft. There are many reasons to write a rough draft, but a key reason we do so in this course is so that I can provide you with thorough written feedback to help you grow and develop towards the final draft. The more mature your rough draft is, the more specific, relevant, and useful my feedback can be.

I do not give a letter grade to the rough draft because I want you to have the freedom to explore your ideas and the way in which you present them; however, successful completion of the rough draft is required in order to receive full credit on the final draft. If I receive a rough draft that I do not believe represents a respectable effort at producing a polished, complete product (based on the explicit standards of each paper), I reserve the right to cap the grade for the final draft at a C (75). The same goes for late or missing rough drafts. However, if your rough draft *is* late, you should *still* turn it in so that I can at least provide you with feedback.

Revision and the Final Draft:

The writing process depends heavily on revising one's own ideas (as well as prose). The revision process will include one rough and one final draft of a paper. Though you may come to this class as a perfectly sound writer, your first attempt to think through an idea and express it in writing will never represent that idea's potential. It will only be through a commitment to drafting and revision that a student will have a chance to receive an A.

Your rough draft will be returned to you promptly with comments I've written for you. Avoid thinking of these comments as a "check list." The best way to approach my comments is to think of them holistically. Though you may find that a comment refers to just one moment of your essay, you should ask: how might this comment apply to other similar moments? By asking yourself such questions, you're taking the first step towards becoming more effective self-editors: a critical skill for college-level work.

In other words, the drafting and revising process is a bit more involved on the college level than you

might realize. It is very likely that, for at least one of your papers, you will need to cut much of what you have written and begin again from scratch. Do not be afraid of this! It's normal, and the final product will be the stronger for it.

PLEASE NOTE: All assignments with grades and / or feedback will be returned to you on Blackboard as an attachment. My feedback will be prepared with Microsoft Word's comment / track changes feature, and if you have any concerns about your ability to view these comments, approach me in advance so that I can offer an alternative of some kind.

Optional Revision:

If you are unhappy with the grade you received for the final draft of essay 1, 2, or 3 (essay 4 will be due too late for this option to be feasible), then you may revise it for an entirely new grade. But, there are a few stipulations.

- 1) Your final draft must have been complete and on-time.
- 2) Prior to submitting the essay, you must have one meeting with me or a writing tutor. I want you to develop a plan for how to approach this next revision.
- 3) You must submit your newly revised essay with a one-page single-spaced letter to me that explains what you revised and why. This shouldn't be an apology for past mistakes. There's really nothing to apologize for - you're learning. Instead, I want to see that you were making conscious decisions about your revision, and not just regurgitating. This letter is also for your benefit; it's a chance to reflect on how and why you write the way you do.

PLEASE NOTE: We will occasionally use anonymous samples of your drafts to facilitate discussion of both the subject matter and the writing process. If you do not want me to use your papers for this purpose, please see me before or after class.

Submitting Work:

All of our work will be submitted electronically on Blackboard (not to my email – to Blackboard). All of your assignments must be in Microsoft Word format (.doc or .docx). If I can't open the file, then I can't consider the assignment as having been turned in. If you have any difficulties with access to or knowledge of this software, please come to me as soon as possible so that we can work out an alternative. I won't consider technology problems an excuse for late / incomplete work after the fact.

However, for the purposes of class discussion and activities, particularly in the first couple of weeks, I may ask that you bring hard copies of your work to class even if you've submitted the assignment online.

Late Papers:

I will generally not accept late work without a documented excuse. In exchange for the timely receipt of your work, I will endeavor to return it in an equally timely fashion. If you have extenuating circumstances that might prevent you from submitting your work, please approach me well in advance of the deadline so that we can work out a solution. I am always willing to help and to make alternative arrangements, but the further in advance you come to me, the more I will be able to do.

Digication:

As a student, you will maintain an online learning portfolio using a college-designed template in Digication. Through this electronic tool you will have the opportunity to monitor your own growth in college-wide learning. It may even help you determine a major that is best suited to you. You will be

able to keep and maintain your learning portfolio after graduation. A Three Rivers General Education Assessment Team will select and review random works to improve the college experience for all. If your work is selected and reviewed for assessment purposes, it will remain anonymous and private. Digication provides a “place” where you will connect your learning from the classroom, college, and life in general. Sometimes when you review all of the work you have done and think about it, you end up learning something different and perhaps unexpected. Please review your course outlines to determine what assignments to upload into the TRCC Digication template and please post your own choices, as well. Have fun in learning!

Important Student Resources

The Writing Center:

The Writing Center is located in TASC (Tutoring and Academic Success Center), which is located in room C117. The Writing Center staff provides writing support for all students at all levels of writing ability. The staff also works in subjects across the curriculum, ranging from English to history to nursing. The Writing Center staff members can help students with research paper development in ways such as exploring topics, finding a thesis, drafting, revising, MLA or APA documenting, etc... Walk-in appointments are available and students can also reserve appointment times up to a month in advance to get feedback on their papers. In addition to the face-to-face services, papers are also accepted via e-mail. Students can take advantage of computer workstations that are fully networked with the rest of the campus, a local printer, copies of the most recent writing handbooks, and up-to-date references on citation and documentation for research.

Disabilities:

If you have a disability that may affect your progress in this course, please meet with a Disability Service Provider (DSP) as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations cannot be provided until you provide written authorization from a DSP.

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TRCC Disabilities Service Providers Counseling & Advising Office Room A-119	
Matt Liscum (860) 215-9265	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Disabilities • Sensory Disabilities • Medical Disabilities • Mental Health Disabilities
Chris Scarborough (860) 215-9289	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Disabilities • ADD/ADHD • Autism Spectrum

Fine Print Policies

Plagiarism:

From the Three Rivers faculty handbook:

Academic integrity is essential to a useful education. Failure to act with academic integrity severely limits a person's ability to succeed in the classroom and beyond. Furthermore, academic dishonesty erodes the legitimacy of every degree awarded by the College. In this class and in the course of your academic career, present only your own best work; clearly document the sources of the material you use from others; and act at all times with honor.

I will not tolerate plagiarized work or any form of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism generally refers to when a student passes off the work of others as his or her own. This could be material taken directly or paraphrased from websites, books, or any other kind of media produced by someone other than the person submitting the essay for grading. If you are confused about the definition of plagiarism or about appropriate citation, please discuss this with me immediately. The consequences for plagiarism can include failure of the assignment and/or failure of the course in addition to other penalties enacted at the discretion of the college.

One of the aims in this course is for you to learn how to conduct yourself as part of a community of scholars, recognizing that academic study is both an intellectual and ethical enterprise. You are encouraged to build on the ideas and texts of others, as that is a vital part of academic life. You are also obligated to document every occasion when you use another's ideas, language, or syntax. Certainly, you are encouraged to study together discuss readings outside of class, share your drafts during peer review and outside of class, or go to the Writing Center with your drafts. However, when you use another's ideas or language (directly, in summary, or in paraphrase) you must formally acknowledge that debt by signaling it with a standard form of academic citation. Please note that ignorance of academic conventions or of Three Rivers' policies never excuses a violation; therefore, if you have questions during the semester, please come to see me.

"N" Grade Policy:

The N Grade is assigned to students when there is no basis for a grade. This would apply to students who never came to class as well as to those who didn't attend or participate long enough to be graded. The N grade is used to distinguish between earned failures (F), official withdrawals (W), and students who stop attending or participating before there is a basis for a grade. In most cases there would be no basis for a grade for students who stop attending or participating before the 60% point. Like a withdrawal, the N grade does not get included in a student's GPA but does count as a non-completed course.

Withdrawal Policy:

A student who finds it necessary to discontinue a course once class has met must provide notice to the Registrar. Withdrawal forms are available at the Registrar's office, both on campus and at the Sub-base. Non punitive "W" grades are assigned to withdrawal requests. An instructor's signature is required after the deadline has passed. No withdrawals are permitted after the last class preceding the final exam. Students who do not obtain an official withdrawal, but simply stop attending classes, run the risk of receiving an "F" for the course.

Grading

Component Percentage

Participation	10%
Short Assignments	15%
Paper 1	10%
Paper 2	15%
Paper 3	20%
Paper 4	30%

A	93+	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	0-59

Grading Policy:

The grades on your papers will come in two pieces that are weighted differently: a pass/fail component for formatting that counts for 20%, and a letter grade component for the content of your essay, which counts for the remaining 80%. You will be shown both grades, and then the final grade they create when put together. I separate these pieces because formatting and content pose very different challenges, so I feel they deserve different grading consideration. While I fully believe that the development and expression of your ideas is the more important piece, you will need to be accountable for both if you are to succeed in the academic or professional world.

So, here's how it works.

Part I

20% of every essay's grade is going to be divided amongst formatting requirements that will change slightly from paper to paper, but generally expect them to deal with proper use of MLA format, margins, and other related details. This is strictly pass fail. I may occasionally award partial credit if the situation merits.

Part II

The other 80% of your grade is my letter grade assessment of the quality of your work based on the standards of each paper. This means that even if you make some serious formatting errors you will at least know exactly where I feel the execution of your thinking stands.

Once I have a grade for the format and the content, I put them together in a weighted total. For those of you who do math, this is the formula: $(\text{Format Grade} \times .20) + (\text{Content Grade} \times .80) = \text{Final Essay Grade}$. So, someone who is awarded an A- (92%) for the content, but who only gets half-credit for formatting, would have the formula look like this: $(.50 \times .20) + (.92 \times .80) = .836$, or 83.6% (a "B").

But, how do I come up with your letter grade? You will receive assignment prompts that have a section detailing my expectations, and those expectations are derived from our course's learning outcomes. My marginal comments and end notes, which you will receive on every draft of every assignment, will explain how and to what extent you've met my expectations. In graded work, this explanation will be tethered to a letter grade. Though my expectations will increase in specific ways for each major assignment, what follows is the department's official breakdown of what (generally) a letter grade in composition reflects.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT OF WRITING

PURPOSE & THESIS	ORGANIZATION & STRUCTURE	DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS	DICTION & GRAMMAR	DOCUMENTATION
<p>To receive an A, a composition must meet all the standards described below:</p> <p>Essay demonstrates an understanding of the purpose of the assignment: it seriously addresses relevant issues and ideas, and uses effective strategies to engage audience. A substantive central idea or thesis is introduced imaginatively, stated precisely, and defined clearly.</p>	<p>Essay unfolds in a clear, logical sequence, with transitions that are explicit and apparent, enabling the reader to follow the connection between ideas; paragraphs are unified, coherent and connected to main idea of essay; sentences are usually precise, coherent, and stylistically varied.</p>	<p>Essay explores issues thoroughly, and supports points fully using a variety of relevant details, examples, and evidence; it develops a clear perspective based on well-reasoned critical insights and analysis.</p>	<p>Word choice is usually appropriate, accurate, precise, concise, and idiomatic; the tone established is appropriate to the nature of the assignment. Generally, grammar, punctuation, and spelling follow accepted conventions and help to clarify meaning; no errors in sentence structure and verb tense are evident, and there are few if any misspellings.</p>	<p>Appropriate and accurate documentation is used when necessary.</p>

To receive a B, a composition must meet all standards described below:

Essay demonstrates adequate understanding of key issues under discussion, and develops a central thesis which is relevant and clearly stated. The purpose of the assignment is fulfilled.

Essay unfolds so that its main idea and organizational structure are generally apparent to reader; paragraphs are coherent and their connection to essay's main idea is apparent; useful transitions are often provided to make clear the connections between one idea and the next; sentences are usually clear.

The main idea is developed logically and supported consistently with relevant details. The essay goes beyond mere restatement of facts and attempts an analytical, evaluative, or argumentative stance.

Word choice is usually appropriate and idiomatic. Though there may be occasional errors in grammar and usage, they are infrequent and generally do not disrupt the clarity of the essay.

Documentation is used where necessary.

A composition will receive a C if it demonstrates some of the weaknesses described below:

Though there is a central idea, it may be ambiguous or imprecisely stated; OR central idea is clear but too general; OR essay does not demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the issues; OR essay does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment.

Basic organization is apparent, but not especially well-executed; sometimes marred by ineffective transitions, sketchiness, repetitiveness, or gaps in logic; OR sometimes reveals a lack of consistency in direction or point of view.

Though an attempt is made to develop ideas with details, ideas are sometimes presented in general terms and lack specifics; OR details may sometimes seem irrelevant to the point being made; OR some ideas are developed but others are not.

Language is adequate to convey basic meaning, but errors in grammar and sentence structure may cause some noticeable disruptions (such as occasional fragments or comma splices, etc.); OR tone sometimes is not appropriate for assignment.

Documentation, when needed, is sometimes not adequately provided.

A composition will receive a D or an F if it demonstrates some of the weaknesses described below:

Central idea is not apparent; OR many general ideas are offered but no one idea is central or focal; OR essay demonstrates little understanding of the issues and ideas under discussion; OR essay does not address or fulfill the requirements of the assignments.

Essay seems to progress haphazardly; no clear pattern of development seems to guide the order or logic of overall essay; OR paragraphs lack coherence and do not contribute to an overall sense of organization and clarity; OR there is no paragraph structure.

Most ideas are too general and little or no support is offered; OR support is ineffective or irrelevant; OR support is primarily personal and anecdotal where different kinds of evidence are needed.

Word use is frequently unclear; sentence structure inadequate for clarity; errors become seriously distracting.

Necessary documentation is seriously inadequate or absent.

Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

Week	Date	Description
1	27-Jan	Course Introduction
	29-Jan	Audience and Ethos, Pathos, and Logos
		Due: "Ethics and the New Genetics" by the Dalai Llama (p 132)
	31-Jan	Due: Essay 1 (Rough Draft)

2	3-Feb	Structuring a "Point" and Peer Review
		Due: Arrive with at least two hard copies of your essay's rough draft.
	5-Feb	Information Literacy Day
	7-Feb	Due: Essay 1 (Final Draft)

3	10-Feb	Pre-Writing Strategies
		Due: Read "Animals like Us" by Herzog (p 241) and "Consider the Lobster" by Wallace (p 497)
		Due: Short Writing Assignment
	12-Feb	Integrating Sources and Logical Fallacies
		Due: Read "Annoying Things People Do with Sources" by Kyle Stedman (On Blackboard)
	15-Feb	Due: Essay 2 (Rough Draft)

4	17-Feb	"Introduction to Introductions" and Peer Review
		Due: Research Essay Proposal
		Due: Arrive with at least two hard copies of your essay's rough draft.
	19-Feb	Visual Rhetoric
	Due: Essay 2 (Final Draft)	

5	24-Feb	Forwarding and Countering
		Due: Read "Forwarding" and "Countering" By Joseph Harris (Blackboard)
	26-Feb	MLA Review and Lab Research Day
	28-Feb	Due: Essay 3 (Rough Draft)

6	3-Mar	Workshop TBA and Peer Review
		Due: Arrive with at least two hard copies of your essay's rough draft.

	5-Mar	Research Essay Workshop #1
		Due: Annotated Bibliography
	7-Mar	Due: Essay 3 (Final Draft)

7	10-Mar	Research Essay Workshop #2
	12-Mar	Research Essay Workshop #3
	14-Mar	Due: Essay 4 (Rough Draft)

Break	17-Mar	Spring Break - Early during break, you will receive your research essays back from me with my comments. It is important that you begin your revision at that time.
	19-Mar	

8	26-Mar	Research Essay Peer Review
		Due: Arrive with at least two copies of your essay's rough draft.
	28-Mar	Due: Essay 4 (Final Draft)
