

English Composition 101

Fall 1994

Required Text:

Anderson, Thayle K., and Kent Forrester. Point Counterpoint: Eight Cases for Composition. 2nd ed. New York: HBJ, 1993.

In addition, all students must have a standard sized spiral ringed notebook with at least 120 lined, blank pages by the beginning of the second-class meeting.

Course Description

English 101 is designed to both introduce and reinforce existing writing, reading, and editing skills for use in the university environment. Methods for attaining and honing these skills include close, analytical readings of assigned essays, note taking for concise recognition of important elements of assigned essays (i.e. thesis statements where applicable, support for thesis, introductory and concluding methods, etc.), a recognition of the importance of and proficiency in effective summarizing and paraphrasing, a series of essays to be completed by the student displaying a clear grasp of the material being evaluated, the development of a style of writing that is both appropriate to the university level and one in which the student feels comfortable, and close editing of final essays to ensure a myriad of syntactical and content orientated goals. Though this seems to be asking a great deal (and I do expect a great deal from each individual), bear in mind that the development of critical thinking, of which critical reading and writing are fundamental aspects, takes time, practice, and perseverance. We aim to improve and explore here, not necessarily perfect.

Course Requirements

- 1) In addition to being responsible for all daily class assignments, be they writing, reading, or editing, students will be required to keep a journal in which they will write EVERY day from Tuesday, August 30th to Wednesday, December 7th. A total of 100 entries are required on a variety of topics, most of which are of your own choosing. These journals will be collected frequently, however, the dates of their collection will not be announced. It is each student's responsibility to bring with him or her to class every day his or her up to date journal.
- 2). Students will be assigned three formal essays which are due when indicated on your syllabus. These essays will go through a series of peer edits before their due dates and work both in class and at home will be required. These essays should be typed, double spaced, with your name and section number in the upper right or left margin.

3) One "in class" essay will be assigned in which the student will complete in one class period an essay to be described and directed when indicated on your syllabus. Though peer editing will not be allowed in this exercise, you will not be writing the essay "cold". As a class we will prepare for the process and examine a number of key points.

4) Finally, each student is required to take a "common" final which is designed to ensure that proficiency in the elements described above in Course Description has been attained. The date of this exam is noted on your syllabus and it is ABSOLUTELY VITAL THAT YOU BE THERE AND TAKE THE EXAM IN THE ALLOTTED TIME. All 101 students (some 1000) will be taking the exam at the same time so you must be present. Your own death may be an excuse for not showing but I would have to clear it with the English Department so just don't die and be there.

Attendance and Grading

Don't skip class. Period. If you miss 4 or more classes your final grade will suffer. If you miss more than 6 classes, you will fail this course. We only have 30 class meetings so it is vital you show up, prepared, every day. There are no "excused absences." You have 3 absences to give and I strongly advise you not to waste them.

Though this seems strict and it may be possible (though, in my experience, extremely unlikely) that you could, by grades alone, pass the course after missing more than 6 classes, bear in mind that discussion, peer input, and peer editing comprise the majority of what we will be doing in the class. Don't expect me to lecture often. I won't. You, either in groups or as a class, will be doing most of the talking. If you don't show up for class, not only are you not talking, you are denying your classmates valuable input and insight. Simply put, come to class, if not for yourself, for your peers.

Final Grade Average (10 point scale)

Attendance/Participation, Daily Assignments, Journals	15%
Essay 1	20%
Essay 2	20%
Essay 3	20%
In Class Essay	15%
Final	10%