# English 125: Writing for College

# Spring 2017

Instructor: Kamilah Okafor Email: kamilah.okafor@reedleycollege.edu

 ko009@scccd.net

English 125, CRN: 59138; 59140

Room: Tuesday and Thursday, CCI 202; SOC 35 Office Hours: (by appointment)

Class time:2:00pm-3:50pm; 6:00pm-7:50pm

Fall Semester: 1/10-5/19

Prerequisites: Successful completion of English 252 or English as a Second Language 225W or placement by the college assessment process.

**Course Overview**

In this course, students will develop the process of writing, revising, and finishing essays, which includes the logical development and organization of ideas. Students will avoid common writing errors, develop their writing skills by reading model essays and analyzing rhetorical strategies, develop critical thinking skills by matching the structures of writing to meaning and audience, and by using writing as thinking to explore and express ideas. This course is a companion to ENGL 126 and prepares students for ENGL 1A. **Students must successfully complete written course work to receive credit.**

Writing is not just a demonstration of one’s ability to write. Writing is a tool, a strategy for generating ideas, for analyzing information, for inventing responses, for communicating successfully, for critiquing your own thoughts, or creating a record of your thinking. In this class writing will serve many purposes. Consequently, you will be asked to write for many different reasons; thus, your writing will not simply be a reflection of your competence, it will be a representation of your engagement in the class.

**Required Texts/Materials:**

* Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say, I Say, 3rd ed. W/Readings-MLA Updated*- ISBN: 978-0393617443
* Boyle, T.C. *Tortilla Curtain* ISBN: 978-0140238280 **(You must have this book by Week 9, Monday, March 7th)**
* Handouts (provided by instructor, and must be brought to class.)
* Money set aside to copy individual writing projects for workshopping and other copies.
* Flash/jump/thumb drive for saving assignments during lab hours
* Access to Canvas (CV) and SCCCD email account.
* A notebook for taking down lecture notes, taking quizzes, etc.
* A separate composition journal for in-class journal writing.
* Access to a home/library computer and printer.

**Course Content**

The course will be divided into three writing projects, a midterm, and a final exam. Each paper will be preceded by drafts, and all writing assignments must be completed to pass the class. You will also complete daily journal writes and homework assignments. You will be expected to participate in a workshop for each writing project. Also, you will need to contribute to class discussions on Canvas and in the classroom*.* Growth comes from practice, therefore all assignments are used to calculate the final grade (see grading below).

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to write multiple papers of at least 1200 words, which include an introduction, multiple body paragraphs, and a conclusion of some sophistication.

**Objectives:**

In the process of completing this course, students will:

* learn about writing papers which include introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions
* learn to write with some sophistication
* practice writing thesis statements
* practice writing topic sentences
* learn about using quotations and in-text citations that support the topic sentences and the thesis
* practice developing supporting material that exhibits critical thinking
* develop an understanding of what a complete sentence is and practice using a variety of sentence types (simple, compound, complex, and compound/complex sentences)
* learn about common sentence errors, such as fragments, comma splices, fused sentences
* develop their usage of descriptive vocabulary that exhibits growth and sophisticated word choice
* learn how to follow MLA guidelines when formatting papers and using quotations and a works cited page
* learn about avoiding plagiarism
* write papers in which they will use 3rd person point of view and practice addressing a specific audience
* practice using all stages of the writing process as necessary and appropriate
* practice writing in-class essays

**Course Requirement**s

Homework: Your homework will consist of writing assignments that will improve your skills as a writer. Homework assignments will be, though not limited to, reading responses, triple entry journals, annotation uploads, and other homework assignments. Most homework assignments, unless specified, will be uploaded to Canvas and will be due at a designated time before class.

Small Groups, Class Discussions, Workshops: Class participation is mandatory and will be a necessary part of your success in this class.Therefore**,** you will need to come to class prepared with your assigned textbooks/handouts, homework done and ideas to share – everyday. Graded class participation will include small group activities, small group workshopping, and large group discussions. I reserve the right to do random book checks and surprise quizzes.

Workshopping is an important component to this class. Workshopping gives you the opportunity to get audience feedback on your writing; workshops are also an opportunity to get ideas for approaching various writing tasks, to understand the range of rhetorical components – besides grammar – that are available for revision, and finally to assess a piece of writing for its rhetorical effectiveness. Participating in these workshops will help you to read and revise your own work with more fluency and expertise.

Journals: Journal writing is an important component to our writing class. There will be prompts for daily journal writing activities in class and time provided during class to complete this writing. A special, designated composition notebook (see my example) is preferred. These journals will be turned in twice during this semester. To receive credit, your journal needs to demonstrate your thoughts and ideas to the prompt, meeting my expectations. This means putting an effort into addressing the prompt. Each missed journal entry will put you at a disadvantage in points (30 points for each turn-in), so if you are absent and missing journal writing in class, you can find the prompts on Canvas; it is up to you to stay up to date with your journals.

Writing Projects: Writing is not just a demonstration of one’s ability to write. Writing is about thinking on paper. It is about learning something new. It is about expressing important ideas and making your own meaning from the ideas expressed by others. It is about connecting to an audience. The writing I will ask you to do will emerge from the concepts, processes, and issues that we will read and discuss in this class. All of these writing projects will encourage you to choose topics that are important to you. This semester you will complete three major writing projects. Each of these projects will involve multiple drafts and writing workshops. I will give you writing prompts at the beginning of each project so that you have a clear idea about what you are required to do.

As we move through the course, each writing project will challenge you to add more knowledge, skills, and practices of writing to what you already know from the assignment before.

***Specifications:*** All writing projects must be formatted with one-inch margins with 12-point, Times New Roman font. The length of these writing projects will vary from 2 to 5 pages. A Works Cited page is mandatory for all essays that incorporate outside sources. All writing must adhere to MLA guidelines.

Reading: Reading and writing go hand in hand. The reading we will do in this class will be necessary for our topics of class discussion, for modeling approaches to writing, and for developing a better understanding about form, rhetorical approach, and the use of evidence in writing. I will expect that when a reading assignment is due that you will have **read actively**; that is, you will have annotated your text, will have questions to ask, and will be ready to engage in conversation with others about the reading. You will participate in small group and whole class discussions of the reading, and track your active reading in your journals.

**Grading and Evaluation**

Homework and Class Participation 300 pts

Writing Project #1: (drafts) 75 pts

Writing Project #2: (drafts, workshops, etc.) 150 pts

Writing Project #3: (drafts, workshops, etc.) 150 pts

Journal Writing (2 turn-ins) 60 pts

Midterm Exam 45 pts

Final Exam 45 pts

Total: 825 pts

Grading Scale

90-100% A

80-89% B

70-79% C

60-69% D

 0 -59% F

You must complete all required writing to receive credit for the course. Completing all the major essays, short writings, drafts, and peer responses to the best of your ability will help improve your writing—and therefore your final grade. Each essay may be revised for up to a 10% increase in score, but revisions must be completed by the deadline given in class. Failure to turn in any one of the assigned essays or complete the exams will mean a failing grade in the class. As with any college class, grades can change significantly due to a single missed assignment or project. Do not presume if you are receiving a certain letter grade on most your assignments that it will be reflected in your final grade for the class. The point system and your overall performance in class will be strictly enforced.

**Exceptions: Although you will be penalized, you are allowed to turn in ONLY TWO late essay assignments. However, for each time you are late, you must make an appointment at the Writing Center and receive feedback, and turn in your late paper with your workshopped paper WITH signed proof of your visit to the Writing Center. This must be completed before the next class session otherwise you will fail the class. There are no exceptions to this rule. This is my THREE STRIKE RULE: IF YOUR PAPER IS LATE A THIRD TIME, YOU WILL FAIL THIS CLASS.**

Attendance: Attendance is highly important and if you fall behind in the daily assignments you cannot make them up. You will be required to do daily writing assignments in class and points will be given. You will be expected to come to class prepared to discuss the homework assignment.

**ABSENCES:** Students with more than four absences may not be eligible for a passing grade. **PLEASE NOTE:** **IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN FOUR ABSENCES, YOUR GRADE WILL BE DROPPED ONE LETTER GRADE AND WILL CONTINUE TO DROP FOR EVERY FOUR ABSENCES.** Students with four absences before the census date will be DROPPED. Students who miss a class during the first week or two classes during the first two weeks will also be DROPPED. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to check on announcements and changes made to the schedule while you are away.Advanced notice of planned absences is always appreciated, but will not guarantee “excused” absences unless in extreme circumstances. I will be keeping track of your attendance; however, it is your responsibility to know when you miss class.

**Submitting Assignments:** Assignments should be submitted per the directions given in class whenever possible (typically on Canvas or a hard copy in person on the date due). If you cannot attend class, you are still responsible for submitting assignments by the due date. I will not accept **any** late homework assignments.

**Tardiness/Leaving Early: Arriving more than 10 minutes late to class or leaving more than 10 minutes before the end of class will constitute an absence. Additionally, every three tardies (lateness less than 10 minutes) will constitute an absence.**

NOTE IMPORTANT DATES: The deadline to drop for a refund is January 20th.

 The deadline to add a class is January 27th.

 The deadline to drop a class to avoid a “W” is January 27th (in person)

Accommodation: 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 (ADA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact me as soon as possible.

Let’s Talk Respect: The classroom is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. Differences of viewpoints or concerns should be expressed in terms that are supportive of the learning process, creating an environment in which students and faculty may learn to reason with clarity and compassion, to share themselves without losing their identities, and to develop an understanding of the community in which they live. Student conduct which disrupts the learning process shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

I am in class to teach. You should be in class to learn and contribute in meaningful ways. Any disruptive behavior is unacceptable. Do not take this class if it conflicts with your work schedule, as you will not be excused. Do not use class time to work on outside projects. Do not talk about things irrelevant to the subject matter of this course when you are assigned group activities in class. Some of our discussions/activities will result in the sharing of personal information. This is a judgment-free space. **Disrespect toward me or the other students will not be tolerated. If your behavior is inappropriate for an academic learning environment, you will be asked to leave the class.**

**Cell Phones/Personal Electronics:** There will be no usage of cell phones, computers, or other personal electronics in class without prior approval from me. At the start of class, phones should be placed out of sight and on silent, and should remain so for the rest of the class period. You will receive one warning; after your first warning, you will lose your daily participation points each time you use personal electronics in class.I will not interrupt class to notify you, I will simply record this disruption in the roster.

**College Policies**

**Plagiarism**

By enrolling in this course, you join a community requiring academic integrity. When you write your name on an assignment, you take credit for the work contained, whether that be an entire text or only a sentence. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty demonstrate a disrespect of the community and will not be tolerated.

Remember to always quote and cite your sources appropriately, even if they are unpublished or from friends or classmates. An unacknowledged paraphrase, a patchwork from several sources, as well as the submission of someone else’s work (published or not), all constitute plagiarism in the eyes of the college, and **will result in a** **failure of this course**. Please ask questions if you’re ever unsure BEFORE you turn in work. **Ignorance IS NOT an acceptable excuse.** Scholars would agree that “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” (excerpt from CSUF’s Policies). You will automatically receive zero points on the assignment and the incident will be noted on your academic record if you are caught plagiarizing.

**Other Classroom Policies**

Email Policy: As your instructor I am here to help you, so email me when necessary. I respond to emails during the weekdays (7:00am-Midnight is best). Any time not during the hours specified is not guaranteed a reply. That being said, I expect your emails to be professional and courteous. I will not attempt to translate text lingo. When you email me, please be sure your email includes a greeting (Dear Professor Okafor), the body message, and a closing signature. Even an email is a form of writing, and I will only respond to professionalism.

Computer Access: You are required to have a regular computer, Internet access, and ability to print documents for this class.  Do not attempt to do your assignments on a phone or tablet without a keyboard. You will have readings uploaded to Canvas that I will require you to read, print, and bring to class. Accessing assignments via Canvas is a requirement, and it is important that you are able to print the assignments that I do not print for you.  If you do not have a home computer or the ability to print, you can do both in the library.

**Please Note:** If any changes are made to the syllabus or class schedule it is your responsibility as a student to make sure you are on top of all changes. Keep an eye out for emails, announcements, and/or ask a classmate.