

Syllabus

English 125: Fall 2016

College Writing Skills

(#55831)

Rm: CCI 207

Reedley College

Professor Carrie Miller

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Office: CC1—216 (office hours by appointment)

Section - 55831

M,T,W,TH (CCI 207)

9 week CONDENSED course

August 15-October 13

*******Be aware and plan accordingly! This class is 18 weeks of class condensed into 9 weeks! That means each week we will have 8 hours of in-class instruction and 16 hours or more of homework! *******

PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to assist you on your journey to becoming a better writer. Before you can become a better or stronger writer, you must believe that writing well is important and serves a purpose in your life. You have to be willing to constantly ask yourself, "What am I trying to say?" Then, you must challenge yourself to answer this question honestly and fully. Effective writing IS something that can be learned through practice.

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.

We use Canvas as a supplement to our class. You can access Canvas directly from the Reedley College Website (click on the "Canvas" link found under the "RC Online" link or quick links).

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Write multiple papers of at least 1200 words, which include an introduction, multiple body paragraphs, and conclusion of some sophistication. This essay will include:
 - a. a clearly defined thesis statement
 - b. unified supporting paragraphs, which begin with topic sentences
 - c. quotations that support the topic sentences and the thesis
 - d. supporting material and ideas, which exhibit critical thinking
 - e. complete sentences which include a variety of sentence types (simple, compound, complex, and compound/complex sentence)
 - f. descriptive vocabulary that exhibits growth and sophisticated word choice
 - g. 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.
 - h. use of MLA guidelines to set up essays, correctly use in-text citations for at least one source, and complete a works cited page
 - i. writing that is free from plagiarism
 - j. demonstrated awareness of how to write from the 3rd person point of view for a specific audience
2. Plan and revise independently, employing all stages of the writing process as necessary and appropriate.
3. Complete a multi-paragraph in-class essay with a thesis and support.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In the process of completing this course, students will:

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

audience

13. practice using all stages of the writing process as necessary and appropriate

14. practice writing in-class essays

LEARNING GOALS TO PRACTICE

All of the following will be included; the instructor will decide the order, and some topics may be studied simultaneously (for example, writing process, critical thinking, sentence and paragraph structure, and reference work will all be included in work on a short reference paper).

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| <p>A. Using the writing process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. prewriting strategies 2. outlining 3. drafting 4. revising 5. editing | <p>C. Thinking critically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. analyze ideas 2. use supporting evidence to validate a Thesis | <p>E. Understanding purpose, audience, voice:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. awareness of audience 2. academic language use 3. third person point of view |
| <p>B. Writing a well-developed essay:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. introduction <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. thesis statements 2. body paragraphs <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. topic sentences/claim B. evidence C explanation D. significance E. connections 3. concluding paragraphs 4. coherent development <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. focus b. organization c. unification | <p>D. Writing sentences:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. sentence variety <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. simple sentences b. compound sentences c. complex sentences d. compound complex sentences 2. crafting sentences <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. using parallelism b. eliminating wordiness 3. avoiding and correcting sentence errors <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. fragments b. run-ons (comma splices and sentence fuses) 4. punctuation | <p>F. Using MLA guidelines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. avoid plagiarism 2. set up an essay 3. cite direct quotations 4. write a works cited page |

REQUIRED TEXTS AND COURSE SUPPLIES

Graff, Gerald. *They Say/ I Say*, 3rd ed. WITH READINGS. W.W. Norton & Company, 2014
 Notebook, pen, Flash Drive

REQUIRED COURSE WORK

Late and missed assignments are not accepted. Both homework and in-class assignments need to be done on time in order to receive credit. However, there are more points possible than the percentage is taken out of. For example, for homework there are 250 points possible, but there will be an opportunity to earn more than 250 points. The extra points can be considered a cushion for missing a few assignments

(either in class or homework). On the other hand, they can also be considered extra credit if you do complete all of the assignments.

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| 1. Homework | 250 points |
| 2. In class: Workshops, assignments, Participation, Journaling, Quizzes | 250 points |
| 3. Project 1 (Essay 1) | 500 points |
| 4. Project 2 (Midterm Reflection) | 250 points |
| 5. Project 3 (Essay 2) | 500 points |
| 6. Final Timed Essay | 250 points |

ATTENDANCE

Roll is taken every day within the first five minutes of class.

I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. All appointments, interviews, meetings with counselors must be scheduled outside of class time. If you work, inform your employer of your class schedule. I consider an unprepared student as absent. I also consider students who are not “mentally present” (whose mind is elsewhere: ie: sleeping in class, texting in class, etc) as absent.

It is your responsibility to stay informed concerning any changes of assignment due dates, readings, etc... This means that being absent is not an excuse for not knowing what is happening in class. Always come to class prepared—even after an absence. **You also must be present in class in order to participate in workshops and in class assignments that are worth 12.5% of your grade.**

⇒ If you are absent the first day of the semester, you will be dropped.

⇒ If you attend the first class of the semester but are absent the second class—and you do not contact me **prior** to class—you will be dropped.

⇒ If you miss **any** classes for the first two weeks of the semester, you will be dropped.

⇒ If you have four absences by the end of the fourth week, you will be dropped from the course at my discretion.

If you do not complete all of the assignments for weeks one and two, you will be dropped from the class.

COMPUTER SKILLS – DESIRABLE

Skills Needed:

⇒ Know basics of word processing (saving files, using spell check, using grammar check, moving text, using the help function, etc.)

⇒ Know how to access and navigate the Internet (use a browser, utilize search engines, save and or print from the Internet)

⇒ Know how to send e-mail and attachments

Hardware Needed:

⇒ Pentium (PC) or Mac equivalent

⇒ Home Internet access is desirable. You can use the computers on campus, but they are not

always available. You need to know when each lab is open and available for drop-in use. 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 flash drive or other source.** This also means avoiding completing assignments at the last minute.*

Software Needed:

- ⇒ The most common word processing format is Microsoft Word. 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 WordPad, you must plan to visit a local library—public or school—to convert your work before sending it for review or as the final product.*
- ⇒ Adobe Reader. This can be downloaded for free. Essays may be returned to you in PDF form. Most handouts will be uploaded as PDFs.

EMAIL – IMPORTANT

- ⇒ **An e-mail address is essential.** The college now uses only the college email accounts (your last name underscore your seven digit ID@my.scccd.edu). You must use your college account for this and any Reedley College class. You can set your scccd.com email to forward to another email account. Information about school email can be found on the home page of the college website.
- ⇒ **I use e-mail and/or canvas announcements to communicate with the class as a whole, with groups, and with individuals.** Whether you have Internet and e-mail access at home or on campus, you should plan on checking your e-mail at least every other day—once a day is preferred. DO NOT use your cell phone as the primary means of checking/reading email. Phone screens are too small; therefore, you are not easily able to view the “whole picture” when reading email. Additionally, many phone programs do not allow for spell check on email messages, so refrain from using your phone as a primary means of communication with me.
- ⇒ **When you send an email, you must be specific in the message and always sign your name.** Your email address does not necessarily identify who you are unless you are using your scccd account. *I do not read or respond to email if I do not know the sender.*
- ⇒ **In the subject line, include the class and section number.** This semester I am teaching 3 classes. In order to respond quickly, I need to match you to the correct class—which means you need to tell me which class you are in. (English 125 M-Th).

⇒ **In addition, remember, when you email me, your instructor—your English instructor—you are not texting a friend.** You need to run spell check and think about the way you are writing, for example, do not use lower case i's when using the first person pronoun "I". (Think about your AUDIENCE for any email you write and adjust the way you write accordingly.)

⇒ **After sending an email, look for a response!** This might sound like common sense, but I am always surprised by students who send an email with an "urgent question" or an important question about an essay or grade, to which I reply in a timely manner with a question or further information, and it takes three or four days for a response from that student.

⇒ **One more note about email—**

Continue checking your email until your final grade is posted. If there is a problem with any final assignments, I will need to get ahold of you before my grade posting deadline. If I cannot get ahold of you, your grade may be affected.

GRADES

Grading Scale 2000 points possible

A grade: 1800 points or higher

B grade: 1600 - 1799 points

C grade: 1400-1599 points

D grade: 1200-1399

F grade: 1199 points or lower

While grades are important to keep students accountable and help students know their standing in the class, the focus is our class is learning—not earning a grade by continually producing products. The majority of **in-class** and **homework** assignments are graded based on effort. This comes with the expectation that students do their best and even take risks in their writing. Writing is something you need to practice. You even **need to make mistakes**: it is part of the revision process. There is a cushion built into the points possible on homework and classwork to allow you to put in your best effort, take risks and make mistakes while still earning a good grade on these assignments. Instead of being asked to produce something just for a grade, you are expected to do the work assigned, in class and out of class, and do it "in the spirit asked" which means to follow the directions, give it your best, take risks, and try new writing techniques.

With this idea in mind, some students will try their best yet still struggle with writing. Projects are graded not on effort, like class work and homework, but on a rubric based on what you learn about effective writing. **If you receive a D or F on any of the class projects, you will be required to attend weekly tutoring at the writing center for the remainder of the semester.** On the other hand, if you sign up for this tutoring during the first week of class, and then complete it, you will earn 50 extra credit points.

WEEKLY AND SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Weekly schedules will be given out on a unit basis. Check Canvas regularly.

ACCOMODATIONS 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 Disability Act (ADA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact me as soon as possible.

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 group and partner activities and assignments.

You will get as much out of this class as you put in to it. My job is to help you gain a stronger appreciation for writing. I truly care about your success and will do whatever I can to help you. However, the final responsibility is yours.

PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

Because cheating, plagiarism and collusion of in dishonest activities erode the integrity of the college, each student is expected to exert an entirely honesty effort in all academic endeavors. Academic dishonesty in any form is a very serious offense and will incur serious consequences.

If it is discovered that you have cheated or plagiarized on an assignment—at any point during the semester—you will receive a zero on that assignment and perhaps a failing grade in the class. Additionally, a plagiarism report will be filed with the administration.

*Plagiarism means to pass off the work of others as your own.
Plagiarism is dishonest and represents an attempt to obtain the benefits of a college degree without doing the work.*

For more information about plagiarism and cheating, refer to the Fall 2016 Class Schedule (Campus Policies).

Bottom line: Do not copy someone else's words or ideas without giving him/her 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 use a paper you wrote for this class in a previous semester. Do not have another person write the paper for you. Do not copy anything off of a book or website without **correctly citing** it. All of these are forms of cheating. You will receive a zero on the assignment (whether it is something plagiarized on your papers or on the discussion board) and a report will be filed with the administration for their review. Please be advised that you will submit your final drafts of your papers through Turnitin.com (through links on Canvas, so if you do plagiarize, you will be caught).

PAPER POLICY

- ⇒ All papers must be revised and typed in accordance with MLA guidelines. All work leading to your final paper must be kept—for example, all prewriting, rough drafts, peer responses, and any other work produced. ***There are no exceptions to this policy.***
- ⇒ Word Processing Formats: The most common word processing format is Microsoft Word. If you use another word processing program, you will need to learn to save your work in Rich Text Format (RTF). Guidelines for how to save in RTF are found under the "**Technical: MLA and How To**" link on Canvas. *Do not use Microsoft Works or any other program that does not allow for easy conversion. Using WordPad is unacceptable. If you have Pages, you must learn to convert files so they can be submitted to TURNITIN and read by others.*
- ⇒ If an essay is due and you cannot access Canvas, probably Canvas is down. Don't stress—wait a little bit and try again. When this happens, watch for email messages from me. Of course, if an essay is due and the Canvas is down, I will not hold you to the original due date. I will email and post to Canvas (once it is up again) the revised deadline.
- ⇒ Instructions for turning in essays through Canvas will be demonstrated in class. All essays will be turned in through TURNITIN through links on Canvas. *TURNITIN is a website that detects plagiarism.* This means that if you copy and or copy/paste writing from a website, another published source, or from a previous student of mine, without properly citing the source or sources, the plagiarism will be detected. You will be "caught."
- ⇒ You will be required to share most of your drafts during peer workshops. We will have at least one type of Writer's Workshop for each essay. All students are required to post a rough draft or outline (as directed) for each Writer's Workshop (with minimum writing completed as announced).
- ⇒ We will be doing various types of writing assignments this semester—and each essay will be based on a reading or text. Before beginning an essay, a discussion will be completed.
- ⇒ With all our writing assignments, process will be focused upon as well as final product.
- ⇒ *At my discretion, sentences and/or paragraphs may be taken from essays or other assignments and shared*

with the class to help illustrate grammar concepts, writing concepts, MLA guidelines, and more.

- ⇒ Graded papers are available on turnitin.com or in class generally within two weeks after their due date. It is expected that you download and read all returned essays. They contain comments about the essay and about writing to help you grow and improve as a writer. If you cannot see the comments click the review tab and click show comments.
- ⇒ If something happens to your computer and/or Internet and an essay (or other assignment) is due, **email me, of course, using another computer or your phone**. Do not wait until everything is back up before contacting me. Moreover, you need to back up your work on a moveable storage device. Public libraries have computers with Internet access—work can be completed in places and on computers other than those we have at home!

IMPORTANT INFO

- ⇒ This class is taught face-to-face, and is a condensed class. So students meet with an instructor/class for EIGHT unit hours per week. The average amount of homework for 1 unit hour is two-three hours. This means that the time needed for this class outside of the scheduled eight hours is sixteen or more hours per week. It is important to understand the time commitment necessary to be successful in this or any class. (This class especially since it is condensed and will be double the amount of homework per week than a traditional full semester class)
- ⇒ you MUST set your phone on vibrate or turn the phone off during class. AND you MUST put the phone in your bag, purse, or pocket. You do not need to look at your phone during class.
- ⇒ It is your responsibility to stay informed concerning any changes of assignment due dates, readings, etc... This means you must pay attention to any announcements made in class and check Canvas.
- ⇒ 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.
- ⇒ You should save your work on your hard drive and back up your work to a USB or other storage device many times while you are working on your writing.
- ⇒ Save every draft of a paper as a new document. For example, when you begin a paper title it Project1Draft1+your last name. When you are ready to start on draft 2, begin with the same document but "save as" and change the name to Project1Draft2+yourlastname
- ⇒ It is also a good idea to have a computer folder for your homework assignments. For each assignment save a new document and title it with either the date or what the homework is about (TSIS ch.2 hw). Then copy and paste it into canvas instead of working on it directly in canvas.
- ⇒ Should you discover that you are unable to regularly attend class for whatever reason, it is imperative that you discuss this with me as soon as possible.

IMPORTANT DATES

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|-------------|----|--------------------|
| August 15 | M | First day of class |
| September 5 | M | Labor day—no class |
| October 13 | Th | Final Exam Period |

ADDITIONAL GRADING INFO:

Assignments = worth 10 points each – no late or make up assignments will be accepted.

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| 8-10 points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student obviously put thought and effort into trying their best to do this homework • For in-class work – student was present physically and mentally and was also on time not tardy. Student’s attention was towards what they were supposed to be doing and not split between the task and using their cell phone or anything else that could distract them or others during class. Student put their best effort into the work | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses with <u>thought</u> put into it. (sometimes this is portrayed through length of writing – sometimes it is portrayed through depth of thought, sometimes both). • Student begins to understand topic and is able to make important observations about it • Uses writing conventions portraying seriousness about learning and communicating • Follows ALL assignment directions |
| 5-7 points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some effort but not best effort into homework • For in-class assignments including group work – not putting in full effort can include not giving the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less thought and more repetition of text • Obvious that student does not understand text or instructions |

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| | <p>work full attention and having attention elsewhere. If student's cell phone is out (visibly indiscreetly) during class time (even briefly) the most points they will possibly receive on that day's assignment is 5 points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If student is more than 5 minutes tardy they will lose participation points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not use writing conventions (grammar, spelling) • Does not follow all instructions |
| <p>0-4 points 0= not turned in</p> | <p>Little to no thought or effort</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above + little or no effort put into assignment |

*Late and make -up assignments are not accepted. It may seem harsh if you miss an assignment, or you miss class (even with an excused absence) and are not allowed to make it up. This may or may not be true, but if you consider that we will have in-class and homework assignments for almost every class, missing 1-2 assignments WILL NOT affect your grade. (There is also a curve on the total points possible for this reason). It will, however, seriously affect your grade if you regularly miss class and/or miss homework assignments. Students who are serious about their education come to class, and do their work on time. Projects 1-3 **and** the final must be turned in on time AND submitted to the correct blackboard location according to given instructions. Failure to do so may result in failing the class. (Part of your job as a college student is learning to be responsible and to follow instructions). While there is a curve on the #1 and #2 below to allow you a cushion for missing a few classes or homework assignments for whatever reason, there is no curve on the essays and final. In order to pass the class, students must pass these essays according to the rubric that will be covered in class. If English is a tough subject for you, I highly, highly recommend attending every class and giving every piece of homework your very best effort. You will of course learn more this way and improve your writing skills, and you will also go above the 250 mark in points which will help your overall grade in the class. You can also earn 50 extra credit points by signing up at the beginning of the semester for regular tutoring in the writing center and completing that tutoring throughout the semester.