#### English 125- Writing Skills (59425)

Reedley College, Fall 2014

Instructor: Lisa McHarry

Office / Phone:

E-mail: lisa.mcharry@fresnocitycollege.edu

Office Hours: By appointment only

Course Information: English 125 (4 Units) 7-8:50am Tues Hum62 /Thurs Social Science 35

#### Course Overview

###### English 125 develops the process of writing, revising and finishing short papers, including logical development and organization of ideas. Emphasizes avoiding common writing errors; develops critical thinking and writing skills by reading model essays by analyzing and utilizing rhetorical strategies appropriate to purpose and audience. Develops basic research skills. Meets A.A./A.S. degree requirements for writing. Prepares students for English 1A.

###### Required Texts, Materials and Expenses

* Greene, Stuart and April Lidinsky. *From Inquiry to Academic Writing: A Text and Reader.* 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2011. Print. (required)
* Strayed, Cheryl. *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail*. New York: Vintage Books, 2013. Print. (required)
* Hacker, Diana and Nancy Sommers. *A Pocket Style Manual*. 6th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2011. Print. (optional)
* Much of this class will be paperless, so a computer, some kind of word processing program, and online access are required. Computer use in class will most likely not be necessary and I will let you know when it is appropriate to use your computer/tablet in class.

#### Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Pre-write constructively to generate ideas and determine ideas, opinions, positions, and ultimately theses and plans
2. Respond to a prompt quickly and independently
3. Write a developed essay with a clear thesis and support
4. Write with some sophistication: introduction should be more than a thesis; a conclusion should be more than a summary; an essay should have ample substance
5. Plan and revise fairly independently employing all stages of the writing process as necessary and appropriate
6. Recognize and revise common errors such as problems with comma splices throughout a piece
7. Use a variety of rhetorics and strictures, including documented sources
8. Use MLA style with some guidance to set up papers and document sources

**Absences:** The class will adhere to the Reedley College catalog attendance policy which states: *Students are expected to attend all sessions of classes for which they are enrolled. Excessive absence will jeopardize a student’s satisfactory progress in a class. Students may be dropped from a class if they fail to attend the first class session of the semester. As a guide, during the semester up to the final drop date, any student who misses more than two weeks of class meetings may be dropped.*

#### Projects and Assignments

Class Participation (10%): You must be prepared and willing to participate in the class discussions and group activities. For full class participation credit, I expect that you will 1) have the homework done for the day, 2) have thought about the homework, will come with questions, experiences, thoughts, challenges, etc, 3) be willing to take risks by discussing things you don’t understand or by bringing topics to our discussions.

Small Group Workshops (20%): A key component to this class is peer response to drafts of formal and informal writing. Students will be expected to share their writing with their peers in order to get feedback about how to revise the writing to better address an audiences questions, challenges, and responses. This means that everyone will need to share their writing with others AND strive to be a good reader to peer drafts. Workshopping will happen both online and in the class, in small groups and as a large group. You will get more specific instructions for how we will workshop in the class, but know that I will expect you will share your texts with your peers and be open to their response. I also expect that you will read your peer’s texts actively and work hard to give them quality feedback about how they can improve their writing.

Writing Online (20%): In this class, you will have several opportunities to try out different genres of online writing for most of the writing you will do for this class. This class will use blogs and discussion board for the purpose of developing your abilities as a writer. These online forums are opportunities for you to try out strategies in response to the readings we do in class. Assignments for these will be outlined in the schedule, but generally need to be at least 200 words. All assignments due online need to be submitted by 7AM the on the date they are due.

Formal Writing Projects (40%): In this class, you will have three formal writing projects of various lengths. These writing projects are meant to get you to read, write, and respond as both a student in the university and as a public citizen. More information about these writing projects will be given to you during the semester. Generally, these projects require outside research using both academic and nonacademic sources; they require you to write multiple drafts before a project is complete, and they must be written toward an audience, which means you will need to contextualize and explain your claims and examples, give readers a clear sense of why your responses and ideas matter, and be proofread in the final text.

Final Portfolio: At the end of the semester, you will create a representation of your work as a writer in this class. For the final portfolio, you will choose at least 10 pages of formal writing to represent who you have become as a writer and write a 4 page reflective cover letter that discusses your learning over the entire semester. Your portfolio will be assessed according to the learning outcomes. The Final Portfolio is graded as a formal writing project.

Quizzes (10%): There will be weekly quizzes to cover readings and lecture notes.

**Specifications:**

1. Late Assignments: You will agree to turn in properly and on time the final portfolio, all writing project drafts, blogs, discussion board posts and other assignments. Because your colleagues in class depend on you to get your work done on time so that they can do theirs on time, late assignments **will not** be accepted without penalty to your grade. Assignments and papers may be submitted within one week of the initial due date for a reduced grade of at least 10%. No assignments/papers are accepted after one week passed the due date.
2. Blogs, Discussion Board posts, and Formal Writing Projects need to meet the following conditions:
* *Complete and On Time*: You’ll turn in on time and in the appropriate manner complete products that meet individual assignment guidelines, which will be listed in the syllabus or assignment prompt or will be worked out together in class.
* *Revisions*: When the assignment is to revise, you will work to reshape, extend, complicate, or substantially clarify your ideas – or relate your ideas to comments from me, your classmates, or the information generated in a class workshop. **I expect you to do more than just correct or touch up; revisions should respond substantially to your colleagues’ assessments.**
* *Copy Editing*: Your writing must be well copy edited – that is, free from virtually all mistakes in spelling and grammar. It's fine to get help in copy-editing, but be sure that you are doing the editing and that the final product reflects your words and abilities with language. I will not be so concerned with editing issues in drafts or in your blogs or assessments. But please be sure to proofread these at least once before submitting them.
* *Mindfulness*: In each of these projects, you are being asked to go beyond summarizing and reporting what you found in the reading and in your research. I encourage you to push your thinking in this class by questioning your own assumptions as well as ours (me and your classmates), and connecting and analyzing the readings in the class in relation to your work.
1. Peer Responses and Assessments: we will make frequent use of this kind of writing/discussion in class. Your work needs to meet the following conditions:
* *Complete and On**Time*: All peer responses should be complete and submitted on time and in the appropriate way so that your colleagues will get your assessments of their writing the way the class has predetermined.
* *Content*: All peer responses should focus their comments on rubrics we develop, following the directions established in class for peer response and our evolving class discussions about them.
* *Courtesy and Respect*: All peer response should be courteous and respectful in tone, but honest. It’s okay to say something doesn’t seem right in a draft, or that something doesn’t really work. Respect means we are kind and truthful.
1. Final Portfolios: You’ll turn in complete and on time a final course portfolio according to the portfolio handout.

**Writing Center (HUM 58):** You are STRONGLY encouraged to enroll in the Writing Center’s English 272 course, a ½ unit tutorial class.

\* **Bonus**: Each student may drop two lowest quiz grades or online writing responses by meeting with a writing tutor in the Writing Center. Two conditions: (1) you must bring the tutor a formal writing project (instead of a blog or other smaller assignment) and (2) you need to bring me the form from the Writing Center that proves you were there and explains what kind of feedback you received from the tutor. This can only be done twice in a semester to enhance your grade, but you are encouraged to visit the Writing Center as much as possible. See me if you have any questions about this.

#### Religious Observances: Students who will be absent from class due to religious observance must provide notice of the date(s) to me, in writing, by the end of the second week of classes.

Reedley College Sponsored Events: For those students who will need to take time off for school sponsored events, I will need to know the date of those absences by the second week of classes in order to excuse those absences. This will need to be on letterhead from the person in charge of your organization.

**SCCCD Policies**

**Plagiarism/Cheating:** Plagiarism is the act of using another person’s words OR IDEAS as your own with no citation for their work. Cheating includes having anyone else complete your work for you or turning in a paper you have written for another class. You will be caught, receive no credit on the assignment, reported to the administration, and may be dropped from the course. If plagiarism and/or cheating are suspected, you may be asked to provide drafts of your written work and submit your paper to turnitin.com, a plagiarism-checking service. Keep all drafts of your writing assignments for these purposes.

The following is taken from page 44 of the Reedley College Catalog:

***Academic Dishonesty***

*Students at Reedley College are entitled to the best education that the college can make available to them, and they, their instructors, and their fellow students share the responsibility to ensure that this education is honestly attained. Because cheating, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities erode the integrity of the college, each student is expected to exert an entirely honest effort in all academic endeavors. Academic dishonesty in any form is a very serious offense and will incur serious consequences.*

***Cheating***

*Cheating is the act or attempted act of taking an examination or performing an assigned, evaluated task in a fraudulent or deceptive manner, such as having improper access to answers, in an attempt to gain an unearned academic advantage. Cheating may include, but is not limited to, copying from another’s work, supplying one’s work to another, giving or receiving copies of examinations without an instructor’s permission, using or displaying notes or devices inappropriate to the conditions of the examination, allowing someone other than the officially enrolled student to represent the student, or failing to disclose research results completely.*

***Plagiarism***

*Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating: the use of another’s words or ideas without identifying them as such or giving credit to the source. Plagiarism may include, but is not limited to, failing to provide complete citations and references for all work that draws on the ideas, words, or work of others, failing to identify the contributors to work done in collaboration, submitting duplicate work to be evaluated in different courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors involved, or failing to observe computer security systems and software copyrights. Incidents of cheating and plagiarism may result in any of a variety of sanctions and penalties, which may range from a failing grade on the particular examination, paper, project, or assignment in question to a failing grade in the course, at the discretion of the instructor and depending on the severity and frequency of the incidents.*

**DSPS**

If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (i.e.: Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact me as soon as possible.

**Elevators**

The elevators on campus are intended primarily for use by authorized staff and students with physical disabilities. Each time you frivolously use the elevator you may be preventing a student with a physical disability from getting to class in a timely fashion. Please be courteous of others with special needs and use the stairs whenever possible. On those days when you do feel a need to use the elevator, please allow authorized staff and any students with disabilities to enter first. Please do not crowd or push any other student if the elevator is full. Wait for the next empty elevator so you and other students can arrive to your class safely. Thank you for your cooperation.