Syllabus – ENGL3 – 2013 FA - Record

Instructor Contact Information

Linda Record
423-310-5192 (voice and text – Eastern time zone)
Primary email: linda.record@reedleycollege.edu
Secondary email: record.teach@gmail.com
Website: http://lindarecord.com/02crit/02home.htm
Blog: http://mostlyenglishy.blogspot.com

There are lots of ways to reach me even though I live in Tennessee. Please feel free to call at any time, even on weekends, but don't expect me to answer every call immediately. After all, we're in different time zones, but that shouldn't be too much of a problem. If you call when I'm not available, please leave a **clear** message with your name and callback number *at the beginning*, and I will return your call as soon as possible. It would help if you tell me the best time to reach you, too.

Email is an excellent means of reaching me quickly because I spend a lot of time at the computer. Be sure to put your last name and the assignment ID in the subject box and include your name in the message. I'll try to answer direct email within 24 hours, but if you haven't heard from me by then, send another message.

Another way to contact me quickly is to post a message in the **Q&A** discussion forum in BlackBoard as I check it every day.

Special note: All messages to the class are sent through BlackBoard, which uses the email account provided by the campus. You must assure that you have access to the email account that is in Bb. Check it by sending a message to yourself and then checking to see if you can find and read the message.

Course Description

English 3 is designed to develop advanced thinking, reading, and writing skills through the study and application logic and cogent thinking to analysis and development of complex arguments. Students learn to recognize the elements of academic argumentation, analyze the arguments of others, recognize and avoid logical fallacies, and produce their own arguments and solutions to problems using primary and secondary research. This course requires substantial amounts of non-fiction reading and of writing, both in formal essays and in less formal written discussions.

Course Texts
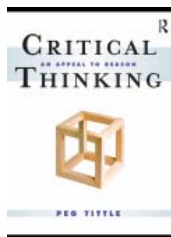
You will **not** need to purchase a textbook for this class. Several texts will be required, including *Critical Thinking: An Appeal to Reason* by Peg Tittle, but all of them will be available free online or provided in PDF format from a free source. Links to required texts are on the assignment pages.

General Expectations

Taking an online class is both similar to and vastly different from taking one face-to-face. Similarities include instructor prepared activities, announcements, lecture materials, assignments, etc. The main difference is that we won't be in the classroom with one another, which means you will need to be more individually responsible than you might in a regular class -- and you might feel a bit lonely from time to time. Still, many students say they are surprised at how much better they get to know their online classmates and teacher than their on-site counterparts. I hope that will be your experience, too. The greatest benefit of being in an online course is that you can have direct, one-to-one communication with me and fellow students at times more convenient to your schedule, rather than only during scheduled class or office hours.

Critical note

Technical problems are **NOT** a valid reason for being late or missing assignments. It does not matter whether you have a computer virus, a malfunction, service provider issues or cannot save a file in a readable format. If a file is not available when I pick it up for grading, or if a submitted file cannot be opened and read by me, then it is the same as not submitting it at all.

The only exception is a regional or campus-wide issue, such as a major storm or power outage that affects all students.

Please back up your work in several places: your system, a backup disk, a flash drive, or email the file to yourself at another e-mail account, etc. Play it safe! If you have any critical technical issue, such as not being able to access BlackBoard, you **MUST** contact me immediately via telephone, email, or some other means.

Participation

There are certain arbitrary deadlines in the class. Our weeks will begin on **Monday** and end on **Sunday**. This does **not** mean that all the work is done on those days; it merely provides an organizational structure for the schedule. Activities will be due no later than **11:59 p.m.** (Pacific) on their specified dates. The due dates are posted in multiple locations in the course site, including on the class calendar and the discussion forums; there is **no** reason for you to miss a due date.

1. **If you miss three tasks you may be dropped from this class.** So please, make arrangements **in advance** if you believe there will be a problem with completing **any** activity.

2. The assignments in this class are the same as if the class were being taught face to face, which means that you will do a substantial amount of reading, writing, and discussion on specific tasks. It also means that in this time frame you will need to commit more hours than usual to the accomplishment of tasks.

3. You will be asked to spend time generating and participating in discussions with the class. These discussions play a central role in the learning experience and are considered part of the required writing process in this class.

4. **Rule of thumb:** Log on to BlackBoard at least three times a week to read announcements and post in discussions. Set up a regular schedule for yourself, just as if you were going to class on campus.

5. **Suggestion:** Keep a close eye on the class calendar and add the due dates to your personal organizer to avoid missing important deadlines.

6. **IMPORTANT:** Check your email every day (campus mail can be forwarded to a preferred account). Read **EVERY** message that comes from **me**.

7. I provide **LOTS** of information, and you'll find it in multiple places in the course site. Of course, it doesn't matter at all how much I provide for you to if you don't take advantage of the resources. Your success in this class is directly dependent upon your willingness to inform yourself about what needs to be done, when it needs to be done, and what expectations need to be met to earn the grade you want to get. I'll do all I can to help you be successful, and I hope you will work equally as hard to achieve success.

8. This online course must meet the same requirements for content as an onsite class, but because it is conducted mostly through reading and writing, it will surely take you longer than a similar class taught onsite. ***Do not*** take this class if you anticipate the workload will be ***less*** than a traditional classroom. It won't.

9. Announcements

I post important general announcements during the course. These can include changes in due dates, assignments, and other information critical to your success in the class. **If something is posted as an announcement, it's the same as giving you a handout in an onsite class.** That means you are responsible for anything that's posted as an announcement, so please, read all of them carefully. I generally email important announcements as well as post them, but don't take any chances on missing important information.

You are responsible for knowing when activities begin and end -- and for completing them in a timely manner. Look at the **class calendar** to see when assignments are due; check announcements to see if any changes have been made. Pay close attention to patterns of activity. You can **work ahead** on some tasks, helping to assure your success in the class -- and the ability to maintain a personal life! This is especially useful if you have an important personal activity scheduled. You can do your work for this class before playing. :)

Student Learning Outcomes

1 Given a variety of complex written texts of varying lengths, students will be able to identify values and assumptions—explicit and implicit—in the writing of others. They will critically examine their responses to controversial issues as they analyze and synthesize the information they read through purposeful discussions and argumentative writing.

2 Given written and visual material, students will be able to distinguish between the strengths and weaknesses of an argument, identifying logical fallacies and rhetorical moves that contribute to a text's effectiveness. Students will identify premises and logical progressions of these arguments to discover how conclusions are formed. These skills will be demonstrated in student projects, writing and discussion.

3 Given an issue about which they will write, students will be able to demonstrate control of college-level writing skills by crafting and revising cogent, lucid arguments. The student writing will exhibit logical, clear thought, control of meaning, and will reflect maturity of style and appropriate tone.

4 Given an issue about which they will construct an argument, students will be able to effectively locate, evaluate, and use appropriate resource material to give credibility to claims and counter-arguments needed to explore and substantiate their perspectives or refute possible objections. Students will present their arguments in essays using correct MLA documentation and formatting.

5 Students will present their work in texts that demonstrate appropriate skill in common writing conventions and use correct MLA documentation and formatting.

Topics:

Thinking Strategies	Writing Strategies
- Elements of arguments - Induction and deduction - Denotation and connotation - Fact vs opinion - World views and values - Validity, soundness, & authority - Logical fallacies	- Writing arguments - Rhetorical devices - Use of evidence - Use of research - Revising arguments - Critical analysis - Sufficiency of support - Editing

Assessment

There are three types of tasks in this class: weekly discussions, formal essays, and exams.

Weekly discussions	**390 points**	**39%**
Midterm & Final exams	**100 points**	**10%**
Formal writing	**510 points**	**51%**

Activities are graded on a point system, and there are 1000 points available to earn in this class. Your final semester grade is based on the percentage of credit you earn throughout the course. Grades are **NOT** rounded up even if you are exceedingly close to the borderline between grades.

- **90-100 % = A**
- **80-89 % = B**
- **70-79 % = C**
- **60-69 % = D**

Life is not linear, and neither is this class. In order to accomplish all of the class activities and objectives, it will be necessary to work on more than one task at a time. If you're not accustomed to planning for overlapping activities, it helps to have a master list of due dates so nothing slips through the cracks. This is provided in the **Class Calendar**, which is posted in lots of places throughout the course site. I strongly encourage you to write all due dates on your personal calendar so that none are missed. Be sure to allow yourself enough time to complete a task before its due date.

In addition, every task has an assessment rubric. You will find these on the assignment pages (which have multiple tasks) and at various places in the class site. Each assessment rubric shows exactly how many points are available for the assignment, what characteristics are being evaluated, what exemplary characteristics are expected, and what portion of the assignment grade is given to each characteristic. These assessment rubrics function as excellent checklists so you can be sure you've not missed something important.

Late Assignments

I do **not** accept late work unless arrangements have been made **in advance** of the task deadline.

However, each student is allowed **one** late-task exemption. The single late-task exemption can be used any time prior to Final Exam week, but it **cannot** be used for **peer reviews**. The late task exemption needs no explanation for why an assignment would be late. To use the late task exemption, send me an email request, and I will allow you to submit the late task (only one) without

penalty. The late task must be completed within 7 days of the original due date. Peer reviews are **not** eligible for late task exemption.

Extra Credit

There are **three ways** to earn extra credit in this course.

1. **Notify me of an error.**
   If you find a mistake in one of the files I've created for the class, please let me know immediately and specifically. For instance, I need to know **exactly what error you've discovered** and **the URL of the page on which it appears**.

   Eligible errors include...

   - typographical, grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors (1 point)
   - broken links (up to 2 points)
   - conflicting information (up to 3 points)

   The **first person** to notify me of an error is the one who will receive the extra credit.
2. **Complete the end of term survey.** Completing the end of term survey will earn you 5 points extra credit.
3. **Complete ALL assignments on time**. Completing all assignments on or before their due dates will earn you 5 points extra credit at the end of the semester.

Incompletes

I do not allow incompletes unless the circumstance is truly extraordinary.

If you think you need an incomplete, please write to me explaining the circumstance which has resulted in your request.

Class Calendar

The class calendar is intended to keep you apprised of the activities and due dates. In addition, all due dates are posted on the assignment folders set up for each week of the class, and there is a link to the class calendar in each assignment folder and other places throughout BlackBoard. **There is no reason for you to miss an assignment due date**. Activities shown on the calendar are subject to change as required by the needs of this particular class. Any changes to the class schedule will always be posted as announcements and sent out via email.

There's one special note about discussions. Each discussion actually has two due dates. The first post must be made no later than **Thursday**, which is the first due date. The remaining posts must be completed by **Sunday**, which is the second due date. The reason for this is that it's very difficult to have a discussion if everyone waits until late Sunday to begin posting.

Please keep in mind, too, that I am 3 hours ahead of you. I participate in the discussions, but if you wait until 7 p.m. on Sunday to do your final posts, there won't be any way for me to respond to them as I'm likely already in bed.

Academic Integrity

Cheating is the practice of fraudulent and deceptive acts for the purpose of improving a grade or obtaining course credit.

While such acts typically occur in relation to exams, it is the intent of the definition that cheating not be limited to examination situations only but that it includes all actions by a student which are intended to gain an unearned academic advantage by fraudulent and deceptive means. Plagiarism is defined as a specific form of cheating that consists of the misuse of others'

published or unpublished language, ideas, or other original material by misrepresenting the material (i.e. another's intellectual property) through not acknowledging it correctly--that is, passing it off as if it were one's own work. Neither cheating nor plagiarism will be tolerated in this course.

The issue of cheating/plagiarism goes deeper than "copying" to an issue of academic dishonesty. In your English class, you will be encouraged to discuss your work at great length with others, you will consult models of reading and writing and other student work to help you, you may confer with a tutor or a writing center technician, and you will do lots of different activities to guide your learning. But it is NEVER permissible "to give or receive answers" or ideas or even words "in a way that bypasses the need to think on your own" about your reading or writing (Dr. Tim Hankins, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology). Help from any source must be acknowledged, and there are accepted ways to do this. If in doubt, ask your instructor. Violation of the letter or intent of this policy will result in serious harm to your learning, to your grade, to your standing in class, and perhaps to your standing at the college.

Depending upon the severity of the act, cheating or plagiarism will lead to disciplinary and academic sanctions ranging from loss of credit in the class, to placement of a letter in the student's permanent file, or even to expulsion from the college as defined in the Code of Student Conduct.
Claimed ignorance of plagiarism policies and regulations is no excuse for their breach.

Penalties for cheating and plagiarism are severe and can follow you the rest of your college career. At a minimum, you will receive an F on the assignment and a warning, but plagiarism in a major essay could result in an immediate F for the class and a write-up for your student record. You may also be liable for more severe penalties, up to and including expulsion from the college. **The bottom line is that the college and I take this very seriously and so should you**.

I expect you to be honest with me and with your classmates, to trust me and each other, to be fair with yourself and with your classmates, to respect each other, and to be responsible for your own learning. If an essay is found to have **more than 20% direct quote** or **does not properly cite sources** of information, it will be scrutinized for further action.

As the instructor, I can visit any forum discussion areas and groups in BlackBoard. Additionally, I can view statistical reports that show the dates and times an individual student logs in at the Bb site and which areas and assignments are accessed. Under ordinary circumstances I do not look at the statistics, but it's only fair that you know I can.

ADA Information

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. For more information visit DSP&S online at http://www.reedleycollege.edu/index.aspx?page=119 or contact the Reedley College Center: Phone 559-638-0332 TTY 559-638-0382.

Conduct

This is a college campus, even though it's made of clicks rather than bricks. Please interact in a courteous manner in your electronic classroom.

The course material is protected by copyright and is intended for private use by registered students. Redistribution without consent is not allowed.

Keep your login ID and password private. This will ensure that your assignments, correspondence and homework are under your control at all times.

Log off when you are finished working. This will also help maintain a secure and private workspace for your class activities.

Try very hard not to jump to conclusions about what someone else might mean. Communicating through writing is much more susceptible to misinterpretation than talking with someone face to face. It's very easy to misunderstand and be misunderstood. Part of the work of this class is to learn how to communicate effectively through writing. So please, be kind to one another.

One more note about this class: It is not my intent to select works which are patently offensive; however, it is not uncommon for literature to contain words, passages, and themes which people in various groups will not only find disagreeable but also repugnant. Because the content of this class deals with difficult and challenging social issues, some of the texts for this class almost certainly fall into one or more of those categories. When such situations occur, I expect each student to openly express opinions, but also to act with dignity and respect toward the ideas and opinions of others.

Recommended Technology

All of these are in the **must have** category to succeed in this class.

- PC or Macintosh with consistent internet access
- Reedley-provided and activated email account
- Adobe Reader (free download for PC and Mac)
- Microsoft Word or other word-processing application
    - If you use another word processor, such as Word Perfect or Microsoft Works, you are **required** to save files in Rich Text Format so they can be shared with everyone in the class.