

English 101
English Composition
Albert C. Wagner
Spring 2015

COURSE GOALS

Welcome to English 101! We are very excited to have you in the course for this semester. English 101 is a college composition course and in many ways it serves as a gateway to your future coursework. The course focuses on teaching and reinforcing proper grammar, analysis of arguments, constructing original arguments and the framework for writing a 5-paragraph essay. The skills that you will learn in this class will not only serve to get you a good grade in the course, but they will continue to be relevant to the remainder of your coursework and in your daily life.

We hope that you come to class with an open mind. The course will challenge your existing writing habits and analytical approach. We encourage you to take criticism and advice from your instructors and fellow students constructively, as we will also take your criticism and suggestions very seriously. While we have developed a set syllabus, the course will develop organically as your skills and interests become more defined.

We are here to help you to become better writers. Everyone can learn to write better. As a result, please take advantage of the opportunity to re-write your essays and incorporate our feedback. Your grade and your knowledge can only increase! With that said, be confident in your writing ability. Writing is just a formal means of conveying our thoughts and ideas. We all know how to communicate so don't be afraid to express yourself on paper. You will surprise yourself with how much you already know and how much you will have learned by the end of the course. So please, take the challenge to become a better writer. We are here to assist you every step of the way.

SYLLABUS

UNIT ONE: WHAT ARE THE INGREDIENTS FOR GOOD WRITING

WEEK 1

Tuesday, February 3

Introduction

- Discuss goals of course, review syllabus
- Discussion of class expectations – of instructors and of students.
 - What do you, as students, expect from us as teachers?
 - What do you think we, as teachers, expect from students?
 - What do you expect from each other? How are we going to treat each other?
 - Hand out other Resources: How to best use a dictionary
- In Class reading and discussion
 - What we mean by “reading.”
- Why Write? The value and purpose of writing, different kinds of writing, different styles, good vs. bad writing
- Introductory questionnaire

Homework:

- *Read George Orwell, “Why I Write,” and Joan Didion, “Why I Write.” For each, circle one sentence you like and one you dislike. Three sentence response.*

Thursday, February 5

Why Write? What makes Writing Good or Bad?

- Reading response due
- Discuss “Why I Write.” Best or most interesting sentences? Get five sentences as a class.
- Grammar assessment

Homework:

- *Read Italo Calvino, “The Black Sheep” and Plato, “The Parable of the Cave.” Circle five sentences worth discussing. Three-sentence response.*

WEEK 2

Tuesday, February 10

The Sentence

- Reading response due
- Discussion of “The Black Sheep” and “The Parable of the Cave”
- Generate five sentences from the class and review:
 - Parts of a sentence: subject, verb, modifiers
 - Dependent vs. independent clauses
 - Overview of grammatical terms.

Homework:

- Take the five sentences generated by the class and identify the subject and verb in each.
- Read *The Iliad*: “Battle of Achilles and Hector”
- Read *The Odyssey*: “The Curse of Polyphemus”
- Write 3 sentences in response to each reading: What’s it about? Who are the characters and what are they like? What do you notice about these stories?

Thursday, February 12

The Paragraph

- What is a paragraph?
- Paragraph Burger” exercise. Emphasis on finding a thesis
- Discuss the selections from *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*
- In partners draft a two paragraph summary of the selections from either *The Iliad* or *The Odyssey*

Homework:

- Read “Amateurism and the NCAA” & “In defense of the NCAA”
- Identify the thesis statement for three paragraphs in each reading
- Come in to class prepared to argue in favor or against the NCAA’s official position

WEEK 3

Tuesday, February 17

Quotation, Citation and Paraphrase

- Quotation vs. Paraphrase
- Why cite information? What is plagiarism?
- Mini-debate on the NCAA op-eds
 - Exercise: Turning quotations into paraphrase, using quotation from assigned articles.

Homework:

- Read “Clergy Letter to Martin Luther King, Junior,” and “Letter From a Birmingham Jail.”

Thursday, February 19

Grammar Review

- Quick review of the grammar concepts covered to this point in the course in anticipation of **grammar review quiz on Tuesday, February 24**
- Exercise: Students interview each other on their reactions to the Clergy Letter and MLK’s response
- Review the letters and discuss reactions as a class
- If time remains, begin working on the homework paragraph

Homework

- Write a paragraph, 3-5 sentences summarizing your interview partner’s reaction to the “Clergy Letter to Martin Luther King, Junior” and “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”. Use at least one quote and one paraphrase. Remember paragraphs should start with a thesis statement

WEEK 4

Tuesday, February 24

Beyond the Paragraph

- Take grammar review quiz & review answers together
- Discuss “Clergy Letter to Martin Luther King, Junior,” “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”
- What is an essay? What is the function of a paragraph in a longer piece of writing?
- Discuss how the structure of an essay mimics that of a paragraph
- Wrap-up discussing the essential elements of good writing

Homework:

- *Pick one of our readings and write two paragraphs on it. The first paragraph should summarize the main point of the reading; the second should give your opinion on the reading. Each paragraph should contain 4-7 complete sentences, a thesis, and supporting information. **First draft due Thursday, February 26***

Thursday, February 26

Peer Review

- Bring in first draft of your two paragraph essay
- Match up in Partners to review each other’s essay. The point of peer review is to correct grammar and comment on ways to improve their writing style. Take this seriously, as it is a way to improve both your writing and your partner’s writing.
- Meet with English 101 instructors about your essay

Homework:

- *Make necessary edits to your essay. **Next draft of two paragraph essay due Tuesday, March 3***
- *Read Orwell, “What is Science?” Select two quotes and write a three sentence response for each quote.*

UNIT TWO: MAKING AN ARGUMENT: THE FIVE PARAGRAPH ESSAY

WEEK 5

Tuesday March 3

The 5-Paragraph Essay

- Two Paragraphs Due
- Introduction to “brainstorming”
- Brainstorm necessary parts of an argument
- Introduce 5-paragraph essay
- Read 5-paragraph essay example: “The Hazards of Moviegoing”

Making an Argument

- Discuss Orwell reading.
- What is an argument? Why is making one important?
- In-class exercise: Parts of an argument
- Brainstorm possible 5-paragraph essay, using homework assignment [quotes and responses].

Homework:

- *Read Barbara Ehrenreich, "Science, Lies, and the Ultimate Truth." Identify Ehrenreich's main argument. Write one paragraph describing how it is different from the argument Orwell is making?*

Thursday, March 5

Essay Outlines

- Paragraph due: Discuss Ehrenreich vs. Orwell.
- Introduce ESSAY #2: A five-paragraph essay on the topic: Is a balanced education necessary?

Due Tuesday, March 10

- Intro to Outlines
- In-class exercise: Sample outline on an essay topic chosen by the class.

Homework:

- *Prepare essay outline. Be prepared to show your outlines to other students and discuss them in class.*

WEEK 6

Tuesday, March 10

Gathering Research

- Essay outline due. Discussion of outlines – questions and concerns
- Class discussion: Why should you cite information in an essay? Parallels between citation and discussion: what it means to contribute to a discourse
- Handout: Incorporating research into an outline
- In-Class Exercise: Find quotations from articles to support your outline. Goal: one quotation and one paraphrase for each.

Homework:

- ***ESSAY 2 due Tuesday, March 17*** Begin by drafting an introduction and one body paragraph.

Thursday, March 12

Essay Writing Workshop: Editor's Meeting

- Discussion of essay progress. Refresher on essay expectations. Meet with instructors to discuss the progress of your work
- Grammar exercise

Homework:

- *Finish Essay #2. DUE NEXT CLASS*

WEEK 7

Tuesday, March 17

NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK

Thursday, March 19

NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK

WEEK 8

Tuesday, March 24

Editing and Revision

• **ESSAY #2 DUE**

- In-class discussion: Handout, excerpt from Orwell's "Politics and the English Language" discussing the principles of good writing
- Approaching editing and revision: what is the editing process? How do you make writing better?
- In-Class Exercise: Can this Paragraph be Saved?
- Homework:
 - *Read Orwell, "Politics and the English Language." Write three sentences on what you look for in good writing. Prepare for in-class editing session.*

Thursday, March 26

Editors' Meeting

- Handout: peer editing worksheet
- Peer editing of Essay #2
- Individual meetings with instructors

Homework:

- *Revise essay based on input from peers and instructors*

WEEK 9

Tuesday, March 31

The Five-Paragraph Essay Reviewed

- FINAL DRAFT OF ESSAY #2 DUE
- In-class discussion: What does a five-paragraph essay do? Strengths and weaknesses?
- Grammar exercise
- Introduction to next unit: literary analysis. How does fiction writing operate differently from nonfiction? How could you use essay writing to approach fiction?

Homework:

- *Read Part one of Fences. Three-sentence response.*

UNIT THREE: LITERARY ANALYSIS

Thursday, April 2 - Introduction to literary analysis

Discussion of first part of *Fences*.

- Discussion of close reading: what is close reading? Why do we close read? What are some close reading strategies? Close read a few sentences together.
- Handout: terms for literary analysis.

Homework:

- *Read second part of *Fences*. Three-sentence response.*

WEEK 10

Tuesday, April 7

Literary analysis continued

- *Fences* discussion, continued.
- Discussion and in-class essay topic: in *Fences*, Wilson introduces Troy by saying he "is usually the most talkative and at times he can be crude and almost vulgar, though he is capable of rising to profound heights of expression." In the context of the play, what do you think the difference is between 'crudeness' and 'profound expression'? Use evidence from the text.

Homework:

- *Read the third part of Fences.*
- *Writing response: choose a sentence or two you find interesting. Write one paragraph on the ways it makes meaning using evidence from the text. Possible topics: What does it reveal about the character who says it? What is their attitude in saying it? How would you characterize the language they are using?*

Thursday, April 9

Literature and the five-paragraph essay

Fences discussion wrap-up.

In-class writing exercise: choose one character and, using evidence from the text, outline his or her motivations or desires in the play. Do they get what they want or do they not? What does that mean for them?

- Introduce ESSAY #3: literary analysis. ***Due Tuesday, April 14***
- Discuss possible essay topics. Brainstorm outlines and theses for the essay.

Homework:

- *Outline Fences essay.*

WEEK 11

Tuesday, April 14

How does a five-paragraph essay help us understand literature?

- Essay outline discussion.
- In-class reading: excerpt from "Baseball as History and Myth in *Fences*."
- Discussion of the essay as an analytical tool.

Homework:

- *Introduction and two body paragraphs of Fences essay.*

Thursday, April 16

Editor's meeting

- Essay #3: questions, concerns, meetings with instructors.

Homework:

- *Finish Essay #3, DUE NEXT CLASS!*

UNIT FOUR: ORIGINAL RESEARCH

WEEK 12

Tuesday, April 21

Original Research

- ESSAY #3 DUE
- Unit Three wrap-up discussion

- Introduce the next unit: an essay drawing on an original topic. Choice of topics presented. Students choose and read through their research packets. **Essay #4 due**
- Introduce small-groups for research essay workshop
- Homework:
 - *Read through research packet. One paragraph on potential essay topic.*
 - *Write essay outline for next class. Be prepared to present essay outline to your small group.*

Thursday, April 23

NO CLASS

WEEK 13

Tuesday, April 28

Editors' Meeting

- Present outlines to your small group
- Work on essay paragraphs with other students and instructors.

Homework:

- *Work on Essay #4.*

Thursday, April 30

Research Essay: Examples and Theory

- In-class activity: Review a research essay as a class. Practice identifying its thesis, its supporting arguments, its citations, and its conclusion. Suggest improvements or further research for the essay.

Homework:

- *Work on Essay #4. Read Kant, "What is Enlightenment?"*

WEEK 14

Tuesday, May 5

How Do Research and Writing Affect the World?

- Discuss Kant
- Work on Essay #4

Homework:

- *Finish Essay #4. Essay #4 due on Thursday, May 7*

Thursday, May 7

Preparing for the Final

• ESSAY #4 DUE

- Discussion of the final essay: what to expect, what to focus on, grading and expectations
- Prepare materials for final essay

Editor's meeting

- Rewrite other Essay drafts

Homework:

- *Prepare materials for final essay.*

WEEK 15

Tuesday, May 12

FINAL – IN-CLASS ESSAY

Homework:

- *Last round of final essay revisions **due next class***

Thursday, May 19

Editor's meeting

- Discussion of the class: what did you learn? What do you still want to learn?
- What to expect in English 102
- Workshop final essays, making last changes and improvements.

GUIDELINES, GRADING AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Guidelines

- Please try to attend as many classes as possible. The class moves quickly and it will be easy to fall behind.
- Homework is marked in italics on the syllabus – please make sure you have completed it **before you come to class**, particularly essay outlines and the essays themselves.
- Essay and assignment due dates are marked in **BOLD** on the syllabus.
- We realize there are many reasons it might be difficult to do both of these things, so if you think you'll have trouble coming to class or completing the homework, just let us know and we'll work something out. If you talk to us, there is almost always something we can do to get you back on track.

Grading

- You will be graded on the four unit essays (60%), the in-class essay (10%), the exit essay (10%), and participation (20%). Participation mainly consists in showing up ready to read and talk, and completing all assignments.
- The first time you turn in an essay, we will give you a provisional grade. If you revise the essay, your grade will go up. Your grade will not go down if you turn in a revision. We strongly encourage you to revise. All revisions are due by the last day of class. We will give some in-class time to work on revisions so you can ask questions.
- The exit essay is graded pass/fail and cannot be revised. If you fail the exit essay, you can still pass

the class, but your revisions of essays will be very important.

- If you have concerns, please come talk to us. We are happy to help you figure something out, either with extra credit or guided revisions.

Portfolios

The portfolio is the most important part of your grade. Your portfolio should include the following:

- ALL of your original essays
- ALL of your revisions
- ALL of your homework assignments and extra writing
- ALL of your free writing exercises

Your portfolio allows us to clearly grade your work over the semester, as well as the end of the semester. It allows us to compare your early writing to your later writing, and it also helps us assess its improvement. Revisions help us identify what areas of your writing you should continue working on as you continue taking college classes (specific grammatical issues, revision, clarity, counterarguments, etc.).

You should consider it absolutely imperative to revise your essays. Revision allows you to improve your writing, as well as to engage with the comments of the people who read your writing.

On a more practical level: if your original essay received a C- or a C, and you do not submit a revision, that C-/C will be your final grade for that essay. If you revise, though, your grade automatically goes up by at least 1/3 of a grade (for example, from a C+ to a B-), and can go up by much more than that, depending on the quality and extent of your revision (we have had some students raise their grades from a C to an A- or A on certain essays).

Academic Integrity

[http://www.mccc.edu/admissions_policies_integrity.shtml]

Mercer County Community College is committed to Academic Integrity -- the honest, fair and continuing pursuit of knowledge, free from fraud or deception. This implies that students are expected to be responsible for their own work, and that faculty and academic support services staff members will take reasonable precautions to prevent the opportunity for academic dishonesty.

Violations

The college recognizes the following general categories of violations of academic integrity, with representative examples of each. Academic integrity is violated whenever a student:

- A. Uses or obtains unauthorized assistance in any academic work.
- B. Gives fraudulent assistance to another student.
- C. Knowingly represents the work of others as his/her own, or represents previously completed academic work as current.
- D. Fabricates data in support of an academic assignment.
- E. Inappropriately or unethically uses technological means to gain academic advantage.

Each instructor and academic support service area is authorized to establish specific guidelines consistent with this policy.

Consequences for Violations of Academic Integrity

For a single violation, the faculty member will determine the course of action to be followed. This may

include assigning a lower grade on the assignment, assigning a lower final course grade, failing the student in the course, or other penalty appropriate to the violation.

Appeals

The student has a right to appeal the decision of the instructor or the Academic Integrity Committee. Judicial procedures governing violations of academic integrity are contained in the Student Handbook.

Approved: Board of Trustees March 18, 2004