

## **ENGL 1301W Composition I Syllabus**

**Fall 2017; Credit 3**

**Meeting Days/Times:** Section 6, CRN 82048, MWF 9:00 – 9:50 AM, Evans 258  
**Instructor:** Christopher Mitchell  
**Office:** Evans 107  
**Contact Information:** cgm011@shsu.edu  
**Office Hours:** MW 1:00 – 2:30 PM or by appointment

### **Course Description**

ENGL 1301, Composition I, is the basic study in English diction, sentence structure, and rhetoric with emphasis on the development of a thesis or claim. More specifically, the course involves the study of skills and methods used in writing at the university level, with the focus on writing academic texts and incorporating appropriate documentation. As the first half of a two-semester sequence that constitutes first-year composition at SHSU, ENGL 1301 is designed to introduce students to the nature of writing for academic purposes so that they will be able to develop ideas through invention and express them clearly and persuasively. The course builds a solid framework for students' understanding of how reading and writing operate concurrently in academic contexts. Learning the rules and conventions of Standard American English is an essential part of learning to write competently in a university setting.

### **Aims and Outcomes**

Freshman composition is a core requirement because writing well is an essential part of a university education. By the end of ENGL 1301, students will be able to develop a thesis or claim, in a discernible and effective order, and demonstrate that they have a command of the conventions of written English appropriate to the freshman level in college. The course includes a review of usage and grammatical terminology as they relate to the writing process. The main aims of ENGL 1301 are (1) to strengthen students' ability to read a variety of texts representing several rhetorical types and (2), through this reading component, to improve their writing skills, oral expression, and visual literacy. Students will also learn to work with peers to review their own writing and the writing of others. They will learn to draft and revise their own texts for content and organization of thought, as well as for editing. Thorough revision includes the re-visioning of the text, its structure, its contents, its visual effect, and how appropriately it meets the needs of its intended audience and purpose. Discussions, peer reviews, and oral critique will develop students' competence in clear verbal expression.

## Course Objectives

Upon completion of ENGL 1301 students will be able to

- analyze audience, purpose, and context,
- respond appropriately to different rhetorical situations and constraints,
- read analytically and think critically, with the aim of solving problems through the development of exposition and argument,
- build a solid connection between reading and writing, with the emphasis on understanding texts, oral, written, and visual,
- use the modified process method (prewriting, writing, and rewriting) to develop well-organized, formal texts in support of a thesis or claim,
- evaluate and critique others' writing, including that of their peers, logically and constructively,
- based on careful listening, give constructive verbal criticism to their peers' oral team presentations,
- work in collaboration to improve their written and oral expression through revision and editing,
- identify persuasive appeals in written, oral, and visual texts,
- use the MLA citation method for documenting basic, fundamental research tasks,
- demonstrate the conventions of Standard American English grammar and appropriate mechanics across various genres and writing situations.

## Textbooks

### *Required Texts:*

- (1) Glenn Cheryl and Loretta Gray. *The Hodges Harbrace Handbook*. 19<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-305-67644-2 (student edition)
- (2) Jo Ray McCuen-Metherell and Anthony C. Winkler. *Readings for Writers*. 15<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2016. ISBN-13: 978-1-337-28104-1 (student edition)

### *Recommended Texts:*

- (3) A good collegiate dictionary, such as *Webster's College Dictionary* or *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*.

## Attendance

Attendance is mandatory for successful completion of this course. Even a moderate number of absences may seriously jeopardize your ability to learn the material and pass the course. Because much of our work will build on material previously completed and will include **team and group interaction**, you should make every effort to attend class and be on time. Students must be in the classroom for the entire time in order to receive full credit for

attendance. Your attendance is expected and will be documented. Department policy is that up to three hours of absence will receive no penalty. This translates into three absences for the MWF class and two absences for the TuTh class (i.e., one full week for both). Plan this time carefully, because any absence beyond the three hours will result in a two-percentage-point deduction from your end-of-semester grade.

Class activities and assignments (quizzes and exercises) **cannot be made up**. A student taking part in extra-curricular activities that will result in missed classes must present to the instructor a schedule of the extra-curricular activities and a letter from the appropriate authority confirming the student's participation in the activities. The schedule and letter must be presented to the instructor before the first missed class. Once the schedule and letter are in hand, accommodations will be made for the student. Due dates for homework assignments will not be affected, but missed in-class assignments will be made-up at the earliest possible date during the instructor's office hours (see above).

Late work will be graded upon receipt and docked a full letter grade if the work is received within one week of the due date, two full letter grades if the work is received within two weeks of the due date, and three full letter grades for any work received more than two weeks after the due date.

Should an emergency arise (such as a serious illness or death in the family) please report your absences through the Dean of Students. His office will assist you in gathering the required documentation and make sure that all your professors are made aware of the circumstances. The instructor will decide whether the documented circumstances qualify as an emergency or not.

If you are unable to attend a class, you must make sure that you are prepared for the session when you return. Much of what you need to know in order to be prepared will be on the calendar, but unanticipated events can occur during classes that may change the calendar. Contact a classmate to see what unanticipated assignments, discussions, etc., you might have missed; this will help ensure that you are not surprised when the class is doing something for which you are not prepared.

## Grading Plan

This is a "W" course, which means that at least 50 percent of your course grade will derive from writing activities designed to help you master course objectives. Writing in this course is one of the tools your instructor will use to help you learn course material. Some writing activities will require you to draft and revise your work, with or without instructor feedback. Other assignments may not receive a grade but are designed to assist you in critical reflection of the course material. You should approach writing in this course as a tool to use as part of your learning as well as a tool your instructor will use to assess your level of learning.

### Course requirements:

|                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Formal essays (5 x 10%) ..... | 50% |
| Oral team presentation.....   | 5%  |
| Midterm exam.....             | 5%  |
| Usage quizzes.....            | 10% |
| Reading quizzes.....          | 10% |
| Summary/response papers ..... | 10% |

|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| Final exam..... | 10%  |
| Total           | 100% |

According to department policy, **no extra credit** is offered.

Explanation of assignments

**Formal essays.** The bulk of your grade will come from your ability to create formal written compositions through invention, organization, drafting, revision, and editing. Each of the five (5) essays will include time spent in various stages of the writing process. Essays will be drafted, will go through guided peer-editing, and will be revised by the original author before the instructor collects the paper for evaluation and assessment. All formal assignments must include all preliminary work in order for you to get credit for the paper. The five essays will represent a variety of writing styles and strategies which are designed to help you develop your college-level writing skills. **One essay (narration) will be written entirely in class.** Together, the formal essays will count as fifty (50) percent of the course grade, i.e., each will be worth ten (10) percent. The essays will exemplify the following writing methods:

- (1) Narration (This writing activity is to be done in class.)
- (2) Exposition and exemplification
- (3) Comparison and Contrast
- (4) Argument and Persuasion
- (5) Description and Casual Analysis

**Grading conference session.** After the first paper has been written, each student must make an appointment to speak with the instructor individually. This one-to-one interview will establish the basis for evaluation and grading of the written work produced in the course of the semester. The conferences will take place in the instructor’s office during office hours or at an appointed time.

**Oral team presentation.** According to new established guidelines, every student must participate in an oral team activity, which ties together with the assigned readings of the week in the *Readings for Writers*. By week 5, teams of 3-4 students will be formed, and presentation dates will be assigned by the instructor. In collaboration, members of the team will prepare a 10-minute oral presentation, which incorporates visual and textual materials. The presentations will take place throughout the remainder of the semester. The focus will be on the writing strategies in the readings, questions on meaning, issues on language, and connections with suitable biographical information about the author and the author’s purpose of writing the text in its historical and social context. The presentation will be followed by a brief (5 min.) critique from the class as a whole. This team presentation counts as five (5) percent of the semester grade.

**Midterm exam (in-class).** This exam counts as five (5) percent of the grade. The content of the midterm exam is left to the discretion of the instructor.

**Usage quizzes.** These activities form ten (10) percent of the grade. Because the intent of ENGL 1301 is to develop and practice writing skills that are academically and professionally essential, it is important to give brief (5-10

**minutes of class time) weekly attention to those grammatical and usage principles that are most frequently and glaringly violated. The following list may be regarded as a minimum and may be extended at the discretion of the instructor:**

- Correct use of the principal parts of verbs
- Agreement of subject and verb
- Agreement of pronoun and antecedent
- Correct use of pronoun form
- Correct choice between adjective and adverb
- Avoidance of sentence fragments
- Avoidance of run-together sentences and comma splices
- Sentence structure and emphasis
- Correct punctuation

**Reading quizzes.** These assignments form ten (10) percent of the course grade. Short quizzes (5-10 minutes of class time) will be given based on the readings in the *Readings for Writers*. The readings illustrate the required methods. The purpose of the quizzes is to ensure that the students have done the readings, comprehended their meaning, and are able to analyze and synthesize the content.

**Summary/response papers.** Effective summarizing of and responding to articles, papers, and books (among other things) is important for writing well and is a valuable skill in any college-level course. You will be required to write five (5) summary/responses to selected works. We will learn what makes an effective summary/response and will practice the skills as we write throughout the course. Primary texts and due dates will be listed on the calendar. These assignments will count for ten (10) percent of the course grade.

**Departmental final exam.** Students will take a final exam, based on usage and mechanics (basic editing skills). The final is an objective test, which will be administered (designed and scored) centrally by the Department of English. Your instructor does not know the detailed content of the exam in advance. The final comprises ten (10) percent of the grade.

## **Classroom Policies**

### *Individual and group responsibility*

During the semester you will be working in teams whose responsibility will be to read and provide constructive criticism on each member's written work and at times create a document (such as an oral team presentation) as a team. Because your input is essential to the success of the entire team, your attendance is required. Failure to work as part of the collaborative team will mean that you do not have the proper background to do the assignment and no grade will be recorded.

If you are to bring a draft of an assignment, make sure you are clear about its purpose and have that draft with you. Do not come to class without the needed materials, including your book and your drafts. You must have prepared the proper materials by the calendar deadline in order to be able to participate and get the full benefit of the class

interaction. Failure to work as part of a classroom cooperative will jeopardize your individual grade.

### *Assignments*

Because writing is a process and involves various stages, students are expected to work through projects in a step-by-step fashion and **turn in all of these steps** when the assignments are due. If any step in the process of a particular assignment is missing or completed unsatisfactorily, the final paper will not be accepted.

Your instructor may require that you submit all of your essays to a plagiarism detecting service such as turnitin.com. Your enrolling in the course and electing to stay in that section constitutes your agreeing to submit your work as your instructor requires.

### *Cell phones and electronics*

The use (including visible presence) of cell phones, text messagers, and all similar electronic devices is prohibited during class-time. Failure to comply to this policy will result to expulsion from the classroom. Even the visible presence of such a device during a test will result in a zero for that test. All such devices should be turned off or put in a silent mode and not be taken out during any class.

### *Computer use (for computer classrooms)*

Using the computer during class for other than class assignments will not be tolerated. If you access Facebook, Twitter, or any other site not affiliated with our coursework during class, you will be **asked to leave the classroom**, since it will be obvious that you do not care to attend to the class activities.

DO NOT check e-mail, surf, or engage in any activity with the computers while the instructor is lecturing or while you are working on an assignment. DO NOT use the computer for any activity other than that assigned. If you need to access the Internet or your email for the assignment, be sure you receive permission before accessing the sites. The penalties for using electronic devices for other than course work during class are:

- an absence being registered for that day
- a zero being recorded for the current assignment

## **University Policies**

### **Academic Honesty**

English Department policy states that a paper or assignment, which evidence can support as plagiarized or in any manner not the result of a student's own intellectual endeavors, will receive zero points. **The second offense will result in failure of the course and possible university disciplinary action.** Submitting your own previously written work for a current assignment or submitting an assignment in more than one class without the prior permission of the instructors is also considered academically dishonest. For information on plagiarism and other **Classroom Rules of Conduct**, see the following site: <http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide>.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination.

Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the **Office of Services for Students with Disabilities** (SSD) located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936.294.3512, TDD 936.294.3786, and email [disability@shsu.edu](mailto:disability@shsu.edu)). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. **NOTE: No accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Services for Students with Disabilities.**

### **Religious Holy Days**

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

### **Visitors in the Classroom**

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom. This policy is not intended to discourage the occasional visiting of classes by responsible persons. Obviously, however, the visiting of a particular class should be occasional and not regular, and it should in no way constitute interference with registered members of the class or the educational process.

### **Instructor Evaluations**

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.



**COURSE SCHEDULE\***

**\*NOTE: The syllabus/course schedule is tentative and subject to change.**

**Abbreviations: RFW = Readings for Writers  
HHH = Hodges Harbrace Handbook**

| <b>Date</b>   | <b>Topic</b>  | <b>Reading(s)</b>   | <b>Notes</b>  |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>WEEK 1</p> <p>August 23</p> <p>August 25</p>                           | <p>Introduction / Overview</p> <p>Syllabus.</p>   | <p>RFW 12-21</p> <p>Syllabus</p>  | <p><i>Late registration open.</i></p>   |
| <p>WEEK 2</p> <p>August 28</p> <p>August 30</p> <p>September 1</p>        | <p>The Writing Process</p> <p>Reading and Responding</p> <p>“Salvation”</p> <p>Reading Quiz #1</p> <p>Telling a Story/<br/>Narrative Topics</p> | <p>HHH 308-38</p> <p>HHH 497-508</p> <p>RFW 82-84</p> <p>RFW 167-70</p> | <p><i>Aug. 30: Last day to register and to process schedule changes online.</i></p> <p>Summary/Response due Aug. 30</p>   |
| <p>WEEK 3</p> <p>September 6</p> <p>September 8</p>                       | <p>Subjects and Verbs</p> <p>Academic Success Center</p> <p>Narrative Essay Part 1 (in class)</p>   | <p>HHH 2-13</p>   | <p><i>Sept. 4: Labor Day, holiday for students and faculty.</i></p> <p><i>Sept. 8: 12<sup>th</sup> class day. Last day to drop without a “Q” and receive 100% refund and to submit degree applications.</i></p> |
| <p>WEEK 4</p> <p>September 11</p> <p>September 13</p> <p>September 15</p> | <p>Usage Quiz #1</p> <p>Nouns and Pronouns</p> <p>Narrative Essay Part 2 (in class)</p> <p>Periods and Commas</p> <p>Conferences</p>            | <p>HHH 70-80</p> <p>HHH 158-72</p>                                      |   |



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| WEEK 5       |  |                    |                                  |
| September 18 | “Once More to the Lake”                  | RFW 402-07         | Summary/Response due<br>Sept. 18 |
|              | Reading Quiz #2                          |                    |                                  |
| September 20 | Sentence Structure                       | HHH 52-60          |                                  |
|              | “Theme for English B”                    | Handout            |                                  |
| September 22 | Examples                                 | RFW 240-44         |                                  |
|              | Group Presentations                      |                    |                                  |
| WEEK 6       |  |                    |                                  |
| September 25 | Usage Quiz #2                            |                    | Rough draft due Sept. 27         |
|              | Library Orientation                      |                    |                                  |
| September 27 | Peer Review Workshop                     | HHH 493-514        |                                  |
| September 29 | Plagiarism                               | HHH 566            |                                  |
|              | Formal Writing                           |                    |                                  |
| WEEK 7       |  |                    |                                  |
| October 2    | Paragraph Structure                      | HHH 353-73         | Essay #2 due Oct. 2              |
|              | “When I Heard the<br>Learned Astronomer” | Handout            |                                  |
| October 4    | Compare / Contrast                       |                    |                                  |
| October 6    | Midterm Review                           | RFW 288-94         |                                  |
| WEEK 8       |  |                    |                                  |
| October 9    | Midterm Exam                             |                    | Summary/Response due<br>Oct. 11  |
| October 11   | “Grant and Lee: A Study<br>in Contrasts” | RFW 300-03         |                                  |
|              | Reading Quiz #3                          |                    |                                  |
| October 13   | Group 1 Presentation                     |                    |                                  |
|              | Peer Review Workshop                     |                    | Rough Draft due Oct. 13          |
| WEEK 9       |  |                    |                                  |
| October 16   | MLA Style                                | HHH 516-27, 541-51 |                                  |
| October 14   | “Sonnet 73”                              | RFW 137-38         |                                  |

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|--|---|--|--|
| October 20   | Group 2 Presentation  |  | Essay #3 due 20 Oct.   |
| WEEK 10<br>October 23<br><br>October 25<br><br>October 27    | Argument and Persuasion<br><br>Usage Quiz #3<br><br>“A Good Man Is Hard to Find”<br><br>Reading Quiz #4<br><br>Group 3 Presentation<br><br>Research Methods | RFW 364-70<br><br><br>RFW 106-18<br><br><br>HHH 483-90 | <br><br><br>Summary Response due Oct. 25   |
| WEEK 11<br>October 30<br><br>November 1<br><br>November 3    | Peer Review Workshop<br><br>Fallacies<br><br>Group 4 Presentation   | <br><br><br>RFW 369-70 again                           | <br><br><br>Rough Draft due Oct. 30  |
| WEEK 12<br>November 6<br><br>November 8<br><br>November 10   | Usage Quiz #4<br><br>“A Supermarket in California”<br><br>Causal Analysis<br><br>Group 5 Presentation   | <br><br><br>Handout<br><br>RFW 338-42                  | Essay #4 due Nov. 6<br><br><br><i>Nov. 10: Last day to “Q” drop.</i><br><br><i>Students cannot drop after this date; they will receive grade earned.</i> |
| WEEK 13<br>November 13<br><br>November 15<br><br>November 17 | “A Modest Proposal”<br><br>Reading Quiz #5<br><br>Peer Review Workshop<br><br>Group 6 Presentation  | <br><br><br>RFW 377-83                                 | Summary/Response due Nov. 13<br><br>Rough Draft due. Nov. 15   |
| WEEK 14<br>November 20                                       | Misplaced Modifiers   | HHH 269-74   | Essay #5 due Nov. 20<br><br><i>Nov. 22-24: Thanksgiving holidays for students and</i>  |

|   |                                      |  |   |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|---|
|   |                                      |  | <i>faculty.</i>   |
| WEEK 15<br>November 27<br>November 29<br>December 1 | Self Assessments<br>Review<br>Review |  | <i>Nov. 27: Classes resume.<br/>Dec. 1: Last class day.<br/>Last day to resign by 5:00 p.m. in Registrar's Office.</i>  |
| Finals week<br>December 4-7                         | Departmental final                   | <i>The Hodges Harbrace Handbook and all the lectures</i> | <i>The final is an in-class final to be administered during the time to be specified for each section by the University. The final (10% of course grade) focuses on editing skills (grammar, usage, and mechanics).</i> |

**Grades will be posted by Monday, December 11, 12:00 p.m.**