

# Writing 121: English Composition

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Online Office Hours: Th 1-3 (via Zoom)  
(For a schedule-only version of the syllabus, click [this link](#))

Fall 2021  
CRN 23454 (4 credits)  
Meets Virtually Mode  
Th 9-10:50 (Zoom)

Writing 121 emphasizes the development of essays appropriate for a college-level audience and focuses on college-level expository writing and critical thinking. Students will improve their writing fluency by focusing on fundamental elements of writing such as thesis, support, organization, basic research/citation, and conventions of language. The class uses processes such as critical reading, prewriting, drafting, peer feedback, revision, editing, and reflection. It asks students to employ these elements and processes while considering the audience, purpose, and genre of a given writing task. Class operates on the model of active learning—exercising one's critical reading skills and asking independent questions. It requires 3000-3500 words (about 10 pages) of revised, final draft copy.

## Course Outcome Goals

Upon successful completion of the class, students should be able to:

1. Anticipate and identify the needs of your audience in a variety of academic writing situations. (You will need to use critical thinking and reading strategies to do this well.)
2. Use rhetorical elements (such as introduction, thesis, development, support, rebuttal, narration, and conclusion) to organize and clarify your writing.
3. Practice foundational research methods by finding, evaluating, incorporating, and citing appropriate sources.
4. Write in clear, effective language.

To meet these outcome goals, students will practice writing thoughtful expository prose and demonstrating competence in organization, mechanics, and the writing process. Such competence is reflected in the following skills: using a variety of writing strategies (narration, definition, comparison and contrast, classification, description, examples, and persuasion) to help focus and develop the main idea; presenting ideas logically; developing a writing style appropriate to the audience, purpose, and situation; reading and critically analyzing the writing of others using summary, paraphrase, and quotations; integrating source material into their own work using lead-in signal phrases and in-text citations; using organizational and transitional strategies to give an essay shape and form; presenting material logically with an introduction which defines the subject and previews the content of the essay, a discussion section which is fully developed, and a conclusion which summarizes and interprets the thesis; using standard grammar, syntax, spelling, and punctuation; and revising and editing their writing effectively.

## Requirements

**Prerequisite:** Placement in WR121 is determined by pre-enrollment testing or by passing WR115 with a grade of 'C' or better. Before entering WR121, students are assumed to have basic competence in grammar, mechanics, sentence structure and in developing related ideas in a unified, coherent paragraph and/or short essay.

**Texts:** *The Little Seagull Handbook*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Bullock, et al. (pdfs available below)  
[Course Packet](#) of handouts  
Readings (scanned pdfs) available for download through Moodle and links below

## Major Assignments, Point Value and Percentage of Total Final Grade:

30% Final Exam (equivalent to 150 points)

20% [Research Essay](#) (5-7 pages) 100 points

20% [Two Short \(2-4 pages each\) Essays](#) (50 points a piece)

22% Participation (Zoom and [Weekly Discussion Forums](#)) 110 points

8% Homework / Peer Review 40 points

500 Total Points Possible (See [Assignment Log](#) for a list of all assignments)

## **Policies and Procedures**

Meets Virtually Class Format: Meets Virtually class format means that half the class time (or 110 min./week) is conducted in an “asynchronous” way--primarily through discussion forums on Moodle-- that allows some time flexibility during each week. The other half of the class (again, 110 min./week) is meant to be in “real time”--conducted primarily through the Zoom video conferencing app. Our Zoom meetings will happen on Thursday each week at the time as indicated by the Schedule of Classes (9:00-10:50).

### **To Join Zoom Meeting for class Thursdays 9-10:50**

<https://lanecc.zoom.us/j/5109521732?pwd=ZoNTNGp3SlZoZo9rZVJ6Ymo5cDRSQTo9>

or

Meeting ID: 510 952 1732

Passcode: WR122

Relying heavily on group discussion and workshops, Zoom sessions will focus primarily on discussion of class readings and up-coming writing assignments. Your involvement in Zoom meetings will be more active than passive, so you may be asked to unmute yourself to communicate orally, use the chat feature, etc. I would encourage you to use a video interface (situate yourself in a space where you feel comfortable having your camera show your image or create a virtual backdrop), but this is not required. Zoom sessions will NOT just be me talking. (Even in a conventional face-to-face class, I rarely adopt a pure lecture format for my writing classes.) A fairly typical pattern for these meetings will be that we first meet as a whole class for general discussion or questions. Then I will form students into random groups using the Breakout Room feature. Typically, students will have about 15 minutes to generate content for the shared class [“TOE”](#) document to help guide subsequent class discussion on the assigned reading and/or to discuss their upcoming writing assignments. Then, we reconvene as a whole class to conduct a class-wide discussion. (If you have ideas on how best to use our time together, please share those ideas with me.) I plan to post provisional agendas for the Zoom meetings each week through the Moodle Announcements forum by Monday. This portion of the class is worth 5 points a week of participation points. You have to attend at least half of the Zoom meeting to be eligible to earn these points. (Zoom generates a report of users.) (For weeks without Zoom meetings because of Veterans Day and Thanksgiving, students will get an automatic full credit.)

For the asynchronous, purely online portion of class time, an important feature of the class will be participation in the weekly online Discussion Forum (located on the class Moodle site). Earn up to 5 points per Forum each week (Weeks 1 and 10 have two separate forums) by participating in this “slow motion” class discussion (meaning that someone may not respond to you immediately but perhaps several days later). Post your reactions and analysis to each week’s readings and topics and respond to what others in the class have to say. Suggested prompts to

respond to are included in the weekly overview documents linked to the syllabus. When you post your primary messages to the weekly discussion forums, plan to post about 150 words (a well-developed paragraph or two). Emphasize your own thinking, analysis, relevant personal experiences, and personal reactions to the topics involved. Then, when you respond to at least two other people, try for a minimum of 50-75 words, using your post to expand your understanding. Ask questions, talk online, and use this feature of our class to expand your understanding of course material. For more description and a grading rubric see [this document](#). **Special Note: Weekly online discussion forums cannot be made up after the due date (midnight Sunday each week).** To be successful in an online course format, students must take an active and responsible role in their own learning. It takes discipline to post to the online Forums and keep current with the class. (You can earn up to one extra credit point a week by posting to the discussion forum early--by the end of the day Wednesday. This does NOT apply to the Personal Introduction Forum on Week One.) Please don't hesitate to contact me if obstacles prevent your full participation in the course.

Reading Assignments: A major component of the class will be critical reading. Writing is always grounded in a particular practice of reading. Your writing takes place in a larger rhetorical context of what others have already written/said about the topic you are interested in. So what a class like this does is to help sharpen your ability to read a text and then know how to respond back. The specific conceptual focus of the course readings and our discussions in the weekly forums on Moodle will be different aspects of something often called "Theory." I have tried different topics and readings through the years that I have been teaching this course ([here's a link to the version of the course I was teaching previously on "great ideas"](#)), but I've never found a set of readings/topics that will engage everyone because everyone in the class has slightly different interests. So, I've decided to just focus on a set of topics that is of interest to me at least (if no one else). "Theory" names an interdisciplinary and critical approach to thinking about one's underlying methodological assumptions, drawing on continental philosophy, linguistics, psychology, sociology, and other various social theories such as feminism and postcolonialism (often employing words and concepts that may not be initially familiar with the majority's understanding of common sense). While this body of study started out as a subdiscipline within English departments as "Literary Theory" (a set of assumptions that govern how a person ought to approach the reading of a literary text), during the past 30-40 years it has morphed into a much wider concept of Cultural Studies more generally. So while I am not expecting that the literary application of these ideas will be directly relevant to students who are not English majors (unfortunately, though, many of the readings I am assigning are still focused primarily on literature), the wider cultural application of what we will be reading and discussing will, I think, have a much broader use. After all, we are all immersed in a world filled with a variety of different "texts" (movies, TV shows, video games, songs, social media posts, news, etc.) Whether one is aware of it or not, one is a reader of a variety of different texts as one navigates their way through life. The different ideas we encounter in this term's readings should make us better readers of these various phenomena. Class readings are available as scanned PDFs through our class Moodle website and links on the syllabus.

Papers: Essays are usually due at the end of any given week by the end of the day Sunday (see schedule below). **Late papers and homework will not be accepted if turned in more than a week after the original due date.** In other words, I don't accept paper "dumping" where students turn in more than half of their coursework in the last week of

class. Papers should be typed, double-spaced, carefully proofread, use MLA formatting conventions, and include your name, date, class name, essay description, and my name. (See [Little Seagull pages 158-60](#) -- scroll down --for basic manuscript format.) Save **all** work you do for this class. Subsequent versions of essays submitted should include previous versions turned in along with peer reviews. Revisions are almost always appreciated and encouraged, but they should be completed no later than two weeks after being returned and require a separate [self-assessment assignment](#). Work will normally be uploaded into different assignment folders and forums on Moodle, but they may also be turned in as an email attachment. I can only download attachments in the following formats: \*.doc, \*.docx, \*.rtf, or \*.pdf (**not** \*.wps or pages format). Make sure both your name and my name appears on the document itself. If using Google Docs, make sure your Sharing settings are set on “Anyone with the link.” Students will write a longer Research Essay and two shorter essays.

**Office Hours:** I will be holding online virtual office hours Thursdays 1-3, meaning that I should be logged into the Zoom meeting that I use for office hours during that time.

**To Join Zoom Meeting for office hours**

<https://lanecc.zoom.us/j/98334887450>

or

Meeting ID: 983 3488 7450

My Zoom meeting for office hours is different from the one I use for class in that I will only be letting in one student at a time. Hopefully, you will not need to wait too long (usually student attendance for office hours is rather sparse). I am also available by appointment if the scheduled office hours conflict with your schedule or if you want to reserve a specific time. Let me know (via email) if you're interested so that we can arrange a meeting time.

**Homework:** The main homework assignment is a [peer reviewing workshop](#) (10 points) on the Research Essay. There is also a Practice Exam to help prepare you for the Final Exam.

**Grading Criteria:** When I read student essays, I look for a number of qualities including unity of purpose, specificity of detail, and coherence of progression. Essays are given a holistic letter grade based on **six criteria: argument, critical reading, organization, audience, sentence-level writing, and manuscript formatting**. “Argument” includes how effectively the paper presents a thesis and supports it through relevant examples. Students can demonstrate their critical reading skills by how they use details from sources to offer a fresh perspective on the topic that goes beyond a bland summary. The paper’s organization into paragraphs should follow from the paper’s main purpose (form follows function). Good papers are often an implicit dialogue between an author and reader—good writers anticipate how a potential audience will relate to a paper. Students should write in complete sentences that avoid grammatical errors (especially comma splices!), awkward phrasings, and mistakes in punctuation, but beyond that students should cultivate a personal writing style with an interesting variety of sentence and phrase structures.

**Grading Scale:** Grades are based on a percentage of the 500 total points possible throughout the quarter (see above for how many points any one assignment is worth). 500-450 points (100-90%) = A; 449-400 points (89-80%) = B; 399-350 points (79-70%) = C; 349-300 points (69-60%) = D; fewer than 300 points will result in a failing grade.

**College Resources:** On [the Writing Center's website](#), you can use the Zoom video app for both drop-in and scheduled conferences. They also have an [Online Writing Lab](#), where you can upload essays to get feedback within a few days. From initial ideas to final drafts, the LBCC Writing Center can help you take your writing to the next level. For more information, visit them online.

**Basic Needs:** Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Roadrunner Resource Center for support ([resources@linnbenton.edu](mailto:resources@linnbenton.edu)), or visit us on the web [www.linnbenton.edu/RRC](http://www.linnbenton.edu/RRC) under Student Support for Current Students). Our office can help students get connected to resources to help. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources that they may possess.

**Accommodation:** LBCC is committed to inclusiveness and equal access to higher education. If you have approved accommodations through the Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR) and would like to use your accommodations in this class, please talk to your instructor as soon as possible to discuss your needs. If you believe you may need accommodations but are not yet registered with CFAR, please visit the [CFAR Website](#) for steps on how to apply for services or call (541) 917-4789.

**Etiquette and Nondiscrimination:** One of the goals of this course is to construct a "discourse community," a space in which students feel respected and comfortable expressing their ideas openly. This means that in class discussion forums basic rules of etiquette should be followed. No personal attacks will be tolerated. The LBCC community is enriched by diversity. Everyone has the right to think, learn, and work together in an environment of respect, tolerance, and goodwill. We will work toward creating a community without prejudice, intimidation, or discrimination. (related to Board Policy #1015). LBCC prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, use of native language, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, veteran status, age, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local laws.

**Plagiarism:** This college punishes incidents of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is subject to disciplinary action as described in [Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct](#). All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. Students may only seek assistance in writing their papers from authorized sources (me, members of class peer review group, or university-approved tutorial service). The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. See me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

## Tentative Schedule

(Please complete readings and writing assignments during the week they are listed below; "Seagull" refers to *The Little Seagull Handbook* (3rd ed); please download linked PDF readings on your own.)

Date	Reading Assignment	Writing Assignment
9/27-10/03	<p><b><u>Week One: Introductions / Rhetoric / What Is "Theory"?</u></b></p> <p>Syllabus; <a href="#">Course Welcome</a>; <a href="#">Big Picture Stuff</a> (esp. #1, 2, 9, and 10); pages 11-25 of <a href="#">Chap. 2 of <i>Little Argument</i></a>; <a href="#">Culler, "What Is Theory?"</a> (focus on subsections on pages 1-5 and 13-17); <a href="#">Short Essay option descriptions</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Personal Intro Forum</a>; Content-Based <a href="#">Discussion Forum</a>.</p>
10/03	<p><b>Midnight: Last Chance for Full Refund</b></p>	
10/04-10/10	<p><b><u>Week Two: Paradigm Shifts / Writing Process</u></b></p> <p><a href="#">Wikipedia article on paradigm shifts</a>; pages 372-74 of <a href="#">Schulz, "Evidence"</a>; Barry, sections from <a href="#">Chap. One of <i>Beginning Theory</i></a> (16-20, 31-35); <a href="#">Seagull 2-29, 158-169</a>; <a href="#">Grading Rubric</a></p>	<p>Discussion Forum.</p>
10/11-10/17	<p><b><u>Week Three: Self and Ideology / Argument</u></b></p> <p><a href="#">Culler chapter on Identity</a>; "Me" and "Ideology" chapters in Bennett and Royle; <a href="#">"Writing Arguments"</a> (<i>LB Brief</i> Chap. 10); <a href="#">Research Essay description</a> and <a href="#">Interest Inventory</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Short Essay #1</a>; Discussion Forum. (Begin working on Research Essay--decide on a provisional topic.)</p>
10/18-10/24	<p><b><u>Week Four: Limits of the Self -- Mutants, Laughter, the Uncanny, and Horror / Info Literacy</u></b></p> <p>Chapters on <a href="#">Mutants</a>, <a href="#">the Uncanny</a>, and <a href="#">Laughter</a> from Bennett and Royle; King, <a href="#">"Why We Crave Horror Movies"</a>; <a href="#">Seagull 90-118</a></p>	<p>Discussion Forum. (Continue working on Research Essay by starting your research.)</p>
10/25-10/31	<p><b><u>Week Five: Race and Colonialism</u></b></p> <p>Pages 206-13, 238-42 from <a href="#">Chapter Eight</a> and pages 245-51, 279-82 in <a href="#">Chapter Nine of <i>Using Critical Theory</i></a> by Lois Tyson; <a href="#">"The Colony"</a> by Bennett and Royle; <a href="#">duCille, "Multicultural Barbie and the Merchandising of Difference"</a>; <a href="#">Directions for Peer Review Assignment</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Short Essay #2</a>; Discussion Forum. (Continue working on Research Essay by beginning to draft the paper.)</p>

Date	Reading Assignment	Writing Assignment
11/01-11/07	<p><b><u>Week Six: Gender</u></b>  Pages 139-44, 166-69 in <a href="#">Chapter Six</a> of <i>Using Critical Theory</i> by Lois Tyson; <a href="#">“Learning to Be Gendered”</a> by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet</p>	<p><a href="#">Peer Review</a> on Research Essay; Discussion Forum.</p>
11/08-11/14	<p><b><u>Week Seven: Queer Theory</u></b>  Pages 172-78, 199-202 in <a href="#">Chapter Seven</a> of <i>Using Critical Theory</i> by Lois Tyson; <a href="#">“Queer”</a> by Bennett and Royle  <b>Note: Veterans Day holiday is on 11/11 (Thursday) this week. No Zoom classes held.</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Research Essay</a> Due; Discussion Forum.</p>
11/15-11/21	<p><b><u>Week Eight: Figural Language</u></b>  <a href="#">“Figures and Tropes”</a> in Bennett and Royle; <a href="#">Metaphors We Live By</a> condensation; <a href="#">Postman, “The Word Weavers/The World Makers”</a></p>	<p>Practice Final Exam; Discussion Forum.</p>
11/22-11/28	<p><b><u>Week Nine: Trauma and Disability Studies</u></b>  <a href="#">“Wounds”</a> in Bennett and Royle; Castle, pages 209-17 in <a href="#">this chapter</a> from <i>The Literary Theory Handbook</i>; Parker, pages 367-79 of <a href="#">Chapter 12</a> -- scroll down -- of <a href="#">How to Interpret Literature</a>  <b>Note: Thanksgiving Holiday is on Thursday and Friday (11/25-11/26) of this week. No Zoom classes held.</b></p>	<p>Discussion Forum.</p>
11/29-12/05	<p><b><u>Week Ten: Ecocriticism</u></b>  Coupe, <a href="#">“Green Theory”</a> in <a href="#">Routledge Companion to Critical and Cultural Theory</a>; <a href="#">“Eco”</a> in Bennett and Royle; Bertens, pages 220-30 in <a href="#">Chapter 10</a> of <a href="#">Literary Theory: The Basics</a></p>	<p>Discussion Forum.</p>
12/06-12/08	<p><b>Finals Week</b></p>	<p>Final Exam; <a href="#">Final Self-Reflective Discussion Forum</a>.</p>

Turn in all final revisions as an e-mail attachment or by Moodle submission by Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> (Thursday of Finals Week)

**Course documents are available on Moodle Website**

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