Writing 121: English Composition
CRN 21236 | Tu/Th 8 – 9:20 a.m. | IA 233
CRN 21054 | Tu/Th 9:30-11 a.m. | IA 232

Office: T-237
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11:30-1:30

Please let me know in advance if you plan to attend my office hours, as I sometimes relocate to the library to escape the noise produced in the theater shop.

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This is an introductory course meant to both expand your knowledge of good essay form and your confidence in your ability to create concise, clear, and cohesive college essays. We’ll look at several different forms of essays and destroy many great pieces of writing in order to learn how the heck we can do that stuff ourselves.

Please expect to do several hours of work outside of class each week.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: At the completion of WR121, successful students should be able to write thoughtful expository prose, demonstrating competence in organization, mechanics, and the writing process (as detailed below).

Content: Students should be able to:
1. Write an expository essay using a variety of writing strategies (narration, definition, comparison and contrast, classification, description, examples, process analysis, cause and effect, and persuasion).
2. Clearly focus and develop the main idea, using specific details.
3. Adjust the writing to audience, purpose, and situation.
4. Develop a clear and appropriate writing style.
5. Present ideas logically.
6. Read and analyze critically the writing of others.
7. Summarize, paraphrase, and quote secondary source information.
8. Integrate source material into essays.

Organization: Students should be able to:
1. Use organizational and transitional strategies to give the essay shape and form.
2. Present material logically with an introduction which defines the subject and previews the content of the essay, a discussion section which is fully developed, and a conclusion which summarizes and interprets the thesis.
3. Write in a variety of formats (essays, journals, reports, letters, portfolios, peer reviews) which meet the needs of the intended audience and purpose.

Mechanics: Students should be able to:
1. Use standard grammar, syntax, spelling, and punctuation.
2. Recognize their individual strengths and weaknesses as writers.
3. Employ editing strategies to eliminate their most frequent errors.
4. Cite sources using Modern Language Association (MLA) conventions, including a 'Works Cited' page.

**Writing Process:** Students should be able to:
1. Transform freewriting, journaling, brainstorming, and other prewriting material into a finished piece of writing.
2. Employ writing strategies that work best for the particular writing situation.
3. Collaborate with other writers in prewriting, drafting, and revising.
4. Revise and edit their writing effectively, working independently or with peers.
5. Build confidence in their writing ability.
6. Locate research material to support their expository writing.
7. Plan, write, and revise well under pressure.

**PREREQUISITE:** Placement in WR121 is determined by pre-enrollment testing or by passing WR115 with a grade of 'C' or better. Students may challenge their mandatory placement, with an advisor's approval, by signing a self-placement form through a counselor. Before entering WR121, students are assumed to have basic competence in grammar, mechanics, sentence structure and in developing related ideas in a unified, coherent paragraph and/or short essay. These skills may be reviewed in WR121, if needed.

**MATERIALS:** Our two required textbooks are available for purchase (new or used) or rental in the LBCC bookstore. They are also on reserve at the LBCC library and available in the Writing Center. If you are unable for any reason to purchase these books immediately, please speak with me. They will be required at every class period.


**Other Materials:**
- Paper and pen/pencil.
- Two-pocket folder.
- E-mail account.
- Regular access to a computer with a word processing program.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:** All work submitted must be your own and must be original to this class. If you copy OR paraphrase from an outside source without citation, copy from or collaborate with a classmate on an explicitly individual assignment, ask anyone else to complete your written work for you, or recycle old work of your own to complete a new assignment, this is a violation of academic honesty. Violations of this nature and plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment and possible failure of the entire course. I will pursue every case of plagiarism to the fullest extent.

Most plagiarism and cheating occurs because a student is pushed against a deadline and turns to a quick, dishonest solution instead of being honest about his or her problem with the instructor.
Please talk to me if you find yourself in such stress that cheating seems like a solution. Better we talk before this happens than we talk after it does and I’ve discovered the problem, at which point there’s little recourse and possible failure facing you.

**GRADING:** Grades are as follows: A: 90-100; B: 80-89; C: 70-79; D: 60-69; F: 0-59. I will assign + and – grades for the three points at the top/bottom of each range.

Your overall grade will be based on the following breakdown:

- **Essays:**
  - 1: 10%
  - 2: 12%
  - 3: 18%
- **Response Journal:** 15%
- **Class Participation and Attendance:** 10%
- **Quizzes, Information Assignment, miscellaneous in-class work:** 5%
- **Final Exam:** 30%

I will return all assignments one week after their submission; if this becomes impossible for any reason (for instance: I am eaten by a bear), I will let you know in advance. Any changes in assignments, due dates, class meeting schedule, etc., will be announced via e-mail, in addition to being announced in class (when possible).

**ATTENDANCE:** Your attendance and participation in our class is vital not only to your own learning but to that of your classmates, who will benefit from your input. Because we talk a lot (discussion), when you’re gone, we’re all sad. You may miss two classes without any grade penalty; absences beyond that will have a negative effect on your grade.

Assuming you have not been eaten by a bear, you should be in class. If the bear takes the form of the H1N1 virus, please don’t come to class. Save your two free absences for serious emergencies. If you know you will have to miss more than two classes (for instance: because you must have your bear-gnawed hand reattached), please see me in advance or make contact as soon as possible. I will require written documentation of illness or injury.

**RESPONSE JOURNAL:** You will be given at least one response prompt each week. These responses will require you to work outside of class to tie together pieces we’ve read with our discussions and with your own writing process. They must be typed, double-spaced, no less than one and no more than two pages in length, and submitted by the date specified in the assignment. The assignments for each response will be posted to my Instructor Web site and announced in class.

The purpose of these papers is to stimulate your own thinking about the topics we cover and to get you used to putting those thoughts into an acceptable academic writing format. Thus, my focus with each paper will be on the thought that you’ve brought to the topic more than the mechanical (spelling/grammar) achievement.

**ESSAYS:** For this class you’ll turn in three polished essays for evaluation. All three essays will go through an in-class peer editing process and revision outside of class before being submitted.
Complete assignment information for each of the three essays will be announced in class and will be available on my Instructor web site.

**Formatting**: All essays must be typed and double spaced. They must have 1-inch margins at all sides and page numbers centered at the bottom. They must be stapled and submitted in hard (printed) copy. Your name, the date, the assignment title, and the word count should be single-spaced in the top right hand corner of the first page. Essays should be submitted in 12-point Times New Roman font. A model of this formatting is available on my instructor web site.

Essays must adhere to the length limits set out below:

- **Essay 1**: Personal Essay: at least 600 words
- **Essay 2**: Explanatory Essay: at least 750 words
- **Essay 3**: Argumentative Essay: 1,000 words

To give you an idea: This page has about 425 words on it.

Rough drafts are unacceptable for classroom submission. The paper should be at its best before you present it to your peers or your instructor. I will discuss papers and assignments before their due date, but I will not look at entire drafts. I will allow multiple revisions on every paper, as detailed below. You may at any time make an appointment during my office hours or drop me an e-mail with questions about your work.

**REVISION**: You may revise any essay as many times as you would like. Revisions will only be accepted with substantial changes – please don’t change a single word and expect a new grade. First revisions must be submitted within two weeks of the original assignment. All revisions must be submitted by 5 p.m. on the day of the final exam. Revisions must be accompanied by a short paragraph explaining the changes you’ve made and why. Revisions must be turned in attached (via clip or in a folder) to all earlier versions of the paper, including the version I graded.

**LATE WORK**: Late papers and assignments receive an automatic 5 percent grade deduction; they will also lose an additional 5 percent per day that I don’t hear from you. After a week of silence, the paper will be worth half of its value; after two weeks, it’s a 0.

When is a paper late?
When I haven’t received it by the due date AND I’ve had no prior notice that it’s coming in late. Please contact me as early as possible when you realize you’re going to struggle to meet a deadline. I’m pretty reasonable. Try me.

**Computer failure is never an excuse for a late paper**. Plan ahead and save often. If you are in many classes with written assignments, please consider investing in an off-site backup program (like Mozy.com, which allows electronic back-ups under 2GB for free) that will protect your work against crashes, viruses, fire, and theft. I have sympathy for many things; computer trouble (and by extension, printer trouble) is not one of them.
Americans with Disabilities Act: If you require assistance due to a disability, please see me within the first week of class to arrange for accommodations that would be necessary or helpful.

Writing Center: 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 (Monday – Friday, 9-4) 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 work online at http://lbcc.writingcenteronline.net where you will receive a response within 1-2 business days. For more information, visit hwww.linnbenton.edu/go/learning-center/writing-help

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