

Course Syllabus
ENG 101: Composition (CRN 2073)
Online Summer 2017

Professor: Adam Floridaia
E-mail: aflordia@mxcc.edu

Middlesex Community College
Phone: 203-608-3015 (Don't bother calling; I won't be in the office at all.)

Office Hours: I will check BlackBoard mail and the "Course Questions" Discussion Board daily and do my best to get back to you within 24 hours.

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.

Required Texts:

- ❖ *The Little Seagull Handbook with Exercises* 2nd ed. Edited by Bullock, Brody, Weinberg.
- ❖ Rather than having you spend \$100 on a textbook, I will post all readings on BlackBoard. You're welcome ☺

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.

Scope of Course: Here's what to expect in my ENG 101: You'll be doing a lot of reading and writing and review basic grammar rules. You'll learn how to read actively and think critically; evaluate and analyze texts; cite sources; and craft organized, intelligent arguments with and without research. I really truly believe that good *writing* begins with good *reading*, which requires good *thinking*. For that reason, you will be doing quite a bit of reading in this class. In the end, mastery of this course should make you a stronger *reader*, *writer*, and *thinker*.

Really Important Notes:

First, welcome to a whirlwind section of English 101! For the next 32 days—that's right, only THIRTY-TWO days!—we will be reading, discussing, and analyzing a whole bunch of short, non-fiction articles. Exciting, right? Well you know what else that means? We've got a heck of a lot to cram into 32 days. My advice: if you plan to excel in this course, don't pick up extra shifts at work and tell your friends and family that you won't see them a whole lot for the next 32 days. Basically, be ready to *work*.

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 won't be any exceptions. 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.

This course is NOT easier because it is a summer course. It is NOT easier because it is online. Both of those aspects actually make it quite a bit MORE challenging. ENG 101 is ENG 101; that means that you will be completing the same amount of work that you would in a traditional semester...all *crammed* into 32 days. If you are a struggling reader or writer, then this class is probably not for you. **THIS WILL BE CHALLENGING!**

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 three times a week for two hours and 45 minutes each day—thus, 8 hours/week. That means you should be getting ~16-24 hours of homework each week. Now, take that 16-24 hours of homework and add another 8 hours to it since online students don't meet in the classroom during that time. Mathematically, you should expect to spend 24-32 hours doing work for this course each week.

I'd say we can round that down *a bit*. As noted above, **I would realistically plan to spend a couple of hours/day doing work for this course for the next 32 days.** 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 32 days. If that is too much for you, don't waste your money: consider switching to a ground course or waiting until the fall semester.

BlackBoard 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 use the “**BlackBoard Mail**” link (NOT external e-mail) to send me any questions that are of a personal nature.

Otherwise, **PLEASE** post any other, general questions (anything about the readings or the assignments or simply the course that is unclear) on the “Course Questions” discussion board. That way, other students can see both the question and the answer I post.

(Note: Be sure to check both your BlackBoard mail and the “Course Questions” board as I expect you to know/follow any answers I post there whether or not you are the one who asked the question.) Also, please watch this: <http://twentytwowords.com/hilariously-annoyed-professor-tears-a-students-email-apart-word-by-word/>

Structure of Course

The Five-Day Cycle:

- There are three units, each about 10 days long. Each unit will be divided into two, five-day sections: reading and writing.

- During the first five days of each unit, you will read and journal on ten short articles. You will write approximately one page on *every* article. The “Journal Assignment” will give you step-by-step instructions.

- During the second five days of each unit, there will be grammar notes and a paper to write.
 - ❑ In the first two units, I will post a grammar .ppt to explain things (in my own way); however, I will also ask that you review the grammar rules in *The Little Seagull Handbook*. In addition, I will encourage you to do the practice exercises in the book—especially the even numbered ones so that you can check the answers in the back. Finally, I’m also posting instructions for accessing an interactive, online grammar website that I encourage you to use for further practice. Ultimately, it’s up to *you* to read and review the things you have trouble with. There won’t be any grammar quizzes, but I will penalize papers for every grammatical mistake.

- Most weeks you will also be asked to review course notes/powerpoints of some sort.

- Every five(ish) days, you will have a significant assignment due by **8 PM and not a second later**. I will program BlackBoard to stop taking submissions at that time because **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED**.

- I absolutely encourage you to work ahead (as much as possible)! Normally, in an online course, I only unlock two weeks at a time. However, for this very abbreviated session I am leaving the entire course at your fingertips from the very beginning! (In fact, I really hope you are reading this before May 30th. I sent e-mails announcing that the course opens up a week before it starts, and that is definitely your best chance to get ahead!)

Design:

I really try to design my online courses to be as user-friendly as possible. I try to label everything clearly and obviously. I also provide step-by-step instructions of what to do. Just follow directions, and you should be fine. Of course, when in doubt—and *after* making an honest effort to figure something out—just ask!

Grading

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

Unit 1 Making Connections	Journal Set 1 (ten entries)	12.5%	Due by 6/4 at 8PM
	Paper 1	20%	Due by 6/9 at 8 PM
Unit 2 Analysis	Journal Set 2 (ten entries)	12.5%	Due by 6/14 at 8 PM
	Paper 2	20%	Due by 6/20 at 8 PM
Unit 3 Argumentation	Journal Set 3 (five entries)	5%	Due by 6/25* at 8 PM
	Paper 3	30%	Due by 6/30 at 8 PM

*Note: all revisions for papers one and two will be due by 6/25 at 8 PM as well.

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 or exceptions.**

Grading: “A” and “B” papers are well above average in critical analysis, style, structure, 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 and, I recommend, slowly and out loud!).

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.” Plan ahead! Do NOT wait until the last minute to attempt to post your work. BlackBoard is programmed to CLOSE the submission window at the posted date/time.

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.

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.)

*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.

Finally:

I've been told my syllabi can make me sound very...difficult...like a real hard-ass. I get it. I like to think that I'm not, though. I like to think that I'm actually quite friendly and easy-going. However, the nicest thing I can do is to plainly lay out all rules, expectations, and deadlines on day one so that everything is crystal clear. I promise that I will be busting my butt, too, and I will return all work as quickly as possible (honestly, I strive for a 24 hour turn around). None of the assignments are “busy work.” Your time and mine are too valuable for that. I really have tried to thoughtfully design a course that will help you become a stronger reader, writer, and thinker. While there will be a lot of work, I truly hope that you are able to enjoy the class and feel rewarded for everything you put into it. G'Luck!

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)

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/

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 123J

 - Secondary Title IX Coordinator
Ms. Queen Fordham
Coordinator of the Meriden Center Welcome Desk
qfordham@mxcc.edu; 203-608-3011
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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.

Unit No.	Instructional Unit	<p style="text-align: center;">Specific Objectives of Instructional Unit</p> <p>(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".)</p>
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.
5	Formulate Effective Writing Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify different types of reasoning (e.g., generalization, analogy, induction, deduction, and "reasoning to the best explanation"). • 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 on 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.

*Hey...are you still reading? The syllabus is over.
Go click on “Unit 1” and get started!*