

<p style="text-align:center"><b>Course Syllabus</b> <b>ENG 200: Advanced Composition (CRN 1184)</b> <b>Online                      Spring 2015</b></p>
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**Professor:** Adam Floridaia

**E-mail:** aflordia@mxcc.edu

**Office Hours:** *Middletown* Monday 12:30-3 & Wednesday 12:30-1:30 (Snow 520)  
*Meriden* Tuesday 8:30 – 9:30, 2:00-3:00 & Thursday by appointment (406)

**Course Prerequisite:** Either ENG\*101ALP, ENG\*101E, or ENG\*101 with a “B-” or better.

**Course Description:** A thorough study of rhetoric, prose style, argumentation, and editing through sophisticated non-fiction readings. Minimum of three extensive essays with various levels of research. This is an “L” course. This may not be used as a 200 level literature course

**Scope of Course:** In Advanced Composition you will gain a fuller understanding of rhetorical terms and devices and analyze how rhetorical strategies are utilized in everyday life. Through numerous non-fiction readings you will enhance your critical reading skills and craft intelligent, insightful questions that could lead to sound research. Finally, you will hone your writing skills by writing for both formal and informal audiences using both scholarly/peer-reviewed and non-academic sources.

**Required Texts:**

*Everything's an Argument with Readings, 6<sup>th</sup> edition* edited by Lunsford et al.  
*Palm Sunday* by Kurt Vonnegut (any edition is fine)

**Strongly Recommended Text:**

*A Writer's Reference Seventh Edition* by Diana Hacker. (This is the good ol' “Grammar Bible” that you had for ENG 101...hopefully you didn't sell it back.)

**Really Important Note:** Think of this syllabus as a contract. It's my best attempt to tell you honestly and accurately what you can expect in the course. All rules and expectations are clearly outlined (I hope), and unless you experience some major medical emergency and notify me asap there really won't be any exceptions/modifications. You probably have jobs and family responsibilities and other classes and friends and such. So do I; so does everyone else in this class. That means that none of us are special, so none of us should expect special treatment. I will not change the following rules and expectations; you will either choose to meet them or not and be graded accordingly.

**E-mail Policy:** Never hesitate to ask should you have any questions or concerns. However, all general questions about the course or an assignment should be posted to the “Course Questions” discussion board. For all personal questions, please use the “Blackboard Mail” function within our course to send e-mail. That way it will be linked to our course and won't get lost or relegated to “junk” in my external e-mail. Thank you! (**Note:** Be sure to check your internal course/Blackboard mail as that is how I will contact you as well!)

**Announcements:** Please note that I have programmed our course so that you should see the “Announcements” page every time you log in. I have done that for a reason: I expect you to read all of the announcements I post. This is where I will post any updates or clarifications to assignment.

### Structure of Course

#### **On An Average Week You Can Expect:**

- Each week you will be asked to read somewhere around 25-50 pages.
- **The expected average workload per week is the same as a “ground” class: that is 9-12 hours per week. (Yes, really!)**
- Most weeks you will also be asked to review course notes, media files, PowerPoints (lectures) or other outside sources alongside your reading.
- **By 8 PM on Wednesday of each week** you will generally be required to post a homework assignment to the weekly discussion board.
- **By Noon on Saturday of each week** you will generally be required to post another homework assignment to the weekly discussion board.
- **Note:** There will likely be two postings each week for unit one, the didactic unit. Units two and three will require more reading and independent thinking, so there will likely only be one discussion post due—on Saturday.

So....

- The rhythm of our course will be as follows:
  - ❑ **Saturday at Noon:** I will “unlock” the following week. (I will allow you to work up to one week ahead of schedule.)
  - ❑ **Wednesday at 8 PM:** All posts must be present and accounted for. No late posts accepted.
  - ❑ **Saturday at Noon:** All posts must be present and accounted for. No late posts accepted.
  - ❑ Repeat. It goes on like this...kind of like any regular twice per week class. This should let you get into a regular schedule for the course and organize your time accordingly.

#### **Weeks When A Paper Is Due:**

- You will have a major paper due the final week of each unit.
- You will have one week to write each paper (not including the week in advance that I unlock things).
- During that week, there will be no reading assignments or discussions.
- I’m happy to *scan* drafts of papers during the week. **You will be allowed to revise the first two papers.** Since I allow revision, honestly I don’t plan to give a whole lot of feedback prior to your actually submitting the essay. More on re-writes to follow.

**Late Work:** **No late work will be accepted.** If BlackBoard marks your submission late, it will be an automatic zero. Please see the “Late Work Addendum” for a fuller explanation.

## Grading:

Your grade in this course will be figured by the following formula:

<b>Unit 1</b> <b>Didactic</b>	Discussion Posts (Homework)	15%
	Paper 1	20%
<b>Unit 2</b> <b>Academic</b> <b>Argument</b>	Discussion Posts (Homework)	7.5%
	Paper 2	25%
<b>Unit 3</b> <b>Public</b> <b>Argument</b>	Discussion Posts (Homework)	5%
	Paper 3	27.5%

As you can see, every grade is extremely important. **Zeros will impact your grade severely – just do the math above. And PLEASE do not bother asking for extra credit. Ever.** (The *one* exception is if you have done every assignment extremely well and just want more work to challenge yourself.)

**Grades:** “A” and “B” papers are well above average in critical analysis, style, and mechanics. Ideas are engaging, original, well-developed, and *convincing*. “C” papers are average, with relatively minor grammar, organizational, or development problems that distract from the easy flow of the essay. Generally these lack true depth of thought. “D” or “F” papers are those that do not meet the assignment, contain numerous errors, are not organized logically, or have repetition rather than development. Note: An “F” can be anywhere from a zero to a 59, and I have given single digit grades to papers that earn single digit grades. Please follow directions and **proofread** (at least twice!) and follow directions carefully!

Because of the prerequisites for this course, I’m assuming everyone enrolled knows how to write a basic academic essay (clear thesis at the end of the intro, unified body paragraphs with clear topic sentences, etc.). In this class you will be learning some more formal types of arguments as well as gaining a much deeper knowledge of what makes a strong argument. In a sense, this course won’t be teaching you so much in terms of new ways to write, but rather new ways to *think*.

Here’s where I echo the words of David Foster Wallace (great author—check him out!) from a course syllabus of his: “If you are used to whipping off papers the night before they’re due, running them quickly through the computer’s Spellchecker, handing them in full of high-school errors and sentences that make no sense and having the professor accept them ‘because the ideas are good’ or something, please be informed that I draw no distinction between the quality of one’s ideas and the quality of those ideas’ written expression, and I will not accept sloppy, rough-draftish, or semiliterate college writing. Again, I am absolutely not kidding.”<sup>1</sup> **Fair Warning:** I consider myself a relatively hard/picky grader on major essays. Part of the reason for that is because you will have the option to revise for a better grade, and I think learning from your mistakes is perhaps the best way to improve your writing.

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<sup>1</sup> Roiphe, Katie. “The Extraordinary Syllabus of David Foster Wallace: What his Lesson Plans Teach Us About How to Live.” *Slate.com*. The Slate Group, 23 Nov. 2011. Web. 4 Dec. 2011.

**Rewrites:** I encourage you to rewrite papers that receive a “B-” or lower. You may re-write the paper regardless of the grade, BUT to earn a higher grade I need to see that you have made extensive improvements rather than simply minor editing changes (which is often more difficult for a paper that has already earned an above-average grade). There is a major difference between *editing* and *revising*. Your final grade for the paper will be determined by averaging the grade of the original and that of the rewrite (remember what I mentioned above about the range of “F” papers before you think about handing in garbage because you know you can re-write it.) Paper 3 will not be eligible for a re-write. Also, it should go without saying that late papers are not eligible for a re-write (they’re just a big fat zero.)

### **Discussion Board Expectations**

So in an average week you’ll have two assignments due on the week’s discussion boards for Unit 1 and one assignment due on the week’s discussion board for Units 2+3. Unfortunately, for this class “discussion” is really a misnomer. You’re basically just posting your homework there. Why? Glad you asked. While you don’t *have* to read anyone else’s work, I strongly encourage you to. In the first unit, I hope that you are intrigued, impressed, and entertained by your classmates’ work. In fact, I even encourage you to “vote” on your favorite posting of the week. **The more active you are on the discussion board, the more brownie points you’re earning. (Wow, I guess there sort of is a little extra credit.) Basically, it’s the difference between me bumping a borderline B+/A- up to a solid A-. I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE any attempts at actual discussion on the weekly “discussion” boards!**

### **Discussion Board Grading Scale**

The majority of your posts will be graded based on a two part rubric: content and writing. All assignments should reflect your best academic writing—that means proper paragraph structure, spelling, grammar, mechanics, no slang, etc.

### **Obvious Online Rules:**

1. No personal attacks are permitted. If there is a difference of opinion, mature discussion and conflict resolution are expected. Disagreement can lead to wonderful discussion and insight—just keep it civil!
2. If I have to delete your post from a discussion board (for personal attacks, inappropriate language or action, etc.), you will receive an automatic zero for that week’s discussion. Basically, remember that even though you’re a mysterious, semi-anonymous, online presence this is a college class. Appropriate behavior/interaction is expected.
3. ALL writing for the course should be academic in nature—unless otherwise noted. Yes, you are writing in an online format; No, you are not writing an e-mail to friends. **Wording, usage, development, thought, clarity, professionalism should all meet high academic standards. That said, I really want you to get creative with your examples for Unit 1—these do *not* have to be academic (even though your analysis does).**
4. You are expected to login several times over the course of the week (to view lecture notes, to post and to respond). Logging in once a week for one hour will

not lead to success in this course. **The expectation of this course is 9-12 hours per week of work (Remember? I mentioned this before, too).**

**Finally:** This is a rigorous course that requires you to manage your time well, employ good study habits, and keep ahead of assignments. As noted elsewhere, all due dates/times should be considered “last possible second” deadlines. Thus, it would behoove you to think that the real “due” date is two days prior, thereby giving you a little extra time should things go wrong. I expect you to devote time and thought to the reading assignments and the discussion posts. Hopefully, this will make for an extremely interesting and enjoyable course, as it encourages you to look at everything through a critical lens and re-examine the world around you!

### Academic Honesty Statement

“At Middlesex Community College we expect the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in accordance with the Board of Trustees’ Proscribed Conduct Policy in Section 5.2.1 of the Board of Trustees’ Policy Manual. This policy prohibits cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration on assignments, unauthorized access to examinations or course materials, plagiarism, and other proscribed activities. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another’s idea(s) or phrase(s) and representing that/those idea(s) as your own, either intentionally or unintentionally.”

**Plagiarism:** You must use proper MLA citation for all writing assignments. Presenting another person’s **ideas or language** as your own will result in an F (zero) for the paper without the right to revise it. If you plagiarize any of the homework assignments, you will receive a zero for every homework assignment in that unit. Even worse:

Plagiarism may also result in an F for the course because I will report the incident to the Chair of the English Department and to the Academic Dean since it is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

What does this mean for you? If you

- Turn in material you did not write,
- Turn in papers written by you for another class (either high school or college),
- Turn in papers you drafted but revised or edited by another,
- Fail to paraphrase, summarize, or quote sources properly, or
- Turn in papers written by someone else and edited or revised by you,
- Get all of your ideas from another source

you have plagiarized.

Don’t do it. I’ll find out, and it’s really not worth the consequences. My sincere advice/plea/warning: do your own work. I want to challenge *you* to *think*, and I want to read *your* ideas.

**In the interest of full disclosure: I will scan every single writing assignment turned in to see if *any* of it is plagiarized. Remember, if you can find something online, so can I. And I do check!**

\*\*“MxCC offers **FREE TUTORING** on campus (Chapman Hall 711), at the Meriden Center, and online (**etutoring.org**). For more information, visit the College Learning Center Website (click [www.mxcc.edu/clc](http://www.mxcc.edu/clc)) or call (860) 343-5770.

**Take advantage of these services and excel in your classes!”\*\***

*Note: The next three pages are just stuff that I’m required to put in my syllabi. Read if you want. Don’t if you don’t.*

**General Objectives of the Course**

Students will learn to write extended essays on challenging topics.

<b>Unit No</b>	<b>Instructional Unit</b>	<b>Specific Outcomes of Instructional Unit</b> (The specific objectives reflect the behavioral outcomes, which include what the student will be able to do at the completion of the unit. Evaluation is then to be based on the student's accomplishment of these objectives. Assume that each statement is prefixed with "The student will".)
	<p>Content</p> <p>Organization</p> <p>Mechanics</p> <p>Form</p> <p>Style</p> <p>Process</p> <p>Research</p>	<p>learn to focus on ideas of substance or merit</p> <p>learn to present (orally) and discuss synopses of their essays</p> <p>learn to expand germinal ideas, developing depth and breadth</p> <p>learn various ways of working with ideas by reading professional essays</p> <p>learn to develop a complex thesis</p> <p>learn to place their ideas in effective sequences</p> <p>learn to create smooth, informative connections between thoughts and paragraphs</p> <p>learn to write the extended sentence</p> <p>learn to use elegant verbal constructions</p> <p>learn to use correct forms of citation in research writing</p> <p>learn to compose a variety of essays—expository, personal, and research</p> <p>learn to employ various rhetorical formats (exemplification, cause and effect, description, etc.) within the larger forms</p> <p>learn to vary sentence structures to create a pleasing flow</p> <p>learn to use appropriate vocabulary to insure clarity</p> <p>learn to apply rhythm and sound through punctuation and diction</p> <p>learn to improve their essays by means of repeated revision</p> <p>learn to use a variety of research methods competently</p> <p>learn to use the library and other information sources effectively</p> <p>learn how to approach sophisticated problems in research</p>

## ENG200

This course is important because it will strengthen your critical thinking skills and your written communication with regard to argumentation. Additionally, English 200 meets all general education core competencies but one: Mathematical Reasoning.

- **Communication:**  
The interactive process through which there is an exchange of verbal and/or nonverbal information.
- **Cultural Awareness:**  
Acknowledgement that society is diverse with groups of individuals possessing differing beliefs, values, attitudes, and customs that are shared from one generation to the next.
- **Social and Civic Responsibility:**  
Behavior that demonstrates adherence to legal/ethical standards established by society.
- **Critical Thinking:**  
Modes of reasoning including analyzing data, evaluating alternatives, setting priorities, and predicting outcomes.
- **Mathematical Reasoning:**  
Determination of approach, materials, and strategies necessary to solve a problem.
- **Technology Utilization:**  
Use tools of the trade to achieve a specific outcome.

These core competencies are important personally, academically, and professionally. The outcomes, as stated in the syllabus, are covered in this course. This course may be used to meet program requirements in General Studies and other select programs.

### ADDITIONAL SYLLABUS INFORMATION

For information about the college's policies and procedures regarding academic honesty, accessibility/disability services, attendance, audio-recording in the classroom, grade appeals, plagiarism, religious accommodations, weather/emergency closings, and more, please go to the

following website: [www.mxcc.edu/catalog/syllabus-policies/](http://www.mxcc.edu/catalog/syllabus-policies/)





### **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

*Middlesex Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or genetic information in its programs and activities. In addition, the College does not discriminate in employment on the additional basis of veteran status or criminal record.*

*The following people have been designated to handle inquiries or complaints regarding non-discrimination policies and practices:*

- Primary Title IX Coordinator  
*Dr. Adrienne Maslin  
Dean of Students/Title IX and Section 504/ADA Coordinator  
amaslin@mxcc.edu; 860-343-5759; Founders Hall Room 123*
  - Secondary Title IX Coordinator  
*Ms. Mary Lou Phillips  
Director of Human Resources, Middlesex Community College  
mphillips@mxcc.edu; 860-343-5751; Founders Hall Room 115*
  - Secondary Title IX Coordinator  
*Ms. Queen Fordham  
Coordinator of the Meriden Center Welcome Desk  
qfordham@mxcc.edu; 203-608-3011*
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**Hey...are you still reading? The syllabus is over. Go click on  
“Unit 1” and proceed to Week 1.**