

College Reading and Composition I
English 101 (0205), Fall 2003
TTh 9:05-10:30 Inst. 1005

Ralph La Rosa
TTh 12:45-1:45
Ext. 7694

Course Description: English 101 is a course in reading and writing to improve the student's skills in thinking clearly, reading carefully, and writing effectively. This course emphasizes the organization and composition of expository arguments, including a research paper.

Course Objectives: The objectives are to refine the writing process, including activities and strategies for invention, drafting, and revision—and to use them comfortably and confidently; to sharpen analytic reading skills that will help you discover ideas and think critically in courses throughout a diverse college curriculum.

Course Texts and Materials:

Samuel Clemens, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Norton Critical Edition (=HF)

Fowler, Aaron, The Little Brown Handbook, Ninth Edition, Longman (=Handbook)

Viktor E. Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning, Washington Square (=MS)

Lee A. Jacobus, A World of Ideas, Sixth Edition, Bedford-St. Martins (=World)

A college dictionary: Webster's Eleventh New Collegiate Dictionary or American Heritage, 4th edition

Two (2) two-pocket folders (one for essays; one for dialectic journals)

Blue books for in-class essays

Course Requirements: The reading and writing assignments are interactive, so your success depends on completing all assignments and actively participating in class discussions of the material.

Class Attendance: Attendance is required. Three unexcused absences are permitted; but students may be dropped or given a failing grade after four unexcused absences. Three late arrivals or early departures are the equivalent of one absence.

Class Participation: You should be prepared for daily oral and written discussion of all materials assigned in the texts or handouts. Participation in Peer Workshops and Study/Teaching Groups allows every student to give and receive constructive and supportive comments on ideas and early drafts of essays.

Reading: A variety of reading will serve as the basis for journal entries, discussions, and analytic essays. In the course of your reading and in class discussions, certain concepts and terms related to the writing process and critical thinking will be introduced. Some of them may not be in your texts, but you are responsible for noting, understanding, and employing those concepts and terms in class discussions and essays.

Journals: When instructed, you will keep a “dialectic journal” that analytically responds to passages in material assigned. These entries should be written on 8 ½” x 11” lined, loose-leaf paper and kept in a two-pocket folder (see Portfolios, below). These will be handed in and will sometimes serve as the basis of class discussions.

Essays: You will write 7000 to 8500 words in at least 7 essays of 500 to 1000 words (in and out of class); two essays on the assigned books (by Frankl and Twain) of about 1000 words each; a research paper of 2000-3000 words; and a final examination essay. The instructor will annotate your essays to point out strengths and weaknesses of their thesis, organization, style, clarity and overall effectiveness (see the Grading Policy, below). Periodically, you will bring copies of rough drafts to class for Peer Workshops. These should be typed and easily read. **All out-of-class essays require a cover page, formal outline, and Works Cited page.** In-class essays require a detailed knowledge of assigned texts, critical analysis, and the use of critical terms.

Research Essay: A formal argumentative research paper (2000-3000 words, or 8-12 pages of text) will be based on reference sources and is due on the last day we meet. Based on an issue raised by one of the authors assigned in this course, it should use a minimum of ten (10) secondary sources (portions of books and articles) to support your argument. At least five (5) sources must be from printed works; others may be from electronic sources (CD ROM, Internet, and films). I will ask to see samples of bibliography cards, note cards, formal outlines, and Works Cited pages through the second half of the semester. All early drafts and note cards must be turned in with the final essay. **SKIPPING ANY STEPS IN THE RESEARCH PROCESS WILL RESULT IN AN F FOR THE PAPER AND COURSE.**

Formats: ALL out-of-class essays must be typed (10 or 12 pt. font) and double-spaced on standard bond or printer paper and secured by a staple in the upper left-hand corner, just above a block identifying you, the course, the date, and the assignment. **DO NOT** use plastic or other kinds of covers. Every essay requires **a title** and **numbered pages**.

In word-processing programs, the default margins are often standard, but instruct your program to print with only the left margin “justified” (so the right one will be uneven, “ragged” like the right margin of this paragraph).

Write in-class essays in LARGE “blue books” (examination booklets available at a bookstore) and with a dark, sharp No. 2 pencil or a pen. And **SKIP LINES**.

Essay Style: In college writing, the style should be impersonal. Using the first-person “I” should be limited to specific examples from your experience that directly

support a thesis or topic. Otherwise, assume that a reader knows who is speaking from your identification block. Do not strive to sound impressive by overusing adjectives and “big words,” and beware of overusing a thesaurus—each of those so-called “synonyms” has a precise meaning, so you need to select one that best fits your meaning. Use a “plain style” that includes the simplest, most effective words and sentence structures to convey your ideas. Of course, you should also use some sentence variety.

Portfolios: All essays (rough and final drafts) and related writing assignments must be kept in an 8 ½” x 11” portfolio (two-pocket folder) that you will hand in with each new assignment. DO NOT use this folder for journals, class notes, or other materials.

Special Note: Keep a copy of all work submitted. Turn in all papers to me personally or have them put in my mailbox. DO NOT leave essays or any other assignments on my desk or chair. I will not take responsibility for them if you do.

Grading Policy

Final drafts of essays will be evaluated on the following criteria:

*Content and development: Controlling idea specific support, coherence

*Expression: Sentence structure and variety, precise word choices

*Organization: Clear and meaningful thesis, transitions, and overall unity

*Grammar, mechanics and usage: Standard written English, punctuation, spelling, meaningful title, and identifying of sources

A (excellent): This paper demonstrates strength in all of the evaluation criteria listed above. It has a compelling, original, and thoughtful main point that is supported by accurate details, examples, and explanations. The paper is easy to follow because it is clearly organized and has transitional markers. In addition, precise and lively word choices are combined into balanced, clear sentences. There are few, if any, deviations from standard usage, grammar and mechanics.

B (good): This paper is strong in all of the evaluation criteria, but is weaker than the A paper in the quality of the main point, development, diction, and sentence variety. It has few, if any, errors of usage, grammar, and mechanics.

C (adequate): This paper is clearly organized around a main idea but may not be as fully developed as an A or B essay. Typically, expression is clear and sentences are correct but may lack variety. Errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are infrequent.

D (inadequate): This essay does not meet the criteria listed for the assignment. Usually, no organizational pattern is evident, or the main point and development are too general to

be effective. Sentence-level problems (comma splices, run-ons, fragments), incorrect word choices, or serious punctuation, usage, spelling or mechanical errors lower the grade.

F (failing): This paper is unacceptable. It is off the topic, plagiarized, or unintelligible.

Daily Work and Journals

Check plus (/+): work completed thoroughly and thoughtfully

Check (/): work completed although sketchy in places

Check minus (/ -): work attempted but not completed

Minus (-): work not attempted

Rewrites: You may rewrite two (2) out-of-class essays to improve your skills and grades. A rewrite should be more than a correction of mechanical and stylistic errors noted by your instructor in the first version. Rethink your thesis, organization, and argumentative strategy. **Submit a rewrite, so labeled, along with the original within one week of the day an essay is returned to you.**

Late Papers and Missed Assignments: You may make up one (1) late essay and one (1) missed in-class essay and two (2) journal assignments **within one (1) week of the due date**. Assignments not completed within this limit will be considered an F or minus.

Examinations: A two-hour final examination essay is scheduled. Failure to write this examination will result in an F for the course.

Calculating the Final Grade

To a degree, your final grade will depend on the quality of writing you can produce at the end of the term. Therefore, grades earned for assignments in the second half of the semester will be more important than those earned for earlier work. Grades on the research paper and final examinations will weigh quite heavily. In general, the formula for arriving at the final grade is as follows:

Out-of-class and in-class essays (40 %)
Class participation, journals,
daily assignments, Groups (20%)
Research process and paper (20%)
Final examination essay(s) (20%)

Plagiarism: This is the serious ethical violation of presenting other people’s words or ideas as your own, including material on the Internet (see your handbook for further definition and how to avoid it). Plagiarism and other forms of cheating can result in a failing grade on examinations and papers and, in some instances (notably, the research essay and final examination), a failing grade for the course.

A Final Word (or two)

All of this may sound distant and intimidating right now, but I wanted to lay out the rules so we won’t have misunderstandings later. Please come to office hours at scheduled times or make an appointment if you have questions, or want to check on your progress or discuss a reading or writing assignment. I hope we can have an enjoyable and worthwhile term together.

Finally (!), this syllabus and the attached Course Calendar may be modified, depending on circumstances.

English 101 Calendar

A starred (*) work is for detailed class discussion and, when noted, requires a “dialectic journal” page that you will hand in at the beginning of the period for which the work is assigned.

For all essays assigned in World and handed out to you, read the introductions, annotate the texts, and think out answers to the study questions (if any) following each essay. Unless noted, assignments by author are to World.

Strongly Recommended: Begin reading MS and HF as soon as possible to allow for re-readings in preparation for discussions and writing assignments.

If you have special problems with any aspect of your reading and writing, consult with me and/or a tutor at the Learning Resources Center (LRC)—where there are interactive software programs available to you.

Research Workshops: By the end of the course, **you must attend three (3) research-writing workshops at the college library and turn in a verification form for each of them.** Sign up for these workshops, as early as possible, at the library reference desk (LRC second floor). For this class, **Research Strategies is required;** you may choose two others. **All three verification forms must be attached to your final research essay. See the attached schedule of workshops.**

Week 1: (9/2, 9/4) Introduction

T: Enrollment business; overview of syllabus and assignment of Machiavelli in World; purchase a large Blue Book TODAY.

Th: In-class writing on Machiavelli, in a Blue Book

2: (9/9, 9/11) Machiavelli and Plato

T: Discuss Machiavelli

Th: *Plato; practice journal page; practice summary; assignment of Douglass summary; see Handbook on **summary** and **formal outline**.

3: (9/16, 9/18) Plato, Aristotle, Jefferson, and Douglass

T: Plato; *Aristotle

Th: Jefferson; Douglass; **formal outline and summary workshop**

4: (9/23, 9/25) Douglass and Thoreau

T: Hand in outline and summary of Douglass; discuss Douglass; Thoreau

Th: *Thoreau, journal page(s) with at least three entries

5: (9/30, 10/2) Thoreau and King

T: Continue above discussion; *King, journal page(s) with at least three entries; Handbook assignments on research: reminder to attend research workshops

Th: In-Class writing on essays read so far; bring a large Blue Book; assignment of Marx and Hitler (handouts)

6: (10/7, 10/9) Marx and Hitler

T: *Marx

Th: Marx and Hitler (handout); assignment of Freud and Jung

7: (10/14, 10/16) Freud and Jung

T: *Freud and *Jung; journal page(s) on each

Th: Assignment of formal outline and essay on one or two of the essays read thus far; assignments of Horney and Bacon

8: (10/21, 10/23) Horney and Bacon

T: *Horney

Th: *Bacon; workshop on formal outline and essay on one or two essays read so far

9: (10/28, 10/30) Darwin and Research Proposal

T: Turn in above essay; *Bacon, journal page(s) with at least three entries; assignment of Darwin and Gould; assignment of Research Proposal

Th: *Darwin, journal page with at least three entries; assignment of Nietzsche

10. (11/4-11/6) Nietzsche and Swift

T: *Nietzsche, journal page(s) with at least three entries: turn in Research Proposal

Th: *Swift (handout), a journal page or pages; assignment of bibliography, note cards, and formal outline of the research essay

11: (11/11, 11/13) Frankl

T: Frankl, MS, 1-120

Th: Frankl, MS, 1-120

12: (11/18, 11/20) Twain

T: Conferences on research essay: bring bibliography and note cards and first formal outline; assignment of essay on Frankl

Th: General discussion of Twain, chapters 1-3; organization of Study-Teaching Groups

13: (11/25, 11/27) Twain and Study-Teaching Groups

T: Turn in essay on Frankl; begin group reports on Twain

Th: College Closed

14: (12/2, 12/4 Twain

T: Groups

Th: Groups

15: (12/9, 12/11) Twain and Research Workshop

T: Groups

Th: Groups. Bring in all materials for the research essay gathered so far, including a first draft of the essay and works cited page; turn in two short essays based on HF reports

Final Examination on HF and Jane Smiley's essay in your text, on date noted in the Schedule of Classes

As instructed, turn in all research materials, first and final drafts; **include the verification forms for the three required workshops**

RCL