**Syllabus for English 125, Hybrid, Writing Skills for College**

**Section #53287, Tuesdays, 10-11:50am in CCI 207**

**Section # 53788, Thursdays, 10-11:50am in CCI 207**

# Contact Information

Mrs. Berg, Instructor Email: emily.berg@reedleycollege.edu

Office: Faculty Annex 6 (directly behind the SOC building) Phone: 638-3641, ext. 3150

Office Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10am-12pm

**Course Description**

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. Placement for this course is designated by the college assessment process or successful completion of English 252.

**Grading Policy**

Your grade is calculated by using the following traditional grading scale during the semester:

**Passing Grades: A=90-100%; B=80-89%; C=70-79% Failing Grades: D=60-69%; F=0-59%**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignments and their Final Due Dates** | **Point Value** | **Your Grade** |
| Essay #1 (Narrative, due week 3) | 100 |  |
| Essay #2 (Exemplification, due week 7) | 100 |  |
| Essay #3 (Comparison/Contrast, due week 9) | 100 |  |
| Midterm (In Class, Timed Exemplification Essay, given week 10) | 50 |  |
| Midterm (Test on the grammar concepts  from weeks 1-9, given week 10) | 50 |  |
| Essay #4 (Research Paper, due week 14) | 100 |  |
| Essay #5 (Classification Essay, due week 17) | 150 |  |
| Final (In Class, Timed Essay) | 50 |  |
| Final (Test on the grammar concepts  from weeks 10-17) | 50 |  |
| Homework (Weeks 1-9) | 50 |  |
| Homework (Weeks 10-17) | 50 |  |
| Discussion Boards | 150 |  |
| **TOTAL POINT VALUE:** | **1,000** |  |

Grades are promptly posted on Blackboard; please look on Blackboard for your current grade in the class. You are also always welcome to come discuss your progress in the class with me during my office hours.

**Changes to the Syllabus/Calendar**

The instructor reserves the right to make changes as necessary for the benefit of the class to change policies on the syllabus or dates on the calendar. Missing class or not checking Blackboard is not an excuse for not being aware of any changes that are made to the calendar or the syllabus.

**Required Texts and Materials**

Kirszner, Laurie. *Patterns for College Writing*. 11th Edition. Boston: Bedford St. Martin’s, 2009.

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc. 1998.

**Supplies Needed for Every Class**:

* a flash drive
* a set of several different colored highlighters
* plenty of lined paper
* some computer paper (in case we run out in lab)
* pencils and blue or black ink pens
* a binder with organizational tabs to keep all of your work for this class

Additional materials needed: two examination blue books (size 8 ½ x 11) for the midterm and final

**Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes**

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

1. Write an essay of at least 750 words which includes an introduction, multiple body paragraphs, and conclusion of some sophistication. This essay will include:
2. clearly defined thesis statement
3. unified supporting paragraphs, which begin with topic sentences
4. quotations that support the topic sentences and the thesis
5. supporting material that exhibits critical thinking
6. complete sentences which include a variety of sentence types (simple, compound, complex, and compound/complex sentence)
7. will avoid fragments, comma splices, sentence fuses and other basic skills errors, such as capitalization, spelling, homophone issues, verb tense issues, subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, word choice issues, confused syntax, etc
8. descriptive vocabulary that exhibits growth and sophisticated word choice
9. use the MLA guidelines to setup essays, correctly use in-text citations for at least one source, and complete a works cited page
10. writing that is free from plagiarism
11. will demonstrate awareness of how to write from the 3rd person point of view for a specific audience
12. Plan and revise independently, employing all stages of the writing process as necessary and appropriate.
13. Complete a passing multi-paragraph in-class essay with a thesis and support.

**Computer Requirements**

Skills Needed:

* Familiarity with computers (knowing where the power switch is located, for example)
* Know the basics of word processing (saving files, using spell check, moving text, using the help function, etc.). (See the “Word Processing Formats” section below).
* Know how to access the Internet and navigate the Internet (use a browser, utilize search engines, save and print from the Internet)
* Know how to send e-mail and e-mail with attachments. (See the “E-mail” section below).
* Have some familiarity with Blackboard. We will be using Blackboard as part of our classroom. Our Blackboard site contains documents, announcements and other information needed for our course; in addition, Blackboard allows for e-mailing and online discussions. There are various tabs to the left of the screen in Blackboard. These tabs lead you to necessary and supplementary documents, to all assignments and schedules, and more. You can access our Blackboard directly from the Reedley College Website (click on the “Blackboard” link found under the “Distance Learning” link; or in the “Quick Links” pull-down menu).

Hardware Needed:

* Pentium (PC) or Mac equivalent
* Home Internet access is desirable. You can use the computers on campus; however, they are not always available, so you will need to find out when each lab is open and available for drop-in use. You should also know if your local library has computers available with Internet access. If your home computer crashes, is in need of repair, or you lose Internet access, you must find an alternative way to complete the required work on time for this class. This means, of course, that you need to constantly back up the work from your hard drive to a disk, flash drive, or other moveable source.

# Discussion Board Details and Tips

A significant portion of your grade is based upon the quantity, but more importantly, the quality of your participation. Here’s some hints to help you write quality original posts and responses:

1. Take the time to think about what you are writing so that your comments are well-written and complete.
2. When responding to others, don’t merely say “I agree.” Instead, explain why you agree or disagree. Try to carry on a discussion.
3. Remember that spelling as grammar count; please also watch your language and word choice. Cursing and inappropriate language are not acceptable. If this occurs, action will be taken as necessary per school policy. Make sure that you capitalize “I.” Do not abbreviate words. Make sure you use academic English. “Stupid” is not very academic and doesn’t tell the reader much!

The following is an example of what is not allowed:

i really thing that this is a stupide essay bec i dont like it i really like the other essay better

This is better:

I thought that the author’s supporting arguments were weak. For instance, the example he used regarding visiting his grandparents did not go into enough detail to really convince me of his point.

Each week, you will have the following due for your discussion board assignments:

* **Original Posts (1 post per question).** I will post two questions each week based on that week’s readings**, you will need to post a substantive post (of at least 200 words per post**) **in response to each of my questions**. The two original posts are due at midnight three days after each class meeting (for Tuesday’s class, you will need to post by Friday at midnight; for Thursday’s class, Sunday at midnight).
* **Replies (1 reply per question).** Then, **you will need to reply to a fellow students’ post for each question (in other words, you need to reply once to each of the two weekly questions, for a total of two replies)**; each reply needs to be **at least 50 words**. The replies are due at midnight the night before our class meets.

After each post, you will need to include how many words your post contains. In Microsoft Word, you can easily find out your word count: go to the “Tools” menu, and the “Word Count” option will be the fourth one down.

**How are Discussion Board Postings Graded?**

A thoughtful, well-written response that directly addresses all of the components of the question will earn full credit. The response should indicate that you reflected carefully upon the question; it also indicates that you took the time to edit your work prior to posting. A full-credit posting will have few grammatical errors, and you would need to include the word count (that is above the minimum requirement of the assignment).

Type your responses first in Word, get the word count added to your post in Word, and then cut and paste the work into Blackboard. This is a good idea for several reasons—first, you can edit your work with the help of spell and grammar check. Also, so many students have told me that they have lost work when their computer crashes or Blackboard freezes. Save it first in Word, then post it in Blackboard.

Each week’s discussion board postings and replies are worth 10 points. Points will be deducted for each of the following infractions:

* not addressing all parts of all of the questions
* not having a depth of thought in the response (responding quickly just to get the work done)
* not including the word count
* falling short of the word count
* having a large number of grammatical errors
* having a large number of spelling errors
* using IM speak (“u” instead of “you”) or using slang
* posting two original responses but no replies
* posting two replies but no original posts
* posting your work late (please note, if you do post your work after I have graded that week’s discussion boards, I will have no way of knowing you have made the work up. To get any credit for your late work, you will need to email me, informing me of which week’s discussion boards you made up. You have until the midterm to make up any discussion boards for weeks 1-9, and the final to make up any discussion boards from weeks 10-17).

**E-Mail**

An e-mail address is essential for this class. If you do not currently have one, you should set one up through Reedley College, Hotmail, or Yahoo immediately. These accounts are free and available through any computer that has Internet access; however, the Reedley College account must be activated first from campus. I will use e-mail to communicate with the class as a whole, with groups, and with individuals.

When you send an email, you must be specific in the message and always **sign your name**. Your email address does not necessarily identify who you are. I do not read or respond to email if I don’t know the sender.

In addition, remember, when you email an instructor, you are not text messaging or emailing a friend. You need to run spell check and think about the way you are writing; for example, do not use lower case i’s when using the first person pronoun “I”.

If you change your email address during the course of the semester, you MUST update your email address on Blackboard and WebAdvisor. You should also notify your instructors of email changes as well.

Keep in mind that the class e-mail list is to be used for school related messaging only. Any other use of the e-mail list can result in your being dropped from the course. Continued sending of unsolicited e-mail could be viewed as a form of harassment. Appropriate action will be taken as necessary per school policy.

**Attendance Policies**

Important skills are learned in every class meeting, especially since we only see each other once a week—when you are absent, you miss a lot! Please be aware **that more than 2 absences for whatever reason will result in a drop** from this class (e.g. 3 absences=drop). It is your responsibility to get assignments and handouts and to make sure that they are turned in if you are absent. I suggest that you find a reliable person in class to turn in papers for you, get homework assignments, and pick up work for you should you need to be absent from a class.

Tardies and early departures are disruptive and will not be tolerated; **two tardies or early departures of more than 5 minutes will result in one absence**. **If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to check in with me at the end of class, or your absence will remain on your record**. Please come in quietly and take the closest available seat by the door to minimize disruptions to the class. Should you need to be tardy more than 10 minutes of any class or need to leave more than 10 minutes early, I will count that as an absence.

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 unacceptable.

**Homework**

The homework assignments are **checked at the beginning of class only** for full credit. **If you are late (or absent) for whatever reason, your work is late**. If you were late, absent, or you didn’t do your work on time, you still have the opportunity to earn partial credit; see me during office hours to submit late work. You have until the midterm to make up any homework from weeks 1-9, and the final to make up any work from weeks 10-17.

**Word Processing Formats**

The most common word processing format is Microsoft Word (that saves files as “.doc”). If you use another word processing program or have Office 2007 (the latest Word version that saves documents as “.docx” instead of “.doc”), you will need to learn to save your work in Rich Text Format (RTF). Do not use Microsoft Works or any other program that does not allow for easy conversion. Using WordPad is unacceptable. If you have WordPad, you must plan to visit a local library—public or school—to convert your work before sending it for review or as the final product.

**Essays—Getting the Work Done on Time**

For each essay assignment, you are required to submit outlines and several drafts before the final draft is due. To receive full credit for your work, your drafts need to be on time and of **substantial length** –the same page requirement as the final draft assignment**. If you are absent for whatever reason on the day a final draft is due, it is nonetheless your responsibility to turn in the work on time**. You will need to submit the paper to me, in class, by email, or in my mailbox **before class begins** to receive full credit for the assignment.

Any essays written during the semester will only be **accepted up to one week** after the deadline for any credit. For each class meeting that you submit the essays late, **a full letter grade will be deducted** from the overall grade. If you turn in a paper late, you will not have an opportunity to rewrite the paper.

Keep in mind that the pace of this class is non-stop in regards to writing papers. You will have a due date for your essays every time we meet. You will one week turn in your outline, the next turn in a draft, and the next turn in the final draft of that essay (and on the day you turn in the final draft of your essay, you will receive your assignment for the next essay).

**Essays--Rewriting Policies**

You are allowed to and encouraged to rewrite up to **two take-home essays over the semester to try to earn up to one letter grade** higher than the final grade you received on the paper. Please note you can only rewrite your work if you turned in the final draft of the paper on time. In order to rewrite your paper, you first need to make an appointment to come into my office hours to discuss what you need to do to improve your paper. Then, you have up to one week from when I return your essays to rewrite the paper. When you turn in your rewritten paper, be sure to include the graded paper, so I can see what changes you made to your paper. I will only give a grade higher for papers with substantial, significant changes in them.

**Essay Formatting**

For all work you submit, follow MLA formatting (watch my MLA formatting video, or see the student sample research paper on pages 782-788 in your *Patterns* text for an example):

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Essays must be typed in size 12 standard font (such as Times New Roman) with no bold,

capitalized, or italicized fonts.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ It should be double-spaced throughout.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Margins should be 1” on all sides of the paper and justified on the left.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ All documentation in the essays must follow the parenthetical citations in MLA format.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ All essays must be stapled.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ On the top left hand side of the paper, you should include (in this order):

Your name

The teacher’s name

The class (with the section number)

Submission date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ After the header, put your title, centered, on the next line. Make sure you don’t make the

title a bigger font than the rest of the paper; don’t put the title in quotes, bolded or

italicized font. Give your title a creative spin (not the name of the assignment).

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ All pages (including the first) are numbered with the number in the upper-right corner,

one half-inch from the top. The page number is preceded by your last name. This information needs to be formatted into your header.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Turn in all work with your final draft (all brainstorming, outlines, and drafts).

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Staple an English 125 rubric on the front of the final draft of your essay.

**Please note:** Should I discover while reading your essay that you have not followed the above formatting expectations, run spell check, or sufficiently proofread and edited your work, I will discontinue reading and return the essay to you. You will then have until the following week to revise the paper and resubmit it with the first paper you submitted. The highest grade such a “returned” paper can receive is a “C.”

# Weekly Quizzes

You will have weekly quizzes based on the previous week’s readings and the grammar concepts. Go to our Blackboard website and find the quizzes under the “Weekly Quizzes” tab. You will need to take the quizzes **by the night before class at midnight**. After this time, you will no longer be able to take the quiz for that week no matter the reason.

Each quiz will have a time limit in which it needs to be completed the first time you begin (usually the time period is 25 minutes to complete 10-15 questions). You are encouraged to look up the answers to your questions by looking at the readings and by looking up the answers on the PowerPoint presentations. You can prepare for these quizzes by completing your weekly reading assignment and taking the comprehension quizzes on our textbook’s web site (www.bedfordstmartins.com/patterns).

# Individual Conferences

Occasionally throughout the semester, I will hold mandatory individual conferences to discuss your progress in the class or to review your drafts with you. You will sign up the previous week for your appointment time. Please make sure you arrive early for this appointment with the homework due that class period ready to show me during your appointment. Missing a conference counts as a class absence, and you still need to check in with me regarding your draft or your grade—you will then need to reschedule your appointment during my office hours.

**Cheating/Plagiarism**

***Bottom line***: do not copy someone else’s words or ideas without giving them credit. Do not use another student’s paper as your own. Do not use a paper you wrote from another class in this class. Do not have another person write the paper for you. All of these are forms of cheating. You will receive a zero on the assignment and a report will be filed with the administration for their review.

# Examinations

**The in-class midterms and final cannot be made up**; if you know in advance that you cannot attend the midterm or final, be sure to speak with me in advance to make alternate plans before the tests are given. I will give a zero to anyone who does not show up to the midterm or final without speaking to me in advance to make alternate plans, no matter what the reason is.

Please refrain from talking during examinations, and you may not leave the classroom unless you have turned in your exam and you have been instructed that you may leave when you are finished. You may only use the materials specified on the directions of the exam, and you may only use your own materials. Absolutely no electronic devises may be used or be on your desk during an exam. Should you be found in violation of these test regulations, you will be immediately dismissed from the exam with no credit.

# Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

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.

**Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Blackboard**

*What is the little exclamation in the grade book on the Blackboard (Bb) site?*

The exclamation point simply says that your quiz went through properly and is waiting to be graded. Some quizzes are automatically graded as they are multiple choice. If they are not, I will have to go in and grade them myself. This might take a week or so. After I grade them, you will be able to open them through the grade book function, and review the quiz. The correct answers will usually be available at that time.

*I have a question mark or a lock next in my grade book next to a quiz or exam. What does this mean?*

This means that for some reason the quiz or exam did not go through properly. This usually results from either you dropping off line, having a power failure, exiting the program before you have finished the quiz or exam or hitting the enter button instead of clicking on the submit button at the bottom of the page. If this happens, you must email me immediately to clear the lock. I check my email several times a day and can usually clear it within 24 hours or less.

*I can’t access Blackboard. What do I do?*

Wait and try again. If you keep having trouble accessing Blackboard, try all of the following in order before emailing me:

1. Turn off your computer entirely and unplug it. Let it sit for 5 minutes. Then plug it back in and try accessing the web site again.
2. Check the URL for the site and be sure you are entering it correctly. The URL you should use is http://blackboard.reedleycollege.edu .
3. Try accessing another website from your computer that you have not accessed recently. This will clarify if the problem is with Blackboard or with your own browser or internet service provider.
4. Hit the refresh button. Sometimes a “page not found” screen gets stuck in the browser’s cache. Refreshing the page will sometimes clear it.
5. Turn off any parental control or other content filters. Sometimes these filters, as valuable as they are, can filter out good content as well as bad.
6. Call 1-866-401-7784. This is the Bb help desk.

*Can I call you if I need help with my computer?*

I am not a computer technician, nor is my job as an instructor to act as computer support. While I might be able to help with small issues here and there, you really need to know how to use your computer and get computer support elsewhere. Often, the Bb help desk will be able to help you.

**Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Hybrid Classes**

*What exactly is a hybrid course, anyway?*

Hybrid basically means “half-and-half”: part of the class is taught in the traditional, face-to-face way with two hours of class time a week; the other part of the class time is on-line for two hours a week. A regular, traditional English 125 or English 1A would meet for four hours a week of class time.

*Be honest: does having less time in class mean that this class is easier?*

Short answer: No. You would spend the same amount of time in this hybrid course as you would in a regular course. The difference is that with a hybrid, you get to decide when you want to spend those two hours a week on our on-line class. In some ways, this class might be harder. You won’t have your instructor around all the time to remind you of due dates, for example, so you must be more self-motivated than in a traditional class.

*What sorts of activities would you complete in a hybrid class?*

In hybrid courses for the online component, you might be participate in the following activities through

Blackboard:

* + Reflecting upon assigned readings and essay topics through discussion board and commenting on other students’ posts
  + Watching videos about essay structure and grammar topics
  + Downloading grammar exercises and writing handouts to use as a reference
  + Accessing and reading student samples of essay assignments
  + Taking quizzes and tests based on the readings and grammar concepts
  + Conducting research using Reedley College’s online databases

*Do you need computer and internet access at home to be successful in this course?*

It is not essential to have computer access, but it certainly will make it easier for you. It is possible if you don’t have access—if you are committed to having a regular time you scheduled to devote to going to a computer lab.

**Reminders/Tips for Success**

1. **Electronic Devices**: **Please turn off cell phones and pagers during class and put them away, off your desk**. It is unacceptable to set your phone on discreet and leave it on top of your desk, or to text during class—it is disruptive to you, your fellow students, and your instructor when you check your messages and calls during class. Please do not use or have on any other electronic equipment during class (I-pods, cell phones, laptops, etc.), including during lab time. Without a doubt, do not answer your phone in class.
2. **Disruptive behavior** during class will not be tolerated for the sake of our learning environment; I reserve the right to ask you to leave the class with an absence if you are disruptive of other’s learning. Disruptive behavior includes (but is not limited to) talking, passing notes, arguing, eating food, sleeping during class, working on assignments for our class or other classes other than the one being covered in class at the time, receiving cell phone calls during class, text messaging during class, having your cell phone on your desk, not having the materials needed for class, or having your head on your desk. **The first time a student violates these rules, he will receive a verbal warning from the teacher. The second time (and any time thereafter), the student will be dismissed from the class with an absence**.
3. In this class we will occasionally read, view, and discuss controversial subject matter. This is college, so adult topics should be expected. These could include issues such as race, sexuality, gender, and cultures different from your own. When you are faced with new ideas, ideas that are different than your own, or issues that make you uncomfortable, I expect you to keep an open mind and never to lower yourself into discriminating or using a mocking, harassing, or belittling tone of voice to others.
4. If you choose to withdraw from the class, please keep in mind that **it is your responsibility to drop from the course before the final day to drop**. If you do not drop yourself and simply stop attending the class, you will earn an F in the course.

**Last day to drop (without a “W”): January 29**

**Last day to drop (with a “W”): March 12**

1. Set up a current, readily accessible working email account as soon as possible and ensure that this current email is entered into Blackboard (as I communicate frequently through Blackboard).
2. Always be prepared for class. If you show up unprepared for class and unwilling to work, I will ask you to leave with an absence for the day.
3. Be sure to keep all of your work during the semester. Accidents happen, teachers lose papers, gradebooks get stolen—protect yourself by keeping copies of your work, both hard copies and electronic copies.
4. During our lab time, I expect you to work quietly on assigned work. If you are finished with a writing assignment, then I can read your assignment before you turn it in. You can always work on rewriting other writing assignments during lab times. You can also work on homework for our class. Lab time is not a time to browse the Internet (except of course if you are researching a writing assignment for our class). You may be asked to leave if you are not complying with these guidelines. **Do not only rely on our lab time to complete your writing assignments. Many times, we will use lab time to do other work.** You will need to work on your papers outside of class time also. There is a computer lab in the library. There are computers available at the public library in downtown Reedley that you can use.
5. 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 unacceptable.
6. Showing up to class 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.
7. Turning in the work is not enough: just doing the assignments does not warrant a passing grade. You need to be doing passing work to pass the class.
8. From time to time, I might share your essays with the entire class (I will do so without telling who the author is), or you will be asked to share your work with each other. Please don’t write about topics you don’t want others to know about.
9. **Important dates:**
   1. January 11 (Monday): start of spring semester
   2. January 18 (Monday): MLK Day holiday
   3. February 12 (Friday): Lincoln Day holiday
   4. February 15 (Monday): Washington Day holiday
   5. Spring Break: March 29-April 2 (Monday-Friday)
   6. May 17-21: Finals schedule (no regularly held classes)
   7. **Our final is scheduled for: Tuesday, May 18, 10-11:50am**