

Course Syllabus

Dean Bowers

ENGL 1301.WC8, WC7

Fall 2011

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

Department : English & Foreign Languages

Course Title : Composition I

Section Name : ENGL 1301.WC8, WC7

Start Date : 08/22/11

End Date : 12/9/11

Modality : Online

Credits : 3

Instructor Information

Name : Dean Bowers

OC Email : dbowers@odessa.edu

OC Phone # : 432-335-6572

Course Description

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

Prerequisites/Corequisites

ENGL 0370 passed with a "C" or better or a satisfactory placement score.

Scans

1, 2, 9

Required Readings/Materials

a) You must purchase the following *required* readings/materials:

- ✓ There is no required textbook for this course. However, you do need to have dependable computer access because all of the readings and other resources for the course are on Blackboard (see **Computer Access** section).
- ✓ A computer file storage device (preferably a USB drive)

b) You are encouraged to buy the following *optional* books/materials

- ✓ Folder or notebook (recommended)
- ✓ Thesaurus and dictionary (recommended)

Course Objectives

Learning Outcomes

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

Encouragement

My overall philosophy is that you can succeed in this class, and that you can get and will get the grade that you are willing to work for. I will maintain rigorous standards, but I will help you in any way that I can to be successful because I do want all of you to do well. My goal is to help you develop your analytical reading skills, your critical thinking skills, and to continue to develop your ability to clearly articulate your ideas. These are skills that will serve you well in other classes, in job situations, and in your own personal development. I also hope that you

enjoy the reading and find some authors and works that you like. I encourage you to talk to me if you have questions, concerns, or problems in the class. If you cannot come to my scheduled office hours, other meeting times can be arranged. I can also assist you in arranging the use of other helpful resources. I hope we can have an interesting, productive, and fun semester together!

Computer Access

You need to have regular access to a computer for this class:

- **Internet** – You need to have dependable access to the internet.
- **Word Processor** – All assignments should be typed, saved to your computer, and then submitted to Blackboard. If you don't have Word, most computers come with Works already loaded. Make sure to save documents in Rich Text Format. Some alternative word processors are the one on Google Docs or the free word processor available at www.openoffice.org.
- **Blackboard** - You are responsible for any materials that can be found in our Blackboard course.
- **Odessa College email** – When I send messages and reminders, they will go to this email. You are responsible for any information sent to your OC email.
- **Powerpoint** – You can open Powerpoints in Blackboard. Here is a link for a free Powerpoint Viewer:
<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?familyid=048dc840-14e1-467d-8dca-19d2a8fd7485&displaylang=en>.
- **Adobe Reader** – If you don't have this already, you can download the reader for free at <http://www.adobe.com/>.

I am assuming that concurrent students have access to computers at school, and hopefully everyone has access to computers at home. In any case, not having computer or printer access is not a valid excuse for failing to complete assignments on time.

Class Behavior

Even though most of our interactions will be on Blackboard and via email, I will expect for you to be courteous and respectful in our communications. We will probably not do discussion boards, but if we do, here are some guidelines.

- ♦ In Discussion Boards, I expect students to only post material appropriate for a classroom environment and to be respectful and courteous toward their fellow students.
- ♦ The Discussion Boards are an opportunity to share different points of view, and this will make the interactions more interesting for all of us. If you have a different point of view on a topic than someone else, I encourage you to share your ideas – just do so politely. Offer your ideas up as another possible way of looking at the topic.
- ♦ If a student submits inappropriate or belligerent posts, replies, or other materials to Blackboard, or if a student interacts with me or another student in an inappropriate or

belligerent way, I will contact the Dean of Arts and Sciences, and we will explain to the student why the behavior was inappropriate and discuss how to avoid it in the future. If there is another incident, I will contact the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the Vice President of Student Services to discuss further disciplinary measures. In cases where inappropriate material has been submitted for an assignment, students will receive reduced credit or even no credit (depending on the situation) for the posts in question.

Attendance

Instructors at Odessa College are required to take attendance, even in online classes. **You need to access Blackboard at least two days each week.** At the end of each week (Sat.), I will check to make sure that people have been present. Considering the resources that you need to access on Blackboard, most weeks you will probably need to log in more than this. You get two absences without any penalty. Each subsequent absence will result in a loss of one point from your final grade.

Course Requirements (Assignments and Assessments)

Course Assignments

Description Essay 8%

This assignment focuses on the use of precise and vivid language along with the development of vocabulary.

Personal Philosophy Essay 11%

This assignment focuses on developing effective techniques for writing an essay based on personal experience. It incorporates the descriptive and narrative strategies used in the Descriptive Essay.

Movie Review 10%

This assignment focuses on incorporating specific and relevant examples into a discussion to support a writer's opinion. It also provides practice in referencing an outside work in a written discussion, a skill which will be used in research assignments as well as in ENGL 1302 Composition and Rhetoric assignments.

Exploratory Essay 15%

This assignment asks the students to explore two different perspectives on an issue that they have selected. This will be valuable as they evaluate possible views of their audience while writing the Proposal Essay and any other argumentative/persuasive document. This assignment also requires the effective incorporation and correct documentation of relevant outside resource material to support each perspective.

Proposal Essay 20%

This assignment asks each student to research and clearly present a problem/issue, to propose a solution to this problem/issue, and to persuade the audience that this solution is the most effective way to address the problem/issue. The assignment requires the effective incorporation and correct documentation of relevant outside resource material for to support the different sections of the proposal.

Resume / Cover Letter 5%

This assignment gives the students practice in applying the skills they have learned to produce documents that will have obvious practical value for them.

Activities 16%

Students have assigned readings throughout the semester; these readings will be relevant to the different assignments and will also demonstrate the different skills that I want the students to be learning. These specific reading activities will ask students to analyze the readings in terms of their themes, structure, and the strategies used by the authors to convey their ideas. This category also includes grammar review activities.

Final Exam 15%

The final consists of an essay and a short exam. The final requires that students implement the various analytical, revising, editing, and documentation skills that they have learned during the course of the semester.

Topic/Overview:

See Course Calendar for specific dates.

Item(Name)	Type	Description
Assignment Instructions	Lecture/Discussion	Presentation of the instructions for each essay assignment as it is assigned.
Reading Discussions	Lecture/Discussion	Discuss readings and their relevance to the class assignments and lessons
Parts of Speech	Lecture/Discussion	Review of the parts of speech
Sentence Structure	Lecture/Discussion	<i>Discuss fused sentences, comma splices, fragments, awkward wording</i>
Similar/Confusing Words	Lecture/Discussion	Discuss homonyms that students frequently misuse

Pronouns	Lecture/Discussion	Review pronoun usage rules
Capitalization	Lecture/Discussion	Review capitalization rules
Punctuation	Lecture/Discussion	Review essential punctuation rules
Essay Strategies	Lecture/Discussion	Review/discuss various strategies for effectively conveying ideas in an essay
Writing Process	Lecture/Discussion	Discuss the steps involved in writing an essay effectively
Verb Tense - Narration	Lecture/Discussion	Review the rules for using the proper verb tense when writing a narrative
Verb Tense - Textual Reference	Lecture/Discussion	Review the rules for using the proper verb tense when referring to an outside work
Transitions	Lecture/Discussion	Discuss the effective use of structuring an essay and focusing it around the thesis idea by using transitions
Library Overview	Lecture/Discussion	Introduce the resources available to Odessa College students through the Odessa College Learning Resource Center
MLA Documentation	Lecture/Discussion	Review/discuss the rules for properly and effectively using the Modern Language Association documentation system for research essays
Source Credibility	Lecture/Discussion	Present some criteria to apply to source material to evaluate each source's level of credibility
Evaluating Source Material	Lecture/Discussion	Present some criteria to apply to source material to evaluate each source's relevance and usefulness for a writer's particular discussion
Incorporating Source Material	Lecture/Discussion	Discuss some methods for effectively incorporating source material into a research essay
Argument Strategies	Lecture/Discussion	Discuss some strategies for persuading an audience to take an interest in one's subject and one's perspective on that subject

Grading Policy

Assignments

- ◆ **Assignments need to be posted on Blackboard by 11:59 PM on the designated due date in order to be counted on time.**
- ◆ **If you have trouble posting the assignment to Blackboard for any reason, contact me immediately and send the assignment to me via email by the deadline so that I can count it on time. You will need to post assignments on Blackboard for them to be graded once the submission problem is resolved.**
- ◆ Make sure to follow specific assignment instructions carefully.
- ◆ Assignments are due by the end of the day (11:59PM) on the designated date
- ◆ I would like all assignments submitted in Rich Text Format.
- ◆ Late assignments will lose 10 points. I will accept late assignments for 48 hours after the due date/time. After that, I will not accept them.
- ◆ If an assignment does not meet the word minimum, it will lose 10 points (or be subject to the penalty described on the assignment instructions).
- ◆ If you have a legitimate, documented reason why you need more time on an assignment, please contact me. The documentation must be included with the assignment.

Assistance with Assignments/Tutoring

You are always welcome to call me or email me with questions about your assignments. I can help you brainstorm for topics and ideas, help you organize your essay, help you with using quotations, help you edit your essay and/or discuss any other questions. I will also answer these kinds of questions and look at drafts of assignments to provide comments via email. Just please make sure to send me the draft with enough time before it is due to send you feedback.

In addition to my help, any registered Odessa College student can go to the Student Success Center for tutoring and for assistance with different subjects. If you are in Odessa, or nearby, the SSC can be a valuable resource. The Odessa College Student Success Center is located on the first floor of the Learning Resources Center (library). You are welcome to go to the SSC for assistance in this class. The English tutors can help you with the same aspects of the paper as I have listed above. The point to emphasize here is that they will **help** you; **they will not do the assignment for you**. Make sure to take a copy of the assignment instructions with you so that the tutor will understand the assignment. To get more information about the SSC, call 432-335-6673 or go to <http://www.odessa.edu/dept/ssc/index.htm>.

Odessa College also offers access to Smarthinking, an online student assistance service. You can access Smarthinking from the Student Success Center webpages; the following link will take you to the Smarthinking information on the SSC site:

<http://www.odessa.edu/dept/ssc/tutoring.htm>. When you go to access Smarthinking, you will be directed to the Student Portal. Your same passwords that you use for your Blackboard and email should work for the Portal. If not, call 432-335-6673.

Plagiarism

Simply put, plagiarism is turning in work that you claim to be your own, but that is not yours; in other words, parts of it or all of it comes from another source.

Plagiarism occurs if you do any of the following without giving proper credit to the real author of the material: directly quote from another author's material, paraphrase from another author's material, or even borrow an idea from another author's material.

- **If you are caught plagiarizing material on any assignment (tests, essays, discussion board posts and replies), you will receive a zero on the assignment in question.**
- **If you are caught plagiarizing material a second time, you will receive an F for the course. I will also contact the Vice President of Student Services.**

When we are doing research assignments, errors on your citations will not be considered plagiarism unless you have not cited any of your sources. However, since using and citing sources are major components of the research assignments, correct citation count for a portion of the grade.

You can do the work; plagiarism is not worth it. If you have questions, please contact me.

Ineligible Materials for Assignments

Please abstain from using material (quoted, paraphrased, or otherwise borrowed) from interpretational resources (such as Spark Notes, Cliffs Notes, etc.) or from essay sites (such as 123HelpMe, etc.) as the basis of your discussions in your essays and other assignments. While proving plagiarism can be difficult, it is not so difficult to tell when a student has relied on a supplemental website for assistance instead of on the actual assigned text. While this kind of laziness may not always qualify as plagiarism, it does demonstrate that you are not meeting the class requirements and your grade will reflect that.

- ♦ **If your discussion relies on these kinds of websites, the highest grade you will be able to get on that assignment will be a 65 (D).**
- ♦ **If your discussion uses materials other than those designated for the assignment, the highest possible grade you can get on that particular assignment will be a 75 (C).**
- ♦ **As the policy above states, if it can be proven that you have plagiarized from any source, you will incur the stated failing grades.**

Percentage %	Grade
100-90	A
89-80	B
79-70	C

69-60	D
59 and below	F

Withdrawing from Class

Nov. 9 (Wed.) is the last day you will be automatically be given a 'W' when you withdraw from a class. After that, you will receive the grade you currently have in the class.

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 correspondence for this class will be conducted using your Odessa College email.**

Student Portal

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 correspondence for this class will be conducted using your Odessa College email.**

Technical Support

For Blackboard username and password help and for help accessing your online course availability abd 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

For information regarding student support services, academic dishonesty, disciplinary actions, special accommodations, or student's and instructors' right to academic freedom can be found in the [Odessa College Student Handbook](#).