

Course Syllabus

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change during the semester . Please check the online version of this syllabus on a regular basis for any updates.

Department	:	English & Foreign Languages
Course Title	:	Composition I
Section Name	:	ENGL 1301.4, 1301.730
Start Date	:	01/17/2012
End Date	:	05/11/2012
Modality	:	FACE-TO-FACE
Credits	:	Three credit hours

Instructor Information:

Name, Office : Dr. Mark W. Jordan, Wilkerson Hall #220
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Course Description:

Catalog description: "Consists of essentials of correctness and effectiveness in writing skills. Emphasizes reading and writing expository prose. Requires expository essays and collateral readings."

Professor's supplementary description: This course teaches critical thinking ability while teaching effective writing skills. The overall emphasis is not on grammar or mechanics for their own sakes, but on the use of these and other skills as tools in producing useful written communication. The course will normally be taught in an interactive computer lab environment. No prior computer knowledge is necessary, though helpful; but while typing skills are not a formal prerequisite for the course, students with absolutely no typing experience will be placed at a disadvantage. Courses in traditional formats are offered for such students. The overall emphasis is not on grammar or mechanics for their own sakes, but on the use of these and other skills as tools in producing useful written communication.

Prerequisites/Corequisites: ENGL 0370 or counsellor approval

Scans: SCANS 1, 2, 9

Course Objectives (Learning Outcomes):

- 1.0 Learn to write thesis driven essays, with clear internal organization governed by a series of controlled paragraph topic sentences;
- 2.0 Learn to move logically in a body paragraph from the generalization of the topic sentence to more specific clarifications;
- 3.0 Learn to understand and appropriately apply modes of expression in written communication;
- 4.0 Learn to maintain a logical movement through an essay with control of transitions, clarifications, and reasonable conclusions to ideas;
- 5.0 Learn to analyze an audience to determine the best strategies for effectively communicating with that audience;
- 6.0 Demonstrate an understanding of some basic research techniques and how to use library resources;
- 7.0 Demonstrate a knowledge of research documentation including quotation integration, proper citation, and some knowledge of bibliographic form;
- 8.0 Demonstrate competence in using conventional English; and
- 9.0 Articulate ideas in well-organized, lucid prose that exhibits the application of the aforementioned skills.

Course Policies:

- 1.0 Absence is not an excuse for coming to the next class meeting unprepared; also, absence does not extend due dates! Work submitted late for any reason, including absence, may be penalized five points per weekday (or in shorter terms, ten points per weekday) at my sole discretion. If absent, contact me as soon as possible (preferably via email) regarding how to submit anything due, and to learn of upcoming assignments.
- 2.0 Major work (excluding the final exam) submitted over one week past the due date will normally receive no higher than an F (or lower, if incomplete). Daily work normally earns a zero after one week past the due date. No work is taken after semester's end. Any exceptions in any case are at my sole discretion.
- 3.0 Any student missing the final exam normally receives a zero for the final exam grade. Depending on the student's grade average, this will often result in failure of the entire course.
- 4.0 Cell phones, pagers, and laptops: (a) must be set on silent, to prevent disruption of class; (b) must be only rarely used for non-course related matters, not routinely, with no calls taken in class whatsoever, to prevent both disruption of class and loss of focus by user; (c) may not be used at all by a student in danger of failing; and (d) must be put away entirely during tests, to prevent any unfair advantage. Repeated violations may be considered chronic disruption of class and dealt with as such.
- 5.0 As adults, you may leave the room without asking permission, but students who abuse this privilege with frequent comings and goings will be considered to be disrupting class. You are encouraged to see to your needs either before class or during formal breaks (in longer evening sections).
- 6.0 Chronic class disruption may result in a student being dropped from my course. This is a last resort and would occur only after repeated warnings, the last warning being delivered in writing.
- 7.0 Plagiarism (submitting work not one's own) in any form is not allowed. Various forms, intentional and unintentional, will be discussed. The penalty for intentional, flagrant plagiarism is an F for the course.

Required Readings/Materials :

- 1.0 No textbook need be purchased for this course. My website is the textbook: <<http://www.odessa.edu/dept/english/mjordan/>>
- 2.0 Some students may wish to buy a grammar handbook (optional; sold in bookstore)
- 3.0 A USB drive (flash drive) for saving files

Course Requirements (Lectures, Assignments and Assessments):

- 1.0 **Several major, multi-paragraph pieces of writing (60% of course grade; exact percentages depend on number of essays written).** Students will usually write five major essays prior to the final exam, which is an in-class essay. All are to be written using the Three-Part Writing Format as taught in class. Essays run in length from a minimum of 1000 words (about three pages, double-spaced) to a minimum of 1250 words, with greater development (detailed examples, etc.) resulting in higher grades, all else being equal. Essays also focus on various different writing modes and/or writing purposes; additionally, at least one essay asks the student to learn and demonstrate basic research and documentation techniques. Instructions for each essay are given in writing and orally, in class.
- 2.0 **Error logs** featuring corrections of grammatical errors in major essays **(10% of course grade when combined with item 3.0)**. In general, an error log consists of correcting all sentences from a graded essay which contain major grammatical errors. Complete instructions are given in class.
- 3.0 **Various minor reading and/or writing assignments (10% of course grade when combined with item 2.0)**. Typical such assignments are quizzes, partial essay drafts, peer critiques, etc.
- 4.0 **Participation, judged by attendance, promptness, and contribution to class (10%).** Attendance is judged by percent of attendance versus number of class meetings. Promptness is judged by timely arrival for class. Class contribution can range from very positive (attentiveness, participation in discussion, etc.) to very negative (disrupting class).
- 5.0 **An essay as a final examination (20%).** The final exam topic is chosen by the student within broad boundaries. The student may prepare an outline and work from it, but the essay itself must be written in class.

Summary of Assignments & Activities

Note: Essay assignment topics may change! These topics are those used last semester.

Item Name	Type	Description	Time Frame
Essay One	Social Issues	Persuasive purpose; argumentation mode. Choice between two topics. Worth 10%	Essay One usually takes approximately four weeks of the course. Basic rhetorical concepts and the required writing format must first be taught before work on the essay itself can be begun. Feedback is give on partial drafts before the final draft is begun. <i>The pace of all essay units depends in turn on the pace of student learning in the classroom, along with other variable factors.</i>
			<i>Specific due dates will be announced in class.</i>
Essay Two	Classification by Qualities	Informative purpose; classification mode. Broad topic choice. Students explain how someone is competent at a particular skill by describing the key qualities of that skill, with examples. Worth 10%	The normal time frame for Essay Two is between two and three weeks.
Essay Three	Comparison / Contrast	Expressive / informative purpose; comparison / contrast mode. Various topics may be used. Example: Contrasting good and bad mentors on the basis of several common qualities, used well or used poorly. Worth 15%	Essay Three generally takes between three and four weeks of the semester.
Essay Four	Using Secondary Sources	Persuasive purpose; argumentation mode. Range of topic choice usually narrow; to be announced in class. Students research a particular topic of broad social relevance, and argue a position using research findings presented as direct quotes and cited using MLA format. Worth 15%	Essay Four generally takes between three and four weeks of the semester.

Essay Five	Cause / Effect	Primarily informative; cause/effect mode. Broad range of topic choices. Students may describe either the causes or effects of some specific situation involving the use of some "quick fix" approach. Worth 10%	Essay Five generally takes between one to two weeks of the semester.
Final Exam Essay	Some Part of What Makes Us Human	Primarily expressive; definition mode. Broad range of topic choices. Students define, using some mode of their own choosing, some particular part of what makes us human (an emotion, a belief, a behavior, etc.). Worth 20%	This Final Exam essay must be written in class during the assigned exam period of two and a half hours. Students choose topics beforehand and may bring outlines from which to work.

Grading Policy:

- 1.0 **Final grade for course:** 90 through 100 = A; 80 through 89 = B; 70 through 79 = C; 60 through 69 = D; below 60 = F
- 2.0 **Individual assignments:** Plus sign (+) = 8 (e.g., B+ = 88); minus sign (-) = 2 (e.g., B- = 82); neither + nor - = 5 (e.g., B = 85)
- 3.0 See Course Policies regarding **late submissions, penalties for plagiarism**, etc.

Special Needs:

Odessa College complies with Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have any special needs or issues pertaining to your access to and participation in this or any other class at Odessa College, please feel free to contact me to discuss your concerns. You may also call the Office of Disability services at 432-335-6861 to request assistance and accommodations.

Learning Resource Center (Library):

The Library, known as the Learning Resources Center, provides research assistance via the LRC's catalog (print books, videos, e-books) and databases (journal and magazine articles). Research guides covering specific subject areas, tutorials, and the "Ask a Librarian" service provide additional help.

Student E-mail:

Please access your Odessa College Student E-mail by following the link to either set up or update your account: <http://www.odessa.edu/gmail/>. All online assignments or correspondence will be submitted using your Odessa College email.

Technical Support:

For Blackboard username and password help and for help accessing your online course availability and student email account contact the Student Success Center at 432-335-6878 or online at <https://www.odessa.edu/dept/>

ssc/helpdesk_form.htm.

Important School Policies:

Information regarding student support services, academic dishonesty, disciplinary actions, special accommodations, or students' and instructors' rights to academic freedom can be found in the Odessa College Student Handbook.