

# English Composition 101

*Three Rivers Community College*

Spring 2012

## Essential Details

### Joseph J. Selvaggio

Office: C268

Office Hours: MW 1 – 2 pm | T 11am – 12pm or by appointment

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#### Sections:

MW: 10447 T4 – 3:30 – 4:45      Room: E204

11801 T26 – 5:00 – 6:15      Room: D222

TTR: 11622 T23 - 9:30 – 10:45      Room: D224

10452 T9 - 1:00 – 2:15      Room: D228

12126 T29 - 2:30 – 3:45      Room: D228

## Course Description

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. A placement test is required prior to enrollment

## Required Text

Bartholomae, David and Anthony Petrosky, eds. *Ways of Reading: An Anthology for Writers*. 9th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011. Print.

"When something can be read without effort, great effort has gone into its writing."  
-*Enrique Jardiel Poncela*

## Learning Outcomes

*Upon successful completion of these courses, students should be able to:*

### **Read and think critically**

- demonstrate an understanding of the intrinsic connection between reading, critical thinking, and writing
- demonstrate the ability to read and understand academic writing with differing points of views and be able to recognize and analyze the merits of each position
- evaluate the accuracy and validity of a specific perspective or argument
- understand how audience, purpose, genre, and context shape the meaning and effectiveness of all texts, especially texts presented in college settings

### **Write critically and analytically**

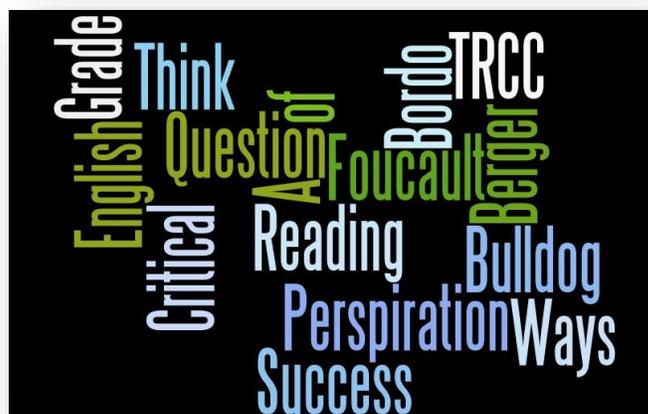
- demonstrate an understanding of the organizational skills required for academic writing, such as pre-writing activities, outlining, paragraph development, revising, and the ability to thoroughly edit
- demonstrate in reading and writing an understanding of the rhetorical concepts of audience, invention, style, organization, and delivery
- develop their own perspective into an academic argument that reflects critical analysis

### **Demonstrate information literacy**

- conduct research using library tools, print and electronic media, and any other sources that enhance academic writing
- evaluate sources for accuracy, validity, and academic relevance
- use information to support and develop their assertions through paraphrasing, quoting, and summarizing
- cite sources using MLA citation style
- learn and employ strategies for avoiding plagiarism

### **Apply the foundations of strong academic skills**

- develop and use academic reading and speaking vocabularies
- use tools appropriately related to reading and writing, such as dictionaries, thesauri, and writing handbooks
- utilize word processing programs, including proofreading software, in the writing process
- produce documents according to MLA formatting conventions
- employ strategies for effective editing, including attention to grammar, mechanics, usage, and the conventions of standard American English
- collaborate with others in developing points of views and analyzing writing
- employ effective annotation skills
- use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating in a college setting
- formulate appropriate questions and hypotheses



## Assignments

All assignments are due at the beginning of class. I do not accept emailed assignments. Presentations and Oral report dates are final. Missed presentations must be made up in order to pass the course. If you know that you will not be able to attend class when an essay is due, please make arrangements to turn in the essay before class on the due date. **A third of a grade (i.e. an A+ paper will become an A, a C- paper will become a D) will be deducted for each day an assignment is late.**

### **Informal Writing and Quizzes (5%):**

Throughout the semester, there will be informal writing assignments in-class and outside of class. “Informal” does not mean “not important”; these assignments and quizzes build on the foundations of the critical thinking, reading, and discussing we will be doing throughout the semester. Any assignments not completed with lower your final grade.

### **Formal Essays (70%):**

You will complete several essays and an annotated bibliography. The due dates are highlighted in the course calendar and all writing must follow the format outlined below. **Assignments that are not properly formatted may be returned without a grade and/or will have a grade reduction.**

### **Group Assignments and Essay Workshops (20%):**

The group assignments are opportunities to collaboratively explore and present to the class an issue or event related to the work we are discussing in class. I am interested in seeing your ability to demonstrate the skills that we have worked on throughout the semester: citing appropriate sources, critical thinking, synthesis of information, I will provide more details and handouts as the class proceeds.

### **Writing Center Conferences (5%):**

You will be required to attend conferences at the writing center (located in C117 TASC Center – next to the library for **each** formal writing assignment. The Writing Center) provides documentation to me that you attended a conference. You will also be asked to write a one-page reflection of what you covered during the conference process to be attached to the final version of each essay.

### **Research Paper Revision Portfolio and Course Self-Assessment:**

The portfolio is a gathering of your work. You will turn in your portfolio at the end of the semester. The portfolio will include your final essay revision along with the first version with my comments and grade. More specific details about the contents of the portfolio will be given before it is turned in. *The revision portfolio and assessment is part of the “formal essays” grade.*

**“It was we, the people; not we, the white male citizens; nor yet we, the male citizens; but we, the whole people, who formed the Union... Men, their rights and nothing more; women, their rights and nothing less.” – Susan B. Anthony**

## Additional Information

### Attendance:

This is a writing intensive course that incorporates active class participation, group projects and peer-workshops. Peer review workshop participation counts toward the grade assigned to each of your essays. If you have an unexcused absence on a workshop day, *your final grade will be affected*. Attendance and participation are important factors in your final grade. You are permitted two (2) absences. **After two absences, a doctor's note or other documentation may be required as I deem appropriate and we will conference to determine if you will realistically be able to pass the course.**

I understand that things happen and if you know ahead of time that you will miss class or have an emergency of some kind, please contact me as soon as possible. You are, of course, responsible for the work due on the days you are absent. If an assignment is due on the day of your absence, you are still responsible for getting the work in on time. In addition, **coming into class late is disruptive. Please be on time to class and turn off any electronic devices not associated with the class.**

### Special considerations

If you have a disability or some other personal circumstances that require accommodations, please let me know as early as possible in the semester so that I can make appropriate classroom arrangements. Please call (860) 383-5217 for more information or to schedule a confidential meeting with one of our disability service providers.

### Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or thoughts without crediting them properly. Plagiarism includes paraphrasing another person without properly identifying that person. Plagiarism includes copying, buying, borrowing, stealing or otherwise obtaining and using another person's work as if it was your own.

**Plagiarism is not properly documenting the source of information that you use in your work.**

### Formatting your Papers:

- All papers should be on white paper, printed, spell-checked for typos and other errors.
- Use 12-point Times New Roman font, and left-justified with one-inch margins.
- On the first page of the paper, in the upper left-hand corner, place your name, course title, my name, assignment name, due date (all in double space).
- The body of your essay is double-spaced.
- Your title should then appear two spaces down, centered on the page. Please note that the assignment name is not the title of your essay.
- Number pages beginning on page two in the upper right corner or centered at the bottom of the page.
- Staple the essay pages together in the upper left corner. Unstapled essays will not be accepted.
- Save paper. A cover or title page is not necessary.
- Use MLA citation to document sources.

**Save Your Work:**

It is always a good idea to *save your work* to disk or to make a copy of any paper that you turn in for a grade. Save a hard copy of your work to avoid missing assignments due to computer disasters. I would also recommend emailing a copy of your work to *yourself* as a precaution.

**Class Participation:**

Physical presence is not enough; you must come to participate. Participation means openness to the idea of discussing your own writing and the writing of your classmates. Your participation in group discussions, large and small, is vital to the success of the class and will be reflected in your final grade.

This class is a discussion class, and it is vital that we share our ideas and talents with each other. Writing and speaking are very closely related forms of communication, and working on one inevitably helps the other. Never be afraid to ask a question, offer a comment, take a stand on an issue, or disagree with us or anyone else. We will refine our views mostly through free and lively exchange. Several guidelines can help govern this exchange:

- Entering this class intending to learn a great deal.
- Remembering the importance of a sense of humor.
- Demonstrating an interest in people of other times and places.
- Being willing to offer your own ideas.
- Commenting respectfully on the ideas of others.

**“The best principles of our republic secure to all its citizens a perfect equality of rights.”**

**-- Thomas Jefferson**

### Text Analysis/Mini-Lecture/Writer Support Sheet

- 1) First, read the text from start to finish.
- 2) Then, go back to the first few pages. Are there any words, phrases or ideas that are repeated? Underline, circle or box words, phrases, and ideas that are similar. What do these words tell you about the points that are important to the author?
- 3) What is the overall issue(s)/subject/idea of the text? In other words, what is the text about? How did you arrive at this conclusion?
- 4) First, in your own words, why might this topic be important to a reader? Does the author state why it is important? Where do they make that argument? Use a quote and include the page number. For example:

Jones claims, "If logging continues, the rainforest will be destroyed in ten years; and such an ecological disaster could speed up the process of global warming" (46).

- 5) What is the author's main claim/argument/thesis or stance on the subject? Where did you find it? What makes you think it is the thesis? What may have motivated the author to write this piece? Do they want the reader to take action? If so, what do they recommend? Do they have a specific goal in mind? What is that goal? Use specific passages in the text that would support your insights.
- 6) What are the counter arguments that the author is responding to? There are probably several examples. Explain in your own words what the counter arguments are to the author's stance. Does he or she answer those counter-arguments effectively? Where are they brought up in the essay? How are they answered?

The counter arguments may not be overtly stated, but instead implied as in the example below. What would be the argument Jones is countering in the example below?

Jones argues that global warming has been scientifically verified. He cites a study by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) which shows that the earth has warmed dramatically over the last ten years (59).

- 7) Who is the author writing for? In other words, who might be his or her audience? List specific words, phrases, or other cues that might hint at the intended audience.
- 8) What is the genre of the piece? Editorial, narrative, business memo, etc?
- 9) If you were going to write an essay that connected this reading to previous work done in this class, what connections can you make between the other texts?
- 10) When considering multiple texts/authors – do they use similar key words, phrases, ideas or themes? Write several connections down - perhaps using a brief quote(s) or passage(s) from the other source(s).

Write down a few quotes of **no more than two or three sentences each** that you found interesting (you may not even fully know why they stand out for you but be prepared to discuss the quotes that you selected). Be sure to note the page number (and the source if it is different from our class text).