

**WR 121—Spring 2015**

**Course Information**

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| **Professor:** Dr. Nicholson |  **CRN:** 47241 |
|  **Email:** nicholb@linnbenton.edu |  **Days:** Tuesdays and Thursdays |
|  **Office:** SSH-212 |  **Times:** 1:00 to 2:20 |
|  **Office Hours:** T R 4:00 to 5:00 |  **Room:** IA-219 |

**Required Texts and Supplies:**

* Graff, Gerald, Cathy Birkenstein, and Russel Durst, eds. *“They Say / I Say”: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing—with Readings.* 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 2012.
* Nota bene—you should have absolutely no problem obtaining “*They Say/I Say*” from our LBCC bookstore as *“They Say / I Say”* is one of two required texts for WR 121. And yes—the full title of the book is *“They Say / I Say”: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing—with Readings*, but from henceforth we will refer to the book simply as *“They Say / I Say.”* Also, you should note well (nota bene in Latin) that when a writer refers to a book, the title of a book is *always* placed in italics (or underlined in the antique world of typewriters). And—the manner in which I wrote the book entry is in accordance with MLA style—we’ll learn more about MLA style as we progress through the term.
* Bullock, Richard, Michal Brody, and Francine Weinberg, eds. *The Little Seagull Handbook*—*with Exercises*. 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 2014.
* More important information—you **MUST** obtain the **EXACT** versions of the two course texts for this class. In other words, you must obtain the **second editions** of the texts. Why must you obtain the second editions of the texts? Because editors possess a pernicious propensity to alter texts from published edition to edition, and we all need to be literally on the same page when we read from the texts.
* Always bring a pen and paper to class. After all, this *is* a writing class, and we will be doing many in-class writings throughout the ensuing weeks.
* You’ll need to purchase two blue/green books that you’ll use for the practice final exam in addition to the two blue/green books that you’ll use for the actual final exam. You needn’t obtain the four blue/green books till the beginning of the **fifth week** of the class. The LBCC bookstore sells blue/green books, and the last time that I checked blue/green books were still thirty-five cents each.

**Catalog Course Description**

WR 121 English Composition (3 class hrs/wk, 3 cr) F/W/Sp/Su

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. Placement determined by pre-enrollment testing (CPT). Students using the writing lab are required to attend a Writing Lab Orientation at the beginning of the term. Orientation times and dates can be found at www.linnbenton.edu/go/writinglab. Prerequisite: Placement in WR 121 is determined by pre-enrollment testing (CPT) or by passing WR 115 with a grade of “C” or better. With an advisor’s approval, students may challenge their mandatory placement by signing a self-placement form through their counselor.

**Student Learning Objectives and Outcomes**

The human mind is a miraculous mechanism. Every second of every moment of every day we have ever experienced has been received, filtered, and processed by our minds. In our minds we store memories of our experiences, and from our memories we make choices, and from these choices we make decisions. Your very act of reading this writing is a result of a choice that you made to take this class based upon a decision that you made to attend this college based upon memories that contribute to shaping your perception of yourself. And these words that you are reading are a result of *my* mind making choices—and making word choices is what a writer does.

During the next ten weeks, we are going to learn how a writer makes choices. We are going to learn that there are certain exacting rules that a writer must adhere to—these rules form the mechanics of writing. The fundamental mechanics of writing include correct spelling, correct grammar, and correct syntax—all vital functions that contribute to effective writing. In addition to working on our fundamental writing mechanics, we are going to read various short selections from our reader in order to learn how to read at the college level. We are going to write three essays this term—a personal narrative essay, an informative essay that will include research, and a persuasive essay that will also include research. We are going to take quizzes throughout the term, and we are going to practice timed writing by writing various responses in class. We are also going to take a mandatory final exam. At the end of this class, the student will be able to:

**Student Learning Objectives**

* Read, interpret, and analyze texts at the required college level
* Write with grammatical and syntactical proficiency
* Perform college level research
* Write a personal narrative essay
* Write an informative essay that includes research
* Write a persuasive essay

**Student Learning Outcomes**

1. *Analyze the* *rhetorical needs* (the interaction of audiences, purpose/outcome, and subject) of a variety of academic and practical writing assignments.
2. *Apply appropriate levels of 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 their ideas clearly and effectively using words, sentence patterns, and writing conventions to make their writing clear, credible, and persuasive.

**Grading**

* 50% Essays
* 20% Quizzes and in-class writings
* 30% Final exam

**Attendance Policy**

If you know for certain that you have to miss a class because of an emergency or because of an ineluctable circumstance, I’ll do my best to work with you. If you simply choose not to attend class, your cavalier attitude could lead to severe academic penalty. Also, please be on time to class. It is highly disrespectful to me and to your fellow students when you are late to class. Thank you.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is word theft. You will receive the grade of F for this course if you plagiarize. Plagiarizing occurs when a writer steals the words of another writer and claims that the stolen words are her or his own words. Over the course of the next ten weeks, I will show you how to use direct quotations and how to paraphrase. When you use direct quotations and when you paraphrase, and when you give credit where credit is due through the use of parenthetical citations using MLA style, you avoid plagiarism altogether. By analogy—if you steal a car and the police track you down and arrest you for grand theft auto, the police usually don’t smile at you and say, “Please don’t do that again.” As you are well aware, you will be punished to the full extent of the law for your auto theft, and by extension, college professors will punish you for plagiarizing (though it is unlikely that you will be incarcerated). Don’t plagiarize. Thank you.

For further information concerning academic honesty, please consult the following:

* *Linn-Benton Community College: Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct Handbook*
* You can reach the handbook through the following: linnbenton.edu/go/student- rights

**Late Work Policy**

Part of being a successful college student is learning how to budget your academic time. Generally, I will not accept any late essays—it simply isn’t fair to the students who hand in their essays on time. However, I would rather receive a late essay than no essay at all. Thus, in fairness to the students who hand in their essays on time, I will drop your essay’s grade a full letter grade corresponding to every class session that your essay is late.

**Class Courtesy and Electronic Device Policy**

Once more, coming to class late is extremely disrespectful to your classmates. Please be on time to every class. Thank you! Also, texting, Internet surfing, Tweeting, and Facebooking (is there such a verb?) are not only disruptive activities, but also will not be tolerated during class time. Thank you! Also, please leave your hate hats at home. One of my favorite bands from Finland once sang, “Hating is easy / Loving takes real character.” It’s true—it takes much more courage to be tolerant, to be respectful, to be kind, and to be empathetic than it does to hate. Please have the courage to be kind.

**Diversity, Respect, Tolerance, and Goodwill**

The LBCC community is enriched by diversity. Each individual has worth and makes contributions to create that diversity at the college. Each individual has the right to think, to learn, and to work in an environment of respect, tolerance, and goodwill.

**Great Expectations**

What I expect from you:

* To attend class as much as humanly possible
* To bring open minds and open hearts to every class
* To be tolerant of each other
* To respect each other
* To do the readings in our books
* To use your imaginations
* To write from your hearts and from your souls
* To grow as writers
* To grow as human beings

What you should expect from me:

* To give you the best writing and reading instruction that I am able to give you
* To hand back your essays in a timely manner
* To be understanding and empathetic
* To be on time to every class, just as I expect you to be on time to every class
* To respect you tremendously for having the vision and the courage to attend college
* To open doors, windows, and horizons in your imaginations
* To help you succeed
* To help you grow as human beings
* This syllabus is subject to changes at the professor’s discretion.

Here’s looking forward to a great spring term at LBCC!