

Three Rivers Community College
English 101: Composition
Fall, 2010
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Catalog Description

College Composition engages students in critical observation, reading, and writing. The course prepares students 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 through assigned writings.

Expectations for Each Student

This is not a teacher-centered course. The success of every class, and ultimately every student, depends upon three things: 1. how thoroughly you prepare outside of class for every session; 2. the attitude that you bring to each class; 3. your commitment to learn and participate once you get here.

Each week you are expected to come to class prepared by completing all assignments for that session. As a minimum, this will include the assigned readings and journal writings. On weeks when we are engaged in peer editing, you should bring three copies of the draft of the writing assignment that you are working on. Every week you should bring your notebook, journal, all essays and drafts, and all required texts.

In class, you are expected to participate in discussions about the assigned readings, to read journal entries to the class, to ask relevant questions, and to reflect on fellow classmate's writings and comments. You should demonstrate your best efforts on in-class reading and writing assignments and in peer editing sessions.

Required: Get a fellow student, and preferably a back-up, to cover for you in the event that you are ever late or absent. This classmate will collect handouts for you and provide notes and a summary of what you've missed as well as what may be required for the next class. Absences are not an excuse for not handing in work or coming to the next class unprepared. If you are absent, do not email me for missing assignments; email your fellow student.

In addition to these expectations, we will discuss the handouts, "What I expect of my students" and "What my students can expect of me".

Course Grade

Each of the following four items will be equally weighted as 25% of the final grade for the class.

1. Attendance and Participation

Don't plan to arrive at class on time; plan to arrive a few minutes early. Sign-in upon arrival for each class and indicate if you are early/on time (Y) or late (N). You will be allowed one unexcused absence without penalty. After that, your attendance and participation grade will drop 10% for each missed class.

Student self evaluations will be available at the first class. If your goal is to earn an "A" or "B" in attendance and participation, you should stay a few minutes after the conclusion of each class to reflect upon your involvement and contribution to the class and to complete the self evaluation. Save these self evaluations in your class notebook and at the end of the semester write a one to two page summary detailing your growth.

2. Reflective Journal

You are expected to read newspapers and magazines, either in print or on-line, on a regular, and at best-- daily-- basis. At least two times per week you should respond in writing to what you have read in a journal. Additionally, you should write one journal entry per week on something that relates specifically to the class such as a discussion, activity, or a reading. Three journal entries per week is the minimum requirement and, if done properly, will earn you a grade of "C".

If you would like to earn a "B", complete the above with one additional weekly entry responding to something from class.

If you would like to earn an "A", complete the requirements for "C" with one additional weekly entry responding to something from class and one additional weekly entry on a current topic from a magazine or newspaper.

Journal entries may be written in your own handwriting or typed. Either way, a cumulative, paper copy of the entire journal must be brought to class each week. Journals will be reviewed periodically throughout the semester, and at the end of the semester. Each journal entry should be at least one complete paragraph. You will not be graded on spelling, grammar, or conventions, however, you will be graded on other important aspects of writing that will be noted on the journal format and grading handout.

Journals are expected to be kept over break periods.

3. Essays

Essays based on the readings and class activities will be assigned at regular intervals. A standard format for submitting essays will be distributed and it should be adhered to. Failure to follow the format may result in rejection of the paper with the opportunity to hand it in late, with a penalty. Peer editing is an essential part of the writing process and so it is expected that you will bring three copies of the complete draft of your essay to

class on peer editing days. Failure to do so will result in a 20% deduction from the final grade for that particular essay.

Papers will be graded according to a rubric that will be distributed and reviewed in advance. Late papers will not be accepted after one week and will be recorded as “0”. Late papers handed in within the week, i.e.- no later than the start of the next class, will be accepted but will lose 20% of the final grade. If you are absent on the day a paper is due, it should be faxed or emailed to me by the time the class starts, or it will be considered late. If you are more than a few minutes late on the day a paper is due and you hand the paper in at that time, it will be considered late.

Regardless of ability, all students are encouraged to utilize the Writing Center. We will discuss incentives for students that elect to do so.

4. Quizzes and Tests

Announced and/or surprise quizzes based upon readings and out-of-class assignments may be given at any time. You should expect them. Additionally, mid-term and final exam in-class writing assignments may be given and graded as tests.

Supplies

Bring the following to every class: all three texts; a notebook with your handouts, notes, and weekly self-evaluations; pens and highlighters; your reflective journal; a portfolio of all your class writing assignments; your name card.

Plagiarism

All written work must be original. If it is not original, it must be cited. Plagiarism is defined as the unacknowledged use of another’s words or ideas in your writing and claiming it as your own. Penalties are, at a minimum, a “0” on the assignment, up to failure for the course and notification of the Dean of Students.

Statement on Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and believe that you need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact the Disabilities Counseling Services office. Note that I cannot make any accommodations for you until I receive a written statement from the college.

Required Texts

Discovering Arguments: An Introduction to Critical Thinking and Writing with Readings. Third Edition. William Palmer, Pearson Publishing.

The Brief Penguin Handbook. Lester Faigley. Longman Books.

Woe is I: The Gramphobe’s Guide to Plain English in Plain English.

Patricia T. O’Conner, G.P. Putnam’s Sons Publishing.