

Three Rivers Community College
Spring 2009/ English 101- CRN 10453
College Composition
Tues/Thurs. 2:00PM – 3:15 PM Room B118

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COURSE OVERVIEW

Course Objectives 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 the use of the library, appropriate documentation, and incorporation of sources in original papers will be taught through assigned readings. A placement test is required prior to enrollment.

Course Theme The readings for this course will be organized thematically and broadly centered on **the individual's search for personal identity within the confines of society**. Specific topics related to this general theme will include: *the importance of family ties and personal memories, the individual's need for a sense of place, the role of education, and the influence of the prevailing culture on our development and growth as individuals.*

**Required Text
And Materials** *The Writer's Presence, 5th Edition*, Donald McQuade and Robert Atwan, ed., 2006. Bedford/St. Martin's.

The Brief Penguin Handbook, Lester Faigley, Pearson Education, Inc., 2006.

One **computer disk** dedicated to your work in English 101 (If you do not use disks, find an alternative way to back up all your required work for the course).

****A sturdy folder with pockets** in which to keep handouts and in-class exercises, and all responses to assigned readings, most of which must be *typed at home and brought to class each session. This is your working folder and is essential to this course.*

****Attendance and Participation** Attendance should be considered **mandatory** and will be included as part of your final grade. A single absence

significantly diminishes your opportunity to participate, to explore and develop the ideas you will be writing about, and to benefit from the perspectives of others in the class. Hence, it is extremely important that you attend class, that you come on time with your assignments prepared on the date due, and that you enter into class discussion. *Do the readings thoughtfully and write your responses candidly and to the best of your ability since these will always be the starting point of our discussions.*

Assignments and Grading

Your final grade in this course will be broken down into five major areas:

- One descriptive essay 20%
- One analytic essay 20%
- One research-based persuasive paper 25%

- In-class exercises
Daily reading responses in a Journal (your working folder) [10%] 20%
Attendance/Class participation [10%]

- Final Portfolio organization and presentation 15%
(This will take the place of a final exam)

Student Outcomes:

English 101 is designed to build or reinforce specific skills and abilities. If you successfully complete this course, you will be able to:

- read challenging material and identify and assess the validity of main ideas or points of view
- compare or contrast various perspectives on a topic
- analyze a particular perspective, theme, or argument on a topic and evaluate its merits
- develop your own perspective on a topic and state it clearly and succinctly in a well-constructed THESIS statement.
- support your thesis statement with specific and detailed evidence from readings, from research, and/or from your personal observations and experience
- document information from other sources using MLA format
- recognize the reader as an intrinsic element in writing and employ strategies to engage your reader
- employ strategies for effective “global” revision of writing, including attention to organization and paragraph coherence

- employ strategies for effective editing, including attention to appropriate grammar and usage
- conduct basic library research, including accessing basic print media and electronic data bases
- collaborate with others in analyzing writing, developing points of view, and conducting research

***The Working Folder/
Reading Journal***

This is the place where you keep *all* your writing—drafts, peer reviews, revision plans, reading responses done outside class, and both in-class and out-of-class writing of various types. We will cover thematic units of reading and writing from which will spring most of the material in this working folder. I will evaluate *your* working folder once at some point during the course of the semester—the order will be random, so keep your work up to date. *It all has to be done, but it does not all have to be perfect—consider this a work in progress.*

Final Portfolio

This is the place where you will demonstrate your best writing for final review and evaluation. Toward the end of the semester, you will have an opportunity to review the writing pieces you have been working on during our time together, reflect on them, make some choices, and revise a few select pieces for inclusion in the final portfolio. We will discuss the meaning of revision at some length, but for now, consider this the opportunity to polish and refine your best work. Everything you learn about writing through the semester should be reflected in the work you decide to present. You will, of course, have some choice, but here are some requirements:

- You must include a total of between 10 and 12 revised pages. Among these must be at least one substantial selection that uses text citations from the readings to support and develop your point of view.
- References to readings and any outside research must be correctly cited using MLA parenthetical style—*The Penguin Handbook* will be your guide for this.
- The collection of writing you choose should show some variety of style and approach as well as depth of analysis. So, consider including—again, ***thoughtfully revised*** from your working folder/reading journal—shorter response pieces or informal personal experiences (we will write frequently both in and out of class). Some of these may very well reflect your best and most genuine work.

- A reflective essay or “cover letter” *must* be included in the portfolio, one that introduces the writing you have chosen, examines the choices you have made, and evaluates your own performance as a writer. [this piece should be between 1 and 2 pages long and will be counted as part of the total number of required pages].

IMPORTANT: Except for the reflective essay, the writing in this final portfolio is not new writing—it is writing that was done earlier, primarily as responses to the assigned readings, and stored in your working folder, but that now has been thoroughly revised and edited.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Class Participation I’ve already noted this, but—briefly—it is to your advantage to allow me to know you. In a very real sense, you are the curriculum. I, in turn, will do my best to put you at ease and not allow this to be a terrifying experience.

The Writing Center I encourage you to visit the campus Writing Center during the course of the semester. Writing Center tutors are ready to support and encourage you in your writing. .

Format of Assignments

I will accept handwritten work only as part of an in-class exercise. All other work, including responses to assigned readings, must be word processed or typed using margins of no more than 1 inch, standard type size (12 point) and plain font (avoid italics, script and use of all caps). Whenever I specify number of pages, I mean typed pages of approximately 250 words each.

Time Management I will expect you, as adults, to submit your papers and other assignments ***on time. If you know you are not going to be in class on the day a paper is due, the best option is to email me a copy from home. Late work will receive a lowered grade.*** In any case, you may not simply “skip” an assigned paper (there will be three of these)—take my word for this: it is very difficult to come back from a grade of zero. The final presentation * portfolio takes the place of the final exam and may not be submitted after the due date. (* This is essential since you cannot receive course credit without it.)

Syllabus Updates On a final note, the syllabus and assignment schedule may be modified during the semester depending upon the pace and needs of the class. I will discuss any changes with you in class. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out from your peers whether any changes were made and to keep up with the work assigned.