

English 101: Composition  
Section DL2 | CRN 33529  
Three Rivers Community College  
Fall 2019

**Instructor:** Andrew Marvin

**Class Meets:** Online via Blackboard

**Office Hours:** MW 1:30–4:30 PM, T 2:00–4:30 PM, and R by appointment in C160

**Mailbox:** D207

**Email:** amarvin@threeivers.edu

### **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.

### **Required Texts**

Graff, Gerald, Cathy Birkenstein, and Russel Durst, eds. *“They Say / I Say” with Readings*. 4th ed., Norton, 2018.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

#### **Respond to Rhetorical Situations**

- Adapt writing as the audience and purpose requires.
- Develop and apply an independent writing process that includes drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading.
- Reflect on and explain writing choices regarding audience and purpose.

#### **Engage with Authoritative Sources**

- Use the reading process to distinguish between supporting points, evidence, and reasoning in complex texts that engage multiple perspectives using a variety of rhetorical strategies.
- Employ effective annotation skills in the reading of complex texts.

- Locate and evaluate sources appropriate to the rhetorical situation.
- Interpret and analyze arguments, 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 distinguish these from one'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 and logical support for assertions.
- Compose unified, coherent, and fully developed paragraphs with attention to transitions and signal phrasing for source material.
- Write at least one thesis-driven, text-based essay of 1,500 words demonstrating competent argumentation using complex texts.

### **Apply Language Conventions**

- Apply standard English language conventions (diction, tone, formality) consistently, with particular attention to college-level writing situations.
- Cite varied sources in MLA format.

## Assignments

In this class, your grade will be determined by the following:

### Discussion Boards

Because this course is conducted online, discussion boards will serve as a surrogate for in-class discussion. You will be expected to respond to discussion boards with brief (250–300-word) responses on Blackboard. You will also be expected to respond directly and substantively (100–150 words) to *two* of your classmates' posts.

You may use informal language (personal pronouns, contractions, modest amounts of slang) in your discussion board posts, but please remember that we want to maintain a professional, respectful atmosphere. You may say anything you like as long as you don't hurt anyone and as long as you back up your claims. *Discussion board posts must be submitted by each week's deadline and adhere to word counts to receive credit. They cannot be made up.*

### Rough Drafts

For each major essay assignment, you will compose a rough draft and submit it on Blackboard. I will give you general feedback and suggestions for moving forward. I do not fix every grammatical error and typo on rough drafts. They are for high-level feedback, and it is up to you to implement my suggestions. Further, because rough drafts are supposed to be rough, they are graded in an “either you did it, or you didn't” capacity.

### Better Drafts & Peer Reviews

Following my review of your rough draft, you will consider my feedback to revise and expand your paper into a new and improved *better draft*. This version will be shared with your classmates for peer review.

Peer reviews have two parts: (1) submitting your own better draft for your peers to review, and (2) reviewing the better drafts of your peers. Both components are worth points. Writing, thinking, and learning are social acts, and thus you are expected to participate in this process. Peer reviews strengthen your essays ahead of final draft submission. Failure to participate in peer reviews (i.e., upload a better draft and/or review others' drafts) results in point loss and a weaker final draft.

### Major Papers

You will write four formal essays this semester. As we progress, the essays will increase in both length and complexity, and each will incorporate a number of sources and

rhetorical techniques. All papers in this class are formal, academic, argumentative, and analytical. All will follow MLA style (see my guides in Course Resources and the MLA Formatting video).

### **CLOSE READING**

Your first paper will be a rhetorical analysis of a nonfiction article of your choice. This analysis will comprise a brief summary of the source's main ideas, an explication of the author's audience and purpose, and an analytical argument about how the author uses language.

### **SYNTHESIS ESSAY**

Your second paper will be a synthesis essay wherein you find, invent, and demonstrate connections between two nonfiction articles of your choice. You will use these connections to argue and support your own position about the topic or issue.

### **RESEARCH PROJECT**

The last third of the semester will be dedicated to a formal academic research project on a topic of your choice. Your project will comprise three parts:

1. *The Background Report*: a thorough explanation of your topic's history—i.e., the who, what, when, where, and why—that provides context and setup for...
2. *The Position Paper*: an academic argument that presents your position and validates it through analysis, synthesis, and interpretation of evidence.
3. *The Annotated Bibliography*: a special kind of works cited page summarizing and evaluating your sources.

In addition to these major components, your Research Project will also include a Works Cited page and an introduction. At the end of the semester, you will compile all of these parts into a single document.

Each assignment is worth a certain number of points, as explained below.

## How You Will Be Graded

Each assignment is worth a certain number of points. There are 100 points total.

Assignment	Point Value
Discussion Boards (6)	18 (3 points each)
Rough Drafts (4)	4 (1 point each)
Better Drafts & Peer Reviews (4)	12 (3 points each)
Close Reading Final Draft	12
Synthesis Essay Final Draft	15
Background Report Final Draft	15
Position Paper Final Draft	18
Annotated Bibliography	6

Total Points Earned	Letter Grade	GPA
93–100	A	4.0
90–92	A–	3.7
87–89	B+	3.3
83–86	B	3.0
80–82	B–	2.7
77–79	C+	2.3
73–76	C	2.0
70–72	C–	1.7
67–69	D+	1.3
63–66	D	1.0
60–62	D–	0.7
0–59	F	0

## Class Policies

### Participation

An online class does not exist without active participants. *You should log into the course every day to check Announcements, Messages, and the Course Questions forum.* Note that I can see the last time you logged into the course.

Strong participation is vital to the success of the class, so do not be afraid to ask a question, offer a comment, or disagree with one another. We must be open to discussing our own writing and the writing of others, including the authors we read and each other. You may say anything you like as long as you don't hurt anyone and as long as you back up your claims. Be respectful, willing to share your ideas and have them challenged, and curious about new ways of thinking.

### Late Assignments

All assignments are due via Blackboard by the assigned deadline. If you plan on being away from your computer when an assignment is due, you are responsible for getting your work to me ahead of time. *All assignments have a deadline, and deadlines are—as a general rule—non-negotiable.*

Discussion boards, rough drafts, better drafts, and peer reviews must be submitted by the deadline to receive credit and *cannot be made up*. Formal essays will be penalized *one point for each day they are late*. "Late" is defined as "after the deadline," and since our deadlines have dates *and* times, one minute late is still late. Be careful.

### Course Questions Forum

If there's something about the course, an assignment, or a concept that you don't understand, please post a thread in the Course Questions forum. Doing so enables me to reply publicly so that everyone may benefit from your question and my answer. Do not be afraid to do this. Ensuring you understand something is the first step to doing well, and chances are that other people are wondering the same thing as you. I encourage you to reply to one another if you know the answer to a classmate's question.

### Contacting Your Professor

Please use proper written communication etiquette when corresponding with me and your classmates. *Remember that questions pertaining to the course should be posted to the Course Questions forum for everyone's benefit (see above).* Even questions about your own essay or writing process can help the entire group and lead to wider discussions.

If you do need to reach me privately (i.e., to discuss a grade, health issue, etc.), please use Blackboard's messages tool. This is how I will contact you individually. *Only in an emergency* should you email me at [amarvin@threeivers.edu](mailto:amarvin@threeivers.edu).

I log into the course just about every day, and I will make every effort to respond to you within 24 hours. If you have sent me a Blackboard message, have not heard back within 24 hours, *and* the issue is urgent, you may email me.

### **Some Words About Technical Support**

Don't fail a course because of computer trouble. Here is TRCC's help page for students in distance learning courses. You should read this even if you don't anticipate problems.

<https://www.trcc.commnet.edu/learning-resources/educational-technology/student-resources/>

This is a fully online course, so you will be spending a lot of time on the computer and the Internet. While everyone takes their first online or hybrid course at some point and a certain learning curve is expected, there are nevertheless some things you simply *must* have to succeed in this class.

Our Learning Management System (LMS) is Blackboard, which is where the entire course takes place. That means you must be able to access and log into Blackboard (probably via <http://my.commnet.edu>). That means you must have a reliable Internet connection and a computing device that you're comfortable using and that can fulfill the requirements of the course.

This is a writing class. That means you need writing software. You can use whatever writing app you like as long as you submit assignments in the file formats I require (.docx and .pdf). Still, it's handy to have Microsoft Word on your computer, and you can download it for free using your student credentials. Follow the instructions here:

<https://www.trcc.commnet.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/installing-microsoft-office-suite-support-file.pdf> (video demo [here](#))

While there is always a chance that something in the course is missing or broken due to instructor error, I work tirelessly to prevent this from happening. Please let me know if I seem to have made a mistake. On the other hand, Blackboard is not very good. If you are having a technical issue with Blackboard, try a different browser (Safari, Chrome, etc.). If that doesn't work, please contact IT using the information at the bottom of this page:

<https://www.trcc.commnet.edu/learning-resources/educational-technology/student-resources/>

**Save Your Work Constantly.**

Make a habit of hitting CTRL+S or CMD+S every few seconds. Print extra copies of assignments for your records. Email assignments to yourself. Use external backups. I strongly recommend Dropbox (it's free; use <https://db.tt/hW0iLT4> for extra space) or a similar service to protect your work. Have multiple contingency plans in case one of your backup methods fails. Do not fall victim to carelessness or faulty technology.

**Plagiarism**

If you use someone else's words or thoughts without crediting them, you are plagiarizing. If you do not document your sources, you are plagiarizing. If you paraphrase without properly identifying the original author, you are plagiarizing. If you copy, buy, borrow, steal, or otherwise obtain and use another person's work as if it were your own, you are plagiarizing. Plagiarism is a high academic and literary offense. *If you plagiarize, I will catch you, and you will receive a zero for the assignment in question. I will also report you to the Academic Dean, and the incident will go on record.*

Plagiarism is theft. Do not do it.

**Withdrawal**

Students may officially withdraw from any class at the Registrar's Office (A115, registrar@trcc.commnet.edu, 215-9919) up to the end of the tenth week of classes. You should discuss the decision with the professor, as they can help you decide whether withdrawal is the right choice. Withdrawing does not affect your GPA, but it may have financial aid consequences, so consult with Financial Aid or your advisor before making any decisions. Any student who does not attend class or complete all coursework without officially withdrawing will be graded accordingly.

**myCommNet Alert**

myCommNet Alert is a system that sends text messages and emails when there is a campus emergency. Additionally, TRCC sends messages when the college is delayed or closed due to weather. I encourage you to sign up for these alerts in myCommNet.

**Special Considerations for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this course, please meet with a Disability Service Provider (see the chart below) as soon as possible. Please note that an instructor cannot offer disability accommodations until a student provides the necessary paperwork from the college's Office of Disability Services. Also note that



*accommodations take effect when the instructor receives the paperwork from a student. They will not be provided retroactively.*

<b>TRCC Disability Service Providers</b> Counseling & Advising Office	
Matt Liscum, Counselor (860) 215-9265 Room A113	Learning disabilities, ADD/ADHD, autism spectrum, mental health
Elizabeth Willcox, Advisor (860) 215-9289 Room A113	Medical, mobility, and sensory disabilities

### **Academic Integrity**

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 throughout 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.

### **The Writing Center: C113**

The mission of the TRCC Writing Center is to give all students the tools and support they need to be successful and independent academic writers. It offers a range of services for students, faculty and staff covering four basic areas: walk-in and reserved appointments, classroom presentations, writing resources, and emailed paper submission. To contact the Writing Center, call (860) 215-9082, or email [TRWritingCenter@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:TRWritingCenter@trcc.commnet.edu).

### **Donald R. Welter Library**

The library is open Monday–Thursday from 8:30 AM to 8:00 PM and Friday from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM. It is closed on Saturdays and Sundays. Hours may be truncated during the Summer and Winter sessions. The Circulation & Information Desk can be reached at (860) 215-9051. For more information, visit [the library's website](#).

### **Computer Labs**

In addition to the Writing Center's Tutoring Lab and the library, room E112 is an open computer lab. Its hours of operation are Monday–Thursday 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM and

Friday 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM. It is closed on Saturdays and Sundays. Hours may be truncated during the Summer and Winter sessions.

### **Printing**

Students can print from the open computer lab (E112), TASC, and the library. Each semester, students get a printing balance of \$25.00. To purchase additional print credit, fill out the form in the IT Department (C135), and bring it to the Cashier's Office in the A-Wing. If you have technical difficulties while printing, contact IT (see above).

### **Digication**

All students are required to maintain an online learning portfolio in Digication using the college template. Digication gives students the opportunity to monitor their personal growth and integrate lessons from inside and outside the classroom. Periodically, a Three Rivers General Education Assessment Team will select and review random works to help improve the college experience. Student work reviewed for assessment purposes will remain private and anonymous. Students can create multiple portfolios and may continue to use their Digication account after graduation.

### **Mandated Court Reporter**

Please know that I am required to share what you tell me with the Title IX Coordinator or the Dean of Student Services. They will want to discuss your rights and options with you, and they will do their best to protect your privacy and honor your wishes, but they may need to investigate further or even contact law enforcement if there is a danger to you or the campus.

You also have a right to a completely confidential option, and Student Services (A Wing) can help you access free, 24/7 counseling services, which can also connect you with legal or medical help.

### **Board of Regents for Higher Education and Connecticut State Colleges and Universities Policy Regarding Sexual Misconduct Reporting, Support Services, and Processes Policy**

Statement of Policy for Public Act No. 14-11: An Act Concerning Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Intimate Partner Violence on Campus:

“The Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) in conjunction with the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) is committed to insuring that each member of every BOR governed college and university community has the opportunity to participate fully in the process of education free from acts of sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, and stalking. It is the intent of the BOR and each of its colleges or universities

to provide safety, privacy and support to victims of sexual misconduct and intimate partner violence.”

### **United States Department of Education and Office of Civil Rights Title IX Statement of Policy**

“Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs and activities in federally funded schools at all levels. If any part of a school district or college receives any Federal funds for any purpose, all of the operations of the district or college are covered by Title IX.

Title IX protects students, employees, applicants for admission and employment, and other persons from all forms of sex discrimination, including discrimination based on gender identity or failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity. All students (as well as other persons) at recipient institutions are protected by Title IX — regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, part-or full-time status, disability, race, or national origin-in all aspects of a recipient’s educational programs and activities.”

If any student experiences sexual misconduct or harassment and/or racial or ethnic discrimination on the Three Rivers Community College campus, or fears for their safety from a threat while on campus, please contact:

Maria Krug  
Title IX Coordinator  
Office A113A  
574 New London Turnpike, Norwich, CT 06360  
(860) 215-9208  
[mkrug@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:mkrug@trcc.commnet.edu)