

English 52: Introduction to College Composition

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Course Objective

Words are like chemicals: some combinations can lead to life-changing discoveries, and others can lead to embarrassments or explosions. Putting words together to create successful writing is always an experimental process that requires orderly thinking, trials, and retrials. While this course shows you different ways to arrange your thinking and writing, it will also give you an opportunity to experiment with the kinds of writing that allow you to understand and change both your life and your world.

Course Materials and Assignments

ALWAYS bring paper, pens, and a regular folder (your course journal) to class. You will need one 8 1/2" x 11" Blue Book for the final exam.

Required Texts:

Strategies for College Writing, by Robert Funk et al. (Second Edition)

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, by Robert Louis Stevenson.

A Pocket Manual of Style, by Diana Hacker (4th Edition).

Texts are available at the campus bookstore. You will also need an English dictionary.

Always bring texts with assigned readings and your dictionary to class.

Essays (60% of your grade)

You will turn in six original essays and two rewrites. Each of the original essays focuses on a particular aspect of English usage and allows you to experiment with a different form of writing. Each essay must be typed or word-processed in a 12-point font and double-spaced. Note your name, the course name, the instructor's name, and the word count at the top of each essay.

ESSAY ONE: Introduction and Goals, 500-750 words, 5% [Subject/Verb Agreement]

ESSAY TWO: Personal Narrative, 500-750 words, 5% [Sentence Fragments]

REWRITE ONE: Essay One OR Essay Two, 10% [Run-ons, Comma Splices]

ESSAY THREE: Description & Comparison, 500-750 words, 5% [Pronouns, Possessive]

ESSAY FOUR: Process & Interpretation, 500-750 words, 5% [Tenses]

REWRITE TWO: Essay Four OR Essay Five, 10% [Active vs. Passive Voice]

ESSAY FIVE: Definition, 750-1000 words, 10% [Quote Integration]

ESSAY SIX: Evaluating Research, 1000-1250 words, 10% [Source Attribution]

Grading: *A* essays meet or exceed the assignment's requirements and show mastery of the related aspects of usage. *B* essays meet most or all requirements and do well with usage. *C* essays meet most requirements but have trouble with usage and/or contain some unclear statements. *D* essays fail to meet several requirements and have trouble with usage and/or many unclear statements. *F* essays lack organization and clarity and/or fail to meet most requirements. Incomplete essays—or essays that do not approximate the required word count—will usually receive *D*s or *F*s.

Lateness: You must turn in a hard copy of your essay during class on the due date. Late essays turned in during the next class meeting after the due date drop two letter grades. Later essays will receive an *F* or no credit (a *0*). Turn in all essays! An *F* is much, much better than a *0*. Three *0*s will likely result in failing the course.

Academic Honesty: Your essays must be your own work. Plagiarized work will receive a *0* and subject you to further penalties. See the *Class Schedule*, pp. 139-140.

Participation (30% of your grade)

Writing Center Assignments: Spend one hour each week in the writing center working on that week's assignment. The assignments usually involve 1/2 to 1 page of writing in which you focus on particular aspects of English usage during an exercise that prepares you for the next essay. If you finish the week's assignment in less than an hour, use the remaining time to work on your responses to the readings or on the next essay. Keep all assignments in your course journal.

Course Journal: In response to each class meeting's reading, write about 1/3 to 1/2 of a page about your reactions—what you think of the reading, what you like or don't like about it, questions it raised in your mind, details or aspects of the writing that caught your eye, and so on. Label each response with the name and date of the reading. Keep the responses in a folder along with all in-class writings, writing center assignments, and peer-edited drafts. Leave out all other materials.

Class Discussions: I will not grade what you say in class, but I will note that you speak up and demonstrate that you're thinking about the readings. If too much silence in class makes me suspect you're not doing the readings, you might encounter pop quizzes.

Attendance: Class activities and writing workshops are vital to your success. If you must miss a meeting, inform me ahead of time by email. Five or more absences could result in failure or exclusion from class. See the *Class Schedule*, p. 20, for details.

Class Decorum: Be courteous to fellow students: I will not tolerate harassment or class disruptions. Make sure cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are either off or silenced. Do not be late to class. Lateness is a disruption and a failure to participate.

Final Exam (10% of your grade)

The final exam will be an in-class essay on the scheduled date.

Miscellany

I will not be able to critique whole essay drafts, but I'm happy to meet with you to discuss specific parts of your writing or other course-related issues. Email me or stay after class to schedule a meeting. I reserve the right to alter the policies and assignments described on this syllabus, but I exercise this right rarely. The syllabus tells you many of the things you need to know for this course. Keep it. Know it. Love it.

Schedule of Meetings and Assignments (subject to change)

Complete all readings BEFORE the class meetings under which they appear!

Week One

Writing Center: List the ten most important things you want people to know about yourself. Organize the list into two or three categories. Write an explanation of why you chose these categories. Usage focus: subject/verb agreement (S/V)

Jan. 10: Course introduction

Jan 12: SCW 1-13; Pocket 25-32

Week Two

Writing Center: List three to five goals you have for your immediate or long-term future. Write a one-paragraph explanation of how these goals relate to the aspects of yourself you listed and categorized in week one. Usage focus: S/V.

Jan. 17: MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY—NO CLASS

Jan. 19: SCW 14-30; Workshop, Essay One [DRAFT]

Week Three

Writing Center: Think of an important event in your past that you wouldn't mind sharing with your classmates and your instructor. In complete sentences, answer these questions: What happened? When and where did it happen? Who was involved? How did it affect those involved? Why is it important to you? Usage focus: sentence fragments (frag), S/V

Jan. 24: SCW 33-49 [ESSAY ONE DUE]

Jan. 26: SCW 50-69; Pocket 48-50

Week Four

Writing Center: Arrange the information from week three's assignment into a narrative order. Write an explanation of why you chose the order you did. Usage focus: frag, S/V

Jan. 31: SCW 122-145

Feb. 2: SCW 165-175; Workshop, Essay Two [DRAFT]

Week Five

Writing Center: Write a one-paragraph description of a place that is important to you. Consider how the place and the things in it look, sound, smell, feel, and/or taste. Usage focus: run-ons (r-o), comma splices (c.s.), frag, S/V

Feb. 7: SCW 79-88 [ESSAY TWO DUE]

Feb. 9: SCW 89-106; Pocket 50-54

Week Six

Writing Center: Think of an important person in your life, and list words and phrases that describe this person. Write two or three reasons why this person is important, and sort the descriptions on your list into categories related to these reasons, leaving out the descriptions that aren't related. Write two or three short paragraphs about this person, using the reasons as the paragraphs' main ideas and the descriptions as supporting details. Usage focus: r-o, c.s., frag, S/V

Feb. 14: SCW 106-121, 154-164

Feb. 16: SCW 325-337; Pocket 36-44, 76-79 [REWRITE ONE AND COURSE JOURNAL DUE]

Week Seven

Writing Center: Write a paragraph in which you compare and contrast the descriptions from weeks five and six. Write a single sentence that summarizes the similarities and differences between the important place and person. Usage focus: pronouns (pro.), possessives (poss.), r-o, c.s., frag, S/V

Feb. 21: PRESIDENT'S DAY—NO CLASS

Feb. 23: SCW 338-345; Workshop, Essay Three [DRAFT]

Week Eight

Writing Center: Summarize the events in Donnie Darko so far in one or two paragraphs, mentioning the details that seem most important to you. Who are the main characters? What do they do? What is the sequence of events? Usage focus: Use the present tense to describe the film, use tenses consistently, and only use progressive tenses when necessary (tenses); pro., poss., r-o, c.s., frag, S/V

Feb. 28: Donnie Darko viewed in class [ESSAY THREE DUE]

Mar. 2: SCW 177-187; Pocket 33-36; Donnie Darko in class

Week Nine

Writing Center: Write an interpretation of the ending of Donnie Darko. What happened? How did it happen? Why did it happen? Explain the sequence and causes of the events, and summarize what happened and why in a single sentence. What do you think it means? Usage focus: tenses, pro., poss., r-o, c.s., frag, S/V

Mar. 7: SCW 376-388; Donnie Darko in class

Mar. 9: Review SCW 17-19, 334; Workshop, Essay Four [OUTLINE]

Week Ten

Writing Center: Find three descriptions of Mr. Utterson's character in Jekyll and Hyde. Referring to these descriptions, write one or two paragraphs about how Utterson's character shapes the way the story appears from his point of view. Usage focus: passive voice (p.v.), indefinite it (indef.), tenses, pro., poss., r-o, c.s., frag, S/V

Mar. 14: J&H 1-21 [ESSAY FOUR DUE]

Mar. 16: J&H 22-45; SCW 223-233; Pocket 4-5

MARCH 21-27: SPRING BREAK—NO CLASSES

Week Eleven

Writing Center: Choose two short quotations from Jekyll and Hyde that you think reveal the monstrosity of one character (Mr. Hyde or otherwise). Write a paragraph about each quotation in which you first introduce the quotation with an idea about it, then quote the text properly, and finally state how the quotation demonstrates your idea. Usage focus: quote integration (quotes), p.v., indef., tenses, pro., poss., frag, S/V

Mar. 28: J&H 46-77; SCW 234-238, 517-525

Mar. 30: J&H 78-103 [REWRITE TWO AND COURSE JOURNAL DUE]

Week Twelve

Writing Center: Develop your introduction, thesis, and first body paragraph for essay five. Usage focus: quotes, p.v., indef., tenses, pro., poss., frag, S/V

Apr. 4: J&H 105-114; SCW 258-266

Apr. 6: Workshop, Essay Five [DRAFT]

Week Thirteen

Writing Center: Choose a current issue that you would like to research. Using only what you already know, write one or two paragraphs about your ideas and opinions about the topic and the kinds of things you expect discussions of the topic to involve. Usage focus: p.v., indef., tenses, pro., poss., frag, S/V

Apr. 11: Pocket 101-111 [ESSAY FIVE AND COURSE JOURNAL DUE]

Apr. 13: SCW 31-32, 525-533; Library Orientation

Week Fourteen

Writing Center: Using one of the sources for your research paper, write a page in which you summarize the source's information and identify its point of view and biases as well as its strengths and weaknesses. Cite the text properly as you discuss it. Usage focus: quotes, p.v., indef., tenses, pro., poss., frag, S/V

Apr. 18: SCW 421-442

Apr. 20: SCW 443-469

Week Fifteen

Writing Center: Use the procedure for week fourteen to critique your second source.

Apr. 25: SCW 471-491 [WORKS CITED LIST DUE]

Apr. 27: SCW 492-503 [OUTLINE DUE]

Week Sixteen

Writing Center: Use writing center resources to develop your draft. Usage focus: source attribution (sources), quotes, p.v., indef., tenses, pro., poss., frag, S/V

May 2: SCW 504-516, 534-541

May 4: Workshop, Essay Six [DRAFT]

Week Seventeen

Writing Center: Use writing center resources to revise your draft. Usage focus: source, quotes, p.v., indef., tenses, pro., poss., frag, S/V

May 9: SCW 406-410 [ESSAY SIX AND COURSE JOURNAL DUE]

May 11: Review for final

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, May 18 (date is tentative—see *Class Schedule*, p. 142)