

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

**Spring 2018; Credit 3**

**Meeting Days/Times:** 1301.03 Evans 260 12:00-12:50PM  
**Instructor:** Nathan Ridings  
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**Office Hours:** Monday 10-11:50AM & 1-1:50PM, Wednesday 1-1:50PM

### **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:*

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 5-percentage-point deduction from your end-of-semester grade.

Class activities and assignments (quizzes and exercises) **cannot be made up**. The midterm however can be made up if documentation for the absence is provided. Late papers will still be accepted, but at a 10-percentage-point deduction per class day they are late. No late papers will be accepted after the day of the class final.

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%
Final exam.....	10%
Peer Review and Summary & Response Papers .....	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 example
- (3) Comparison and Contrast
- (4) Argument and Persuasion
- (5) The fifth method is selected from the following:
  - Description
  - Process Analysis
  - Division or Analysis
  - Classification
  - Cause and Effect
  - Definition

**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 *Bedford Reader*. 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 counts as five (5) percent of the grade. This exam will focus on grammar, literary terminology, and on the in-class readings.

**Usage quizzes.** These 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 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 *Bedford Reader*. 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.

**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.

**Additional components.** These assignments are to be chosen by the instructor from the following assignment types: discussion board, blog, or journal postings; summary or response papers; peer workshop responses; writing efficient and appropriate informative e-mail messages. Any combination of these assignments will add up to (but not exceed) ten (10) percent of the course grade.

- *Summary/response papers:* Effective summarizing of 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 complete five (5) summary responses of selected works throughout the course. We will learn what makes an effective summary and will practice the skill prior to your creating your own. Primary texts and due dates will be listed on the calendar.

- *Peer workshop responses:* As part of your writing you will learn to critique the writing of others and of your peers. Time will be spent in class learning how to provide constructive feedback and response to a variety of writing samples. In order to turn your final paper in for grading, you must receive two peer evaluations and provide two evaluations for your peers. Your written evaluations to your peers will also be assessed and computed as part of your final course grade. In addition, you will be required to provide verbal feedback to your classmates' oral presentations.

## 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 are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex (tel. 936.294.1720). 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 Counseling Center.

### **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:**      **BR = The Bedford Reader**  
                              **BH = The Bedford Handbook**

Date	Topic	Reading(s)	Notes
WEEK 1 January 17-19	Introduction to the course.  Distribution of the syllabus.  Overview of the course.  Rhetorical Triangle	N/A	<i>Late registration. Process class schedule changes.</i>
WEEK 2 January 22-26	Rhetorical Appeals  Narrative Essays  Storytelling Devices  Subject-Verb Agreement	M: "Conveying a clearly stated Thesis" Pg 332 HH Handbooks  W: Shame  F: Terrorism: America in Fear	.
WEEK 3 January 29-Feb. 2	Hero's Journey  Pre-writing  Basic Elements of an Essay  In-class Essay  Subjects vs Objects	M: My Name is Margaret  W: A Good Man Is Hard to Find  F: N/A – Narrative Essay in class	<i>Feb. 1: 12<sup>th</sup> class day. Last day to drop spring courses without a "Q" and receive 100% refund.</i>  <i>Narrative Essay in class</i>  Grammar Quiz Wednesday
WEEK 4 February 5-9	Organizing a Formal Essay  Research  Exposition & Explanation  Compound & Complex Sentences	M: Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall...  W: Solving the Drug Problem in the United States  F: Peer Review	Essay 2 Rough Draft Due Friday in Class  Grammar Quiz Wednesday
WEEK 5 February 12-16	Literary Terms – Set 1  Description  Abstract vs Concrete Writing	M: Hell  W: Body Modification: Think about It!  F: Shrew The Littlest	Grammar Quiz Wednesday

	Comma Use	Mammal	
WEEK 6 February 19-23	Compare & Contrast  Literary Terms – Set 2  Going Beyond Surface Level  Adjectives & Adverbs	M: Gant and Lee: A Study in Contrasts  W: “OMGILY2!!” Online Dating Is at Your Own Risk  F: “Good Style” HH Handbook Pg 225-236	Essay 2 Final Draft Due Friday  Grammar Quiz Wednesday
WEEK 7 February 26-March 2	Process Analysis  Technical Documents  Possessives & Plurals	M: My Strangled Speech  W: Bullied  F: Peer Review	Essay 3 Rough Draft Due in Class Friday  Grammar Quiz Wednesday
WEEK 8 March 5-9	Choose Presentation  Performative Speech	M: “I Have a Dream”  W: Gettysberg Address  F: Midterm	
WEEK 9 March 12-16			<i>March 12-16: Spring Break</i>
WEEK 10 March 19-23	Argumentation  Logical Fallacies	M: A Modest Proposal  W: People Out on a Limb  F: “Evaluating Sources” Pg 483-490	<i>March 20: Classes resume.</i>  Essay 3 Final Draft Due Friday
WEEK 11 March 26-30	Definition  Context Clues & Etymology  Colon, Parenthesis, and Semicolon	M: Invisibly Wounded  W: Immigrants in America	<i>March 30: Good Friday – Holiday for students and faculty.</i>  Grammar Quiz Wednesday
WEEK 12 April 2-6	Division/Classification  Literary Theory  Logical Fallacies Continued  Misplaced & Dangling Modifiers	M: Kinds of Discipline  W: Color of Their Skin AND Content of Their Character  F: Peer Review	<i>April 6: Last day to “Q” drop.</i>  <i>Students cannot drop after this date; they will receive grade earned.</i>  Grammar Quiz Wednesday  Essay 4 Rough Draft Due in Class Friday

WEEK 13 April 9-13	Analysis  Understanding Tropes & Patterns  Literary Analysis	M: A Peaceful Woman Explains Why She Carries A Gun  W: Woman is a Noun  F: "Writing About Literature" HH Handbook Pgs 625-635	Grammar Quiz Wednesday
WEEK 14 April 16-20	Genre  New Essay Forms	M: Why We Don't Complain  W: F: Thoughts About the Internet	Essay 4 Final Draft Due Friday  Grammar Quiz Wednesday
WEEK 15 April 23-27	Meetings	M: Meetings  W: Meetings  F: Meetings	Rough Draft of Essay 5 Due at Meeting
WEEK 16 April 30-May 4	Review	M: Meetings  W: Review  F: Review	<i>May 4: Last class day. Last day to resign from spring courses</i>  Grammar Quiz Wednesday (Overall Grammar Review)
Finals week May 7-10	Departmental final	The <i>Bedford Handbook</i> and all the lectures	<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>  Essay 5 Final Draft Due

**Grades will be posted by Monday, May 14, 12:00 p.m.**