**English Composition, WR121 Syllabus**

# **General Information**

## **Instructor Information and Availability**

Tristan Striker

Phone number: 4574

E-mail: striket@linnbenton.edu

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 12-1, or by appointment

Office Location: North Santiam Hall 214

## **Course Information**

Course name: WR 121 English Composition

Section number: 08

CRN: 32550

Scheduled time/days: MW 8:30-9:50

Number of credits: 3

Classroom(s): North Santiam Hall 207

### **Prerequisites:**

Placement into WR 121

## **Course Materials**

All course readings and materials will be on Moodle.

## **Course-Specific Requirements**

Your presence and a high tolerance for puns and bad jokes.

## **Course Description**

Welcome to English Composition! For many of us, this is our first encounter with college-level writing, and I am thrilled to guide us through this exciting process. Writing is a journey. Ok, I know that is a cliché, but it really is. One of the key goals for us in this class will be to explore our unique writing process. For all of us, this process involves three basic steps: prewriting (exploring, brainstorming, drafting), writing (exploring, brainstorming, drafting), and rewriting (explo…wait, this sounds familiar!). Think of writing as a wonderful, never-ending cycle of creating, testing out, recreating, revising, creating again, and eventually tearing yourself away from your writing because you must submit it. While there may not be a straightforward “process” or “method” to writing (and this is what makes it so wonderful!), there are skills and models we can use as springboards. Let’s dive in!

In terms of tangible assignments and assessments, we will be exploring three types of writing: an exploratory informative essay, a persuasive essay, and a more personal reflection. We will devote our time together exploring grammar, rhetorical strategies, and academic conversation skills to get ourselves a solid foundation upon which we can build our unique writing styles.

## **WR 121 Student Learning Outcomes**

1. *Analyze the* *rhetorical needs* (audiences, purpose, and subject) of a variety of academic and practical writing assignments.
2. *Apply critical thinking strategies* (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation) in response to the rhetorical needs of an assignment.
3. *Implement appropriate rhetorical elements and organization* (introduction, thesis, development and support, rebuttal, visuals, narration, conclusion, etc.) in response to the rhetorical needs of an assignment.
4. *Locate, evaluate, and integrate* *high-quality information and opinion* in response to the rhetorical needs of an assignment.
5. *Craft sentences and paragraphs* that communicate ideas clearly and effectively using words, sentence patterns, and writing conventions to make writing clear, credible, and persuasive.

# **Class Policies**

## **Behavior and Expectations**

We are held accountable to the [Student Code of Conduct](https://www.linnbenton.edu/current-students/administration-information/policies/students-rights-responsibilities-and-conduct), which outlines expectations pertaining to academic honesty (including cheating and plagiarism), classroom conduct, and general conduct.

### **Guidelines for communication**

1. Stay focused on the conversation. Refer back to texts we are reading in class to make your points.
2. Engage ideas instead of attacking each other.
3. If we start feeling defensive, attacked, or put on the spot, we can ask ourselves why we feel that way. We can then share our feelings with the class.

### **Use of cell phones**

Please put away cell phones until class is finished. See it as a test to determine if screens and electronic devices really are addictive.

## **Attendance/Tardiness Policy**

I expect us to be on time and to attend every class. Attendance is worth 10 points out of 100 for the course. I understand that life can happen to any of us. We have two (2) freebies, or absences that will not count against our final grade. The policy is simple:

1. Each absence is worth two (2) points. This means that each absence beyond the two freebies deducts two points from your overall class grade.
2. Every two tardies, or every two latenesses, will count as one absence. So, four tardies count as two absences.

## **Testing**

One of our writing assignments will be the final exam for this class. This exam will be made up of two days. On the first day, we will write a rough draft of a given writing prompt. The second day is our chance to revise our essay. We will also have a practice run for this final exam towards the end of the quarter.

* Our final exam is scheduled for the following days during Finals week: Monday, 12-12:50, and Tuesday, 11:30-12:20. Students must test both days.

## **Grading**

Here’s how the class breaks down (out of 100 points):

* Bias paper- 20 points
* Informative paper- 22 points
* Persuasive paper- 33 points
* Practice Final Exam- 10 points
* Paper revisions- 5 points
* Attendance- 10 points

**Important**: our final exam is not counted in this breakdown. The final exam is 30% of our total grade. At the end of the term, I will use a nifty calculator to factor your final exam scores into your class grade. The first three papers will be broken down into smaller parts. Each part will have us address a specific part of each assignment that connects to specific learning objective or goal. The smaller parts will add up to the overall assignment.

**Final Grade Calculation:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Percentage** | **Performance** |
| A | 90-100% | Excellent Work |
| B | 80-89% | Good Work |
| C | 70-79% | Average Work |
| D | 60-69% | Poor Work |
| F | 0-59% | Failing Work |

**Late Assignment Policy**

Because of how short quarters are, I cannot and will not accept late papers. However, do not hesitate to contact me if you are feeling overwhelmed or something happens. It is always better to let me know than to not hand anything in.

# **College Policies**

## **LBCC Email and Course Communications**

You are responsible for all communications sent via Moodle and to your LBCC email account. You are required to use your LBCC provided email account for all email communications at the College. You may access your LBCC student email account through Student Email and your Moodle account through Moodle.

## **Disability and Access Statement**

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 the 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 visit the [CFAR Website](https://www.linnbenton.edu/cfar) for steps on how to apply for services or call 541-917-4789.

## **Statement of Inclusion**

To promote academic excellence and learning environments that encourage multiple perspectives and the free exchange of ideas, all courses at LBCC will provide students the opportunity to interact with values, opinions, and/or beliefs different than their own in safe, positive and nurturing learning environments. LBCC is committed to producing culturally literate individuals capable of interacting, collaborating and problem-solving in an ever-changing community and diverse workforce.

## **Title IX Reporting Policy**

If you or another student are the victim of any form of sexual misconduct (including dating/domestic violence, stalking, sexual harassment), or any form of gender discrimination, LBCC can assist you. You can [report](https://linnbenton-advocate.symplicity.com/public_report/index.php/pid073717) a violation of our sexual misconduct policy directly to our Title IX Coordinator. You may also report the issue to a faculty member, who is required to notify the Coordinator, or you may make an appointment to speak confidentially to our Advising and Career Center by calling 541-917-4780.

## **Public Safety/Campus Security/**[**Emergency Resources**](http://www.linnbenton.edu/public-safety-emergency-planning)**:**

In an emergency, call 911. Also, call LBCC Campus Security/Public Safety at 541-926-6855 and 541-917-4440.

From any LBCC phone, you may alternatively dial extension 411 or 4440. LBCC has a [public safety app](http://lbccpublicsafety.mobapp.at/landing/Desktop) available for free. We encourage people to download it to their cell phones. Public Safety also is the home for LBCC's Lost & Found. They provide escorts for safety when needed. Visit them to learn more.

# **Campus Resources**

## **Learning Center**

This is an amazing resource. You should go here for all of your classes. For this class, you can go to the Writing Center for help with your writing assignments. I strongly encourage all of you to use this resource as much as you can. Many studies have shown that students who use the Writing Center perform better on their assignments. Did I mention that it’s free?

## **Library**

The library is your best friend. We have excellent librarians here who are trained in helping you with your research projects. You can use the library online or in person. Either way, use it! It is such a wonderful place. Why wouldn’t you want to go?

## **Me**

Seriously? Seriously. I am here for you. I want you to succeed. I am not a gatekeeper. I am not here to see whether you make the cut. I am here to do whatever I can to get you where you want to go. We are in this together, so please remember that I would LOVE to help you succeed in this class beyond our given class time. Use my office hours or let me know if there is a better time for you. We can make it work.

# **Tips for Success in This Class**

1. Hand in your assignments, even if they aren’t finished.
2. Take on the mindset that you are coming to class on time every day. Treat our class like a professional environment.
3. Come to office hours or communicate with me in some other way. Do this as often as you want to. The relationships you build with your instructors here are vital to your success.
4. Make friends and build a community here! Your classmates are perhaps your most valuable resource (even more valuable than me, and that’s saying something).

# **Changes to the Syllabus**

I reserve the right to change the contents of this syllabus due to unforeseen circumstances. You will be given notice of relevant changes in class, through a Moodle Announcement, or through LBCC e-mail.

**Unit 1: Writing About Others For Others**

Now that we have some writing under our belt, and now that we have explored audience, purpose, close readings, and some basic grammar devices, we can begin writing about others and for others. In this unit, we will learn how to use our close reading skills to not just understand what others are saying, but to think about how we fit into the larger conversation. We will also expand on rhetorical strategies, audience, and grammar. Where in Unit 1 we wrote a cover letter and reflected on our career aspirations, in this unit we will build on summarizing and paraphrasing towards creating an informative paper.

For this informative paper, we will have to pick a topic or issue that matters to you. Once we have picked an issue, and once we have practiced summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting, we will craft a paper with as little bias as possible. So, instead of marketing ourselves and reflecting on our own experiences, desires, and emotions, we will inform our peers about an issue or topic. Since we are choosing a topic about which we care deeply and for which we may feel strong emotions, we must learn to distance ourselves from what we are writing. The goal here is to understand as thoroughly as possible every dimension of our chosen topic or issue so that we can ultimately join the conversation in a responsible, ethical, and productive way.

Please take a look at the schedule below for detailed, step-by-step instructions for each class day and each assignment. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, and like always, I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule based on need.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **In-Class Discussion/Activity** | **Homework for Next Class** |
| Mon1/6 | Introductions | *Read the syllabus carefully* |
| Wed1/8 | Summarizing, paraphrasing, and quotingUsing signal verbs to convey your point | Finish your Summary assignment for Tuesday |
| Mon1/13 | Informative Paper AssignmentHow to use the library databasesWhat is a peer-reviewed source?Last Day to Add/DropPayment Due Date | Work on your informative paper |
| Wed1/15 | Different source typesHow to evaluate sources | Bring in one peer-reviewed source |
| Mon1/20 | No class-MLK Day |  |
| Wed1/22 | How to read and use peer-reviewed sources | Finish Informative paper for Monday |

**Unit 2: Entering the Conversation**

Now that we have some basic research skills under our belt, we will move on to synthesizing that research with our own voice. So, where Unit 2 is all about what “They say,” Unit 3 will be about what “I say.” In this unit, we will build on the skills we learned in the first two units, namely summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, and evaluating information. However, we will build on our informative paper by responding to the conversation outlined therein. In other words, our persuasive paper is persuasive because we are entering the conversation with our own insights, interpretations, and arguments. Where the informative paper was more of an exploration of a specific conversation, the persuasive paper is a place where we can demonstrate our mastery of subject or topic.

Let’s say you walked in on a conversation about anime. People are making all kinds of claims about the meanings of current animes like One Punch Man. They are arguing about whether the anime, manga, or webcomic is better. They are theorizing about who Blast is and who the strongest S-class hero is. You stand there, smiling, nodding, and utterly confused. Unit 2 represents your effort to get to know the subject. You watch One Punch Man, you read the manga and webcomic, watch Youtube videos on the subject, and get generally familiar with the larger discussion. However, you also find that you begin to form your own opinions on the topic. You begin to identify with specific characters. You form your own opinions about who Blast is (is he Watchdogman?). You have your own opinion about the strongest S-class hero (after the last manga update, it’s gotta be Flashy Flash). You prefer the art in the manga, but love the webcomic all the same. This is where your persuasive paper comes in. Where your informative paper was addressing an assumption people may have had about One Punch Man, your persuasive paper is you coming back to that anime conversation with all kinds of ideas of your own to share.

Please take a look at the schedule below for detailed, step-by-step instructions for each class day and each assignment. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, and like always, I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule based on need.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **In-Class Discussion/Activity** | **Homework for Next Class** |
| Mon 1/27 | Three pillars of argumentationPosition paragraph assignment | Work on position paragraph |
| Wed1/29 | Crafting a great thesisHow to craft logical sentences  | Finish position paragraph for Tuesday |
| Mon2/3 | How to write solid paragraphsNaysayer paragraph assignment | Work on Naysayer paragraph |
| Wed2/5 | Anticipating your audience | Finish your naysayer paragraph for Tuesday |
| Mon 2/10 | Persuasive paper assignmentRevising your informative paper into a persuasive paper | [Paul Bloom’s “The Root of All Cruelty”](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/11/27/the-root-of-all-cruelty) |
| Wed2/12 | Saying something that matters  | Bring in rough draft of persuasive paper(hard copy preferred) |
| Mon 2/17 | Persuasive paper peer review | Work on persuasive paper |
| Wed2/19 | How to incorporate outside sources into your persuasive paper | Finish persuasive paper for Tuesday |

**Unit 3: Writing for Yourself, Writing Yourself**

For this unit, we will reflect on what we have done so far. We will do this by looking at bias as a topic. Why does writing matter? Why does researching responsibly and ethically matter? Why does anticipating audience matter? Why does any of this matter? Why am I asking you all these questions??

By looking at cognitive bias, we will explore how and why people believe and do things. It is often hard to understand another person’s point of view. More importantly, it is often hard to understand why and/or how that person can have said point of view or opinion. Exploring bias will help us unpack this fundamental question.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **In-Class Discussion/Activity** | **Homework for Next Class** |
| Mon2/24 | Bias exploration | Finish bias exploration for Thursday |
| Wed2/26 | Bias strategy proposal | Finish bias strategy proposal for Tuesday[Azarian’s “Dunning Kruger Effect”](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/mind-in-the-machine/201808/the-dunning-kruger-effect-may-help-explain-trumps-support) |

**Unit 4: The Final Exam**

This unit is simple: we will prepare for the final essay exam. I know what you are thinking. Don’t worry, we are in this together. Take a deep breath and remember that we have prepared all term for this moment. Also, we will have a practice exam. That should help.

The most important thing to remember is to answer the questions. Each final exam question will have multiple parts. Make sure to identify each part of the question. In fact, it may be a good idea to spend the first five minutes of the exam making a list of each part of the question. Once you have done this, you can organize your essay by question part, devoting one paragraph to each question. Remember, you will be able to revise this essay on your second testing day. It may be a good idea to leave your introduction and conclusion for last, giving you a chance to answer each part  of the question first. Once you have answered each part of the question, begin thinking about what general thesis of your answer will be. We will talk about this more specifically during our prep and practice test.

For now, remember that we are in this together, that you have prepared for this test, and that you can ask me and your classmates any questions you may have.

Please take a look at the schedule below for detailed, step-by-step instructions for each class day and each assignment. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, and like always, I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule based on need.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Mon3/2 | Practice Final exam prepDunning-Kruger Effect | Read practice final exam essay |
| Wed3/4 | Practice Final Exam  | Work on Revisions (Due Thursday March 5) |
| Mon 3/9 | Looking over sample final exam student essays | Read Final exam essay |
| Wed 3/11 | In-class final exam prep | Read and prepare for final exam |
| Mon 3/16 | Final Exam part 1-noon to 12:50 Room TBD |  |
| Tues 3/17 | Final Exam part 2-11:30-12:20Room TBD |  |