**English 125, College Writing Skills—Monday and Wednesday**

Instructor: Mr. Dominguez

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday from 12:00-1:00 and Friday from 10:00-11:00 via email correspondence.

**Required Texts: Students who do not bring the required texts to class may be excused from lecture and considered absent.**

Electronic versions of the texts are not acceptable and will not be allowed in the classroom. Students are only allowed to bring print versions of the texts to class.

Purchase the following texts at the REEDLEY COLLEGE BOOKSTORE. Purchasing other editions or at other bookstores may result in you using the wrong texts, which will significantly lower your grade.

1. *The Tortilla Curtain* by T.C. Boyle, ISBN# 9780140238280.
2. *Writers’ Presence* by Donald McQuade and Robert Atwan, ISBN# 978-1-4576-6446, eighth edition.

Also:

1. *I Know What I Want to Say but I Don’t Know How to Say It* by David Dominguez (HANDED OUT IN CLASS, NOT AVAILABLE IN BOOKSTORE, given to students free of charge).

**Changes to the Syllabus/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 is not an excuse for not being aware of any changes that are made to the calendar or the syllabus.

**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.

**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.

**Course Outcomes—Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:**

1. Write an essay of at least 750 words which include an introduction, multiple body paragraphs, and conclusion of some sophistication. This essay will include:

* a clearly defined thesis statement
* unified supporting paragraphs, which begin with topic sentences
* quotations that support the topic sentences and the thesis
* complete sentences which include a variety of sentence types (simple, compound, complex, and compound/complex sentence)
* descriptive vocabulary that exhibits growth and sophisticated word choice
* 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.
* use of MLA guidelines to set up essays, correctly use in-text citations for at least one source, and complete a works cited page
* writing that is free from plagiarism
* demonstrated awareness of how to write from the 3rd person point of view for a specific audience

1. Plan and revise independently, employing all stages of the writing process as necessary and appropriate.
2. Complete a multi-paragraph in-class essay with a thesis and support.

**Course Objectives—In the process of completing this course, students will:**

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

**Course Content:**

1. Using the writing process:
2. prewriting strategies
3. outlining
4. drafting
5. revising
6. editing
7. Writing a well-developed essay:
8. introduction
9. thesis statements
10. body paragraphs
11. topic sentences
12. supporting details
13. transitions
14. concluding paragraphs
15. coherent development
16. focus
17. organization
18. unification
19. Thinking critically:
20. analyze ideas
21. use supporting details to validate a thesis
22. Writing sentences:
23. sentence variety
24. simple sentences
25. compound sentences
26. complex sentences
27. compound complex sentences
28. crafting sentences
29. using parallelism
30. eliminating wordiness
31. avoiding and correcting sentence errors
32. fragments
33. run-ons (comma splices and sentence fuses)
34. punctuation
35. the comma
36. the semicolon
37. the colon
38. the dash
39. Understanding purpose, audience, voice:
40. awareness of audience
41. academic language use
42. third person point of view
43. Using MLA guidelines:
44. avoid plagiarism
45. set-up an essay
46. cite direct quotations
47. write a works cited page

**Semester Grading:**

First essay:

a. 100 points.

Second essay:

a. 100 points each.

Third essay:

a. 100 points each.

Fourth essay:

a. 100 points.

Final grammar exam:

a. 100 points.

Scale: 500-450=A; 449-400=B; 399-350=C; 349-300=D; 299-0=F

**Extra Credit:**

Extra credit will be offered during the semester. When you turn it in, I will put it in my extra credit folder. At the end of the semester, I will calculate final grades; if you have earned a “C” or higher because of how you have done on the required course work, I will then add your extra credit to your final grade. Thus, the extra credit will not raise a final semester grade of an “F” or a “D.” It can, however, raise your final grade from a “C” to a “B” or from a “B” to an “A.”

**Revision Symbols:**

I will use the following symbols to leave comments on your work:

th = thesis

sm = supportive material

tr = transition

ts = topic sentence

cn = context

dq = direct quotation

mla = citing direct quotations

ct = critical thinking

ct/1 = critical thinking, step 1

ct/2 = critical thinking, step 2

ct/3 = critical thinking, step 3

ct/4 = critical thinking, step 4

kw(s) = key word(s)  
ci = concrete image

ri = romantic image

fs = final statement

f = fragment

cs = comma splice

sf = sentence fuse

fd = follow directions

bs = basic skills

? = confusing

syn = syntax (the words you choose to express a thought and the order you put those words in to form a sentence).

= take out

= take out

= insert

= insert

= good writing

= writing needs to improve

ALSO, if any words are circled, you have a basic skill error, such as spelling, word choice, verb tense, subject verb agreement, pronoun agreement, the apostrophe, capitalization, and indicating the titles of works.

**Absences and Being Dropped from the Course, Being Tardy, Adding the Course:**

* **Absences and being dropped from the course:** If you miss the second day of class, you will be automatically dropped from the course. You will be dropped from the course if you are absent five times or more before the official drop deadline (March 10 to avoid a letter grade). You will be marked absent if you do not attend class, are tardy, leave class early, or walk in and out of class during lecture.
* **Being tardy**: You will be considered tardy if you walk into class after I’ve taken roll.
* **Adding:** To add the class, you must attend every class meeting until you have been officially added to the roster. You must add the class by the end of the second week, or you will not be added.

**Academic Behavior:**

According to the Reedley College *Student Conduct Standards and Procedures*, if a student “Interferes with or disrupts faculty and administrators who are fulfilling their professional responsibilities that student is subject to discipline” (4). Such behavior includes anything that I find disruptive. Cell phones used in any way, shape, or form, and/or not turned off and left in backpacks, pockets, purses etc; being late to class; walking in and out of the classroom during lecture; and leaving class early are considered disruptive. Not bringing your texts to class, not participating constructively, and talking while I’m presenting lecture are also considered disruptive. Students who are disruptive will be suspended by me for 1-2 class meetings. If that student continues to be disruptive, he/she will be referred to the dean of students who reserves the right to suspend the student for 10 additional class meetings. Consider yourselves warned.

NOTE: if you are unable to stay for an entire class period, don’t come to class at all; if you have a documentable excuse that I’m willing to accept, which explains why you could not stay in class for the duration of the period, I will be happy to see you during my office hours to explain what you missed in class; still, if you can’t stay for the duration of the period, don’t come to class at all.

**Email Correspondence:**

If you send me an email, it must begin with “Dear Mr. Dominguez” and end with “Thank you” and “Sincerely, [your name].” Emails must be written with proper English. Emails that look like text messages or contain informal language will be ignored. Here is a properly written email:

Dear Mr. Dominguez,

May I have your feedback on my thesis statement? I have attached it to my email. I’m worried that it may not address the writing prompt. Thank you.

Sincerely, Andrew

Here is an email I will ignore:

hey guy check out my essay and tell me whats wrong let me no right way cuz i want u 2 give me a good grade

**Completing Assignments and Missing Deadlines:**

All assignments must be completed and turned in as instructed on the given due dates. If you miss a deadline, you will receive a zero on the assignment. If you are unable to complete an assignment due to an emergency, I may consider a make-up assignment if you are able to present appropriate documentation. Emergencies may or may not include sickness, injury, bereavement of an immediate family member, or a court appearance. Missing class is never an excuse for missing an assignment.

**The Reading and Writing Center**

If a student earns a D or an F on the first essay, the student must receive tutoring at the Reading & Writing Center for at least one hour per essay assignment until he or she earns at least a C on a subsequent essay. Of course, all students are strongly encouraged to attend the Reading and Writing Center. Putting in the extra work will help you become a better writer.

**Plagiarism:**

If you are caught plagiarizing any work in any way shape or form, you may receive an automatic “F” on the assignment, in the class, or dropped from the course, with the appropriate grade, and referred to campus administration. This is a zero tolerance policy. Consider yourselves warned.

**Course Calendar**

**Required homework: Study the grammar lessons we have discussed in class until you have memorized all the terms and rules. Read ahead so that know the material *before* we discuss it in class.**

January (*The Writer’s Presence*)

* Monday the 9th: Syllabus review. Grammar lesson—writing complete sentences and avoiding incomplete sentences.
* Wednesday the 11th: Read and discuss “The Joy of Reading and Writing: Superman and Me by Sherman Alexie.”
* Monday the 16th: MLK Observance. NO CLASS MEETING.
* Wednesday the 18th: Read and discuss “Learning to Read and Write” by Frederick Douglass.
* Monday the 23rd: Introduce and discuss a practice essay topic. Free writing. Select a focal point for a practice essay. Pick direct quotations for a practice essay. Identify passages for the context of a practice essay.
* Wednesday 25th: Discuss MLA guidelines. Discuss lecture notes and how to write a practice essay. Write a practice essay—the introduction.
* Monday 30th: Continue writing a practice essay—paragraphs in the body of the essay.

February(*The Writer’s Presence*)

* Wednesday the 1st: TBA.
* Monday the 6th: Continue writing a practice essay—how to write the conclusion.
* Wednesday the 8th: Essay 1 workshop—introduction and first paragraph in the body of the essay.
* Monday the 13th: Essay 1 due. Grammar lesson—how to avoid comma splices and sentence fuses.
* Wednesday the 15th: Read and discuss “Arrival.”
* Monday the 20th: Washington Day Observance. NO CLASS MEETING.
* Wednesday the 22nd: Read and discuss “Aria: a Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood.”
* Monday the 27th: Review how to write an essay. Review grammar lessons.

March (*The Tortilla Curtain*)

* Wednesday the 1st: Essay 1 returned. Essay 2 assigned/ revise essay1. 1W1.
* Monday the 6th: Essay 2 due. Grammar lesson—how to use the comma.
* Wednesday the 8th: Read and discuss chapters 1-2 from *The Tortilla Curtain*.
* Monday the 13th: Read and discuss chapters 3-5 from *The Tortilla Curtain*.
* Wednesday the 15th: Read and discuss chapters 6-8 from *The Tortilla Curtain*. HOMEWORK: Finish reading the novel by March 29—read 15 pages a day until you have completed the novel.
* **Thursday the 16th--REQUIRED: Reedley College Speakers Series Presents T.C. Boyle, Forum Hall, 7:00PM.**
* Monday the 20th: Introduce and discuss a practice essay topic. Free writing. Select a focal point for a practice essay. Pick direct quotations for a practice essay. Identify passages for the context of a practice essay.
* Wednesday the 22nd: Write a practice essay—the introduction and paragraphs in the body of the essay.
* Monday the 27th: Continue writing a practice essay—paragraphs in the body of the essay.
* Wednesday the 29th: Continue writing a practice essay—how to write the conclusion. Essay 3 assigned.

April (back to *The Writer’s Presence*)

* Monday the 3rd: Essay 3 workshop.
* Wednesday the 5th: Essay 3 due. Grammar lesson—the four sentence types. 1W1.
* Monday the 10th: Spring Recess. NO CLASS MEETING.
* Wednesday the 12th: Spring Recess. NO CLASS MEETING.
* Monday 17th: Read and discuss “Against School.”
* Wednesday the 19th: Introduce and discuss a practice essay topic. Free writing. Select a focal point for a practice essay. Pick direct quotations for a practice essay. Identify passages for the context of a practice essay
* Monday the 24th: Write a practice essay—the introduction and paragraphs in the body of the essay.
* Wednesday the 26th: Continue writing a practice essay—paragraphs in the body of the essay and the conclusion.

May (*The Writer’s Presence*)

* Monday the 1st: In-class essay on “Is Google Making Us Stupid” first draft.
* Wednesday the 3rd: In-class essay on “Is Google Making Us Stupid” final revision.
* Monday the 8th: Study for final grammar exam.
* Wednesday the 10th: Study for final grammar exam.
* Monday: No Class.
* Wednesday the 17th: FINAL GRAMMAR EXAM.

Important Dates for Extra Credit

* Tuesday, February 7, 2017: First Wednesday at One Series Presents Poet Christopher Buckley, Staff Dining Room, 100-150PM.
* Tuesday, February 7, 2017: Reedley College Speakers Series Presents Carol Firstman, Forum Hall, 7:00PM.
* Wednesday, March 1, 2017: First Wednesday at One Series Presents Novelist and Nonfiction Writer Michael McLaughlin, Staff Dining Room, 100-150PM.
* Thursday, March 16, 2017: Reedley College Speakers Series Presents T.C. Boyle, Forum Hall, 7:00PM.
* Wednesday, April 5, 2017: First Wednesday at One Series Presents Poet TBA in celebration of National Poetry Month, Staff Dining Room, 100-150PM.