

English 1121: College Writing and Critical Reading

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Hours: M 1-3 pm, TF 10-11 am, W 5:30-6:30 pm, and by appt.

Fall 1998
Sections 3, 5

Course Description

According to the A.R.C.C. 1998-1999 Semester Catalog, English 1121 “provides extended practice in critical reading, writing, and thinking. Course content includes the writing process, essential composition skills, and critical reasoning in various rhetorical situations. The course requires effectively reasoned and supported essays, including an argumentative research paper” (111).

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

- Develop effective essays by practicing writing as a recursive process (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading) and by selecting information to support a thesis clearly, concisely, and logically.
- Read analytically both published texts and students’ texts, including their own—i.e. identify the thesis, analyze support, and evaluate the effectiveness of the writing for the purpose and audience.
- Recognize and direct writing to a particular audience for a particular purpose.
- Solve writing problems by identifying a purpose or goal, describing the audience’s assumptions and expectations, and selecting from a variety of writing strategies the methods appropriate for meeting the writing goal.
- Make language choices appropriate to their audience and context (these choices include consideration of diction, tone, consistent point of view, and style).
- Use edited Standard American English correctly.
- Recognize the basic strategies of persuasion and argument and apply these strategies to specific writing assignments that address a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Analyze the technical elements and logical connections their own argument and those of others. Students will use this analysis in the development and revision of their essays and as a reading strategy.
- Distinguish (in social, academic, professional, and civic arguments) assertions of value from assertions of fact or policy. Students will also recognize the role of emotional, logical, and ethical appeals in support of these assertions.
- Identify an issue, explore their position on the issue, and state their position. Students will then identify potential audiences with diverse values and beliefs, and articulate opposing arguments. Finally, they will select evidence that will persuade their target audiences to accept the assertions made in their essays and research papers.
- Use various information gathering techniques (including library research, electronic sources, interviews, and/or observation) to obtain evidence which they can then use to support their assertions in their argumentative essays and research papers.
- Analyze and evaluate sources to identify the writers’ authority, purposes, target audiences, biases, assumptions, and reasoning. Based on these analyses, students will select those sources most appropriate as support for their own assertions.
- Represent sources in their own writing through accurate summaries, paraphrases, and direct quotations. They will use a style manual to cite and document sources correctly.

Required Texts and Materials

Axelrod, Rise B., and Charles R. Cooper. *The St. Martin’s Guide to Writing*. Shorter 5th ed. New York: St. Martin’s, 1997.
Sladky, Paul, ed. *Free Falling and Other Student Essays*. 3rd ed. New York: St. Martin’s, 1997.
Stull, Andrew T., and Emily Thiroux. *English on the Internet: 1997-1998*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1998.
Troyka, Lynn Quitman. *Quick Access*. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1998.

3x5 or 4x6 index cards or a spiral notebook.
One 3.5” HD computer disk.
Two two-pocket folders.
Loose-leaf paper.

Requirements and Evaluation

Formal Writing (80%): You will write five “formal” essays this quarter: a summary-response essay (10%), a critique (10%), an explanation paper (20%), a position paper (30%), and a final self-evaluation (10%). You will receive an assignment sheet for each essay, and we will discuss and do some of the work for each essay in class. A rough draft, a draft workshop, and a final draft are required for each essay to pass the course—see also the portfolio and participation information below. All rough drafts should be double-spaced, word-processed or **legibly** written; all final drafts must be double-spaced, word-processed, and conform to the directions given in class, including instructions for in-text and end-of-text citation conventions.

Informal Writing (20%): This category includes the departmental midterm in-class essay (10%) and the various “informal” writings you will do throughout the term (10%). The departmental in-class essay (a critique) will be read and evaluated by other members of the English Department. The other “informal” writings will include responses, exercises, and (possibly) quizzes. Any of these writings that are assigned and completed in class **cannot** be made up if you are absent. For the writings that I collect, you will receive either a “plus,” a “check,” or a “minus” for each one; these marks will be averaged and converted to a grade when I calculate your final grade.

Policies

Attendance: Since participation is so important to the success of this class (see note below), attendance is required. If you miss _____ or fewer hours of class, you will receive the higher final grade in a borderline situation. If you miss more than _____ hours of class (_____ % of the course), you will receive No Credit for the class—this is an English Department policy. It is **your** responsibility to notify me as soon as possible if you are absent due to a medical or family emergency. Finally, chronic lateness is disruptive to me and your classmates, and late arrivals will count as absences.

Incompletes: Incompletes will only be granted to students who have a **documented** medical emergency in the final two weeks of the semester. These students must have completed **all** of the other work for the course with an average grade of “C” or better, must not have missed more than 12 hours of class, **and** must demonstrate the ability and willingness to complete the work before the third week of the following semester. It is **your** responsibility to notify me as soon as possible if this scenario applies to you.

Portfolios: You will submit each essay to me in a writing portfolio. In addition to the revised/final draft, each portfolio will contain all the work you did in the process of writing each essay—all your prewriting, notes, photocopies of sources, outlines, drafts, peer comments, and a process memo. If a complete and acceptable portfolio does not accompany each essay, the essay grade will be an “F.”

Late Papers: Due dates will be listed on each assignment sheet—see also the tentative schedule. Late final drafts will receive no comments and your grade will be lowered one letter; after one week, the grade will be an “F.”

Record-Keeping: Please make back-up copies of all your work, and keep all papers returned to you. If questions about grades arise, you will need to produce the original documents.

Conferences: Please see me during office hours or schedule an appointment with me if you have questions or problems at any time during the semester. I am here to help.

Plagiarism: Knowingly presenting another person’s ideas or writing as your own without appropriate citation will result in an “F” for the course and notification of the appropriate college officials.

A Note about Participation

This class will be conducted as a “writing workshop.” What this means is that we will write in (and out of) class every day, and we will share and talk about our writing often. This writing will include exercises, responses, informal papers, formal drafts-in-progress, and problems and solutions. (**Always bring your current writing project to class or lab with you.**) Much of this work will be done in small groups, so you need to be present each day to benefit from these activities and to be an audience (a reader and responder) for your peers. You also need to be willing to share and talk about your own writing and to make these small groups comfortable, productive, and worthwhile. When we are “workshopping” rough drafts of formal essays, you must bring a **completed** rough draft (and copies when requested) or your paper grade will be lowered one letter. As an incentive for active participation, the quality and quantity of your participation will be considered if you have a borderline final grade.

Tentative Schedule

Section 3: **MWF 8:00-8:50 T 228**
 T 8:00-8:50 T 207

Section 5: **MWF 9:00-9:50 T 228**
 T 9:00-9:50 T 207

Week 1: 8/24 – 8/28:

Discuss Expectations of Course, Instructor, Self, and Peers
Discuss Syllabus
In-Class Writing and Responding
Introductions

Week 2: 8/31 – 9/4:

Discuss SMGW Chapters 11 and 12
Discuss Assigned Essays
Begin Prewriting for Summary-Response Essay
Mock Draft Workshop

Week 3: 9/7 – 9/11 (No Class on M 9/7):

Summary-Response Rough Draft Due
Draft Workshops
Work on Revising Summary-Response

Week 4: 9/14 – 9/18:

Summary-Response Portfolio Due
Discuss SMGW Chapters 8, 12, and 19
Discuss Assigned Essays
Begin Prewriting for Critique Essay

Week 5: 9/21 – 9/25:

Critique Rough Draft Due
Draft Workshops
Work on Revising Critique

Week 6: 9/28 – 10/2 (No Class on F 10/2):

Critique Portfolio Due
Introduce Research Paper Assignments
Discuss Assignment and Topics
Discuss Search Questions and Terms
Discuss SMGW Chapter 21
Librarian Presentations
Work Time

Week 7: 10/5 – 10/9:

Departmental Midterm In-Class Essay
Research Topics Due
Discuss SMGW Chapters 5 and 21
Work Time

Week 8: 10/12 – 10/16 (No Class on F 10/16):

Explanation Paper Source File Due

Discuss and Practice End-of-Text Citations

Discuss and Practice In-Text Citations

Week 9: 10/19 – 10/23:

Explanation Paper Annotated Bibliography Due

Discuss and Practice Synthesis

Work on Linear / Non-Linear Outlining and Drafting

Week 10: 10/26 – 10/30:

Explanation Paper Rough Draft Due

Draft Workshops

Work on Revising Explanation Paper

Week 11: 11/2 – 11/6:

Explanation Paper Portfolio Due

Discuss SMGW Chapters 6 and 19

Discuss Position Statements (claims) and Reasons (assertions)

Plan Position Support (evidence)

Work Time

Week 12: 11/9 – 11/13 (No Class on W 11/11):

Conferences with Scott to discuss Position Paper

Bring Tentative Thesis, Outline, and Questions

Week 13: 11/16 – 11/20:

Position Paper Source File Due

Writing Workshops

Week 14: 11/23 – 11/27 (No Class on F 11/27):

Position Paper Annotated Bibliography Due

Writing Workshops

Week 15: 11/30 – 12/4:

Position Paper Rough Draft Due

Draft Workshops

Work on Revising Position Paper

Week 16: 12/7 – 12/11:

Position Paper Portfolio Due

Discuss Final Self-Evaluation Essay

Prewrite and Plan Self-Evaluation Essay

Final Exam Period: Monday, December 14, 1998, from 11:50 a.m. to 1:50 p.m. in Room _____

Final Self-Evaluation Essay Due

Notes: Specific reading and writing assignments will be given in class and on the assignment sheets.
This syllabus and schedule are subject to change; changes will be announced in class.