



Course Syllabus: Composition I

Meeting: MWF 11:30–12:20 (ENC 1101.0005), VAB 217

Term: Spring 2014

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Office Hours: MW 14:00–16:00; appointments strongly recommended.

Visit <http://friend.lattiss.com> for availability.

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will review current research on writing to learn how you and other people (students, academics, and other professionals) write in various situations. In our studies, we will focus on how:

- writers and readers create meaning with texts
- certain writing processes and practices can be more or less effective
- people in different groups shape writing (and vice-versa)
- writing in the university is different from high school and among fields

You will use writing as a tool to help you learn each of these concepts, and you will become more aware of your style and ability as a writer. You will also learn how to examine the writing expectations in various settings, making you a more successful student and a better writer. See Table 1 for an overview of the topics studied in this course and a list of the major required papers.

2. COURSE OUTCOMES

Through successful completion of this course and its activities, you should be able to

- acquire and use strategies for reading complex, college-level texts;
- understand the *fluid* nature of the writing process through its various components and be able to apply those components conscientiously and appropriately;
- use *discipline-specific writing* as a means of being heard
- identify characteristics of a *discourse community* and respond to them appropriately; and
- understand the concept of *rhetorical situation* and be aware of its influence on your reading and writing activities, both in and out of class.

3. MATERIALS FOR CLASS

- Required
 - (1) Wardle and Downs, *Writing About Writing: An Introduction to the Conversation*, either
 - the brand-new *Second Edition* with the white cover (ISBN 978-1-4576-3694-3) or
 - the *First Edition* with the blue cover (ISBN 978-0-312-53493-6)
 - (2) Lunsford, *The Everyday Writer: A Brief Reference*, either
 - the *Fifth Edition* (ISBN 978-1-4576-6439-7) or
 - the *Fourth Edition* (ISBN 978-0-312-66486-2)
 - (3) Reliable connection to the Internet. Make a plan for where you will go if your device or connection dies.
 - (4) Automated, reliable backup system. Every semester, I have a student who loses everything due to a hard drive failure. Don't be that student.
 - (5) Regular access to your Knights Mail account. I check my account multiple times per day and will almost always reply within one business day. You should check yours *at least* once per day, but definitely before each class meeting. (Why not set it up on your phone?)
- Recommended
 - (1) Google account connected to your Webcourses account.¹ This helps make collaboration a breeze.
 - (2) Dropbox account into which you store all your work. This takes care of backups.
 - (3) Your own computer running a full (non-mobile) operating system. Some of the work we do is much simpler with new software and the ability to run multiple programs simultaneously. Phones are too limited, and tablets can get frustrating.²

4. GRADING & ASSESSMENT

Your grade in this course will be based on two holistic grades listed in Table 1(b). Think of these like grades for a semester-long project: the components work together to build the overall value of the whole, which will be graded in this course. You will get consistent feedback throughout the semester to help ensure you are on-track for a successful grade. Additionally, each major assignment will have a specific assessment rubric, and every smaller assignment will have detailed completion guidelines that will be provided on Webcourses. The smaller assignments are designed to help you build skills and confidence as you work toward your final portfolio. They should not be dismissed.

Please note the following distinctive characteristics about grading in this course:

- You can earn a D for an assignment or major component, but you cannot earn a D for this course. To pass, you must earn at least a C– (140 points).
- The grade of NC (no credit) can be assigned at the instructor's discretion only if you complete all course work on time, participate fully, and fail to produce satisfactory work for the class.

4.1. Grading Standards. Participation in all activities, and successful completion of all assignments (as defined by each assignment's assessment rubric) will earn you a passing grade of C, indicating that you have achieved the expected outcomes of the course. If you do not take part in all assignments and activities,

¹You can connect the two using the Settings link in the top-right corner of Webcourses.

²Various computer labs across campus, or the loaner machines at the library, can work in a pinch.

GRADE	MIN. POINTS		
A	185		
A–	180		
B+	175		
B	165		
B–	160		
C+	155		
C	145		
C–	140		
NC	Unsatisfactory		
F	Partial/Poor		

(a) Grade Calculations

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS
Product (portfolio contents)	100
Process (participation & collaboration)	100
TOTAL	200

(b) Grade Distribution

FIGURE 1. Course Grading System

you should not expect a passing grade in the course. If the quality of your work or your participation falls below acceptable standards (i.e. if you are heading for failure), I will be sure to let you know. Along more optimistic lines, grades of B or A are used for work that is good and excellent, respectively, surpassing the basic expectations. Assignment sheets will suggest ways to exceed those expectations, so you won't have to guess. If your performance exceeds basic standards, I will be sure to let you know.

Besides participation, all grades for this course come from products turned in at the end of the semester (see Table 1(b)). This is by design, to allow you the chance to experiment and take risks as you progress through the course. If your research leads you down a dead-end, your grade will not be affected. In lieu of grades, you will receive regular feedback from your peers and instructor about what is and isn't working well with your research and various written products. Take the feedback seriously, and revise your work regularly throughout the semester so that your final portfolio best reflects your ability.

Please note these odd characteristics of grading in this course:

- (1) You will not earn a grade on any assignment before the final portfolio. You'll get feedback, but not a grade.
- (2) **You cannot pass this course unless you earn at least a C– on your portfolio.** In other words, a passing score (≥ 70 points) on your portfolio qualifies you to have your portfolio and participation scores averaged into a final grade.

4.2. **Expectations.** While enrolled in this course, you can expect these things from me:³

- enthusiasm for research, teaching, and writing;
- clarity and thoroughness in assignments, goals, and expectations;
- personal interest in your learning and work;
- freedom to be creative with the products you create for this course;
- critical feedback to help you improve your thinking and writing; and
- preparation to ensure a beneficial and productive semester.

³The structure and approach of the Expectations section is adapted from the English 239 syllabus of Cheryl E. Ball, ISU.

If at any point you feel I am failing to meet any of those expectations, please let me know. Your feedback is the best way I can learn how to improve my teaching.

As we progress through the semester, your peers and I will expect these things from you:

- consistent and active participation in class activities, including peer review assignments;
- informed contributions, based on sufficient preparation and consideration (i.e. doing the readings and research)
- an open mind, tolerant and curious about differences of opinion; and
- honest and polite commentary and feedback that helps your peers improve their work.

During class discussions and as you work on your assignments, keep in mind that I value these things in my students:

- thought-out and supported opinions;
- willingness to take risks and try new approaches to solving problems, as risks often create the greatest opportunities;
- creativity in how you respond to the challenges created and faced by this course; and
- excellence in your work, showing the best you can produce.

5. POLICIES & MISCELLANEA

5.1. Participation. Your attendance is mandatory, and your success in this course depends on your active engagement. If you are absent more than three times, I will recommend that you drop the class; more than six times, and you risk failing the course. If you must be absent, it is *your* responsibility to complete the day's activities and contact your peers to determine what you missed and how you need to recover. Any absence will cause you to forfeit the points for any participation or activities for those days. (Note that because major papers are collected online, absence from class will not affect the deadline or score for online submissions.)

Absences due to University-sponsored events—such as music performances, athletic competitions, debates, and some conferences—can excuse you from certain minor assignments (but not major papers).

TABLE 1. Assignment Overview

WEEKS	UNIT	MAJOR PAPERS
1	Academic Reading	
2–4	The Writing Process	Process Analysis
5–12	Discourse Community	
5	<i>Concepts</i>	Characteristics Analysis
6–7	<i>Lexia & Membership</i>	Definition Analysis
8–9	<i>Genre Awareness</i>	Genre Analysis
10–12	<i>Authority & Identity</i>	Accommodation Analysis
13–14	Rhetorical Situations	Rhetorical Analysis
15–16	Revision & Reflection	Final Portfolio

When participating in school-sponsored events, submit a Program Verification form to your instructor no later than the day you return to class. Absences due to religious holidays should be discussed with the instructor during the first week of the semester.

Please note that major assignments will be submitted online, so attendance (or lack thereof) does not affect your ability to submit work. You are still expected to turn in your work regardless of whether you are in class that day.

Treat participation in class activities (including discussions, peer review assignments, etc.) as evidence of attending to the course. I expect complete participation on all assignments from each student. We both know that the most boring classes are the ones where the instructor does all the talking. Don't let that be the case here. Share your thinking, provide your opinion, and join in the work. When in doubt, speak your mind—it's the only way your peers and your instructor will know what you're thinking, and the only way we can compliment, complement, or correct, as needed.

5.2. Gordon Rule. Composition I (ENC 1101) is a Gordon Rule class, meaning that you will be writing at least four major assignments, and you must earn a "C" or better to earn credit for the course. The assignments that contribute to your final portfolio meet this Gordon Rule requirement.

5.3. Etiquette. In short, the members of this class, both the instructor and the students, are expected to behave courteously and professionally in all interactions. Under that umbrella statement, the following general guidelines should be followed in any class here at the University of Central Florida (UCF).

Tolerance: Many of our discussions will be driven by opinions and based on challenging material. Since we are all writers, everyone in class will have personal experiences and viewpoints that can contribute meaning to the conversations. All participants are expected to treat others with dignity and respect and are expected to refrain from insensitive comments, including racist, ageist, sexist, classist, homophobic, or other disparaging and unwarranted views.

Timeliness: Students are expected to be ready for class at its designated time just as much as you expect the instructor to dismiss class by the designated time. Should you arrive to class late for any reason, please do so with a minimum level of disruption. If you need to leave class early for any reason, please notify the instructor in advance and be as non-disruptive as possible when leaving.

Cellphones: As a courtesy, all cellphones should be silenced during this or any other class. Should your phone accidentally create a distraction during class, you should take action to eliminate the distraction without adding to it.

Computers: You will need to use your computer in class regularly to collaborate with others and complete your assignments. Having the discipline of shutting off distractions (such as Facebook, chat applications, etc.) improves your ability to focus and participate meaningfully.

Messages: Grammar, spelling, and punctuation reflect the formality of the situation in which they appear. Keep in mind that emails and discussion posts you write for this class are being read by an English teacher in a composition course. Though I don't expect discussion posts to be perfectly error-free (they're not that important), I do expect you to treat written language with respect. Complete sentences and full words ("you" instead of "u") are always a good idea, even if the intended audience is your peers.

Email: As a UCF student, you have access to a Knights Mail account, which will be the primary method of communication for course-related announcements and information. Your instructor generally

replies to messages within 24 hours Sunday through Thursday; messages sent on Fridays or Saturdays might get a delayed response.

5.4. **Computer Reliability.** Save everything, and save often. Computer problems are regular part of life, and I expect you to prepare for them rather than use them as an excuse for late work. Every semester, your instructor has students sustain a complete hard drive failure, losing all their work. Such failures are unavoidable, but losing data is not, if you plan ahead. Working backups and protection from Windows viruses are essential to avoid the most common catastrophes. A free Dropbox account (<http://dropbox.com>) provides convenient and automatic backups, allows you to access your files from any networked computer in case disaster befalls yours, and preserves old versions of files so that if a file is deleted or altered, a previous copy can be restored. Regardless of the solution you choose, know how you will keep moving if your computer fails.

5.5. **Helpful Resources.**

5.5.1. *Writing Assistance.* The University Writing Center (UWC) provides free help for students writing papers for class. Consultations (which can be in-person or online) can help with planning, drafting, or revising your papers. Consider using the UWC's services, particularly in the early stages of planning a document. Learn more at <http://uwc.ucf.edu>, by calling 407-823-2197, or by visiting the first floor of Colbourn Hall. Please note that the weeks of midterms and finals can be very busy there; you are strongly encouraged to make a reservation. A link to the UWC appointment scheduler is available in Webcourses.

5.5.2. *Additional Support Services.*

Counseling and Psychological Services: 407-823-2811, CAPS 101, <http://caps.sdes.ucf.edu>

Knights Helping Knights Pantry: 407-UCF-FOOD, FC-G 171, <http://knightspantry.org>

Student Disability Services: 407-823-2371 (TDD 407-823-2116), FC-G 185, <http://sds.sdes.ucf.edu>

Other: See the Student Development and Enrollment Services (SDES) site for a complete listing of offices available to assist students: <http://www.sdes.ucf.edu/departments>

5.6. **Plagiarism.** Students at UCF are expected to act with integrity, in terms of both classroom behavior and intellectual property. For details, please see the Golden Rule Student Handbook, section UCF-5.008.1.e. Violations of this ethical cornerstone will result in disciplinary action, which can include any of the following:

- loss of credit on an assignment
- a "Z grade" for the course (see <http://z.ucf.edu> for details)
- loss of credit for the course
- removal from the University

In an effort to protect the integrity of your work and ensure it is not re-used by others later, your instructor may ask that your assignments be submitted to Turnitin.com by their deadlines.

In this course, we will be discussing the use of outside texts for writing in and out of the classroom, specifically the use of source documentation/citation/attribution. If you have questions about correct documentation of sources, consult a writing handbook (such as *The Everyday Writer: A Brief Reference* by Andrea Lunsford), the style guide for the citation system you are using (such as the *MLA Handbook for*

Writers of Research Papers, by Joseph Gibaldi), the UWC (see Section 5.5.1), or your instructor during office hours. Use of outside sources without proper credit, turning in work that is not your own, or assisting others to do either are each considered plagiarism and are subject to the above consequences.

5.7. Accommodations. At UCF, we are committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has 1) registered with Student Disability Services [FC-G 185, phone 407-823-2371, or TTY/TDD 407-823-2116], and 2) met with the instructor to request accommodations.

More personally, I am dedicated to incorporating inclusive practices for all students within the classroom, as well as providing for specific accommodation requests. Beyond the provisions of Student Disability Services, please feel free to contact me with any suggestions and/or requests you have regarding the accessibility of information and/or interactions in this course. I am always interested in these types of suggestions, as they may not only meet a specific student's needs, but could be employed to make the overall class more accessible and inclusive for all students.⁴

5.8. UCF Allies. Your instructor is a UCF Ally for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and questioning (LGBTQ) community on campus. All UCF Allies offer acceptance, support, and a safe space for anyone who is LGBTQ or is working with issues of sexual identity. Allies answer questions and hold discussions in an open and non-judgmental way, and they can refer you to campus and community resources, as needed. All UCF Allies have attended a training workshop to learn about oppression, heterosexism, homophobia, the coming out process, and the benefits and responsibilities of being an Ally. Your instructor occasionally helps facilitate these workshops, so you are especially welcome to reach out to him to discuss any related issues. Feel free to visit during office hours or contact him by email. For more information about the UCF Allies program, visit <http://allies.sdes.ucf.edu/faq>.

5.9. Instructor's Research. For the purposes of conducting research or improving his teaching practices, your instructor may use your work anonymously as an example in other classes, in workshops and lectures, or in publications. For example, I might quote from one of your assignments in a journal article or conference presentation, without revealing your identity. If you do **not** wish your work to be used in this manner, let me know in writing (via email is fine) within one week after the date your final grade is available. (This date is listed on UCF's Academic Calendar.) Your course grade will not be affected by your decision to permit or deny my use of your work. You can ensure my impartiality by notifying me after the date grades are due, which is also listed on UCF's Academic Calendar.⁵

⁴The second ¶ in the "Accommodations" section is adapted from the syllabus of Barbi Smyser-Fauble, ISU.

⁵The "Instructor's Research" section is adapted from the syllabus of Beth Rapp-Young, UCF.

6. COURSE CALENDAR

UNIT	WEEK	DATE	READINGS/HOMEWORK (BEFORE CLASS)	GUIDING QUESTION (DURING CLASS)	
Reading in the University	1	6 Jan	n/a	What is a “Composition Class”?	
		8 Jan	Swales, “Create a Research Space (CARS)” WAW 6–8 Syllabus Quiz	What are the tricks to reading a research article in an academic journal? UCF Drop/Swap Deadline Thursday	
The Writing Process		10 Jan	Perl, “Composing Process” WAW 191–215	How can we study the writing process if it’s all in our head? UCF Add Deadline	
		2	13 Jan	Skim EW 52–56; write self-portrait; record yourself writing it	What makes a person a “bad writer”? 2-page Writer Self-Portrait Due
		15 Jan	Lamott, “Shitty First Drafts” WAW 301–304 Keep a complete writing journal for two days.	What makes a document or essay “bad writing”?	
		17 Jan	Berkenkotter and Murray, “Decisions and Revisions...” and “Response of a Lab Rat...” WAW 216–235 D/J 3–5	How can the audience influence what authors write?	
		3	20 Jan	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—No class	
		22 Jan	Transcribe your recording: How would you apply Perl’s process to it?	What can you look for in your transcriptions?	
		24 Jan	Read Rose (WAW 236) or Williams (WAW 37)	What can you assert or conclude based on your observations?	
		4	27 Jan	EW, 82–94 (Reviewing and Revising); review assignment sheet	What do we mean by “revising”? What are you qualified to review?
		29 Jan	Write shitty first draft of Process Analysis	What can other students do to make their papers as awesome as yours?	
	31 Jan	Finalize Process Analysis	What have we figured out so far? Process Analysis Due		
Discourse Communities	5	3 Feb	Swales, “The Concept of Discourse Community” WAW 466–480	What is a Discourse Community?	
		5 Feb	Review Characteristics assignment sheet; brainstorm groups	How do certain groups exhibit Swales’ characteristics?	
		7 Feb	Brainstorm a list of new vocabulary words from this class	What are the effects of a community’s specific lexis?	
Lexia	6	10 Feb	Gee, “Literacy, Discourse, and Linguistics: Introduction” WAW 481–495	How can language control group membership?	
		12 Feb	Choose a term with specific, rich meaning in an academic discourse; bring dictionary definition.	What does it mean to be “literate”?	

UNIT	WEEK	DATE	READINGS/HOMEWORK (BEFORE CLASS)	GUIDING QUESTION (DURING CLASS)
<i>Genre</i>	7	14 Feb	Find discipline-specific definition of your term.	What is “mushfaking”, and is it a good thing?
		17 Feb	Ask member of community how he/she learned the term	What are your non-dominant discourses?
		19 Feb	Write shitty first draft of Definition paper	How much can you learn about a group through the words they use?
		21 Feb	Identify traits/characteristics of academic articles	Why do we write the way(s) we do? Multi-Dimensional Definition Due
	8	24 Feb	Devitt, “Generalizing about Genre” (Get from Webcourses), pp. 573–580	What “recurring situations” exist in academic writing?
		26 Feb	Write one message in two genres	What affordances and constraints are created by the genres we use?
		28 Feb	Porter, “Intertextuality and the Discourse Community” WAW 86–96	What is plagiarism?
	X	3–7 Mar	Spring Break—No class	
	9	10 Mar	Brainstorm groups that could benefit from an awareness of genre, intertextuality, or discourse communities	How do writers decide what genre to use for their ideas?
		12 Mar	Write shitty first draft of Genre Analysis	What can we learn about a situation by looking at the written responses to it?
		14 Mar	Wardle, “Identity, Authority, and Learning to Write in New Workplaces” WAW 520–537 D/J 4, 6	What could we have told Alan to make things work? Genre Analysis Due
<i>Authority</i>	10	17–21 Mar	Friend at Conference—No class (UCF Withdrawal Deadline 3/18)	
	11	24 Mar	Penrose and Geisler, “Reading and Writing Without Authority” WAW 602–617 D/J 1, 2	What advice do you have for Janet? for Roger?
		26 Mar	Read Science Accommodation sheet	What kind of authority can you bring to your papers? to your major?
		28 Mar	Mirabelli, “Learning to Serve” WAW 538–555	How do genre and authority relate?
	12	31 Mar	McCarthy, “Stranger in Strange Lands” WAW 667–699 D/J 1, 3, 7	What advice do you give to Dave? What advice does McCarthy give you?
		2 Apr	Bring in article on science finding	Which of your two articles is better? (Why is that a trick question?)
		4 Apr	Keller, “Studies Explore...” WAW 595–601 D/J 1, 2	How different can two articles be if they’re about the same thing?
	13	7 Apr	Write shitty first draft of Science Accommodation	How can your writing show the conversation?
		9 Apr	Grant-Davie, “Rhetorical Situations and Their Constituents” in WAW textbook D/J 1, 3, 5	How can writing be a negotiation?

UNIT	WEEK	DATE	READINGS/HOMEWORK (BEFORE CLASS)	GUIDING QUESTION (DURING CLASS)
Rhetorical Situations		11 Apr	Haas and Flower, "Rhetorical Reading Strategies and the Construction of Meaning" WAW 120-38 D/J 1, 3	Who are Haas and Flower writing to, and how can you tell? How does a reader construct new meaning while reading? Science Accommodation Due
	14	14 Apr	Bring in informational textual artifact. Brainstorm controversial topics.	What are the rhetorical situations and exigencies of "informational" texts? What are the constraints of writing for school?
		16 Apr	Write shitty first draft of Navigating Sources	What are you good seeing that can make other students' papers better?
		18 Apr	Finalize draft	What's left to do? Navigating Sources Due
Final Portfolios	15	21 Apr	EW 99-101; write Course Audit cover letter; revise major papers; prepare final portfolio	How do your writing and revisions demonstrate that you "got" the course? Are you a Stranger in Strange Lands?
	16	Exams	Finalize your portfolio	Any last-minute panic attacks? Portfolio Due

6.1. **Changes.** Material in the preceding schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Students will be notified of any changes in class. If relevant, changes will also be reflected on Webcourses.

6.2. **Final Exams.** Because this class includes a portfolio that documents your progress over the semester, there is no final exam. However, all instructors at UCF are required to hold class during exam periods. Therefore, for students having trouble submitting their final portfolios, a troubleshooting class will be held during the exam periods below. These class sessions will meet in the Texts & Technology Lab, located in CNH 207C, **Wednesday, 23 April 2014, 10:00-12:50.**

7. WORKS CITED

- Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2009. Print.
- Lunsford, A.A. *The Everyday Writer: A Brief Reference*. 4th ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010. Print.
- Wardle, Elizabeth and Douglas Downs. *Writing About Writing: An Introduction to the Conversation*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011. Print.