**Syllabus for English 125, Section 56326 - Fall 2015**

**College Writing Skills**

**Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00 pm-2:50pm in CCI, room 202**

**Class information:**

Instructor: Emily Basiletti Email: emily.basiletti@reedleycollege.edu

Office Hours: see me – by appointment

**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%**

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| **Assignments and their Due Dates** | **Approximate**  **Point Value** | **Your Grade** |
| Essay #1 (due week 4) | 100 |  |
| Essay #2 (due week 7) | 100 |  |
| Essay #3 (due week 10) | 150 |  |
| Grammar Midterm (Test on the grammar concepts  from weeks 1-8) | 25 |  |
| Essay #4 (due week 14) | 150 |  |
| Essay #5 (due week 17) | 150 |  |
| Midterm (In Class Timed Essay) | 50 |  |
| Final (In Class Timed Essay) | 100 |  |
| Grammar Final (Test on the grammar concepts  from weeks 9-17) | 25 |  |
| Homework (Weeks 1-9) | 25 |  |
| Homework (Weeks 10-17) | 25 |  |
| Weekly Grammar and Reading quizzes | 100 |  |
| **APPROXIMATE 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/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.

**Required Text**

Birkenstein, C., Durst, R., Graff, G. *They Say, I Say With Readings*

Recommended – MLA handbook

**Required Materials**

* A composition notebook specifically for this class – we will be doing a lot of writing
* A set of different colored highlighters
* Pocket-sized notebook

**Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes**

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

1. Write multiple essays of at least 1200 words that include an introduction, multiple body paragraphs, and conclusion of some sophistication. These essays 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.

**Homework**

All homework assignments (grammar work, drafts of the writing assignments, and reading assignments) are **checked at the beginning of class only for full credit. If you are late or absent for some reason, your work is late.** If you were late, absent, or did not do your work on time, you still have the opportunity to earn partial credit on missing assignments up until the midterm. For assignments given after the midterm, you will have until the final day of instruction (not the day of the final) to turn in missing work for partial credit.

**\*Note:** Extra credit opportunities will be available throughout the semester.

**Attendance Policy**

Important skills are learned in every class meeting—when you are absent, you miss a lot! Please be aware that **a total of more than two weeks of absences from whatever reason will result in a drop** from this class. Due to the number of students wishing to add this class, **any student who misses any classes within the first two weeks (dates) without discussing the absence with me, will be dropped from this class.** Keep in mind that this is a college class—any 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.

If you need to miss class, it is your responsibility to get assignments and handouts and to make sure that they are turned in before class begins. I suggest that you find a reliable person/partner in class who can turn in papers for you, get homework assignments, and pick up work for you, should you need to be absent from class. Also, review attached assignment guide

Tardies and early departures from class are disruptive. **Two tardies of 5 minutes or more and/or two early departures of 5 minutes of more 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 record. If you are late, please come in quietly and take the closest available desk, so as to limit disruptions to the class.

**Email**

When you send an email, please include in the subject line: your course name and your name. Be specific and always **sign your name** (your email address does not necessarily identify who you are). You are free to email me at any time with questions regarding the class; however, please keep in mind that it could take twenty-four hours (possibly longer) for me to respond to you. Do not send multiple emails.

Please also keep in mind that when you email me, you are not responding to a text message or emailing a friend. Please do check spelling and grammar. I will not respond to an email if I cannot read what is written. Additionally, be respectful. I will not respond to inappropriate or otherwise disrespectful emails.

**Quizzes and Exams**

Unlike with homework assignments, quizzes and exams cannot be made up. If you know in advance that you cannot attend on a quiz or exam day, be sure to speak with me at least forty-eight hours in advance, so we can make alternate plans before the tests are given. Anyone who does not show up to a quiz or exam without speaking to me in advance will earn a zero, no matter what the reason.

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

**Cheating and Plagiarism**

**Bottom line:** Do not copy someone else’s work 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 (whether it is something plagiarized on your paper or on the discussion board), you will not be allowed to rewrite the assignment, and a report will be filed with the administration for the review. Please be advised that you will submit your final drafts of your papers in Turnitin.com, so if you do plagiarize your papers, you will be caught.

**Student Conduct**

* You are expected to behave in a manner that is respectful to others and conducive to learning. You are expected to interact with each other respectfully and to work cooperatively and constructively in groups.
* There are often reasons to pull out a cell phone or laptop and do a quick Google search for the answer to a question you may have. I will allow this use of technology, but if I find it is being abused, this allowance will be taken away. Further, cell phones MUST be on silent. If a cell phone rings during class, the entire class will be given a pop quiz.
* It is not acceptable to listen to music in class.
* You will get out of this class as much as you put into it. My job is to help you better understand basic sentence structures, essay structure, and more—and use this knowledge to help you become better writers. I truly want each of you to succeed in this course and will do whatever I can to help you. However, the final responsibility is yours.

\*\*Removal from Class by Instructor Reedley College’s Student Code of Conduct Policy (Board Policy 5520 and Educational Code 76032) authorizes an instructor to remove a disruptive student from his or her class for the day of the removal and the next class meeting. The instructor shall immediately report the removal to the Vice President of Student Services. During the period of removal, a student shall not be returned to the class from which he or she was removed without the concurrence of the instructor of the class.

**Essential Information**

* **Time commitment:** This course meets every week for four unit hours. The average amount of homework for a unit hour is two-three hours. This means that the time needed outside of class is about eight to twelve hour per week. It is important to understand the time commitment necessary to be successful in this or any class.
* It is your responsibility to stay informed concerning any changes of assignment due dates, readings, etc. This means you need to pay attention to class announcements (and also Blackboard announcements), or check with a classmate.
* It is your responsibility to officially withdraw from this and/or any course. Failure to do so may result in an “F” grade being awarded.
* Because we are using Blackboard, a class email list is generated. This email is to be used to school related messaging only.

**Getting Feedback and Additional Help on Your Writing**

If you would like additional feedback on your essay, you may email me a copy of your draft, but you must indicate when you are available to meet and/or call to discuss said feedback.

In class, we will be learning several valuable ways of improving your reading and writing. We will learn several “lenses” which can be used while reading, but will primarily be used as a means of providing feedback to peers. Keep in mind that these tools can be used inside and outside of class, so if you would like additional feedback, you may also consider asking a classmate to provide feedback.

The Reedley College Writing Center, located in HUM 58, is another excellent resource for assistance on drafts. The Writing Center is open Monday-Thursdays 8am-2pm. They offer walk-in services and offer an online tutorial.

* English 272 is a course offered in the Writing Center that is designed to help you on any writing assignment. Any student who enrolls in and completes this course successfully will receive extra credit.

In our Blackboard site, you also have access to **free online tutoring** (look for the “Smarthinking Tutoring” tab). Through this tutoring service, you can submit your writing for review by one of their tutors, who will get back to you with feedback in less than twenty-four hours. There are also live tutors available most hours of the day for immediate feedback and answers to questions regarding writing.

**\*Note on Peer Reviews and Feedback**

Some of the essays written in this class will be workshopped by peers. Their job is to provide constructive feedback on what you have written. For example, one student may not understand a point you are trying to make and may need additional information. As a writer, it is beneficial for you to know how a reader responds to what you’ve written. That said, these peer reviews are to be focused on the writing only. **Derogatory comments about the writer or topic of the paper will result in a zero on the activity.**

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a verified need to an academic accommodation of materials in alternate media (i.e. Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), please contact me as soon as possible.

**Essay Formatting** \*We will review this in class.

For all work you submit, follow MLA formatting:

* Font set at TIMES NEW ROMAN, 12 pt.
* Entire essay must be DOUBLE SPACED—no more and no less
* The margins are set to 1” on all sides
* In the PARAGRAPH menu, make sure you select the “Don’t add space between paragraphs of the same style (i.e. there should be no extra spaces in between paragraphs)
* Page numbers are inserted (not typed) into the upper right hand corner (header) beginning with page one. This is formatted into the header, appearing 1/2 an inch from the top of the page. The 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 must appear 1 inch below the top of the page with this information double spaced:
* Student’s name
* Instructor’s name
* Course and Section Number
* Due Date for Essay
* Run spelling and grammar check to help you catch errors.
* The Works Cited page is the last page of the essay. (Format to be discussed in class).

**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.

**Essays—Turning in the Final Draft**

The following work must be done before class to submit a final draft of a paper for your paper to be on time:

1. **Submit the final draft of the paper in our Blackboard site to 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. Take note of the percentage score you got, and open the report to find out why you got the score you did. Papers must be uploaded at least one hour before our class begins.
2. **Prepare a packet to be submitted at the beginning of class**. The packets must be stapled together in this order:
   1. Rubric on top. Write your name on the rubric, and on the bottom of the rubric, write your Turnitin.com originality score and a few sentences explaining why you got the score you did.
   2. Your completed Checklist of Required Elements for that paper.
   3. Final draft of your paper. Highlight on the final draft your thesis and the topic sentences for all body paragraphs.
   4. All other work done on that paper (from freewrites to outlines to rough drafts).

**Additional Notes:**

* Keep your outlines, drafts, and final drafts.
* Keep track of your work. You should save all of your work until the end of the semester so you can double check your final recorded grade. Check your grades regularly throughout the semester as well.
* Important dates:
* **August 28** – last day to drop full-term class to get refund
* **September 4** – Last day to register for full-length class of drop to avoid a “W”
* **September 7** – Labor Day – No classes – campus closed
* **September 18** – Last day to change a fall class to/from a pass/no-pass grade basis
* **October 16** – Last day to drop a full-term class
* **November 11** – Veterans Day – No classes – campus open
* **November 26-27** – Thanksgiving holiday – No classes – campus closed
* **December 14**-**18** – Final exams week
* **December 21** – Grades due by noon

**Additional Resources:**

* The Owl Purdue Writing Lab provides basic and specialized information on writing. This is a good resource to use for formatting.
* http://www.lextutor.ca/conc/eng/ - This link will take you to a very useful lexicon. This is a database through which you can look up specific words (most any word, actually) to see how those words have been used previously. It provides multiple sentences in which the word was used, so you can see the context of its use. This is a great tool for improving your vocabulary. If you are unsure of how to use a certain word, look it up in this lexicon.

**Schedule of assignments forthcoming**