

# WRITING 121: ENGLISH COMPOSITION

Winter 2017 – Tue/Thur 10:00 to 11:20 PM

NSH-207 (Tue) / MKH-207 (Thur)

Instructor: Matt Usner  
Office: NSH-213

Email: usnerm@linnbenton.edu  
Office Phone: 917-4283

Office Hours: Tue/Thur 11:30-12:00  
and 2:30-3:00

**THE PURPOSE OF THIS SYLLABUS:** This syllabus contains all the vital information about this course—what you'll be learning, what will be expected of you, and what you can expect from me. Essentially, this syllabus is a contract that states what is required of both of us during the term. Since this is a valuable document, you should study it and refer to it often. The better you know the syllabus, the better the chance that you'll do well in the course.

**COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** "Writing 121 covers processes and fundamentals of writing expository essays, including structure, organization and development, diction and style, revision and editing, mechanics, and standard usage required for college-level writing. 3 class hours/week, 3 credits."

**PREREQUISITE:** Appropriate score on Computerized Placement Test (CPT) or a "C" or better in WR 115.

**COURSE OVERVIEW:** This course is designed to enhance your writing skills by introducing various methods of development for writing academic essays. The course also introduces you to critical reading and analysis of various texts. This term we will focus our readings and writings on issues in education, particularly on issues in higher education--that is, education after high school. In a college classroom full of diverse students, one thing they all have in common is their pursuit of higher education. There will be some mini-lectures in this class, but largely it will be collaborative and discussion-based. That means you'll be sharing your thoughts with the entire class, as well as interacting with small groups of your peers. I will ask you to take an active, engaged role in your learning, both individually and collaboratively. Our classroom will be a safe, open space to share diverse ideas honestly and respectfully. I promise to make this class as engaging as I can, but if you aren't willing to take your reading and writing seriously—and believe that you can improve both skills—then this course may not be for you.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Student who successfully complete WR 121 will be able to:

- Analyze the rhetorical needs (the needs of their audience in relationship to the assignment) for academically-oriented writing assignments.
- Apply appropriate levels of critical thinking strategies (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation) in their written assignments, with a focus on factual, analytical, and evaluative writing.

- Implement appropriate rhetorical elements and organization (introduction, thesis, development and support, definition, narration, comparison, conclusion, etc.) in their written assignments.
- Locate, evaluate, and integrate high-quality information and opinion appropriate for college-level informational, analytical and evaluative assignments.
- Craft sentences and paragraphs that communicate their ideas clearly and effectively using words, sentence patterns, and writing conventions at a college level to make their writing clear, credible, and precise.

**COURSE MATERIALS:** The textbooks below are available at the LBCC bookstore in the Calapooia Center. Copies are also on library reserve for 2-hour use in the library.

- Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing. 3rd ed. New York: Norton, 2014. ISBN 0393935841.
- Bullock, Richard, Michal Brody, and Francine Weinberg. The Little Seagull Handbook with Exercises. 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 2014. ISBN 0393935817.
- A pocket folder to submit your drafts, peer review feedback, and revisions of your essays.
- Access to your LBCC student email account (<http://www.linnbenton.edu/roadrunner-mail>).
- Access to a printer; you will be required to bring a printed copy of each of your essay drafts to class, and to submit printed versions of your final drafts and revisions.
- Two examination books for the final exam; these can be purchased in the bookstore.

**MOODLE:** Assignment instructions and grades will be posted on our course site on Moodle (<http://elearning.linnbenton.edu/>). You will also be asked to upload the final drafts of your essays on Moodle. I'll demonstrate how to use Moodle during the first class period.

#### **ASSIGNMENTS & ACTIVITIES:**

- : You will write 3 out-of-class essays for this class. Each will vary in length and point value, with each one being longer and worth more points than the previous one. Specific instructions and grading criteria for each assignment will be distributed well in advance of due dates. You will be required to share a draft of each essay with your peers for feedback; likewise, Essay #3 will require a formal outline (5% of final grade). You will have the option of revising the first two papers for the chance at a higher grade, as long as the original essays are submitted on time.
- (30% of final grade): The final exam will take place over two days (see the course calendar for the days and times). You will write an in-class essay that responds to an article. You will be receiving specific instructions about the exam in the weeks leading up to it.
- : Quizzes will ask you to answer a question about the

required textbook reading for that particular class period. There will be 6 reading quizzes, but only your 5 highest scores will count toward your final grade. Quizzes will not be announced in advance, and they are not open-book. If you are not present in class for a quiz, you cannot make it up. Your best way to prepare for quizzes is to read every assigned textbook selection thoroughly.

- : As part of your third essay, you will be completing a series of library research tasks. The primary focus areas will be finding and evaluating online sources, including those accessed through library databases.

**GRADING: You can earn up to 500 points in this course:**

Assignments	Points	% of Final Grade
3 Essays	50, 75, 125 = 250 (first two can be revised)	50%
Final Exam Essay	150	30%
6 Reading Quizzes	10 each = 50 (5 highest scores out of 6 count)	10%
Outline for Essay #3	25	5%
Information Literacy Exercise	25	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	--	<b>100%</b>

**Your final grade will be determined by the following point breakdown:**

GRADE	TOTAL POINTS	DESCRIPTION
A	500 to 448 points (89.6% and up)	Passing work that is <u>excellent</u>
B	447 to 398 points (89.4% to 79.6%)	Passing work that is <u>good</u>
C	397 to 348 points (79.4% to 69.6%)	Passing work that is <u>average</u>
D	347 to 298 points (69.4% to 59.6%)	Non-passing work that is <u>below average</u>
F	297 and below (59.4% and below)	Non-passing work that is <u>fundamentally lacking</u>

**IMPORTANT COURSE POLICIES AND CAMPUS RESOURCES:**

- **No-Show Policy:** Unless prior arrangements have been made with me, students not attending the first two class sessions will be withdrawn.

- **Attendance:** Attendance is vital for your success in this course. Missing class means missing valuable instruction time; you give yourself the best chance to do well by attending every class. Because all due dates are already on the course calendar, an absence is never an excuse for not submitting an assignment on time. If you must miss a class, let me know that ahead of time when possible. If you miss a class when an assignment is due, be responsible and either email it to me or slide it under my office door. I reserve the right to lower your final grade for more than 3 absences.
- **Phones in the Classroom:** Human beings have survived without cell phones for tens of thousands of years; I'm confident that you can survive without yours for our 80-minute class periods. Silence your phone and put it in your pocket or bag--not in your lap, not face down on your desk. When you use your phone in class, you are distracting yourself and others, including me. So don't do it. If you do, I'll gently remind you to put it away. If you keep doing it, I'll not-so-gently ask you to leave. As a father of a young child, I will have mine on and with me, but you will not see or hear it. I--and your classmates--expect the same courtesy from you. If there is a serious need to have your phone out, such as a family emergency, please put it on vibrate and let me know at the start of class.
- **Laptops/Tablets in the Classroom:** I strongly prefer that students do not use these devices in the classroom unless instructed to, but if you feel that you must, please talk to me before doing so.
- **Late Work:** All assignment due dates appear on the course calendar. In fairness to all students, an assignment that is submitted after its deadline will lose points and may not receive feedback. Specific policies for late penalties will be included with assignment instructions, so please read them carefully.
- **Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:** Presenting someone else's ideas in writing as if they are your own is plagiarism, and it is a serious academic offense. Any plagiarized elements in your writing will result in, at minimum, a zero for the assignment and, at maximum, automatic course failure. If you ever borrow information from an outside source to put in an essay, you must cite it properly. If you're not sure how to do this, please ask me for help before submitting your paper. Once you submit a plagiarized paper, the consequences mentioned above will be enforced.
- **Office Hours:** I encourage you to visit me during my office hours to discuss your questions or concerns. It's best to schedule a time in advance, but I won't mind if you stop by unannounced.
- **The LBCC Writing Center:** The [LBCC Writing Center](http://www.linnbenton.edu/learning-center/writing-center) (WH-200) is a fantastic free resource for students. Tutors are available to assist you with all aspects of your writing assignments. The Writing Center also offers online tutoring services as well. Get more information here: <http://www.linnbenton.edu/learning-center/writing-center>
- **The LBCC Library:** The [LBCC library](http://library.linnbenton.edu/home) is located on the first floor of Willamette Hall. The library has several [databases for research articles](http://library.linnbenton.edu/home) that you can access both on and off-campus. Get more information here: <http://library.linnbenton.edu/home>

- **Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR):** LBCC is committed to inclusiveness and equal access to higher education. If you have approved accommodations through the Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR) and would like to use your accommodations in this class, please talk to your instructor as soon as possible to discuss your needs. If you believe you may need accommodations, but are not yet registered with CFAR, please go to <http://linnbenton.edu/cfar> for steps on how to apply for services or call 541-917-4789.
- **Non-Discrimination Policy:** Everyone in the LBCC community has the right to think, learn, and work together in an environment of respect, tolerance, and goodwill, and we will honor that right in our classroom.
- **Food and Drink in the Classroom:** Drinks are fine; food is not.
- **Our Classroom’s “Golden Rule”:** To maximize learning by minimize distractions from it.

**COURSE CALENDAR:**

DATE	TOPICS, ACTIVITIES, AND DUE DATES	READINGS DUE <u>BEFORE</u> CLASS
Tue 1/10	Course introduction; Diagnostic writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None</li> </ul>
Thur 1/12	Discuss the writing process and set-up of ; Assign Essay #1 (first draft due 1/26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>Seagull</u> 2-16</li> <li>● <u>TS/IS</u> xvi-xxvi (“Preface”) and 1-15 (“Introduction”)</li> </ul>
Tue 1/17	Discuss readings; Brainstorming for Essay #1; Review sample Essay #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>TS/IS</u> 19-29 (ch. 1)</li> <li>● “What Do U.S. College Grads Lack? Professionalism” (on Moodle)</li> <li>● “Vocation or Exploration? Pondering the Purpose of College” (on Moodle)</li> </ul>
Thur 1/19	Practice summarizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>TS/IS</u> 30-41 (ch. 2)</li> <li>● <u>Seagull</u> 100-103 (section on paraphrasing and summarizing)</li> </ul>
Tue 1/24	Practice quoting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>TS/IS</u> 42-50 (ch. 3)</li> </ul>
Thur 1/26	First draft of Essay #1 due (digital copy only; 2 page min.); In-class revision: focus on opening paragraph, summary paragraph, thesis statement, and body paragraph development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>TS/IS</u> 55-67 (ch. 4) and 68-77 (ch. 5)</li> <li>● <u>Seagull</u> 17-29</li> </ul>
Tue 1/31	Peer review workshop: printed copy of revised draft (2 page min.) due at the start of class!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2 Readings on peer review posted on Moodle</li> <li>● <u>TS/IS</u> 139-159 (chapter 11)</li> </ul>
Thur 2/2	ESSAY #1 FINAL DRAFT DUE ON MOODLE BY START OF CLASS (bring hard copy in folder AND submit on Moodle); Assign Essay #2 (first draft due 2/9) and begin work on it in class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None</li> </ul>

Tue 2/7	Discuss readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Why I Just Asked My Students to Put Their Laptops Away” (on Moodle)</li> <li>• “Lecture Me. Really.” (on Moodle)</li> </ul>
Thur 2/9	First draft of Essay #2 due (digital copy only; 2 page min.); Revise drafts: focus on introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>TS/IS</u> 92-101 (chapter 7)</li> </ul>
Tue 2/14	Peer review workshop: printed copy of revised draft (3 page min.) due at the start of class!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>TS/IS</u> 105-120 (chapter 8)</li> </ul>
Thur 2/16	ESSAY #2 FINAL DRAFT DUE (bring hard copy in folder AND submit on Moodle); Assign information literacy assignment (due 2/23); Assign formal outline for Essay #3 (due 2/28); Assign Essay #3 (first draft due 3/2); Begin researching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Seagull</u> 80-95</li> </ul>
Tue 2/21	Meet in computer lab (room to be announced); Work on Information Literacy	NONE
Thur 2/23	INFORMATION LITERACY DUE (at end of period)	NONE
Tue 2/28	ESSAY #3 OUTLINE DUE; Discuss MLA documentation and formatting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Seagull</u> 149-157 (“Sample MLA paper”)</li> </ul>
Thur 3/2	First draft of Essay #3 due (digital copy only; 3 page min.); Revise drafts; focus on counterarguments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>TS/IS</u> 78-91 (chapter 6)</li> </ul>
Tue 3/7	Peer review workshop: printed copy of revised draft (4 page min.) due at the start of class!	NONE
Thur 3/9	Revision workshop; Final Exam instructions	NONE
Tue 3/14	Post Final Exam reading; 50-minute practice in-class writing; Bring to class!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sample Final Exam essays and grading rubric (on Moodle)</li> <li>• <u>TS/IS</u> 167-171 (“IMHO”)</li> </ul>
Thur 3/16	ESSAY #3 FINAL DRAFT DUE (bring hard copy in folder AND submit on Moodle); Revisions of Essay 1 and/or Essay 2 due	---
Mon 3/20	Final Exam Part I: 12:00-12:50 (Bring 2 exam books!)	---
Tue 3/21	Final Exam Part II: 11:30-12:20	---