

## ENGLISH 25: Writing Skills For College

Fall, 1999

Instructor: Melissa Black

Office Phone: 638-3641 ext. 3840

Section 80315

M 3:00 PM - 4:50 PM (INC-1)

W 3:00 PM - 4:50 PM (AGR-15)

Section 80316

M 6:00 PM - 7:50 PM (SOC-30)

W 6:00 PM - 7:50 PM (HUM-62)

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### Course Objectives

In this course, we will emphasize the process of writing, revising, and finishing shorter papers. Students will learn to recognize and avoid common writing errors; to analyze rhetorical strategies in model essays and develop reading skills; to match the structures of writing to meaning and audience; and to use writing as thinking, to explore and express ideas.

### Required Text

Elbow, Peter and Belanoff, Pat. *A Community of Writers: A Workshop Course in Writing*. Second ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1995.

### Recommended Text

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Fifth ed. New York: Modern Language Association, 1999.

### Required Materials

Loose-leaf lined paper (college-ruled)

Spiral bound notebook, 8 1/2 x 11" paper, about 80 sheets

High density disk with label

### Course Work/Breakdown of Final Grade

Class participation	5 percent
Journal	5
Quizzes	10
Essays	60
Final Examination	20

Class participation means reading the assignments before coming to class, responding thoughtfully to observations made by your classmates, and thinking about questions you can pose. (Remember, questions are just as useful as commentary!)

There will be 5 to 10 unannounced quizzes during the course of the semester, and the lowest two quiz scores will be dropped. A missed quiz will count as a zero -- no make-ups are allowed. Your final quiz grade will be determined by the average score earned (the total sum of your quizzes, minus the lowest two, divided by the number of quizzes given, less two).

### Grading Scale:

90 - 100 = A

80 - 89 = B

70 - 79 = C

60 - 69 = D

0 - 59 = F

You will be keeping a journal this semester, and you are required to bring it with you every day to class. This journal is a place for you to experiment and think on paper without having to worry about grammar, mechanics, or spelling. I will collect the journal periodically, and it must be up to date at each checkpoint. The journal will not be graded, but you will receive credit toward the journal by completing the required work on time and in a thoughtful, critical manner.

## **Paper Policy**

All papers must be revised and typed in accordance with MLA guidelines. All work leading to a final paper must be attached -- for example, all prewriting, rough drafts, peer responses, and any other work produced. A paper turned in without this work will result in no credit earned. There are no exceptions to this policy.

You will turn in your papers twice during the semester for grading: at midterm and before finals week. Your papers will be turned in as portfolios. This means that you will choose your best work and submit it in a folder for grading. The portfolio system allows you to demonstrate the process you follow from beginning to end to create a written work; the process allows you ample time to review, revise and edit your work. The final product should be polished and professional in appearance and content.

Because of the portfolio system used in this course, you need to be disciplined. Attending class and keeping up on all assignments is essential to your success. If you are not self-motivated or need credit for everything you do, you will have difficulty in this course.

Papers are due at the beginning of class on dates assigned. Always keep a copy of your essay so that, if it ever gets lost (whether through your fault or through mine), it will be easy to replace.

You are allowed only one late paper per semester. If you choose to turn in a paper late, it must be turned in within one week of the due date. Thus, if a paper is due on a Monday and you do not turn it in, you will have until the following Monday to turn in the paper. Being absent from a class does not excuse a student from this policy. Essays/assignments cannot be left in my box unless discussed with me before the due date.

You may be required to copy some of your essays in progress and distribute them to other students. This will count toward your participation grade.

## **Essential Information**

Roll is taken every day. Excessive absences may result in the instructor dropping you from the course. (Four absences are considered excessive.) If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you will be considered tardy. Two instances of tardiness equal one absence.

Aside from the late policy regarding essays, no late work is accepted. Homework must be turned in on the due date. There will be no make-up of quizzes.

It is your responsibility to stay informed concerning any changes of assignment due dates, readings, etc. Missing a class does not excuse you from this responsibility.

It is also the student's responsibility to officially withdraw from this and/or any course. Failure to do so may result in an "F" grade being awarded.

Should you discover that you are unable to regularly attend class for whatever reason, it is imperative that you discuss this with the instructor as soon as possible. Telling the instructor of work schedule changes, illness, family emergencies, etc. after missing several days/weeks is not acceptable.

## Helpful Hints

Exchange phone numbers with another student in the class. This way, if you are ill or want to verify an assignment, you will have a classmate to contact.

Some important dates this semester are:

Holiday–Labor Day	Monday, September 6
Holiday–Veteran's Day	Thursday, November 11
Holiday–Thanksgiving	Thursday-Friday, November 25-26
Finals Week	Monday-Friday, December 13-17

The drop deadline for this course is the end of the ninth week, or Friday, October 15.

Final Exam Date: Monday, December 13, 1999

Section 80315	3:00 PM - 5:00 PM
Section 80316	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

A beginning is always difficult, for it is no simple matter to choose from language the one bright word which shall live forever...

-- William Saroyan, *Myself Upon the Earth*

No iron can pierce the heart with such force as a period put at just the right place.

-- Isaac Babel, *A Writer's Notebook*

The art of writing is the art of applying the seat of the pants to the seat of the chair.

-- Mary Heaton Vorse, *A Writer's Notebook*