

Course Syllabus
ENG 101: Composition (CRN 2084)
Online Summer 2014

Instructor: Adam Floridaia

Middlesex Community College

Office Hours: By Appointment. I will check BlackBoard mail daily.

Course Prerequisites: *Reading Prerequisite: ENG* 073 or ESL *173 with a grade of “C” or better, or placement, or SAT scores; Writing Prerequisites: ENG *063 with a grade of “C” or better; or placement; or SAT scores; or ENG*096 with a grade of “C” or better.* This is an “L” course.

Course Description: Students will develop written texts of varying lengths and styles for different audiences and purposes. They will respond to rhetorical situations, use sources, craft logical arguments, apply language conventions, and formulate effective writing strategies.

Required Texts:

The Little, Brown Reader 12th Edition edited by Marcia Stubbs

A Writer’s Reference Seventh Edition by Diana Hacker

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 e-mail me should you have any questions or concerns. I will get back to you as soon as possible and will always do my best to get back to you within 24 hours. **Please, please, 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!)**

*You will also notice a “Course Questions” Discussion Board beneath “Course Content” on BlackBoard. **PLEASE** post any general questions you have about the course there. That way, other students can see both the question and the answer I post.

What to Expect

Workload: First, let's get the tough part out of the way and do a little math. The rule of thumb for college courses is that there should be 2-3 hours of homework for every 1 hour spent in class. For a ground summer course, the class would meet twice a week for 2 hours each day—thus, 4 hours/week. That means you should be getting 8-12 hours of homework each week. Now, take that 8-12 hours and add another 4 hours to it since online students don't meet in the classroom during that time. Mathematically, you should expect to spend 12-16 hours doing work for this course each week.

I'd say we can round that down *a bit*: plan to spend roughly 10 hours doing work for this course for the next ten weeks. If you can't devote that time to the course, do not expect to pass or to do very well. Please don't get me wrong, I'm not trying to scare you off or threaten you; I'm trying to be direct and honest about what you can expect when you're taking English 101 *online* in ten weeks. If that is too much for you, don't waste your money: consider switching to a ground course or waiting until the fall semester.

Structure of Course

The course is ten weeks long, and I have divided that into three units. I absolutely do encourage you to work ahead if possible.

In An Average Week You Can Expect:

- Each unit will be divided into three weeks. The first week, you will do a whole lot of reading; the second week, you will practice grammar; the third week you will write an essay.
- During the first week of each unit, you will read around 75-100 pages.
 - ❑ In addition to didactic readings, you will read 30 short articles over the span of the course (10/unit). You will write approximately one page on *every* article.
- During the second week of each unit, there will be notes about the paper as well as grammar rules you need to master. The grammar rules are all in *A Writer's Reference*. You will be completing online grammar exercises through the book's companion website. There are explicit directions on how to setup an account (it is outside of BlackBoard) and get going.
- During the third week, you should spend brainstorming, outlining, drafting, revising, and editing your paper.
- Most weeks you will also be asked to review course notes, media files, PowerPoints (lectures) or other outside sources alongside your reading.
- Each week, I will recommend that you get certain work completed by Wednesday and other work completed by Saturday. This is only a suggestion to help you manage your time. You are **absolutely encouraged to work ahead of schedule.**
- **By Noon on Saturday of each week** you will generally be required to post a major assignment (essay or journal) or have completed the grammar exercises.

Weeks When A Paper Is Due:

- You will have a major paper due the final week of each unit.
- During that week, there will be no major reading assignments.
- I'm happy to *scan* drafts of papers during the week. **You will be allowed to revise the first two papers.** More on re-writes to follow.

Grading

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

Unit 1 Making Connections	Journal Set 1	7.5%
	Average Grammar Grade	5%
	Paper 1	17.5%
Unit 2 Analysis	Journal Set 2	7.5%
	Average Grammar Grade	5%
	Paper 2	17.5%
Unit 3 Argumentation	Journal Set 3	7.5%
	Quizzes	7.5%
	Paper 3	25%

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.)

Grading: “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 carefully and **proofread** (at least twice!).

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.”¹

Late Work: **No late work will be accepted.** You need to meet the deadlines stated in the syllabus. **If you fail to submit a paper or journal on time, then you will receive a zero** with no “re-dos,” “revisions,” “exceptions because you feel special,” or “excuses: my computer died, I was sick, my dog ran away, my car won’t start, I’m lazy, etc.” **Any submission time-stamped one second past the deadline is a zero.** Plan ahead! Do NOT wait until the last minute to attempt to post your work. What if BlackBoard malfunctions and logs you off? Then you’ve got a zero. What if

¹ 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.

BlackBoard's clock is five minutes faster than your clock? If BlackBoard marks your submission late, it's a zero. What if...? Late work = zero. That's it.

Rewrites: I really, sincerely believe that the best way to improve your writing is not simply to do grammar exercises over and over (although that does help) but to learn from your own mistakes; that means carefully revising papers. In fact, the majority of the actual writing instruction I give will be in the form of feedback on your papers. Obviously, I do my best to make expectations clear before you write the paper. However, when I return the first two papers* to you, I will give you far more than just a letter grade—I will give you detailed, specific feedback about what worked and what didn't work on that paper.

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 revisions (which is often more difficult for a paper that has already earned an above-average grade). 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.) Think of it this way: if you do really well the first time you submit your essay, then you are done because you're happy with your grade, and you don't need to revise the paper at all; if you don't do so well on the paper, then you'll get a whole bunch of notes from me for how to revise it, which, if you follow carefully and take the time to revise, should allow you to earn back up to half of the points you lost on the paper. (It's like failing a test and being able to re-take it and get half of your points back. Plus, I'm usually generous with the averaging of the two grades.) Finally, it should go without saying that late papers are not eligible for a re-write (they're just a big fat zero.)

**Paper 3 will not be eligible for a re-write, and, unfortunately, I won't provide as much detailed feedback as I will on the first two essays. Why? Well, first because you can't revise it anyway since it's due the final day of class, and second because I have to submit final course grades, which limits the amount of time I can spend on each paper.

Once More Emphasizing What to Expect:

In the spring semester, I taught two sections of ENG 101 on ground. Here are the students' final grades:

A: 14 B: 8 C: 6 D: 6 F/W: 16

That should show a few things. First, it is possible to do well and get an "A." Second, about half of the 50 students did not pass with a "C" or above, which means that it's also very possible to not get a good grade. Finally, that was over the course of a 16 week semester; you are attempting to do it in 6 weeks.

Conclusion: Remember what I wrote above about the amount of time you should plan to spend doing work for the course. If you devote time and effort to every assignment, then you should do just fine.

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. *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 ideas from another source without properly documenting it

then 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!

(The next few pages are college policies that I’m required to include—read at your own discretion)

Unit No.	Instructional Unit	Specific Objectives of Instructional Unit (The specific objectives reflect the behavioral outcomes that 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 be able to".)
1	Respond to Rhetorical Situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and evaluate the specific audience and purpose in different Writing situations, and adapt their writing appropriately to those situations. • Develop effective prose that influences attitudes, beliefs, and actions through appropriate logical, ethical, and emotional appeals. • Locate and evaluate sources appropriate to the rhetorical situation.
2	Use Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read, comprehend, and summarize an argument from a complex piece of writing. • Analyze, evaluate, and respond to an argument from a complex piece of writing. • Summarize, paraphrase, and quote accurately the ideas of others, clearly differentiating them from the students' own • Synthesize and integrate others' ideas purposefully and ethically with correct and appropriate documentation. • Generate a controlling idea or thesis.
3	Craft Logical Arguments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clear and logical evidence, support, or illustration for their assertions. • Choose appropriate and effective organizing methods, employing effective transitions and signposts. • Write a focused and sustained argument of at least 1500 words that demonstrates all of these outcomes • Use diction, tone, and level of formality appropriate to audience, purpose, and situation. • Apply the conventions of Standard English grammar, spelling, and mechanics. • Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading their writing.
4	Apply Language Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on and explain the effectiveness of their writing choices regarding the audience, purpose, and situation. • Demonstrate competence in argumentation by identifying issues, evidence and reasoning processes: recognizing various types of arguments, analyzing components of arguments, and formulating good arguments, including a significant focus on inductive reasoning as outlined below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify the presence of arguments, as distinguishable from explanations, illustrations, descriptions, or creative works. ○ Identify the components of an argument (premises/evidence and conclusion/thesis) and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between these components. ○ Identify different types of reasoning (e.g., generalization, analogy, induction, deduction, and "reasoning to the best explanation").
5	Formulate Effective Writing Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate competence in analysis by breaking subject matter into components and identifying their interrelations to ascertain the defining features of the work and their contributions to the whole as outlined below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <input type="checkbox"/> Distinguish fact from opinion. ○ Examine works in order to identify distinct elements, patterns, and their interrelationships and express their significance.
6	Critical Analysis and Logical Thinking (full competency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate competence in identifying assumptions, assessing the quality and reliability of sources of evidence, and learning the criteria for evaluating the success of each kind of inference as outlined below : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assess the reliability, reasonableness, and perspective of the sources of evidence. ○ Identify their own assumptions and minimize confirmation ("my-side") bias while considering viewpoints other than their own. ○ Apply criteria for evaluating the success of each kind of inference
7	Continuous Learning/Information Literacy (full competency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw together disparate claims into a coherent whole in order to arrive at well-reasoned and well-supported inferences that can be justified as a conclusion as outlined below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop and present an integrated, well-reasoned, and well-supported independent interpretation of ideas based on appropriate evidence and methodology.
8	Appreciation of the Ethical (full competency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate competency in using current, relevant technologies to solve problems, complete projects, and make informed decisions. • Access, navigate, identify and evaluate information that is appropriate for their need(s) and audience(s). • Synthesize information to broaden knowledge and experiences and produce both independent and collaborative work. • Evaluate the economic, legal, ethical, and social issues surrounding the access and use of information and relevant technologies. • Respond critically to ethical issues. • Apply appropriate concepts and terminology in identifying ethical problems, proposing and defending solutions to them. • Apply standards and practices of scholarship, research, and documentation to defend positions and beliefs, including reevaluating beliefs in light of unforeseen implications or new evidence. • Recognize the value of creative, collaborative, and innovative approaches to problem-solving, including the ability to acknowledge differing points of view.

General Objectives of the Course

Written Communication (designated, full competency)

- Students will be prepared to develop written texts of varying lengths and styles that communicate effectively and appropriately across a variety of settings.

Critical Analysis and Logical Thinking (full competency)

- Students will be able to organize, interpret, and evaluate evidence and ideas within and across disciplines; draw reasoned inferences and defensible conclusions; and solve problems and make decisions based on analytical processes.

Continuing Learning/Information Literacy (full competency)

- Students will be able to use traditional and digital technology to access, evaluate, and apply information to the needs or questions confronting them throughout their academic, professional, and personal lives.

Appreciation of the Ethical (full competency)

- Students will identify ethical principles that guide individual and collective actions and apply those principles to the analysis of contemporary social and political problems.

College Policies

ADA Accommodation Statement

“Students with physical or learning disabilities who may require accommodations are encouraged to contact the Counseling Office. After disclosing the nature of the disability, students are urged to discuss their needs with individual instructors. This should be done at the beginning of each semester. Instructors, in conjunction with appropriate college officials, will provide assistance and/or accommodations only to those students who have completed this process.” For more information, contact the Disability Support Services (D.S.S) at 860-343-5879.

Religious Accommodation Statement

If your religious obligations conflict with the course calendar requirements, and if you wish to request an accommodation, you must make your request in writing prior to the date of the assessment or activity you will miss and preferably at the beginning of the semester. When requesting a make-up quiz, test, exam, assignment, or activity, state the reason for your request and the date(s) on which your religious obligation(s) will conflict with the course calendar requirements. Also, if your religious obligation/holiday is unfamiliar to your instructor, you may be asked to provide a calendar which shows the published date(s) of your religious observance(s) or holiday(s).

Inclement Weather Statement

In the event of inclement weather either before the start of a day when classes are in session or during the *school day*, you may check for information on delayed openings, college closings, class cancellations, etc by listening to the radio and television stations listed below. Additionally, a message will be posted on the MxCC website at www.mxcc.comnet.edu and an announcement made on the college’s main phone number, (860) 343-5800. (*When calling the main phone number, be sure to choose*

option 1 from the menu for school closings.) If classes are already in session, everyone on campus will be notified of any changes. Decisions to cancel classes or close the college early will be made as soon as practicable.

Radio Stations

WMRD 1150 am
WDRC 102.9 fm and 1360 am
WMMW 1470 am
WRCH 100.5 fm
WTIC 1080 am, 96.5 fm
WZMX 93.7 fm
WELI 960 am, WKCI 101 fm

Television Stations

WFSB - 3
WTNH - 8
WVIT - 30

***Hey...are you still reading? The syllabus is over.
Go click on “Unit 1” and proceed to Week 1.***