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

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [Contact Information](#Contactinfo) | [**Course Description**](#Coursedescription) | [**Grading Policy**](#Gradingpolicy) | [**Changes to the Syllabus/ Calendar**](#changes) | [**Required Texts and Materials**](#requiredtext) | [**Weekly Schedule**](#weeklyschedule) |
| [Course Information/ Learning Outcomes](#courseobjectives) | [**Computer Requirements**](#computerrequirements) | [Discussion Board Details and Tips](#dbtips1) | [**How are Discussion Board Postings Graded?**](#gradingdb) | [**Attendance Policies**](#attendance) | [**E-Mail**](#email) |
| [**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**](#accommodations) | [**Word Processing Formats**](#word) | [**Essays—Getting the Work Done on Time**](#essaysontime) | [**Essays--Rewriting Policies**](#essaysrewrite) | [**Essay Formatting**](#essayformat) | [Quizzes](#quizzes) |
| [**Cheating/ Plagiarism**](#cheating) | [**FAQs Regarding Blackboard and Hybrid Classes**](#faqblackboard) | [**Reminders/ Tips for Success**](#reminders) | [Getting additional help/ Homework](#homework)  | [Individual Conferences](#individualconferences) | [Examination Policies—Midterm and the Final](#exams) |

# 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 and Wednesdays from 10am-12pm; Fridays from 10-11am. *Other times may be scheduled outside these hours as needed.*

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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 Due Dates** | **Point Value** | **Your Grade** |
| Essay #1 (due week 4) | 100 |  |
| Essay #2 (due week 7) | 100 |  |
| Essay #3 (due week 10) | 100 |  |
| Midterm (Test on the grammar concepts from weeks 1-9, closes week 10) | 50 |  |
| Essay #4 (due week 14) | 150 |  |
| Essay #5 (due week 17) | 150 |  |
| Final (In Class, Timed Essay) | 100 |  |
| Final (Test on the grammar concepts from weeks 10-17, closes finals week) | 50 |  |
| Homework (Weeks 1-9) | 25 |  |
| Homework (Weeks 10-17) | 25 |  |
| Discussion Boards | 80 |  |
| Grammar Quizzes | 70 |  |
| **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.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**Changes to the Syllabus/Assignment 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.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**Required Texts and Materials**

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

ISBN: 978-0-312-48841-3

Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1981. ISBN: 0-345-34296-8.

**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: one examination blue book (size 8 ½ x 11) for the final.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**Weekly Schedule**

In the assignment folders tab in our Blackboard website, you will find a detailed schedule of the due dates for the entire semester. To give you a feel of how the class will work, a typical week looks like this:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sunday** | **Monday** | **Tuesday**Class meets. That week’s schedule begins. | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** Due by midnight:--all readings and videos for this week’s assignment sheet must be completed--All original discussion board posts --the quiz on three weeks’ concepts (if indicated on the assignment sheet for this week) | **Saturday** |
| **Sunday** | **Monday**Due by midnight:--all replies to other classmates’ discussion board posts | **Tuesday** Class meets. Due (print out the work prior to class):--all essay work--final drafts of essays when due need to be uploaded to Turnitin.com by 9:00am--grammar exercisesThe next week’s schedule begins. | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |  |

**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.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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.).
* 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.
* 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.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

# Discussion Board Details and Tips

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 b/c 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.
* **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**. Make sure you address the person you are replying to by name. These replies are due at midnight the night before our class meets.

In the subject line of each post, **you will need to title each post** and reply with something catchy, creative, and informative. Think of your title as an advertisement for your thoughts, as you are trying to get students interested enough to read your post. After each post, you will need to include **how many words your post contains**.

Also, does replying to another students’ work mean you can only agree with that student? Think about how discussions happen in traditional classes. Do students only agree with each other in real-time class conversations? If we did, it would certainly be a dull conversation, and we probably wouldn’t learn much. Think about how you would politely disagree with a student you are having a conversation with (by saying something like, “I appreciate your viewpoint, but have you considered...” “I think I understand what you are saying, but I wonder if you have thought about...”).

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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**.

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

**No late work for the discussion boards will be allowed**. Once I have graded the discussion boards, you cannot receive any credit for any late work on those posts.

*A special note*: some students have tried to post empty discussion board posts in the past before the due date, thinking that later on after the work is due they would go back and edit their work. When you edit your work, the timestamp I use to determine whether work is done on time or not will reflect your edited work time, not the original post.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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). Keep in mind that this is a college class—an absence, no matter the reason, is still an absence. That being said, it is common courtesy to inform me should you need to miss class, especially if you miss more than one class in a row. There’s few things more infuriating for teachers than a student who disappears for a few class sessions and then shows up wanting to know if he’s missed anything or expecting to fit right back in.

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.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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 up to half credit. 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. The grammar packet will be collected at the midterm and again at the final for homework points. No homework can be turned in after then.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**Getting Additional Help**

The Writing Center is located in HUM 58 on the Reedley College campus. Stop by to enroll in English 272, a course designed to help you on any writing assignment from any class. Or take advantage of our walk-in or online tutorial. The Writing Center is open Monday - Thursday: 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Writing Center aims to help students become more confident and skilled writers, create a student-centered environment that focuses on the ideas of the writer, and offer students resources for all of their writing needs.

**Word Processing Formats**

The most common word processing format is Microsoft Word 2007 (.docx). If you use another word processing program, 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 a program other than Microsoft Word, you must plan to visit a local library—public or school—to convert your work before posting it for the final product.*

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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).

All of your papers will be submitted on Blackboard, through Turnitin.com. Before you upload the file, double check to make sure that you are submitting the correct draft of this assignment. Upload the file to the Blackboard site (find it in this essay’s details folder). **Save your file with your first and last name plus the essay number in it** (e.g. the file should be called “John Smith Essay #1.docx”), and make sure you save this file as a **doc or .docx or .rtf** file (I do prefer .docx). To submit an essay, follow the detailed instructions in each essay’s folder, where the link to submit your paper is located.

Please remember that computer problems inevitably will occur when submitting your paper online. I have found that when students wait until the last minute to upload their papers, they will usually end up having problems (such as having the computer crash). Remember, a paper turned in at 9:05am is considered late and a full letter grade will be deducted! I will not be able to respond to a last minute, panicked email to have me clear a failed upload attempt. The smart student will take this warning into consideration and upload the paper several hours or days in advance of the due date, allowing time to get help or make alternative arrangements should computer problems occur.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**Essays--Rewriting Policies**

You are allowed to and encouraged to rewrite only **one essay 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**. **You have up to one week** from when I return your essays to rewrite the paper. Here’s the steps you will need to follow to rewrite your paper:

1. Once I have returned the essays to the class, you have up to one week from then to rewrite the paper. On the rewritten draft, **highlight exactly what you have changed in the document itself**.
2. Then, after the works cited page, include a separate typed paragraph explaining exactly what changes you have made and explaining how these changes improved your paper. I will only award a grade higher for papers with substantial, significant changes in them and for people who have followed these directions.
3. Turn into me the rewritten copy with the highlighting and your explanation of what you changed.
4. **You will not have the opportunity to rewrite Essay #5, as grades are due soon after you turn in that final paper.**

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

# Quizzes

You will have quizzes every three weeks based on the grammar concepts from that time period. Go to our Blackboard website and find the quizzes under the “Grammar Quizzes” tab. You will need to take the quizzes no later than **three days after our class meeting at midnight**. After this time, you will no longer be able to take the quiz 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 30 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.

Please remember that computer problems inevitably will occur. I have found that when students wait until the last minute to take the quizzes, they will usually end up having problems (such as being locked out of a quiz or having the computer crash). After the quiz due date has passed, I will not reopen the quiz for you for any reason, including computer problems, and because the quiz closing time is always at midnight, I will not be able to respond to a last minute, panicked email to have me clear a quiz attempt. The smart student will take this warning into consideration and take the quiz several days in advance of the due date, allowing time to make changes and allowing the good chance that a computer problem might occur.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

# 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. 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.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

# Examinations

**The in-class essay final as well as the grammar midterm and final through Blackboard cannot be made up**; if you know in advance that you cannot attend the midterm or final, be sure to speak with me at least forty-eight hours 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 the reason.

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.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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):

* Font set for TIMES NEW ROMAN 12
* Line spacing set for DOUBLE
* Entire essay is DOUBLE line spaced only—no more and no less ANYWHERE
* The margins are set to 1” on all sides.
* In the PARAGRAPH menu, SPACING **BEFORE** and **AFTER** is set for ZERO
* Page numbers have been INSERTED (not typed) into the upper right hand corner beginning with page one. This is formatted into the header, appearing ½ inch from the top of the page
* Student’s last name appears before the page number—AND there is a space between the name and page number.
* On page one ONLY, in the top left hand corner of the page, the following appears 1 inch below the top of the page.
	+ Student’s Name
	+ Instructor’s Name
	+ Course
	+ Due Date for Essay
* The above information is double line spaced.
* The essay has an appropriate title, which is centered—USING the computer’s function to center (not tabbed or spaced into the center). The title is a creative one, not merely the assignment’s name. The title has every major word capitalized, and there are no quotation marks around the title. The title is the same size font, and it is not italicized or in all capital letters.
* The Work(s) Cited is the last page of the essay—INSERT NEW PAGE. The works cited page is the last formatted page of the essay, so it also follows all of the formatting details listed above.
* On your final draft, highlight your thesis statement and all of the topic sentences in your body paragraphs.

**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.”

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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, and they are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Yes, when you call, you will have to wait awhile. Every single time I have called them (and I’ve called them a lot), I’ve had my issue resolved over the phone.

*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.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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.

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**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, and I reserve the right to dismiss you from class if you are more interested in your phone than our 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. When this class is taught face-to-face, students meet with an instructor and the class for four hours a week for this class; while we still meet for two hours of class time, you are still expected to spend the additional two hours of class time online each week. In addition to our four hours of class time (both in the classroom and in our Blackboard site), the average amount of homework for an hour is two-three hours for each hour of class time. It is important to understand the time commitment necessary to be successful in this or any hybrid class; you are expected to spend the same amount of time on this class as would any English 125 student—the benefit to you is that you get to decide when you work on the class, outside of the set due dates.
4. It is your responsibility to stay informed concerning any changes of assignment due dates, readings, etc. This means you should check the Blackboard announcements on a daily basis and your SCCCD e-mail account daily.
5. If an essay is due and you cannot access Blackboard, probably Blackboard is down. Don’t stress—wait a little bit and try again. When this happens, watch for email messages from me. I will let you know the revised due date. Of course, if an essay is due and the Blackboard is down, I can’t hold you to the original due date.
6. If something happens to your computer and/or Internet and an assignment is due, ***call me or email me (of course using another computer)***. Do not wait until everything is back up before contacting me. Moreover, you need to back up your work on a moveable storage device (CD, flash drive, USB, etc). Public libraries have computers with Internet access—work can be completed in places and on computers other than those we have at home!
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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. Likewise, 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.
10. **Important dates:**
	1. **Semester begins: Monday, January 9**
	2. **MLK holiday: Monday, January 16**
	3. **Lincoln holiday: Friday, February 17**
	4. **Washington holiday: Monday, February 20**
	5. **Last day to drop the class without a “W” on your transcript: Friday, January 27**
	6. **Last day to drop the class (a letter grade will be assigned after this date): Friday, March 9**
	7. **Spring break: April 2-6**
	8. **Our final will be held on Tuesday, May 15 from 10:00-11:50am in CCI 207.**

***Keep in mind that even though Reedley College may take several holidays throughout the semester that fall on our normally scheduled due dates, the online assignment due dates still apply. In other words, there are no holidays in an online class.***

[*(Return to Table of Contents)*](#_Table_of_Contents)

**Tips for Emailing Mrs. Berg and Other Instructors**

***Mrs. Berg’s note*: Email tends to be the primary way that students contact me in an online or hybrid class, and there are some things I wish you would keep in mind when considering whether to contact me this way. I do welcome contact, but I want you to know that I get between 50-100 emails a day (or more!). Responding to emails is a large part of what I do in an online class, and reading and following these tips will help me ensure I can help you more efficiently.**

1. **Email using your SCCCD account.**Your instructor does not know who “volfan2014” is, nor is he or she likely to open messages from unknown senders. Reedley College provides you with a professional email address that it expects you to maintain, so utilize it to ensure that you can be identified as a member of the university community.
2. **Always put the Course & Section Number in the subject line.**Many instructors will only accept emails from you in this format. Remember, your instructor has multiple sections of your course and may still be learning your name, so you need to identify yourself to help him or her to help you. A phrase such as “Question about paper” will be overlooked, whereas a professional subject line easily points to your identity as the instructor’s student.
3. **Know your instructor’s preferences and policy regarding email.**Make sure your instructor accepts email, and that email is the best way to talk about the particular subject. If your instructor doesn’t accept assignments via email, don’t send them! If it’s a complicated matter, or if it’s very urgent, a face-to-face meeting during office hours would probably be better.
4. **Format your email properly.**Always use a greeting, and write in complete sentences. Remember to indicate which class you’re writing about (course and section number in the subject line). End with a closing courtesy and signature. If you include an attachment, make sure the file name clearly identifies what the attachment is and who it’s from, so your instructor doesn’t have to guess (e.g. – “sjones-paper1prospectus.docx”). In addition, if you include an attachment, be very specific about what you want done with that document.

Above all, proofread! Just because it’s an email doesn’t mean you don’t have to adhere to Standard English! Use capital letters where appropriate, punctuate properly, and avoid “text-talk” (u, thru, lol, etc.). Compose your emails first in a Word document to take advantage of spell- and grammar-check before sending.

1. **Be clear and specific.**If you have a question about an assignment, be sure to specify which assignment. If you’re responding to feedback or other communication from the instructor, make it clear in your email that you’ve read the instructor’s response and are continuing the conversation.
2. **Don’t email in anger.**If you’re dealing with a touchy subject, or you’re lodging a complaint, be careful! Once sent, an email cannot be retrieved. Try having someone else read your message to ensure that you’re not being offensive or inflammatory, and if you’re emotional when writing the email, wait at least an hour before sending it.
3. **Patiently wait for a reply.**If you send an email, check back for a response. Leave plenty of time for your instructor to respond to your email (about 24 hours during the work week), and don’t harass him or her. However, it is perfectly okay to politely follow up on email messages if more than 24 hours has passed during the work week. Sometimes messages get lost in a crowded inbox. But make sure that what you’re asking is reasonable. Don’t send a rough draft at 10:00p.m. the night before the paper is due and expect feedback. Also, keep in mind that a request that takes five minutes to type might take awhile to fulfill.

Remember, email is the most passive way to contact your instructors. If the matter is very urgent, important, or sensitive, you’re probably better off talking to your instructor face-to-face, or at least calling him or her.

1. **Choose your wording carefully.**If you missed class, don’t ask “if” you missed anything important. It’s a good bet that your instructor thinks everything he or she works hard to impart to you in class is important. Be diplomatic. Even if you feel completely in the right, be smart about how you phrase your message. Remember, your instructor is there to help you succeed and wants to help you succeed. As with most things in life, if you ask nicely, the instructor will be much more likely to try his or her best to help you. Don’t be demanding, and don’t tell your instructors what they “have” to do. Finally, be honest, but don’t over-share.
2. **Copy yourself on emails to your instructors.**This will help verify that your message got through intact, and give you the opportunity to check that everything looks the way you expected. If you included attachments, check them to make sure that they open and appear as they should.
3. **Be sure that your instructor is the best person to ask before emailing.**If you ask a question that the instructor has already answered multiple times in class, or the information you need is on the syllabus, or you can get the material from a classmate, then your instructor will not look favorably on your email. Remember, if your question is about assignments or class policies, most likely the information you are looking for is available to you in Blackboard, in the syllabus, or in the assignment sheets. Take time to look carefully before asking, and if you don’t find the information, look again to be sure before contacting the instructor.

*Special thanks to the Student Success Center at University of Tennessee at Knoxville for most of the tips in this article.*

