

**English 125, College Writing Skills—ONLINE CLASS (there will be no face to face meeting for this class)**

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.

**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:**

- 3) *I Know What I Want to Say but I Don't Know How to Say It* by David Dominguez (will be available as a PDF ONLINE).

**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 250 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:**

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

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

- A. Complete a multi-paragraph in-class essay with a thesis and support.
- B. Learn about writing papers which include introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions.
- C. Learn to write with some sophistication.
- D. Practice writing thesis statements.
- E. Practice writing topic sentences.
- F. Learn about using quotations and in-text citations that support the topic sentences and the thesis.
- G. Practice developing supporting material that exhibits critical thinking.
- H. Develop an understanding of what a complete sentence is and practice using a variety of sentence types (simple, compound, complex, and compound/complex sentence).
- I. Learn about common sentence errors, such as fragments, comma splices, sentence fuses.
- J. Develop their usage of descriptive vocabulary that exhibits growth and sophisticated word choice.
- K. Learn how to follow MLA guidelines when formatting papers and using quotations and a works cited page.

- L. Learn about avoiding plagiarism.
- M. Write papers in which they will use 3rd person point of view and practice addressing a specific audience.
- N. Practice using all stages of the writing process as necessary and appropriate practice writing in-class essays.

**Course Content:**

- A. Using the writing process:
  - 1. prewriting strategies
  - 2. outlining
  - 3. drafting
  - 4. revising
  - 5. editing
- B. Writing a well-developed essay:
  - 1. introduction
    - a. thesis statements
  - 2. body paragraphs
    - a. topic sentences
    - b. supporting details
    - c. transitions
  - 3. concluding paragraphs
  - 4. coherent development
    - a. focus
    - b. organization
    - c. unification
- C. Thinking critically:
  - 1. analyze ideas
  - 2. use supporting details to validate a thesis
- D. Writing sentences:
  - 1. sentence variety
    - a. simple sentences
    - b. compound sentences
    - c. complex sentences
    - d. compound complex sentences
  - 2. crafting sentences
    - a. using parallelism
    - b. eliminating wordiness
  - 3. avoiding and correcting sentence errors
    - a. fragments
    - b. run-ons (comma splices and sentence fuses)
  - 4. punctuation
    - a. the comma
    - b. the semicolon
    - c. the colon
    - d. the dash
- E. Understanding purpose, audience, voice:
  - 1. awareness of audience
  - 2. academic language use
  - 3. third person point of view
- F. Using MLA guidelines:
  - 1. avoid plagiarism
  - 2. set-up an essay
  - 3. cite direct quotations
  - 4. 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
MLA	=	citing direct quotations
SPH	=	signal phrase
DQ	=	direct quotation
PG#	=	page number
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
PR	=	proofread
?	=	confusing
SYN	=	syntax (the words you choose to express a thought and the order you put those words in to form a sentence).
√+	=	good
√-	=	needs to improve

**Being Dropped from the Course:**

Students who do not check in during the first week of the semester will be dropped. Waitlisted students who do not check-in during the first week of the semester will not be added. Officially enrolled students who appear inactive for more than two weeks before the official Reedley College drop deadlines will be dropped from the course (consecutive weeks or nonconsecutive weeks).

**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. Consider yourselves warned.

Proper academic behavior is especially important in an online class. Students must treat each other with respect at all times. In addition, if you email your instructor or send him a message on the discussion board, you must be respectful. Always address your instructor as Mr. Dominguez or Instructor Dominguez. Students who do not address their instructor properly will not receive a reply via email or the discussion board.

**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 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. Remember, you are expected to keep track of what is going on in class at all times.

**Technology:**

Because this is an online class, students are expected to be familiar with technology. For example, students must be familiar with Black Board, use Microsoft Word (full version), have quality internet service, have a reliable computer, be able to use their SCCCD email, and use common video players to access lectures. Having problems with technology is not an excuse for falling behind in the class or for not turning in work. **PLEASE NOTE: all work must be submitted as MS Word attachments. Work that is not submitted as MS Word attachments will not be accepted.** For example, if a student submits a link to a cloud or some sort of account login to access the student’s work, the assignment will not be accepted. Google Docs and Pages and other word processing programs and formats may not be accepted. Consider yourselves warned.

**Plagiarism:**

If you are caught plagiarizing any work, 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.

## Course Outline

**Please note that the course outline may be changed to adjust to the needs to the class. Lectures will be posted every Friday unless otherwise noted on the calendar by your instructor (No lectures during spring break).**

### January (*The Writer's Presence*)

- 13<sup>th</sup>: Syllabus review. Grammar lesson—writing complete sentences and avoiding incomplete sentences. Read and discuss “The Joy of Reading and Writing: Superman and Me by Sherman Alexie.”
- 20<sup>th</sup>: Read and discuss “Learning to Read and Write” by Frederick Douglass.
- 27<sup>th</sup>: 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. Discuss MLA guidelines. Discuss lecture notes and how to write a practice essay. Write a practice essay—the introduction.

### February (*The Writer's Presence*)

- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Continue writing a practice essay—paragraphs in the body of the essay.
- 10<sup>th</sup>: Continue writing a practice essay—how to write the conclusion. Essay 1 assigned.
- 16<sup>th</sup>: **THURSDAY, NOT FRIDAY**. Essay 1 due. Grammar lesson—how to avoid comma splices and sentence fuses. Read and discuss “Arrival.”
- 24<sup>th</sup>: Read and discuss “Aria: a Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood.”

### March (*The Tortilla Curtain*)

- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Essay 1 returned. Essay 2 assigned/ revise essay 1.
- 10<sup>th</sup>: Essay 2 due. Grammar lesson—how to use the comma. Read and discuss chapters 1-2 from *The Tortilla Curtain*.
- **Thursday the 16th--REQUIRED: Reedley College Speakers Series Presents T.C. Boyle, Forum Hall, 7:00PM.**
- 17<sup>th</sup>: Read and discuss chapters 3-8 from *The Tortilla Curtain*. HOMEWORK: Finish reading the novel by March 31—read 15 pages a day until you have completed the novel.
- 24<sup>th</sup>: 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. Write a practice essay—the introduction and paragraphs in the body of the essay.
- 31<sup>st</sup>: Continue writing a practice essay—paragraphs in the body of the essay. Continue writing a practice essay—how to write the conclusion. Essay 3 assigned.

### April (back to *The Writer's Presence*)

- 7<sup>th</sup>: Essay 3 due. Grammar lesson—the four sentence types.
- 14<sup>th</sup>: **Spring Recess. NO CLASS.**
- 21<sup>st</sup>: Read and discuss “Against School.” 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
- 28<sup>th</sup>: Write a practice essay—the introduction and paragraphs in the body of the essay. Continue writing a practice essay—paragraphs in the body of the essay and the conclusion.

### May

- 5<sup>th</sup>: **Timed essay. Topic posted at 600PM and due by 1159PM (May 5, 2016).** ←PLAN AHEAD!
- 12<sup>th</sup>: Study for the final grammar exam.
- 19<sup>th</sup>: **THURSDAY, NOT FRIDAY. FINAL GRAMMAR EXAM.** Final grammar exam will be posted from 600PM-1159PM. You will have two hours to complete the exam during this time period. ←PLAN AHEAD!