

# WR 121: English Composition

Winter 2023

CRN: 32901 T/F (online)

## Course Information

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| <b>Instructor</b>                         | Damien Weaver<br>weaverd@linnbenton.edu<br>Office: Online, Virtual Space<br>Office hours: Wednesday 4:00-5:00 pm, (and by appointment)  |
| <b>Course Overview</b>                    | Placement into WR 121 or WR115 with a grade of C or better.<br><br>This course emphasizes clear, detailed writing that employs critical reading and thinking and basic research skills.<br><br>The purpose of WR 121 is to help you grow and stretch yourself as a college writer—for academic assignments and also for the writing demands in your personal, professional, and civic lives. In this course, you'll examine how writing is a process, as well as a communicative act that always occurs within a particular context, and you'll gain practice writing for different purposes in multiple contexts.  |
| <b>Course Learning Outcomes</b>           | Upon completion of this course, students should be able to achieve the following outcomes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. describe and practice writing as a multi-faceted process of inquiry, learning, and expression;</li><li>2. practice writing as a social process through compassionate and critical response to their peer's work and revision of their own writing in response to peer and instructor feedback;</li><li>3. practice ethical argumentation in discussion and writing through open and curious engagement with multiple perspectives;</li><li>4. develop audience awareness and practice respectful treatment of audience in accomplishing their writing purposes; identify and critically apply style conventions for writing in an academic context.</li></ol> |
| <b>Required Texts</b>                     | Graff, Gerald, et. al. <i>They Say / I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing (with Readings)</i> . 5 <sup>th</sup> ed., Norton, 2021.<br><br><u><a href="https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/">Purdue OWL (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/)</a>: A Handy and Invaluable Resource for all things related to MLA Formatting.</u>  |
| <b>Required Resources &amp; Materials</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reliable internet and Canvas access to complete homework assignments.</li><li>• Adobe Acrobat Reader or similar program that allows you to make notes and highlights on a .pdf. Click <a href="#">here</a> to download Acrobat for free.</li></ul><br>Access to a word processing program such as Microsoft Word: While Google Docs is robust and useful tool, it can be difficult to properly format documents on that platform. Microsoft Word is much easier and it is available for free to teachers and students. Click <a href="#">here</a> for details.  |

## Coursework and Grading

**Essay Cycles: 30% of Course Grade:** Cycle One Essay = 15%, Cycle Two Essay = 15%:

This course is designed as a series of two major essay cycles. Each cycle entails a major argumentative essay that is drafted in stages according to a formal writing process. This means that essays are submitted first as an initial draft, and then as a final revised draft. Further instructions for content and requirements of formal essays are provided on Canvas. Initial drafts are expected to be complete, i.e., meeting the minimum word count, and written in formal, academic prose. Remember, if you do not submit an initial draft, your overall grade for the course will be negatively impacted. See next assignment category below for further details.

**Final Exam: 30% of Grade:** Consists of a brief essay written during finals week. More details to follow.

**Major Writing Assignments: 20% of Course Grade:**

As you progress through the writing process, you will be asked to complete several major writing assignments on the way to your final essay draft. These include an essay plan, outline, and initial drafts of your major cycle essays. This course places heavy emphasis on the process (not just the final product), and such is reflected in the grade-weighting for these assignments.

**Minor Writing Assignments: 10% of Course Grade:**

Assignments in this category are mostly shorter pieces written for homework: free-written responses to assigned readings, a research narrative, essay plans and outlines, etc. I will drop the lowest grade from this category when computing your final grade.

**Participation and Peer Review: 10% of Course Grade:**

This class emphasizes the communication of ideas both in writing and in discussion, so your active participation is essential. You will frequently be posting/discussing the ideas presented in and inspired by the assigned readings. As part of the essay cycle process, you will read and review classmates' initial (rough) essay drafts. This feedback will aid you in revising the final draft you ultimately submit.

Grading breakdown in a more visually succinct format:

|                             |            |   |
|-----------------------------|------------|---|
| Cycle One Final Essay       | <b>15%</b> | Assignment Grades: Your graded assignments will be assessed according to the LBCC grading system.<br><br>This grading system consists of twelve basic grades, A, B, C, D, and F.<br><br><b>Grading Scale (%)</b><br><br>A 89.5- 100<br>B 79.5- 89.4<br>C 69.5 - 79.4<br>D 59.5 - 69.4<br>F ≤59.4<br><br>Note that grades of #.5 are rounded up. |
| Cycle Two Final Essay       | <b>15%</b> |   |
| Final Exam                  | <b>30%</b> |   |
| Major Writing Assignments   | <b>20%</b> |   |
| Minor Writing Assignments   | <b>10%</b> |   |
| Participation / Peer Review | <b>10%</b> |   |

| <b>Course Policies</b>                         |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Discourse<br/>Community<br/>Membership:</b> | <p>One of the best ways to learn to write is to share ideas about writing with others. Creating a community that enables us to grow and develop as writers depends on each person fulfilling our responsibilities, offering mutual respect to one another, and being receptive readers of one another's work.</p> <p>As a result, essential learning in this course will happen as you engage in writing-related activities with peers. Performing well in discourse community membership means actively and respectfully contributing to and seeking to learn from our class community. Note that participation can take a variety of forms: e.g., asking questions and giving comments during class discussion, taking notes on behalf of a small group, sharing perspectives in writing with peers.</p> <p>Discourse community responsibilities include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Giving constructive Peer Feedback. Learning to write means learning to be read by many others. In our class, you'll regularly give and get critical peer response. By giving constructive feedback and by listening carefully to others, you'll learn to make effective revisions—e.g., to further develop ideas and to move readers in intended ways.</li> <li>b. Participating in peer activities, incl. class discussion &amp; small group exercises. Our writing community activities will include discussion among the entire class as well as small group exercises—during class time, possibly on Canvas forums, too. These activities are designed to help you write and reflect on your essay assignments.</li> </ol> |
| <b>Attendance</b>                              | <p>Attendance is mandatory and you are expected to arrive promptly to class meetings. You are allowed a maximum of one week's worth of absences (ex: 3 for a MWF class, 2 for a T/Th) without a penalty to your grade. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Please reserve any absences for emergencies. Each absence after the third will lower your course grade by one-third of a letter grade (eg. B+ to B, etc.). Please see me if you have an extended illness or exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Note: Any absence beyond two full weeks of missed class meetings may result in course failure. Any absence after three full weeks of missed class will result in course failure.</p>   |

**Late Work**

Deadlines are crucial for writers. Thus:

- For weekly writing assignments, **the standard grade penalty for late work is 10 points per day up to a maximum of five days.** Work submitted more than five days late may not be eligible for a grade.
- Deadline extensions are possible in extenuating circumstances, such as serious illness. Please contact me in advance if you foresee missing an assignment deadline.
- NOTE: Circumstances which generally do not warrant a deadline extension include: technological issues at the last minute (having reliable technology is a requirement of the course), forgetting that the assignment was due, being busy with assignments for other classes (effective time management is a crucial skill to cultivate).
- Late submissions of initial drafts may also result in losing credit for peer review workshops.

**Classroom Environment**

The ability for each student to learn is affected by the contributions and behaviors of every other student. Please show respect to your instructor, to your classmates, and to the process of learning as a whole. During discussions, allow others time to talk, try not to interrupt, and above all refrain from rude, offensive, or belittling comments. Remember, we critique writing and ideas, not people. No deliberate derision of your peers or myself will be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, offensive speech regarding one's nationality, race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or disability. When others are talking, pay attention to their comments and do not do anything that will distract yourself or others, including using your cell phone or other electronic devices.

**Academic Honesty**

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course, which means you may not submit papers or portions of papers you have written for any other course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. **Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, a serious academic offense.** In cases where plagiarism or other academic misconduct has been clearly established, the award of up to an F for the final course grade is the standard practice in composition courses. Please contact me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

**LBCC Writing Center****Writing Resources**

From initial ideas to final drafts, the LBCC Writing Center can help you take your writing to the next level. Please feel free to drop in during regular hours to work one-on-one with one of the supportive Writing Assistants. In addition to your draft, please bring your assignment and any questions you have. You may also submit your writing online at [lbcc.writingcenteronline.net](http://lbcc.writingcenteronline.net) where you will receive a personalized response within 1-2 business days. For more information, visit the Writing Center online at <http://www.linnbenton.edu/go/learning-center/writing-help>.

**E-Handbooks**

The following electronic handbooks will be available for grammar and citation reference during this course:

*Purdue OWL* (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>)

*UNC Writing Center Handouts* (<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/>)

*Writing for Success* (<http://open.lib.umn.edu/writingforsuccess/>)

NOTE: May not reflect the most recent MLA edition (8<sup>th</sup>). Refer to *Purdue OWL* for citation information.

**Disability Services**

If you have a documented disability, I will help you in any way I can. Talk to me during the first week of class. If you think you might have a disability, but you are not sure, contact Disability Services, 917-4789. [Here is a lot more useful information about Disability Services and LBCC's disability policies.](#)

**LBCC Non-Discrimination Policy**

Everyone is welcome at LBCC, regardless of whether they are black, white, Latino, native, gay, straight, Christian, Muslim, Jewish, atheist, male, female, transgendered, married, disabled, a veteran, a non-English speaker, an immigrant, or any number of other categories not listed here. [For the official nondiscrimination policy click here.](#) What is more, LBCC sees our differences as a source of strength and an important part of education. [Click here to see what the LBCC board has to say about diversity.](#)

**PERFORMANCE-BASED LEARNER OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

**1. Academic Discourse and Conventions**

- a. Engage in and value a respectful and free exchange of ideas.
- b. Practice active reading of college-level texts, including: annotation, cultivation/development of vocabulary, objective summary, identification, and analysis of the thesis and main ideas of source material, among others.
- c. Participate in class discussion and activities; speak, read, respond, and listen reflectively.
- d. Appreciate and reflect on challenging points of view through reading and writing;
  - measure another writer's viewpoint against personal experience and assumptions and the experience of others.
- e. Understand self as a part of a larger community.
- f. Use appropriate technologies in the service of writing and learning. For example: use word processing tools to prepare and edit formal writing assignments (spell

check/grammar check, find and replace); understand the limitations of such tools; locate course materials and resources online; and use online communication tools such as e-mail.

- g. Word process and format final drafts with appropriate headings, titles, spacing, margins, demonstrating an understanding of MLA citation style.
- h. Demonstrate the ability to use Edited Standard Written English to address an academic audience.
- i. Use a writer's handbook and/or other resource for style, grammar, and citations.
- j. Manage prerequisite skills such as grammar, sentence variety, and word choice.

## **2. Organization, Thesis, and Development**

- a. Try more than one organizational strategy in essay drafts including reworking thesis statement Write well-focused, logically organized, and well-transitioned essays, using introductions, discussion, and conclusions in which the relationship of ideas to the thesis and to one another is clear.
- b. Develop and organize essays using evidence that may include examples, illustration, and research to support ideas.
- c. Evaluate and synthesize ideas from own writing and the writing of others.
- d. Write at least one argumentative essay that demonstrates an understanding of the basic elements of formal argumentation including claims, support, logic, and credibility.
- e. Write argumentative essays that integrate research.

## **3. Audience, Purpose, and Voice (Develop Rhetorical Competence)**

- a. Identify the roles played by situation, purpose, and audience in directing a writer's choices, and make appropriate choices of tone, voice, and level of formality.
- b. Assess knowledge, expectations and biases of audiences.
- c. Anticipate questions an audience is likely to have and supply appropriate information.
- d. Identify the different levels of formality through vocabulary, syntax, and other conventions, and the situations in which they are appropriate.
- e. Employ strategies of development appropriate for the purpose and audience, recognizing that effective writing usually involves combinations of organizational strategies, including finding and integrating outside source material.

## **PERFORMANCE-BASED LEARNER OUTCOMES**

### **4. Writing Process**

- a. Explore the ideas of others in both informal and formal writing.
- b. Recognize that strong organization, thesis, and development result from a recursive writing process.
- c. Exercise original thought in selecting and narrowing writing topics
- d. Develop essays through a flexible writing process that proceeds from exploration and discovery, through drafting, peer review, revision, editing, and proofreading.
- e. Work effectively and collaboratively with other writers to evaluate and revise essays, sharing work in process and providing constructive feedback to others according to established guidelines, and revise according to peer and instructor feedback.

- f. Appraise own writing skills, abilities, and process and those of others, identifying strengths and addressing weaknesses.
- g. Use available writing assistance.

**5. Research and Documentation**

- a. Use the library, a database, and the Internet to locate information and evidence.
- b. Evaluate source materials for authority, currency, reliability, bias, sound reasoning and validity of evidence.
- c. Demonstrate an ability to summarize, paraphrase, and quote sources in a manner that distinguishes the writer's voice from that of his/her sources.
- d. Produce at least one paper that demonstrates an ability to synthesize sources to support an assertive or argumentative thesis through summary, paraphrase, and integrated quotation.
- e. Format citations and bibliographic information in more than one documentation style using the handbook.
- f. Integrate research as support for their own ideas with proper MLA or APA documentation.

**STATEWIDE GENERAL EDUCATION (AAOT) OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of the Writing course, students should be able to:

1. Read actively, think critically, and write purposefully and capably for academic and, in some cases, professional audiences.
2. Locate, evaluate, and ethically utilize information to communicate effectively.
3. Demonstrate appropriate reasoning in response to complex issues.