**English 125, College Writing Skills, Online**

Instructor: Mr. Dominguez

Office/phone: Annex 2/ 638-3641, ext 3745

E-mail: david.dominguez@reedleycollege.edu

Office Hours: F 10:00-1:00

Required Texts: Please purchase the following texts at the Reedley College bookstore ASAP. *Handbook Of Literary Terms*, Kennedy (publisher Longman, ISBN 0-205-60356-4); *The Packinghouse Review* Vol 2 Number 3, Garza and Dominguez (ISBN 1-4538-8626-5); PLEASE NOTE THAT *THE PACKINGHOUSE REVIEW* WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL LATE JANUARY TO EARLY FEBRUARY. I WILL LET YOU KNOW IN CLASS WHEN IT IS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**Course Outcomes—Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:**

1. Write an essay of at least 750 words which include an introduction, multiple body paragraphs, and conclusion of some sophistication. This essay will include:
* a clearly defined thesis statement
* unified supporting paragraphs, which begin with topic sentences
* quotations that support the topic sentences and the thesis
* complete sentences which include a variety of sentence types (simple, compound, complex, and compound/complex sentence)
* descriptive vocabulary that exhibits growth and sophisticated word choice
* avoidance of 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.
* use of MLA guidelines to set up essays, correctly use in-text citations for at least one source, and complete a works cited page
* writing that is free from plagiarism
* demonstrated awareness of how to write from the 3rd person point of view for a specific audience
1. Plan and revise independently, employing all stages of the writing process as necessary and appropriate.
2. Complete a multi-paragraph in-class essay with a thesis and support.

**Course Objectives—In the process of completing this course, students will:**

1. Complete a multi-paragraph in-class essay with a thesis and support.
2. Learn about writing papers which include introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions.
3. Learn to write with some sophistication.
4. Practice writing thesis statements.
5. Practice writing topic sentences.
6. Learn about using quotations and in-text citations that support the topic sentences and the thesis.
7. Practice developing supporting material that exhibits critical thinking.
8. Develop an understanding of what a complete sentence is and practice using a variety of sentence types (simple, compound, complex, and compound/complex sentence).
9. Learn about common sentence errors, such as fragments, comma splices, sentence fuses.
10. Develop their usage of descriptive vocabulary that exhibits growth and sophisticated word choice.
11. Learn how to follow MLA guidelines when formatting papers and using quotations and a works cited page.
12. Learn about avoiding plagiarism.
13. Write papers in which they will use 3rd person point of view and practice addressing a specific audience.
14. Practice using all stages of the writing process as necessary and appropriate practice writing in-class essays.

**Course Outline:**

1. Using the writing process:
2. prewriting strategies
3. outlining
4. drafting
5. revising
6. editing
7. Writing a well-developed essay:
8. introduction
9. thesis statements
10. body paragraphs
11. topic sentences
12. supporting details
13. transitions
14. concluding paragraphs
15. coherent development
16. focus
17. organization
18. unification
19. Thinking critically:
20. analyze ideas
21. use supporting details to validate a thesis
22. Writing sentences:
23. sentence variety
24. simple sentences
25. compound sentences
26. complex sentences
27. compound complex sentences
28. crafting sentences
29. using parallelism
30. eliminating wordiness
31. avoiding and correcting sentence errors
32. fragments
33. run-ons (comma splices and sentence fuses)
34. punctuation
35. the comma
36. the semicolon
37. the colon
38. the dash
39. Understanding purpose, audience, voice:
40. awareness of audience
41. academic language use
42. third person point of view
43. Using MLA guidelines:
44. avoid plagiarism
45. set-up an essay
46. cite direct quotations
47. write a works cited page

**Semester Grading:**

First essay:

 a. 50 points.

 b. Graded based on the course outcomes and on your ability to follow directions.

Second, third, and fourth essays:

 a. 100 points each.

 b. Graded based on the course outcomes and on your ability to follow directions.

One final grammar exam:

 a. 50 points.

 b. Graded based on the course outcomes and on your ability to follow directions.

Semester Grading Scale: A=400-360; B=359-320: C=319-280; D=279-240; F=239-000

**Extra Credit:**

Extra credit will be offered during the semester. When you turn it in, I will put it in my extra credit folder. At the end of the semester, I will calculate final grades; if you have earned a “C” or higher because of how you have done on the required course work, I will then add your extra credit to your final grade. Thus, the extra credit will not raise a final semester grade of an “F” or a “D.” It can, however, raise your final grade from a “C” to a “B” or from a “B” to an “A.”

**Revision Symbols:**

The symbols listed below indicate areas of writing that may need to be improved in your work. These symbols will be used by me to mark your composition:

th = thesis

sm = supportive material

tr = transition

ts = topic sentence

cn = context

dq = direct quotation

mla = citing direct quotations

ct = critical thinking

kw(s) = key word(s)

fs = final statement

f = fragment

cs = comma splice

sf = sentence fuse

fd = follow directions

? = confusing

**English 125 Essay Rubric—These guidelines will be used to grade your essays:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Content** | **Organization** | **Conventions** |
| **A** | * Strong thesis statement
* Strong topic sentences in all body paragraphs
* Strong examples/details/reasons that are well-chosen, thoughtful, original and balanced which support the thesis
* Overall essay is cohesive
* Thoughtfully, thoroughly addresses the essay prompt
* Meets or exceeds essay’s requirements
 | * Strong essay structure with strong introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion
* Strong paragraph structure
* Strong use of transitions within the paragraphs and between paragraphs
* A strong sense of logic in the paragraph’s organization
 | * Sophisticated, varied sentence structure
* Excellent control of sentence structure
* Few if any surface errors (spelling, mechanics, punctuation) none of which interfere with understanding
* Accurate, concise word choice
* MLA formatting followed with very few if any errors
* Citations used for all words and ideas not writer’s own
* Textual evidence has strong signal phrases and correct parenthetical citations
 |
| **B** | * Clear thesis statement
* Clear topic sentences in all body paragraphs
* Clear examples/details/reasons that are mostly well-chosen, original, and balanced which support the thesis
* There is basic essay unity
* Addresses the essay prompt
* Meets most of the essay’s requirements
 | * Good essay structure, with a clear introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion
* Good paragraph structure
* Good use of transitions within the paragraphs and between paragraphs
* Good sense of logic in organization
 | * Sentence structure is varied at times
* Good control of sentence structure
* Minor surface errors that do not interfere with understanding
* Few diction and word choice problems
* MLA formatting followed with few errors
* Citations used for all words and ideas not writer’s own with slight errors
* Textual evidence has signal phrases connected to quotations and correct parenthetical citations with slight errors
 |
| **C** | * An identifiable but weak thesis statement
* Adequate topic sentences
* Adequate supporting examples/reasons /details which are present, although limited, too general, or unbalanced
* Some suggestion of unified content
* Adequately addresses the essay prompt
* Meets many of the essay’s requirements
 | * Adequate introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion
* Adequate paragraph structure
* Some use of transitions within the paragraphs and between paragraphs
* A basic sense of organization, perhaps with some discrepancies in logic
 | * Attempts made at times to vary sentence structure
* Adequate control of sentence structure, although there may be errors
* Some surface errors that do not interfere with understanding
* Some word choice errors that do not hinder understanding
* MLA formatting followed adequately
* Citations mostly used for all words and ideas not writer’s own. Writer may be a little confused about rules.
* Most of the textual evidence have signal phrases connected to quotations and parenthetical citations with errors
 |
| **D** | * Missing or weak thesis statement
* Missing or unclear topic sentences
* Supporting examples/details/reasons present, but are weak, poorly developed, disconnected from the thesis, repetitive, or very unbalanced
* The content is not unified
* Attempts to address the essay prompt, but only answers part of the question or appears to misunderstand the prompt
* Does not meet most of the essay’s requirements
 | * Weak organization (perhaps missing an introduction or conclusion paragraph)
* Weakly organized paragraph structure
* Few or improperly used transitions
* Little sense of organization, with major discrepancies in logic
 | * Simplistic sentence structure
* Limited control over sentence structure
* Significant surface errors that may interfere with understanding
* Significant word choice errors that may hinder meaning
* MLA formatting followed inadequately
* Errors in following citation rules
* Most of the textual evidence used are missing signal phrases
 |
| **F** | * Essay is incomplete or doesn’t address the prompt
 | * No sense of organization
* Missing an introduction, body paragraphs, or conclusion
* No use of transitions
 | * Lack of control over sentence structure
* Major problems with surface errors that obscure meaning
* Numerous and significant word choice errors that obscure meaning
* No MLA formatting
* Lack of citations or major mistakes
* No signal phrases used before or after quotations (or no textual evidence provided)
 |

**Being Dropped from the Course, Adding the Course:** I will assume that students who do not check in on the discussion board by Friday, January 14, 2011, at 12:00PM are inactive and drop them from the course. After January 14, however, it is your responsibility to officially drop yourself from the course if you are no longer active; otherwise, you will receive the appropriate grade at the end of the semester.

**Academic Behavior, Email, and the Discussion Board:**

Because this is an online class, we'll communicate often via email. When you send me an email, use CORRECT English and maintain a respectful tone. Your emails must begin with "Mr. Dominguez" and end with "Thank you." Emails that do not reflect proper etiquette will not receive responses. In addition, maintain a respectful tone with me and each other on the discussion board. When I read your posts, I expect to see proper English. Not capitalizing “I” when it is a first-person pronoun, for example, is *not* proper English. The language used to write text messages is *definitely* not proper English. Students who fail to maintain a respectful tone in this class via email or the discussion board may be dropped from the course—consider yourselves warned.

**Completing Assignments and Missing Deadlines:**

All assignments must be completed on the given due dates. If you miss a deadline, you will receive a zero on the assignment. If you are unable to complete an assignment due to an emergency, I may consider a make-up assignment if you are able to present appropriate documentation. Missing class is never an excuse for missing an assignment.

**Plagiarism:**

If you are caught plagiarizing any work, you may receive an automatic “F” on the assignment, in the class, or dropped from the course, with the appropriate grade, and referred to campus administration.

**Calendar**:

January

* 13th lecture posted on fragments, comma splices, and sentence fuses.
* 20th lecture posted on sentence types.
* 27th lecture posted on how to write a basic essay, essay #1 assigned on “The Fight with Covey.”

February

* 3rd essay #1 due by 12:15 in the afternoon. Lecture posted on how to write essay #2, will focus on “This Wicked Patch of Dust” from *The Packinghouse Review*, please read this essay ahead of time.
* 10th lecture posted on how to write essay #2.
* 17th lecture posted on how to write essay #2.
* 24th lecture posted on how to write essay #2. Essay #2 assigned on “A Place called Mexico” from *The Packinghouse Review*.

March

* 3rd essay #2 due by 12:15 in the afternoon.
* 10th lecture posted on how to write essay #3, will focus on “Detention in the Casket,” “Joker,” and “New Orleans Funk” from *The Packinghouse Review.*
* 17th lecture posted on how to write essay #3.
* 24th lecture posted on how to write essay #3.
* 31st lecture posted on how to write essay #3, essay #3 assigned on “Angry Young Man,” “L’argent,” “Jardinero’s Fall in the Garden of Edinburgh Avenue” from *The Packinghouse Review.*

April

* 7th essay #3 due at 12:15 in the afternoon, lecture posted on how to write essay #4, reading TBA.
* 14th lecture posted on how to write essay 4.
* 21st Spring recess.
* 28th lecture posted on how to write essay 4, essay #4 assigned, reading TBA.

May

* 5th essay 4 due at 12:15 in the afternoon. Lecture posted on final.
* 12th lecture posted on final.
* 19h essay 4 returned with minimal comments. ***Final posted at 7:00PM and due at 9:00PM May 19. PLAN AHEAD!***