

# English 125: Writing Skills for College

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*Fall 2016*  
*Reedley College*

**Section:** 56246

**Meeting Location:** Humanities, Room 62

**Meeting Time:** TTh 3:00 PM - 4:50 PM

**Instructor:** Jim Keller

**e-mail:** kyle.keller@sccd.edu

**Office Hours:** 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.

Prerequisites: ESL 225W High Intermediate Academic Writing or ENGL 252 Writing Improvement or placement by the college assessment process.

## Required Texts, Materials, and Expenses

### Required Textbook:

**PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING: A RHETORICAL READER AND GUIDE**, 13th Edition, by Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell (Bedford/St. Martins, 2015, ISBN 978-1-4576-6652-0)

### Recommended Textbook:

**A POCKET STYLE MANUAL**, Seventh Edition, by Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers (Bedford/St. Martins, 2015, ISBN 978-1-4576-4232-6)

### Other Necessities:

- Regular access to a computer with a word processor
- Daily access to your State Center Community College District e-mail account
- Canvas access
- A flash drive or other means of storing your files (I do not recommend relying on cloud storage solutions)
- Paper, pencils, pens
- A means of taking notes (paper or electronic)
- One 8 ½ x 11" examination blue book for the final exam

## Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes and course objectives are standard across the college, representing what we seek to teach to all ENGL 125 students, regardless of who teaches the class. They can be found on the official course outline of record. They are reproduced here for your information (but may not be used for instructor evaluation).

### ***Student 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.*

### ***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*

## Projects and Assignments

### *Papers*

You will be assigned approximately 5 formal papers over the course of the semester. These papers are expected to be typed, double-spaced, in a standard 12-point font. They will all have specific length requirements and a prompt that will need to be fully addressed by the paper in order to receive credit.

### *Exams*

There will be a midterm and a final exam. The final exam will be an in-class essay, and will require you to provide your own 8 ½ x 11" examination blue book.

There will be no late or make-up exams unless I am notified prior to the exam of a serious illness which is subsequently verified by the college nurse. An early exam can be arranged only for extenuating circumstances as outlined in the college's official policies.

### *Readings / Reading Logs*

You will have readings due almost every class session. For most of these readings you will be required to post a short reading log to Canvas. The reading logs will be prompted. These reading logs count as homework for the purposes of grading.

### *Worksheets, in-class work, and other homework assignments*

Other types of homework may be assigned at any time, and will be graded on whether or not they were completed in the spirit of the assignment. Corrections made to homework are for the student's information in order to help them improve.

## Course Policies

The common policies we'll all be expected to adhere to in order to get credit for this class are:

- Take full and active responsibility for your participation, writing, input in discussions, and progress in this course;
- Give courtesy and respect to everyone;
- Participate in each session's discussions and activities;
- Come to each session on time and prepared (see "Attendance" below);
- Complete all assignments as directed and in the spirit they are asked of you.

## Grades

Grades will be calculated on a numerical scale, as follows:

Passing:

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89.9%

C = 70-79.9%

Non-passing:

D = 60-69.9%

F = 0-59.9%

- Formal essays assigned over the course of the class will account for **70%** of the total grade.
- The midterm (grammar / MLA) exam will account for **5%** of the total grade.
- The final (in-class writing) exam **10%** of the total grade.
- Homework and other assignments are worth **10%** of the total grade.
- Participation is worth **5%** of the total grade. (Students must be present in order to participate, and this grade takes both online and in-class participation into consideration.)

## Late Work

Late work is not accepted except under extenuating circumstances (which generally requires a documented excuse acceptable to the college). This is because the class is designed in such a way that work builds on previous assignments. If you turn in work after the class has already moved on, you've missed the opportunity that the assignment provides.

Work not done in the spirit of the assignment, clearly given no thought or with no effort at proofreading, or otherwise deemed unacceptable will be regarded as late, and late work is not accepted.

Early work is generally acceptable, and if I notice a serious defect in early work before the actual due date, I will notify the student and give them a chance to correct it. I do not, however, make any guarantees to look at early work before the deadline.

## Phones and Electronic Devices in Class

All students are expected to engage fully in all class sessions. Phones are expected to be silenced, and no one is to take or make a call or text during class. Instant messaging, using social networks, e-mailing, etc. during class time is completely unacceptable.

However, modern electronic devices are an integral part of our learning process, and may be used to take notes, look up information related to in-class activities, etc. We are all adults and know the difference between paying attention and goofing off. Don't goof off and there won't be any trouble.

## Attendance

You are expected to attend every class on time and prepared. Missing more than three consecutive classes without a documented excuse acceptable to the college may result in your being dropped from the class. Missing more class time than is allowable under the state-mandated minimum instruction time for the course will either result in your being dropped from the class (if these absences occur before the drop deadline) or failure of the course (if the final absences occur after the drop deadline).

Three tardies (less than ten minutes late) will be counted as an absence. Leaving class early or arriving more than ten minutes late will be counted as an absence. Attending class unprepared (prep work not completed, lacking necessary materials, etc.) may be counted as an absence if it prevents you from participating fully in the day's activities.

Additionally, any student who is marked absent for first class session *will* be dropped from the course.

If other students are attempting to add the class, *any* absence during the add/drop period may result in the absent student being dropped from the course unless the instructor has been contacted before the end of class with assurances that the absence was unavoidable and that the student intends to continue with the course.

Students who are physically present but are texting, playing on social media, asleep, refusing to participate, or otherwise disengaged from the learning experience will be marked absent.

The instructor may choose to disregard tardies in the event of extenuating circumstances that apply to many students (e.g., a serious traffic issue). On foggy days, please err on the side of driving safely, but also try to give extra time to your commute.

The instructor will not repeat material for absent students, whether the absence is excused or not. Get the material you missed from a classmate.

### *Computer Access*

You are required to have computer access with internet to do your homework. Use of on-campus computer labs is acceptable.

### *Canvas*

Reedley College is in the process of switching from Blackboard to Canvas for online components of this course, including all assignment turn-ins. We will make the switch this semester. You must have Canvas access (<https://sccd.instructure.com/>) on day 1. Your instructor is not an I.T. department and cannot troubleshoot Canvas for you. Contact the help desk at 559-499-6070 immediately if you are having Canvas problems.

### *e-mail*

All official communication for this class will be done in-person in the classroom, via Canvas, and via your State Center Community College District e-mail account ([my.sccd.edu](mailto:my.sccd.edu)). Be sure you have activated this account and are checking it daily (you can set it up to forward to another address), because anything sent to your official college e-mail account is assumed to have been received and read by you. "I didn't get the e-mail" is never an excuse.

e-Mail communication regarding this class will *only* be sent to your college e-mail account, including messages sent in reply to a message from another account. This is for your privacy and security. If you have sent the instructor an e-mail and have not received a reply, check your college account.

### *Tutoring Services*

All students are encouraged to take advantage of tutoring services available on campus. However, students who receive a failing grade (D or F) on an early assignment will be *required* to take advantage of the Reading & Writing Center, Tutorial Center, and/or the online Reading & Writing Center as part of their participation grade.

### *Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty*

Cheating on any exam or assignment will result in a 0 for that exam or assignment and an automatic referral to the college for possible disciplinary action.

There are two types of plagiarism: deliberate and inadvertent.

Inadvertent plagiarism is a result of failure to correctly cite sources or poorly wording a quote or summary in a way that implies that it is the author's own work (or that the author's own work is someone else's). Avoiding inadvertent plagiarism is one of the things we teach in this class, and therefore incidents of inadvertent plagiarism will be dealt with as part of the revision and grading process.

Deliberate plagiarism is any conscious attempt to pass off someone else's work as your own, including attempting to pass off your own work in another class as original work for this class. Any instance of deliberate plagiarism will automatically result in a 0 on the assignment and a referral to the college for possible disciplinary action, which may result in failure of the course.

It is your responsibility to know what is and is not plagiarism. Do not, under any circumstances, attempt to hand in something that you did not write yourself. This includes having someone else do your homework, copying materials off the internet (including copying material but substituting synonyms for key words), turning in papers written by fellow students, and anything else you can think of that involves not doing the work yourself. The chances of getting caught are extremely high, so don't risk it!

### *Disabilities*

If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (e.g. Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

## **Subject to Revision Policy**

This syllabus is subject to revision at any time, and at all times the most recent version posted to Canvas Blackboard and/or distributed in class shall be the enforced version. Minor revisions may be made by the instructor by verbally announcing them in class, and it is the responsibility of the student to be aware of these changes.

## PROJECTED COURSE SCHEDULE

Key dates are listed here. This schedule is tentative and may change as the semester develops. I will notify you if we make any changes. In-class announcements of schedule changes take priority over this schedule. This schedule does not include grammar worksheets, which may be assigned as homework if there is inadequate time to complete them in class.

*Tuesday, August 16*  
First day of class  
homework due: n/a

*Thursday, August 18*  
homework due:

- Post to the "Introduce Yourself" forum in Canvas.
- Take the Syllabus Quiz on Blackboard.
- Read and post a reading log for the Introduction of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.1-12)

*Tuesday, August 23*  
homework due:

- Post responses to the "Introduce Yourself" forum in Canvas.
- Read and post reading log for "Hidden Intellectualism" by Gerald Graff (.pdf online)
- Read and post reading log for Part 1 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.13-28)

*Thursday, August 25*  
homework due:

- Read and post reading log for "Analyze, Don't Summarize" by Michael Bérubé (.pdf online)
- Read and post reading log for "What Should Colleges Teach?" (parts 1-3) by Stanley Fish (.pdf online)
- Read and post reading log for "Should Writer's Use They Own English?" by Vershawn Ashanti Young (.pdf online)
- Read and post reading log for Part 2 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.29-49)

*Friday, August 26*  
**Last day to drop with a refund.**

*Tuesday, August 30*  
homework due:

- Read and post reading log for Part 3 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.51-64).
- Essay 1 first draft

*Thursday, September 1*  
homework due:

- Read and post reading log for Part 4 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.65-79).

*Friday, September 2*  
**Add/drop period ends.**  
**Last day to drop without a "W" in person.**

*Monday, September 5*  
**Labor Day. Campus closed.**  
**Last day to drop without a "W" via WebAdvisor.**

*Tuesday, September 6*  
homework due:

- Read and post reading log for Part 5 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.81-93).
- Essay 1 final draft

*Thursday, September 8*  
homework due:

- Read and post reading log for several short essays in **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING**:
  - "Why Looks Are the Last Bastion of Discrimination" by Deborah L. Rhode (pp.244-8)
  - "Girl" by Jamaica Kincaid (pp.259-60)
  - "Sex, Lies, and Conversation" by Deborah Tannen (pp.421-5)
  - "Mother Tongue" by Amy Tan (pp.463-8)
  - "The Ways We Lie" by Stephanie Ericsson (pp.471-8)
  - "Your Flip-Flops Are Grossing Me Out" by Dana Stevens (pp.687-90)
  - "Inked Well" by David Kirby (pp.692-6)

*Tuesday, September 13*  
homework due:

- Read and post reading log for Part 17 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.719-728).
- Read and post reading log for Part 18 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.729-750).
- Essay 2 thesis proposal due

*Thursday, September 15*  
homework due:

- Read and post reading logs for excerpts from Part 6 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.97-103 [103-111 optional]).
- Read and post reading log for excerpts from Part 7 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.151-165 [165-168 optional]).

*Tuesday, September 20*  
homework due:

- Read and post reading log for excerpts from Part 8 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.207-217 [217-221 optional])
- Essay 2 first draft

*Thursday, September 22*  
homework due:

- Read and post reading log for excerpts from Part 9 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.265-276 [277-280 optional]).
- Essay 2 peer responses

*Tuesday, September 27*  
homework due:

- Essay 2 final draft

*Thursday, September 29*  
homework due:

- Read and post reading logs for several short essays in **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING**:
  - "Let Steroids into the Hall of Fame" by Zev Chafets (pp.21-3)
  - "Thirty-Eight Who saw Murder Didn't Call the Police" by Martin Gansberg (pp.128-32)
  - "Ten Ways We get the Odds Wrong" by Maia Szalavitz (pp.250-8)
  - OPTIONAL: "Getting Coffee is Hard to Do" by Stanley Fish (pp.288-91)
  - "Why Rational People Buy into Conspiracy Theories" by Maggie Koerth-Baker (pp.342-7)
  - "The Movies That Rose from the Grave" by Max Brooks (pp.359-63)
  - "Your Social Life: Are You a Fox or a Hedgehog?" by Pamela Haag (pp.398-402)
  - "The Songs of Summer of 1963...and 2013" by Juan Williams (pp.403-7)

*Tuesday, October 4*

homework due:

- Read and post reading log for excerpts from Part 10 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp. 319-330 [330-334 optional]).
- Read and post reading log for excerpts from Part 11 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.369-382 [382-389 optional]).
- Essay 3 thesis proposal

*Thursday, October 6*

homework due:

- Read and post reading log for excerpts from Part 12 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.433-440 [440-445 optional]).
- Read and post reading log for excerpts from Part 13 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.487-494 [494-499 optional]).

*Tuesday, October 11*

homework due:

- Read and post reading log for Part 14 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.523-549).
- Essay 3 first draft

*Thursday, October 13*

**MIDTERM EXAM**

homework due:

- Complete Essay 4 survey

*Friday, October 14*

**Last day to drop ("W" grade will be assigned).**

*Tuesday, October 18*

homework due:

- Read and post reading log for Part 15 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.663-671).
- Essay 3 peer responses

*Thursday, October 20*

homework due:

- Essay 3 final draft

*Tuesday, October 25*

homework due:

- Read and post reading logs for several short pieces in **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING**: (list TBD)

*Thursday, October 27*

homework due:

- Essay 4 thesis proposal

*Tuesday, November 1*

homework due:

- Read and post reading logs for Part 16 of **PATTERNS FOR COLLEGE WRITING** (pp.713-718).

*Thursday, November 3*

homework due:

- Essay 4 first draft

*Tuesday, November 8*

**Election Day. Please vote if you are eligible. Not a Federal Holiday; classes held as usual.**

homework due:

- Essay 4 peer responses

*Thursday, November 10*

homework due:

- Revise Essay 4. Bring *two* hard copies to class for copy editing exercise.

*Tuesday, November 15*

homework due:

- Essay 4 final draft

*Thursday, November 17*

homework due:

- Essay 5 first draft

*Tuesday, November 22*

homework due:

- Essay 5 peer feedback

*Thursday, November 24*

**Thanksgiving Day. No class. Campus closed.**

*Tuesday, November 29*

homework due:

- Final Portfolio first draft.

*Thursday, December 1*

homework due:

- Portfolio peer feedback

*Tuesday, December 6*

homework due:

- Revise final portfolio

*Thursday, December 8*

**Last regular class session.**

homework due:

- Turn in final Essay 5 / Final Portfolio

**Final Exam:**

*Thursday, December 15*

3:00-4:50

**If class is cancelled for any reason, students will be notified via Canvas announcement and/or e-mail.**