

## **English 1010: Introduction to Academic Writing Spring 2012**

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### **REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS**

- *The Curious Writer*. Concise 3rd edition. Bruce Ballenger. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2011.  
**ISBN: 0-205-78019-9**
- *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed.* New York, 2009.  
**ISBN: 978-1-60329-024-1**
- *SUU Guide to English Composition*. Eric Morrow, *et al.* Southlake, TX: Fountainhead Press, 2011.
- College-level dictionary
- An e-mail account to which I can send class materials
- A one-subject notebook to use as a research & response journal

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION**

English 1010 is designed to teach you to write essays that communicate your ideas clearly and effectively to college-educated readers. To be successful in most college classes and professional careers, you will need to have well-developed skills for written communication.

Because many people find it difficult or frustrating to write essays, English 1010 will introduce you to ways of making essay writing more comfortable and useful to you. One of the best ways to improve your writing skills is to treat an essay as the result of a process of several steps, rather than as something that happens all at once. By writing an essay in stages, you allow your ideas to develop and mature. You'll also find that by having your peers read and comment on your writing, you'll become a more careful, more comfortable writer. We'll also explore ways to help you communicate your ideas effectively by understanding your reading audience and the purpose of your essay. You'll learn how to present ideas fully and coherently and make your ideas credible by using reliable, effective sources.

In order to accomplish these goals, I will work with you closely throughout the semester and provide you with the instruction you need as you practice your skills. You will write a fully developed researched essay, using documented information from outside sources.

I will help you learn how to analyze your audience; to decide which of the various pre-writing techniques work best for you; to organize and develop your ideas in a coherent, unified way; and to draft, revise, and edit your own work so that you can have confidence in your ability to communicate through writing.

Much of our class time will mimic the environment of a “writer’s workshop.” Most writers find the opinions of their audience useful as they compose their essays. Audience feedback is used to make adjustments that help to communicate the writer’s ideas more effectively. I think you’ll find that the workshop environment can help your writing to greatly improve, and you’ll probably realize that all writers value honest feedback. It may feel awkward at first to have your peers read your work in progress, but your peers probably feel the same way. When we share our writing with one another, we will work to give friendly and helpful feedback. Since everyone in the class is a practicing writer, we should all be able to relate to the demands of writing good essays for a college-level audience.

In addition to writing, we’ll read essays by other students and professional writers in order to help us understand the various components of successful essays. The readings should also help you generate ideas for your own essays and to develop and reinforce your critical reading and thinking skills.

### **Writers Lab Services**

Because all writers need readers, the BC204 Writing Center is open to SUU students seeking free consultations during Spring Semester 8:00-5:00 Monday through Friday. Take advantage of the center since your HSS program fees support the program, which is staffed by junior and senior English majors trained in peer tutoring. Just visit the center or e-mail them at [writingcenter@suu.edu](mailto:writingcenter@suu.edu) to sign up for 30 minute or full hour appointments. They accommodate walk-in appointments when the schedule board is not filled. Please be aware that the center closes early (at noon) on class days that fall before school holidays. We are also closed during Finals Week to allow our student writing assistants the opportunity to prepare for their own final exams and papers.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Essays:** You will write at least three fully-developed and revised essays this semester. All rough drafts and final copies of essays must be typed or printed from a computer. Please follow this format for all of your rough drafts and final copies:

- Final drafts should follow the MLA format. Examples of papers in MLA format can be found in the course textbooks and the *SUU Guide to English Composition*.
- Essays must be typed, double-spaced, with 1” margins.
- The font used for your final draft should be **12-point Times**.
- Pages must be numbered and stapled with your last name and page number in the upper right-hand corner.

**Writing Conferences:** Writers generally make great improvements when they have someone to talk with about their writing. Your classmates and I can give you personal, encouraging, and specific feedback. Our class time will be important and useful to you,

but I would also like you to schedule at least two conferences outside of class with me during the semester. These conferences will allow us to discuss individualized questions and problems you may have on specific essays.

**Reading Responses & Seminars:** As part of the course, we will be reading many essays and articles from the textbook. I will ask you to prepare reading-responses in addition to the longer essay assignments. These responses are designed to reinforce what you are learning in class and to help you understand the writing process. When you get in the habit of writing while you read to respond to a piece of writing, you may also find that you better remember and understand what you read.

Your written responses should be kept in your notebook journal, and will be turned in collectively near the end of the semester. These responses constitute a major percentage of your course grade, so be sure to complete them in a timely manner.

**Attendance:** Regular attendance in this course is required. Much of your learning and work will take place in class, and you will be involved in group work where you will be expected to help your classmates. You will also be introduced to a wide variety of techniques in class that can help you through the stages of writing college-level papers; I will not re-teach these techniques to you in an office “make-up” meeting.

My experience has shown that students who do not attend class regularly tend to not pass the course. I cannot help you improve your writing if you do not attend class. If you miss class on a regular basis and therefore are not present to work with your peers, I will not be able to evaluate the essay you are currently working on. Simply put, this course is not structured so that all you need to do is turn in essays on the due dates.

I do understand that severe illness and family emergencies can prevent you from coming to class. If a true emergency arises and causes you to miss class, please discuss this with me as soon as possible. Although I am happy to work with you in the event of emergencies, I cannot do all the work for you. Please remember that it is your responsibility to find out what you may have missed in class on any day you are absent.

**Late Assignments:** Assignments will be due by 3:00 PM on the date indicated in the schedule. Work submitted after that time will receive a grade reduction of 10% per 24-hour period. Certain circumstances may warrant a deadline extension, but such extensions must be approved by me at least 48 hours prior to the due date. Missed exams may only be taken with the appropriate Dean’s excuse.

Because of frequent frustrations with electronic submissions, **I will only accept hard copies of the assignments.**

**Academic Integrity:** Scholastic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in an immediate failing grade, in addition to university prosecution. You are expected to have read and understood the current issue of the student handbook (published by Student Services) regarding student responsibilities and rights, and the intellectual property policy regarding procedures about what constitutes acceptable on-campus behavior.

Any incident of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment in question. Repeated incidents of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course, and documentation of your plagiarism with the Vice President of Student Services.

**Electronics:** Communication and/or entertainment devices are not welcome in my class. Please seek permission before using a laptop in class.

**ADA Statement:** Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring academic adjustments, accommodations or auxiliary aids must contact the SUU Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities, located in Room 205C of the Sharwan Smith Center (865-8022). SSD determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of services.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STATEMENT:** In case of emergency, the University's Emergency Notification System (ENS) will be activated. Students are encouraged to maintain updated contact information using the link on the homepage of the *mySUU* portal. In addition, students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Emergency Response Protocols posted in each classroom. Detailed information about the University's emergency management plan can be found at <http://www.suu.edu/emergency>

**Advisory:** The promotion of intellectual development and open discussion in our class will occasionally entail exposure to ideas, images, and language with which you may be unfamiliar and/or uncomfortable. These ideas, images, and language may come from the course texts, other students, or me. I highly value the freedom of thought and expression which makes the study and appreciation of film and literature possible and desirable. Be prepared to engage with the unfamiliar in this class and respond to it respectfully.

**Lost Essays:** You are responsible for maintaining copies of all your work. Since essays are occasionally stolen, lost, or destroyed, you should keep an additional copy of each essay and a back-up file.

**Grading:** The point breakdown for the major assignments is noted below. Please keep in mind that other assignments may be added to the course to determine your final grade. If this is the case, I will inform you in class.

Personal Essay	10%
Worksheets, in-class exercises & reading responses	30%
Argument/Editorial Paper	10%
Research Proposal	05%
Working Bibliography	10%
Annotated Bibliography	15%
Research Paper & Presentation	20%

**Passing the Course:** In order to pass the course, you will need to meet the following requirements:

- Turn in all fully-developed and revised essays, and the other written assignments on time.
- Attend classes.
- Participate in class activities and assignments.
- Attend all required conferences.
- Complete all written assignments

Do you . . .

- (a) . . . need this course to graduate?
- (b) . . . have a job offer for after this semester is over?
- (c) . . . need to get a certain grade to get off academic probation?
- (d) . . . have a spot on an athletic team that depends on your grades?
- (e) . . . have a scholarship that requires you to maintain a certain g.p.a.?

If you answered “yes” to any of those questions (or to similar ones), then you should pay particularly close attention to the information below. (And it wouldn’t hurt the rest of you to do so either.)

- **Your grade in this course will be based on your performance, not your effort.** Trying hard is a good thing (it’s certainly better than not trying at all), but it’s not the same thing as succeeding. Hard work may improve your grade, but it does *not* guarantee that you’ll earn the grade you want.
- **You have to earn your grade in this course; I don’t simply give it to you.** I will not give you a passing grade simply because you’ve paid your tuition, because you’re graduating, because you’re on the tennis team, because you’ve never gotten a bad grade before, etc. If you need a particular grade to graduate, keep your scholarship, stay in school, etc., you need to do the work that will earn you that grade.
- **The semester lasts sixteen weeks -- and they all count.** If you don’t put serious effort into the course all semester long, you will probably not do well on the final paper. Don’t assume that you can sleepwalk through the first four weeks of the session and then play “catch up” in April.
- **The time to worry about your grade for this course is now.** Coming to me after the semester is over to plead for a better grade will not work -- especially if you seem to be working harder to persuade me to change your grade than you worked to earn it in the first place.
- **Your chance to earn your grade ends when the semester does.** The *only* exceptions to this rule involve the sort of major life emergencies (e.g., extended hospitalization, death in the immediate family, etc.) that cause you to miss significant portions of the semester. In such cases, I will require independent verification of the emergency in question, and you will receive a final grade of “I” pending the completion of the work that you’ve missed.
- **Don’t overburden yourself.** You may be someone who thrives on pressure, or someone who doesn’t feel challenged by taking three sixteen-week college courses while also holding down a full-time job and being a single parent. If so, that’s a true gift -- and you should use it wisely. Mere mortals, however, should either respect their own limitations (and not try to take on too much at once) or they should recognize (and accept) that trying to juggle too many time- and energy-consuming tasks will generally cause their performance in at least one (and often more than one) of those to suffer.
- **Your life outside this class is your responsibility, not mine.** Your wedding anniversary, your mother’s birthday, your workplace’s annual employee softball tournament -- all of these things and more may distract you from your work for this course. If you decide that your position at the University Journal (for instance) matters more to you than this course, that’s your prerogative -- but you need to recognize that your coursework (and thus your grade) will suffer if you put this class too low on your list of priorities. The ultimate responsibility for juggling the demands made on your time is yours.