

English 091: College Preparatory Writing

Spring 2005

Section: A
Time: MWF - 11:15 – 12:10
Location: 2-15
Credits: 3 credit hours
Final Exam: May 4 from 12:00 to 2:15

Instructor: Cathy Gersema
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Course Description:

This introductory course prepares students for college-level writing. Confidence and skills are built as students write and revise 4-6 essays, learning to develop and organize material to support main ideas. Students review sentence and punctuation patterns and how to proofread. For students who taken ENGL 990 or meet the course's objectives.

Required Textbooks:

- Flachmann, Kim. **Mosaics: Focusing on Essays**, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 3rd ed.

Other Supplies:

- Paper and pen
- Computer disks and/or USB drive
- Money for photocopies
- Internet access and email address (DMACC provides these for students free of charge)

Course Policies:

Absences:

Roll will be taken at the beginning of each class. If you are not there for the roll call, it is possible that you will be counted absent for the day. If tardiness or leaving early problems arise, I may take points from your daily work grade.

Note: Your mental and physical presence is essential to your learning. You must be actively participating to earn points for each class. If you are seriously unprepared for class, you may be marked absent for the day.

Class Attendance Policy:

Attendance is the single most important factor for grades at every level. Come to class. You earn points and appreciation when you do this. Come to class and be smarter every day.

You are responsible for what happens in class, even if you are absent. Some activities cannot be made up. This includes discussions, in-class writings, and other activities. Find out what you have missed from another classmate. I will provide you with a list of names and phone numbers early in the second week.

Weather alert: No one expects you to risk your life or safety to attend class. Only you can decide if traveling is safe for you. Fortunately, our course begins in the winter and ends in the late spring.

Come to class!

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Assignments:

You are responsible for your work.

- Students must complete all the assigned drafts and final copies of the major papers in order to receive credit for this course.
- Students must turn in assignments directly to me. This way we will both know I have received it.
- Students who are unable to hand the assignment directly to me, should call me and we will discuss another arrangement.

Late work:

When one student gets more time to work on a paper than other students, it is as if the late student gets more minutes to score in a basketball or soccer game. It is not fair. With this in mind, students must turn in assignments the class session they are due. Any late work will be penalized 5% for each weekday that it is late.

Computers:

Do not waste time blaming the computer if you were unable to complete the assignment. Save early. Save often. Please recognize that computers are a natural part of our lives now. You need to be able to work with them and allow yourself enough time to complete your assignment.

Back up your work. All floppy drives will fail at one time or another. With this in mind, keep a back up copy of your larger assignments on a second disk or on a hard drive. (Hard drives seldom fail.) Another way to create a back up is to email a copy of your assignment to yourself.

Extreme Situations:

We all have busy lives, and we still get the job done. However, sometimes emergencies arise that are beyond one's control (i.e.: death or illness in the family). In cases like this, we want to see if we can make adjustments that will allow the student to continue in the course.

Disabled Students:

If you are identified as a student with a disability, you must notify me as soon as possible so that we can make accommodations where needed. To request accommodations, get in touch with the Special Needs Coordinator in Building 6, Room 3.

Your Investment in this Course:

College courses are expensive. They cost you both your time and money. To make your investment pay off, come to class.

Plagiarism:

You may not realize it, but you bring originality and variety to my classes. Write the paper that only you can write. If you do this, you will be a better writer by the end of the semester. Rely on yourself.

Plagiarism is using someone else's ideas, words, or research without giving proper credit where it is due. It is grounds for suspension or expulsion. Do not plagiarize. Plagiarized papers earn F's and can get you hot water. If you are having trouble with an assignment, talk to me.

If you do not understand an assignment or are unsure what to do next or you just want to "kick around an idea", talk to me.

Professional Conduct:

- This class is training for your professional life. With this in mind, students will conduct themselves in a businesslike manner. Students will avoid inappropriate behavior, language, and remarks.
- Turn off your cell phone when you are in class.
- Behave in a businesslike manner.

Computer Lab:

There is a computer lab in Building 6 that is open for your use.

Monday – Thursday: 7:30 am – 10:00 pm

Friday: 7:30 am – 4:00 pm

Saturday: 7:30 am – 2:00 pm

Assignments:

Formatting:

- Typed or word-processed in 12 point Arial, Times, or Times New Roman font
- Have 1" margins on all sides.
- Use left justification. No justification on the right.
- Double spaced with no extra spaces between paragraphs.
- Must be page length minimum. (Papers that are short of the minimum will have the grade reduced by the percentage that the paper is short.)
- Submissions must have a title with your name, essay title and date.
- Use page numbers.

Note: When I am not teaching English classes, I have been teaching computer classes. If you need help with formatting your papers, please ask.

Topics to Avoid:

We will spend time in class discussing how to arrive at interesting topics. I have very eclectic taste, which means that I like a huge variety of topics. I hope you will write about topics that have importance to you. We can find a way to make many ideas work for us.

Some topics will be banned because they have been used too many students before you have written on these same topics too many times.

Grading Policies:

The most important thing you can do for your grade is to attend class and complete the assignments. Keep in mind that the quality of your grade depends on you.

I use letter grades for assignments. Assignments that are long and involved are weighted more heavily than other assignments. You will receive a list of assignments that are due for course completion within the next few days. (**Note: To pass this course, you must complete all major assignments.**)

Here are the criteria for letter grades:

- A** All requirements for the assignment have been met – including due date, length, appearance, topic selection. The student’s paper is interesting, appropriate, easy to read, and takes very little correction. Spelling, grammar, and diction are excellent. The paper reflects a high quality of work. This paper is “a good read.”
- B** All requirements for the assignment have been met – including due date, length, appearance, topic selection. This paper is interesting but contains some errors. The spelling, grammar, and word selection are good but could be better. The paper reflects careful work.
- C** Most requirements for the assignment have been met – including due date, length, appearance, topic selection. This topic is appropriate but the paper contains several errors. The spelling, grammar, and word selection are acceptable but should be better. The paper reflects work that is okay but needs improvement.
- D** Many of requirements for the assignment have been met – including due date, length, appearance, topic selection. This paper is dull and contains too many errors. The spelling, grammar, and word selection are need improvement. The paper shows that an effort was made – but the work is below par and showed many problems.
- F** The paper is unacceptable.

Final grades will be composed of the following percentages.

- 25% Daily work – including quizzes and in class writings
- 50% Major compositions
- 25% Reading responses and short compositions