

English 252 – Writing Improvement

Spring 2010

T 12:30-2:20 in DVC 107

Th 12:30-2:20 in DVC 104

Reedley College

Instructor: Drew A. Stutsman

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Office Hours: By appointment

Rationale: In many areas of the work world—particularly business, government, and education—one’s success depends on the ability to manipulate, both orally and in writing, the Standard Dialect of American English. This course is designed to focus the student’s attention on problem areas of sentence structure, punctuation, and word usage and to assist him/her to recognize and produce accepted language elements.

Required Textbooks:

Biays & Wershoven, Along These Lines, 3rd Edition

Reynolds & Huntington, Confidence in Writing

Required Materials:

Notebook/Pens/Paper

Course Objectives: Practice in English sentences, paragraphs, and short

papers; including work with spelling, vocabulary, punctuation,

usage, and sentence structure skills needed by writers. Emphasis

on the communication of the writer’s ideas.

**Course Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

* Write complete sentences, avoiding or correcting major sentence errors and punctuating correctly.
* Use the conventions of English writing; including capitalization, indenting, spelling, hyphenating, etc.
* Write clear, varied, appropriate sentences.
* Use verbs correctly in present, past future, and present perfect tenses and use the correct forms of common irregular verbs.
* Combine sentences using coordination, subordination, and phrase structures.
* Write short papers (approx 500 words) that demonstrate rhetorical control of the main idea, utilizing the writing process in     developing, writing, revising, and editing those papers.
* Complete an in-class writing exam with minimal errors.
* Divide the writer's text into paragraphs.
* Use appropriate word skills, including spelling and vocabulary, affixes common in English, contractions, etc.
* Recognize usage and dialect levels:  standard, community or neighborhood, slang.

Attendance Policy: Congratulations, you're in college now. With that privilege comes the responsibility to attend class on a regular basis. If you want to be successful, all reading and writing assignments must be completed by the date specified. Your commitment to my class must include good attendance, punctuality, and taking the initiative to participate in classroom discussion. My policy is that you miss no more than three classes throughout the semester. You will still be responsible to make-up any assignment(s) you may miss. A good thing to do is to buddy up with someone in class, swap e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers. I will not respond to e-mails asking me about assignments missed. It is up to you to find out the assignments on your own.

Free Writing: At the beginning of each class, we will free write. Free write is easy and only has one rule—Write for 10 minutes nonstop. Subject matter for free write will be topical and relevant to life in America today. You are required to have a notebook that will compile all of your free writes throughout the semester. I reserve the right to collect the notebooks at any point in the semester to check the integrity of the assignment.

Assignments: All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Please don't miss class because you haven't done the assignment. The class time you miss will only dig the hole deeper, meaning that it will become more difficult to succeed in my class. If you have discussed your absences with me ahead of time and I have given permission for you to turn in your assignments past the due date, I must have your assignments at the beginning of the class on the day you return. The grades on late writing assignments will be reduced one letter grade for each school day the assignment is late. Papers turned in to my box will be considered late and dropped a letter grade as indicated in my policy. I will be using Blackboard for some assignments—I will you adequate notice about these assignments.

Essays and Rewrites: Papers are due at class time unless otherwise indicated. Please do not miss class to complete your paper. If you are having technical difficulty, please come to class and talk to me so we can work it out. Papers put in my box during class time will be considered late. Grades on late papers with be reduced a letter grade for every day it is late.

Quizzes and Exams: Unannounced quizzes will be given on a regular basis. Also, in-class writing exams will be given, to demonstrate the learning curve (Standard essays with beginning, middle, and end which communicate a clear idea.)

Homework: Homework assignments will be given early and often. We will review these assignments in class as I see fit.

Vocabulary: We’ll do some vocabulary review on occasion. I’ll share some resources that have helped me over the years with expanding my own vocabulary.

Requirements and Grades:

Essays and Rewrites: 70%

Grammar review/Tests: 15%

Homework: 10%

Participation/Free Write: 5%

Student Resources:

The Writing Center is available to help you with any trouble you might be having with your writing. The first week of class is the best time to enroll. The Writing Center is in Humanities 48 on the Reedley campus. The Tutorial Center is in the library if you need one-on-one help.

**Class Rules:**

1. Be prepared for class.  Bring your book, papers you are working on, notes, handouts, floppy disks, pens, pencils, etc.
2. No talking to your neighbors while someone else is talking, including me.
3. No cell phones.  All cell phones must be turned off upon entering class.  They must be placed in your pocket or in your book bag.  Do not answer a cell phone during class.  Do not look at your cell phone during class.  Do not go outside to talk on your cell phone during class.  If you leave your cell phone on your desk, play with your cell phone, answer your cell phone, or talk on it, you may be asked to leave for the day.  The same rules apply to pagers.
4. Class time is for doing what I assign and not what someone else assigns.  It’s not a time to check your e-mail or do any other internet work.  If you are not on task, I will ask you to leave class.  If you finish your work early, let me know!  Also be prepared.  I already wrote above that you need to bring your writing assignment work with you every day.  If you do not have it, and that is what we are working on, I will ask you to leave and you will be marked absent.
5. If you come to class late, come in and sit down quietly.  Do not ask your neighbor what we are doing.  Do not come up to me to find out what we are doing.  Wait until a break or until after class to find out what is going on.

**If you don’t follow the rules, or are disruptive in anyway, I will ask you to leave class for the day.  If you continue to not follow the rules or to be disruptive, I will file a report with the Dean of Students**. (You are disruptive if you are talking while we are doing class work, if you are doing other work besides the assigned task, if you do not follow directions, if you do not follow the above rules, if you use an inappropriate tone, etc.)

**Other Tips and such:**

* Keep a copy of all your work until the end of the semester.
* Maintain an “I can” attitude – Positive people tend to have positive outcomes (and the opposite is true too).
* Always be prepared for class: If you show-up and you are not prepared, it’s likely that I will ask you to leave and you will receive an absence for that day.
* Showing up is not enough: It’s true that being present helps you to learn, but if you do not do the assignments, you will not pass.
* Turning work in is not enough: just doing the assignment does not warrant a passing grade. You need to be doing passing work to pass the class.
* If you stop coming to the class, be sure to drop. It is your responsibility to do so, not mine. Forgetting to do so could earn you an “F” or “NC” as a final semester grade.  Let me know if you are going to drop so that I don’t worry about you.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Please inform me of any special circumstances you might have.  If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including alternate media requests, please notify me immediately.  Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your needs.**