

ENGLISH 125
College Writing Skills

<u>Course Information</u> Tuesday – 8-9:50 am DVC 104 Thursday – 8-9:50 am DVC 104 4 Units	<u>Instructor Information</u> Name: Benjamin Ovando Email: ovandoenglish@gmail.com Phone: TBA
---	--

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

Textbooks

McWhorter, Kathleen. *Expressways for Writing Scenarios (2nd edition)*. New York: Pearson, 2008. Print.
Modern Language Association. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers 7th ed.* New York: MLA, 2009. Print.

Other Required Materials

Regular access to a computer (required for readings on Blackboard) with:

- internet access (broadband recommended);
- Adobe Acrobat Reader 7.0 (or later);
- a printer.

One two-pocket folder

A USB flash drive

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

English 125: College Writing Skills is a course created to extend your opportunities for reading, writing, thinking, and inquiry. This course is designed to develop your abilities as a reader and writer – a literacy user – as an active participant in the world of language in which you are already immersed. The primary focus is on developing basic essay writing skills including prewriting, revising, and editing short formal essays. The secondary focus is on developing basic college level writing skills such as creating clear, complex sentences, well-developed paragraphs, and expanding the knowledge and use of grammar. With attention to the ways you read and write and through much practice in and out of class, you will develop skills that help you write effectively for many audiences, including your other classes.

As this class focuses on college writing, it is modeled after a “workshop” style writing class. This means that every week we will have an in-class writing workshop. In this workshop you will bring a piece of your own writing and other students will give you feedback on your progress. Additionally, throughout the semester, I will also give you feedback on your writing. At the end of the semester, you will submit a final portfolio that represents the final drafts of your writing in this class. Therefore, you will have all semester to work on and improve your writing.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

In the process of completing this course, students will:

1. Write complete, appropriate, varied English sentences, using coordination, subordination, and modification to clarify meanings
2. Use punctuation, capitalization, abbreviations, etc., conventionally and spell correctly
3. Use standard dialect noun, verb, and pronoun forms and verb tenses correctly
4. Differentiate between standard dialects and community dialects and slang, and use dialects appropriately
5. Study English sentence structures as they relate to meanings and learn to recognize relationships between the ways words are ordered and grouped and the meanings the reader may grasp. Utilizing punctuation, sentence variety and length, and different styles in modification and diction, the student must say what he or she means and make that meaning clear to the reader.
6. Write in paragraphs that develop topic sentences with adequate, detailed support
7. Use various patterns of paragraph development, such as spatial and time orders in description and narration, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, example or analogy, and persuasion. Decisions about organization must be related to the author’s purpose, to the reader, and to the writer’s resources.
8. Initiate and carry through appropriate use of the writing process: recognizing the affect of purpose and audience, discovering topics, selecting and ordering ideas and the evidence to develop the topic, writing and revising, and editing and finishing the paper
9. Write with coherence and unity, paying attention to reference, agreement, consistency, and transitions

10. Use critical thinking skills in writing, with attention to avoiding fallacies, relating structure to ideas, developing logical support for generalizations, following logical orders, and differentiating between statements of fact and opinion
11. Use basic library sources to find information, and avoid plagiarism in the preparation of a limited paper based on published sources

COURSE OUTCOMES:

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

1. Prewrite 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. Construct idiomatically correct sentences although there may be an “accent” resulting from a consistent type of ESL error
8. Use a variety of rhetorics and structures, including documented sources
9. Use MLA style with some guidance to set up papers and document sources

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS:

Reading

Students are responsible for completing assigned reading *before* each class meeting and to actively participate in discussions, activities, and instructional presentations. Selections of the readings for this class are digital documents located on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to download and read these documents in a timely manner. Also, short writing assignments over the readings will be assigned periodically.

Essays

There will be 3 formal essays of 2-5 pages in length assigned during the course, and there will be numerous shorter writing assignments that will support the writing process of the essays. For each essay, students will go through the various stages of the writing process, including prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing. **All three essays must be completed and meet the minimum requirements. Failure to do so may cause the students to receive a failing grade for the class.**

Please note: You are required to submit a draft of your essay to the instructor for feedback three times during the semester. However, your essay will not be given a grade until it is submitted in the Final Portfolio.

General Assignments and Quizzes

You will be given a range of assignments throughout the semester. Assignment due dates will be indicated on the Course Schedule and will be due on the days listed. In addition, quizzes will be given randomly during the semester. They will be based on your readings for the week and are generally 10 points each.

Late Assignments

Late assignments of any type **WILL NOT** be accepted, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor. If you know you will be absent, please turn in your work early or email the assignment to the instructor no later than the regularly scheduled class time.

Final Portfolio

At the end of the semester, you will submit a final portfolio that will contain your best writing in the class. You are free to revise all essays written during the semester for the final portfolio. This means that your portfolio should demonstrate both a product, final documents that are revised and polished and that show the best work that you can do, and a process, the drafts and thinking and writing that you have done to get to the product. Accordingly you will need to have a folder or a binder in which to keep all of your work for this course. **The final portfolio must be submitted on time and meet the minimum requirements. Failure to do so may cause the students to receive a failing grade for the class.**

Final

There will be an in-class timed essay final at the end of the semester which will be based on your readings and test your ability to apply the skills we learned in class. More details will be given towards the end of the semester.

GRADING/EVALUATION:

The grading for this class will be broken down as follows:

General assignments, reading responses, and quizzes – approx. 250 points	<u>Approx. Grade Scale</u>
Essay 1 Instructor’s Draft – 50 points	A= 900-1000 pnts
Essay 2 Instructor’s Draft – 50 points	B= 800 – 899 pnts
Essay 3 Instructor’s Draft – 50 points	C= 700-799 pnts
Final Portfolio – 500 points	D= 600-699 pnts
Final Exam – 100 points	F = 0-599 pnts

Total Points: approx. 1000 points (Total points may change during the semester)

You will receive a “letter” grade from the instructor, unless you apply for the Credit/No Credit option via the registrar. If you choose the Credit/No Credit option, you only need to achieve 70% of the total class points to receive a “Credit” grade. Please read the College Catalog for more information regarding the Credit/No Credit option.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Subject to Change

This syllabus and class schedule are subject to change. You will be notified of any changes.

Attendance

This course is discussion and activity driven. A good deal of time is spent discussing and modeling, working together and demonstrating. Missing more than **Four (4)** classes **BEFORE the drop deadline** will result in automatic withdrawal from the class. Tardiness in excess of 15 minutes will be counted as half an absence unless cleared with the instructor prior to class.

If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to check on announcements made while you are away. It is also your responsibility to make sure that your name appears on the daily attendance sheet each day that you do attend class.

If you require an extended period of absence due to extenuating circumstances, **please advise the instructor as soon as possible.** I will make special arrangements based on the situation that will allow you to continue to participate in class. Please remember you will need to provide documentation of these circumstances (i.e. medical records, police records, etc.). Absences due to extenuating circumstances will not affect your grade in class if proper procedures are taken.

Blackboard

You must have regular internet access, since we will be using Blackboard. On Blackboard I will post daily announcements, comments and assignment changes. Additionally, your major assignments and the syllabus will be available there when you need them. We may also conduct discussion forums on Blackboard.

Turnitin.com

This campus subscribes to the Turnitin.com plagiarism prevention service, and you will need to submit written assignments to Turnitin.com. Your work will be used by Turnitin.com for plagiarism detection and for no other purpose. You may indicate in writing to the instructor that you refuse to participate in the Turnitin.com process, in which case your instructor can use other electronic means to verify the originality of your work.

Cell Phones/Pagers

PLEASE TURN OFF OR SILENCE CELL PHONES AND PAGERS DURING CLASS. Also, text/instant messaging, checking voicemail/email or answering calls during class are strictly prohibited.

COLLEGE POLICIES

Students with Disabilities

Upon identifying themselves to the instructor and the college, students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluation. 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.

Plagiarism and Cheating

All work in this class is assumed to be the original work of the student. Any student who “borrows” essays or class work, improperly cites works or authors, or performs any other type of misrepresentation will receive an automatic “F” for that assignment and risks failing the class, as well as possibly receiving suspension, probation, or expulsion from the college.

Disruptive Classroom Behavior

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 viewpoint or concerns should be expressed in terms which are supportive of the learning process, creating an environment in which students and faculty may learn to reason with clarity and compassion, to share of themselves without losing their identities, and to develop an understanding of the community in which they live. Student conduct which disrupts the learning process (including excessive talking, making rude or derogatory comments, answering cell phones, and leaving class early) shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

Tentative Topic, Workshop, and Paper Schedule

Unit 1 – Introduction to Class [Weeks 1-2] – Magazine Pitch/Proposal – 1-2 pages

Thursday, August 27 – Magazine Pitch/Proposal Workshop; Magazine Pitch Proposal due

Unit 2 – Definition Article [Weeks 3-5] – Essay: 2-3 pages

Thursday, September 3– Topic Workshop: Working Topic/Thesis due

Thursday, September 10 –Proposal Workshop: Proposal due

Thursday, September 17 – Rough Draft Workshop: Rough Draft 1 due (at least 1 full page)

Tuesday, September 22 – Instructor’s Draft due

Unit 3 – Process Article [Weeks 6-9] – Essay: 3-4 pages

Thursday, September 24 – Topic Workshop: Working Topic/Thesis due

Thursday, October 1 – Proposal Workshop: Proposal due

Thursday, October 8 – Rough Draft Workshop 1: Rough Draft 1 due (at least 1 full page)

Thursday, October 15 – Rough Draft Workshop 2: Rough Draft 2 due (at least 2 full pages)

Tuesday, October 20 – Instructor’s Draft due

Unit 4 – Research and Argumentation Article [Weeks 10-14] – Essay: 4-5 pages

Thursday, October 22 – Focused Topic Paper Due

Thursday, October 29– Source Workshop: Proposal due

Thursday, November 5 – Focused Topic Paper due

Thursday, November 12 – Rough Draft Workshop 1: Rough Draft 1 due (at least 1 full page)

Thursday, November 19 – Rough Draft Workshop 2: Rough Draft 2 due (at least 2 full pages)

Tuesday, November 24 – Instructor’s Draft due

Unit 5 – Portfolio Preparation [Weeks 15-16] – Final Portfolio

Thursday, December 3 – Editor’s Note Workshop – Rough Draft due (at least 1 full page)

Tuesday, December 8 – Open Workshop

Thursday, December 10 – Final Portfolio due

Important Dates

Friday, September 4 – Last day to add or drop without a “W”

Friday, October 16 – Last day to drop with a “W” (letter grade assigned after this point)

Tuesday, November 11 – Veteran’s Day **NO CLASS**

Thursday, November 26 – Thanksgiving Break **NO CLASS**

Thursday, December 17 – **Final Exam 8-9:50 am**