

# WRITING 121: ENGLISH COMPOSITION

Winter 2015 – Tue/Thur 10:00 to 11:20 AM – CRN 30025  
IA 242 (Tue) / NSH 108 (Thur)

<b>Instructor:</b> Matt Usner <b>Office:</b> NSH-213	<b>Email:</b> usnerm@linnbenton.edu <b>Office Phone:</b> 917-4283	<b>Office Hours:</b> Tue/Thur 11:30-12:00 and Wed 11:45-1:45
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**The Purpose of This Syllabus:** This syllabus contains all the vital information about this course—what you’ll be learning, what will be expected of you, and what you can expect from me. Essentially, this syllabus is a contract that states what is required of both of us during the term. Since this is a valuable document, you should study it and refer to it often. **The better you know the syllabus, the better the chance that you’ll do well in the course.**

**Course Catalog Description:** “Writing 121 covers processes and fundamentals of writing expository essays, including structure, organization and development, diction and style, revision and editing, mechanics, and standard usage required for college-level writing. 3 class hours/week, 3 credits.”

**Prerequisite:** Placement into this section of WR 121 is determined by any of the following: pre-enrollment testing (CPT), passing Writing 115 with a grade of “C” or better, or acceptance into the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP). If you do not meet one of these prerequisites, please speak to me immediately.

**NO-SHOW POLICY:** Students not attending the first two class sessions will be withdrawn at the end of the first week.

**Course Overview:** This course is designed to enhance your writing skills by introducing various methods of development for writing academic essays. The course also introduces you to critical reading and analysis of various texts. There will be some mini-lectures in this class, but largely it will be collaborative and discussion-based. That means you’ll be sharing your thoughts with the entire class, as well as interacting with small groups of your peers. I will ask you to take an active, engaged role in your learning, both individually and collaboratively. Our classroom will be a safe, open space to share diverse ideas honestly and respectfully. **I promise to make this class as engaging as I can, but if you aren't willing to take your reading and writing seriously—and believe that you can improve both skills—then this course may not be for you.**

**Student Learning Outcomes:** Student who successfully complete WR 121 will be able to:

- *Analyze the rhetorical needs* (the needs of their audience in relationship to the assignment) for academically-oriented writing assignments.

- *Apply appropriate levels of critical thinking strategies* (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation) in their written assignments, with a focus on factual, analytical, and evaluative writing.
- *Implement appropriate rhetorical elements and organization* (introduction, thesis, development and support, definition, narration, comparison, conclusion, etc.) in their written assignments.
- *Locate, evaluate, and integrate high-quality information and opinion* appropriate for college-level informational, analytical and evaluative assignments.
- *Craft sentences and paragraphs* that communicate their ideas clearly and effectively using words, sentence patterns, and writing conventions at a college level to make their writing clear, credible, and precise.

**Course Materials:** The textbooks below are available at the LBCC bookstore in the Calapooia Center. Copies are also on library reserve for 2-hour use in the library.

***Required Textbooks:***

- Graff, Gerald, Cathy Birkenstein, and Russel Durst. *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 2012. ISBN 9780393912753.
- Bullock, Richard, Michal Brody, and Francine Weinberg. *The Little Seagull Handbook with Exercises*. 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 2014. ISBN 0393935817.

***Other Required Materials:***

- A pocket folder to submit your outlines, drafts, peer review feedback, and revisions of each essay.
- Access to your LBCC student email account (<http://www.linnbenton.edu/roadrunner-mail>).
- Access to a printer; you will be bringing 2 printed copies of your essay drafts to class, as well as submitting printed versions of your final drafts and revisions.
- Two examination “blue books” for the Final Exam; these can be purchased in the bookstore.

**Assignments & Activities:**

- ***Essays and Formal Outlines (53% of final grade):*** You will write **3 essays** for this class. Each essay will vary in length and point value, with each one being longer and worth more points than the previous one. Specific instructions and grading criteria for each assignment will be distributed well in advance of due dates. Each essay will require first drafts to be submitted for comments from your peers. Essay #2 and #3 will also require **graded formal outlines**. **You will have the option of revising the first two papers for the chance at a higher grade, as long as the original essays are submitted on time.**
- ***Final Exam (30% of final grade):*** It will take place over two days: **Monday, March 16th from 12:00-12:50 and Tuesday, March 17th from 11:30-12:20**. For the final exam, you will write an in-class essay that responds to one or two readings. You will be receiving specific instructions about the exam in the weeks leading up to it.
- ***Reading Checks (8% of final grade):*** Reading checks are very short quizzes, in which you answer one or two questions about the required reading for a given class period. For example, you may be asked to summarize an important writing concept explained in the textbook, or explain the

main supporting points used by the author of a textbook essay. **There will be 10 reading checks, but only your 8 highest scores out of 10 will count toward your final grade.** Reading checks will not be announced in advance, and they are not open-book. They may be given at any time during the class period, and more than one reading check may be given in the same period. If you are not present in class for a reading check, you cannot make it up. Your best way to prepare for reading checks is to read every assigned textbook selection thoroughly.

- **Information Literacy Exercise (4% of final grade):** As part of your third essay, you will be completing a series of library research tasks. The primary focus areas will be finding and evaluating online sources, including those accessed through library databases.
- **Letter of Introduction (3% of final grade):** Your first writing assignment will be a short letter in which you introduce yourself.
- **Syllabus Quiz (2% of final grade):** During the first week of the course, you will be taking a short quiz on the information found in this syllabus.

**Grading:** You can earn up to **500 points** in this course:

Task	# Counted	Point Each	Total Points	% of Final Grade
Essays	3 (can revise first two)	50, 75, 100	225	45%
Final Exam Essay	1	150	150	30%
Outlines for Essay #2 and #3	2	20	40	8%
Reading Checks	8 out of 10	5	40	8%
Information Literacy Exercise	1	20	20	4%
Letter of Introduction	1	15	15	3%
Syllabus Quiz	1	10	10	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	--	--	500	100%

Your final grade will be determined by the following point breakdown:

GRADE	TOTAL POINTS	DESCRIPTION
<b>A</b>	<b>500 to 448 points (89.6% and up)</b>	Passing work that is <b>excellent</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>447 to 398 points (89.4% to 79.6%)</b>	Passing work that is <b>good</b>

C	397 to 348 points (79.4% to 69.6%)	Passing work that is <u>average</u>
D	347 to 298 points (69.4% to 59.6%)	Non-passing work that is <u>below average</u>
F	297 and below (59.4% and below)	Non-passing work that is <u>fundamentally lacking</u>

**Moodle:** Assignment instructions and grades will be posted on our course site on Moodle (<http://elearning.linnbenton.edu/>). You may also be asked to upload the final drafts of your essays on Moodle. If you need help getting started with Moodle, let me know during the first class period. To help you get familiar with Moodle, you will be completing at least one short assignment on it during the first week.

**Attendance:** Attendance is vital for your success in this course. Missing class means missing valuable instruction time; you give yourself the best chance to do well by attending every class. **An absence is never an excuse for missing an assignment's due date, as all due dates are already listed on the course calendar.**

**Policy on Late Work:** All assignment due dates appear on the course calendar. In fairness to all students, an assignment that is submitted after its deadline will lose points and may not receive feedback. Specific policies for late penalties will be included with assignment instructions, so please read them carefully.

**Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:** Presenting someone else's ideas in writing as if they are your own is plagiarism, and it is a serious academic offense. **Any plagiarized elements in your writing will result in, at minimum, a zero for the assignment and, at maximum, automatic course failure.** If you ever borrow information from an outside source to put in an essay, you must cite it properly. If you're not sure how to do this, please ask me for help before submitting your paper. Once you submit a plagiarized paper, the consequences mentioned above will be enforced.

**Office Hours:** I encourage you to visit me during my office hours to discuss any questions or concerns you have. It's best to schedule a time in advance, but I won't mind if you stop by unannounced.

**Useful Campus Resources and Policies:**

- **The LBCC Writing Center:** The [LBCC Writing Center](http://www.linnbenton.edu/learning-center/writing-center) (WH-200) is a fantastic free resource for students. Tutors are available to assist you with all aspects of your writing assignments. The Writing Center also offers online tutoring services as well. Get more information here: <http://www.linnbenton.edu/learning-center/writing-center>
- **The LBCC Library:** The [LBCC library](http://library.linnbenton.edu/home) is located on the first floor of Willamette Hall. The library has several [databases for research articles](#) that you can access both on and off-campus. Get more information here: <http://library.linnbenton.edu/home>

- **Center for Accessibility Resources:** Speak with your instructor during the first week of class if:
  - you have a documented disability and need accommodations,
  - your instructor needs to know medical information about you, or
  - you need special arrangements in the event of an emergency.

If you think you may need accommodation services, please, contact the Center for Accessibility Resources at (541) 917-4789.

- **Non-Discrimination Policy:** LBCC prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, gender, native language, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, veteran status, or any other status protected under law. Everyone in the LBCC community has the right to think, learn, and work together in an environment of respect, tolerance, and goodwill.

**Our Classroom’s “Golden Rules”:** In the classroom, we want to maximize our learning and minimize distractions from it. With that idea in mind, please honor the following common courtesies:

- Arrive to class on time and stay the entire period.
- Silence your phone and put it away—not in your lap or under a book.
- Feel free to bring a drink to class, but please don’t bring food in the classroom.
- Give your full attention to someone who is addressing the class.

**COURSE CALENDAR:**

DATE	TOPICS, ACTIVITIES, AND DUE DATES	READINGS DUE <u>BEFORE</u> CLASS
<b>WEEK 1</b> Tue 1/6	Course introduction; <b>Assign Letter of Introduction and Moodle Syllabus Quiz (both due 1/8)</b>	None
Thur 1/8	<b>Letter of Introduction and Syllabus Quiz due</b> ; Discuss the writing process; <b>Assign Essay #1 (first draft due 1/15)</b> ; Essay #1 prewriting	<u>Seagull</u> 2-16 (“Writing Processes”)
<b>WEEK 2</b> Tue 1/13	Discuss video and reading for Essay #1; Continue prewriting for Essay #1	Reading and video included in Essay #1 instructions
Thur 1/15	<b>Essay #1 first draft due</b> (digital copy); Continue working on Essay #1; <b>Revised draft due by end of class</b>	<u>Seagull</u> 17-29 (“Developing Paragraphs”)
<b>WEEK 3</b> Tue 1/20	Peer review workshop ( <b>bring 2 hard copies of your draft!</b> )	Readings on peer review posted on Moodle
Thur 1/22	<b>Essay #1 final draft due</b> ; Practice summarizing; <b>Assign Outline (due 2/3) and Essay #2 (first draft due 2/5)</b> ; Essay #2 prewriting (time permitting)	<u>TS/IS</u> 19-28 (ch. 1), 30-40 (ch. 2), 211-214 (“Two Years Are Better Than Four”), and <u>Seagull</u> 100-103 (“paraphrasing and summarizing”)
<b>WEEK 4</b> Tue 1/27	Discuss and practice the art of quoting	<u>TS/IS</u> 42-50 (ch. 3) and 243-255 (“Blue-Collar Brilliance”)
Thur 1/29	Discuss ways to respond to sources; Review thesis statements; Work on outlines (time permitting)	<u>TS/IS</u> 55-67 (ch. 4) and 68-75 (ch. 5)

<b>WEEK 5</b> Tue 2/3	<b>Outline due</b> ; Discuss how to emphasize significance; Draft introductory paragraphs and opening sentences	<u>TS/IS</u> 92-100 (ch. 7) and 222-242 (“Are Too Many People Going to College?”)
Thur 2/5	<b>Essay #2 first draft due</b> (digital copy); Discuss unity and coherence; Continue working on Essay #2; <b>Revised draft due by end of class</b>	<u>TS/IS</u> 105-118 (ch. 8)
<b>WEEK 6</b> Tue 2/10	Peer review workshop ( <b>bring 2 hard copies of your draft!</b> )	None
Thur 2/12	<b>Essay #2 final draft due; Assign Essay #3 (first draft due 2/26), Assign Information Literacy (due 2/19 at end of period), and Outline (due 2/24)</b> ; Introduce library research	<u>Seagull</u> 80-95 (“Doing Research”)
<b>WEEK 7</b> Tue 2/17	Meet in computer lab (location to be announced); Work on Information Literacy and Essay #3	None
Thur 2/19	Work on Information Literacy and Essay #3; <b>Info Literacy due at end of period</b>	None
<b>WEEK 8</b> Tue 2/24	<b>Outline due</b> ; MLA documentation and formatting	<u>Seagull</u> 149-157 (“Sample MLA paper”)
Thur 2/26	<b>Essay #3 first draft due</b> (digital copy); Continue working on Essay #3; <b>Revised draft due by end of class</b> ; Discuss counterarguments	<u>TS/IS</u> 78-90 (ch. 6)
<b>WEEK 9</b> Tue 3/3	Peer review workshop ( <b>bring 2 hard copies of your draft!</b> )	None
Thur 3/5	Discuss Final Exam procedures; Revision workshop (time permitting)	Sample Final Exam essays on Moodle and grading rubric
<b>WEEK 10</b> Tue 3/10	Announce Final Exam reading; 50-minute practice in-class writing	<u>TS/IS</u> 256-273 (“A Lifetime of Student Debt? Not Likely”)
Thur 3/12	<b>Essay #3 final draft due; Revisions of Essay #1 and #2 due</b> ; Review instructions for Final Exam	None
<b>WEEK 11</b> <b>Mon</b> 3/16	<b>Final Exam Part I: 12:00-12:50</b> (room to be announced)	None
Tue 3/17	<b>Final Exam Part II: 11:30-12:20</b>	None