WR 121: English Composition

Spring 2020

CRN: 40126

Course Information	
Instructor	Damien Weaver weaverd@linnbenton.edu Office: Online, Virtual Space Office hours: MW 3:00-5:30 pm, (and by appointment)
Course Overview	This course emphasizes clear, detailed writing that employs critical reading and thinking and basic research skills. The prerequisites include placement into WR 121 or WR115 with a grade of C or better. 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.
Composition Program Learning Outcomes	Upon completion of this course, students should be able to achieve the following outcomes: 1. describe and practice writing as a multi-faceted process of inquiry, learning, and expression; 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; 3. practice ethical argumentation in discussion and writing through open and curious engagement with multiple perspectives; 4. develop audience awareness and practice respectful treatment of audience in accomplishing their writing purposes; 5. identify and critically apply style conventions for writing in an academic context.
Required Texts	*They Say, I Say with Readings*, Fourth Edition, Gerald Graff, et al.
E-Handbooks	*Purdue OWL* (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/): A Handy and Invaluable Resource for all things related to MLA Formatting.
Required Resources & Materials	• Internet and Canvas access to complete homework assignments • Adobe Acrobat Reader DV or similar program that allows you to make notes and highlights on a .pdf. Click here to download Acrobat for free.

Operative Premises:
Writing is a Process and Writing is a Social Act

Writing Process

This course emphasizes writing as a PROCESS with discrete phases that all writers follow: Generative, Drafting, Revision, Copy-Editing, and Final.

   *See the Writing 121 Quick Reference Sheet on Moodle for more details.

The notion of writing as a process is reflected in the design of the course. For each unit, you will complete a series of brainstorming activities, shorter writing assignments, and initial and revised drafts of your essay. All of these build toward a final writing product, your final essay for the unit as a whole. Whereas most other courses will place grading emphasis solely on the writing product, here, we are concerned just as much with the process by which the product is created. As indicated by the grade distribution chart below, **the extent to which you follow the process will have a significant impact on your grade. This entails, among other things, completing assignments on time, meeting minimum word counts, and employing substantial revisions across essay drafts** – the initial draft of a given essay should look very different from the final draft it eventually becomes.

Writing as a Social Act

Writing is a form of discourse (conversation), and is thus an inherently social act. It is an exchange of ideas from one person to another. Consider the elements of the Rhetorical Triangle, which denote the relationships between the writer, the subject matter, and the imagined reader. Also consider the "context"—the time, place, etc.—in which writing appears. All of these crucial aspects influence one's rhetorical strategy (game-plan for effectively reaching their audience), and should always be taken into account. Rather than judging essays are either "good" or "bad," in this course, we evaluate pieces of writing according to <u>degrees of effectiveness</u>. And the degree to which a writer successfully accounts for the rhetorical needs of their reader in relation to the subject matter and writing context is always directly correlative to how effective the writing product ultimately is.

Our Class as a Discourse Community

For us, the social aspect of writing becomes additionally significant because our class is considered a writing community, consisting of your classmates who are now your fellow writers. More than that—we are a "discourse" community. Discourse refers to discussion, in both written and oral forms, and over the course of the term, we will continually interact with one another—sharing our writing and our ideas, giving and receiving constructive feedback through peer review workshops, and bouncing ideas off one another as we ponder very issues of rhetorical, social, and cultural significance. For the uninitiated, the prospect of sharing one's writing and personal thoughts and critiquing those of others may seem intimidating, but *fear not!*, you will come to appreciate and enjoy it!

Coursework and Grading

Coursework

To do well in this class, one must:
- Complete all homework and assigned readings, and complete all writing assignments—generative, minor, and major writing assignments.
- Submit work that is entirely your own and that you have written specifically for this class that demonstrates college-level writing and fulfills the requirements of the assignment.
- Engage respectfully with fellow students, in-class activities, and discussions.
- Seek to improve through incorporation of instructor feedback, revision, and use of writing resources (course textbooks and Writing Center).
- Ask for help and clarification if you need it.

Major Assignments: This course is designed as a series of three units, each with its own major writing assignment—an essay 1,000-1,250 words in length. Each essay will go through an extensive writing process, and each will introduce new challenges.

- ° **Unit 1: Inquiring into Self** asks you to draw upon personal experience, analyze an aspect of your personal context, and write about this to a familiar audience.
- ° **Unit 2: Interacting with Texts** asks you to develop and write a critical response to one or more published texts and tailor the response to an academic audience.
- ° **Unit 3: Identifying the Issues & Adding to a Conversation** asks you to analyze and interpret a given primary "text"—a film, in our case—in which the key issues are less overtly stated (shown, not told), and produce a review essay that also serves as a platform for discussion of a major issue in society/culture.
- ° **Final Exam Essay:** Asks you to analyze and respond to an assigned reading in essay form. More details will be given at in the later weeks of the course.

Grading

Your final grade for the course will be based on the following breakdown:

Writing Assignments	Percentage	Due Date(s)
Final Essay Drafts (Units 1, 2, & 3 - 10% each)	30% of total grade	Unit 1: 20 April Unit 2: 11 May Unit 3: 4 June
Major Writing Assignments	20% of total grade	Rolling Deadlines
Minor Writing Assignments	10% of total grade	Rolling Deadlines
Unit 4 Final Exam	30% of total grade	During Finals Week
Writing Community Membership: Participation and Peer Review	10% of total grade	

Course Policies

Discourse Community Membership

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 writing.

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.

Discourse community responsibilities include the following:
  a. Being prepared to participate. Being prepared includes, but is not limited to, bringing required materials to class and actively reading the required texts. Reading texts by other writers, including classmates, will help you generate ideas, dialogue with others, and become aware of your writing choices. You should also be prepared to reflect on your writing.

  b. 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.

  c. Participating in peer activities, incl. class discussion & 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.

Prerequisite

There are no prerequisites for registration in a WR 121 course. English language learners may, but are not required to, enroll in AEIS courses prior to registering for WR 121.

Attendance

Does not apply to an online course.

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. Please refer to the Composition Program's e-handbook resources as well as the *Student Conduct Code* on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website. In cases where academic misconduct has been clearly established, the award of up to an F for the final course grade is the standard practice of the Composition Program. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

Academic Misconduct Procedures	To ensure that the Composition Program maintains a consistent response to academic misconduct, misconduct cases are administered by the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (OSCCS), and not by individual instructors. While misconduct cases are being evaluated, instructors cannot discuss the assignment(s) in question, but may continue to help students with all other course work. If an assignment of yours is under evaluation for plagiarism, the Composition Program will notify you by email and OSCCS will contact you to schedule a meeting. Until a case is resolved through OSCCSC, no work from the assignment in question can be included in assignments for the course. You are encouraged to communicate with your instructor about guidelines and requirements for continuing coursework on a case-specific basis.
Formatting Guidelines for Written Work	All written work should be typed and double-spaced, using 12- point Times New Roman font and 1" margins. If possible, print your work double-sided. Use MLA format for quoting and citing sources. Failure to format and cite sources may significantly lower the assignment or essay grade. Examples of MLA style: In *Heart of Darkness,* Conrad describes the company manager as inspiring "neither love nor fear, nor even respect" (87). Carretta and Gould explain that: The black writing that appeared during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – which included the genres of spiritual autobiography, captivity narrative, travel narrative, public epistle, sea adventure, and economic success story – is a literature of diasporic movement and cultural encounter. Born to enslaved African parents on a ship in the Middle Passage bearing its human cargo from Africa to the Americas and then brought to England, Sancho might serve as an emblem of most of the writers discussed in *Genius in Bondage*. (5)

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Works Cited:

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Carretta, Vincent, and Philip Gould, eds. *Genius in Bondage: Literature of the Early*
     Black Atlantic, Lexington, 2001.

Lonner Alyssa. "History's Attic: Artifacts, Museums, and Historical Rupture in Gustav Freytag's *Die verlorene Handschrift*." *The Germanic Review*: *Literature, Culture, Theory*, vol. 82, no. 4, 2007, pp.321-342.

INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES & RESOURCES

WRITING RESOURCES

Office Hours You're welcome to come to office hours any time you'd like to discuss questions or concerns related to this course. If you have a time conflict with my office hours, please schedule an appointment.

LBCC Benton Center Writing Zone

From initial ideas to final drafts, the LBCC Writing Center, located in the Learning Annex, 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. For more information, visit the Writing Zone website at https://www.linnbenton.edu/current-students/campus-locations-and-maps/benton-center/learning-and-career-services/learning-annex.php

SCHOOL POLICIES

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.