**ENGL 135 A02/A06: Academic Reading and Writing**

**Course Outline**

**January-April 2012**

**Contact information**

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**Calendar course description**

Practice of skills needed for successful academic writing in a variety of subject areas. Analysis of rhetorical, stylistic, research, and documentation techniques; development of these techniques through practical writing assignments. Balance of lectures and discussion.

**Course overview**

ENGL 135 introduces you to university-level reading and writing. Its goal is to enable you to build on the reading and writing skills you have developed through your earlier school years and to progress toward the advanced level of literacy that is the hallmark of the educated citizen.

ENGL 135 will help you develop the core transferable skills in critical thinking, reading, and writing that you will use in your university courses, regardless of your program of studies. Through the analysis of a variety of challenging readings, you will discover the characteristics and conventions used by scholars in different disciplines. You will explore different genres of academic writing and how these reflect different rhetorical purposes. You will practise typical academic writing tasks, including writing a basic research paper, and will learn strategies for reading and writing more efficiently and for approaching new writing tasks. You will also learn how to use reflection and self-assessment to become a more independent and competent reader and writer. Through these experiences, you will prepare yourself for the increasingly challenging reading and writing you will do as you advance through your degree program and beyond.

**Prerequisites**

You are eligible to take ENGL 135 if you have the required final grade in English 12 (or equivalent), an LPI score of 5, or 1.5 units of English.

**Course goals and learning objectives**

The course goals state what the course should help students learn; the learning objectives state what you should be able to demonstrate during and at the end of the course.

The course content will focus on meeting the course objectives described below.

**Goal: To strengthen students’ reading skills**

**Learning objectives:** You should be able to

* use reading strategies to comprehend challenging texts
* identify the main and supporting ideas in what you read
* analyze academic writing in terms of rhetorical purpose, audience, content, genre, pattern of development, and stylistic features

**Goal: To encourage students to respond critically to ideas**

**Learning objectives:** You should be able to

* distinguish between fact and opinion
* analyze the reasoning behind an argument
* take a critical stance toward ideas, raising questions, examining evidence, and evaluating arguments on the basis of reason

**Goal: To prepare students for writing in courses across the curriculum**

**Learning objectives:** You should be able to

* focus on a purpose for writing
* use writing as a means of learning
* approach a writing task as a process of planning, outlining, drafting, revising, and editing
* summarize effectively
* incorporate source material into their writing according to standard academic conventions
* write well-structured sentences and paragraphs in standard English
* critique your own and others’ writing

**Goal: To help students develop basic information literacy skills**

**Learning objectives:** You should be able to

* develop research questions
* determine appropriate sources
* use the print and electronic resources of the library to locate sources
* evaluate sources for authority, relevance, timeliness, and other criteria

**Goal: To help students develop awareness of their progress as readers and writers**

**Learning objectives:** You should be able to

* appreciate the importance of strong academic reading and writing skills to your undergraduate studies and your career
* reflect on your progress as a reader and writer and set goals for yourself
* make use of appropriate resources to support your academic reading and writing, including dictionaries; spelling, usage, grammar, and style guides; and ESL resources
* effectively manage your reading and writing tasks

**Required texts**

You will require two texts for ENGL 135:

* ***The Active Reader*, Second Edition, by Eric Henderson**

This textbook, which is written by a UVic ENGL 135 instructor, features a set of contemporary academic and professional readings along with guidance on the academic reading and writing tasks you will encounter in your university studies.

* ***Academic Writing Essentials* (buy new, packaged with MyCanadianCompLab)**

This concise and easy-to-use reference includes the essential information you need to write successfully in your university courses. *AWE* covers punctuation, mechanics, and style, as well as provides strategies for reading, planning, writing, and revising.

Both textbooks are available at the UVic Bookstore.

**Course resources**

In addition to your textbooks and any handouts, a number of other resources are available to support your learning in ENGL 135.

* [***The Active Reader* website**](http://www.oupcanada.com/higher_education/companion/literature/9780195425154/student_resources.html)

The companion site for your textbook includes exercises, additional readings, updated documentation guidelines, and activities to accompany the readings in *The Active Reader.* As a user of *The Active Reader*, you also have access to other online resources from Oxford University Press, including quizzes, exercises, and much more.

* [**My Canadian CompLabwebsite**](http://www.mycanadiancomplab.ca)

With your copy of *Academic Writing Essentials*, you will receive a time-limited subscription to My Canadian CompLab, developed by Pearson and featuring exercises, reference material, and even individualized feedback in an online composing space.

You’ll be given information in class about how to find your English 135 class on Pearson’s site.

* **The Writing Centre**

The Writing Centre provides free one-on-one tutoring to help students build their writing skills and proficiency in English. The centre also runs workshops that address common problems in academic writing. You can [book appointments online](http://www.ltc.uvic.ca/servicesprograms/twc.php) or visit on a drop-in basis.

The Writing Centre is located in Room 135F of the Learning Commons, in the McPherson Library. Some sessions, though, will be held in the evenings in residence.

* **UVic Libraries**

The [Research Help](http://library.uvic.ca/site/research/index.html) link at the UVic Libraries Gateway offers students help with their research, writing papers, locating resources, and identifying people to ask for more help. The Research Help section includes links to eTutorials on basic research skills.

* **CALL Facility**

The CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) facility offers software, audio, and video resources for language learners, including ESL learners. Resources are available on an individual, drop-in basis. The CALL Facility is located in the basement of the Clearihue building (A012). You can contact the CALL facility by phone at 721-8959 or by email <[calllab@uvic.ca](mailto:calllab@uvic.ca)>. Because of recent and ongoing construction, there is likely to be changes throughout the semester; please contact the lab before trying to go there, especially if you have limited time available.

**Course requirements**

As part of the requirements for successful completion of ENGL 135, students are required to write a minimum of 3000 final (that is, edited and proofread) words, along with exercises and other assignments**. If you fail to complete a major assignment, you may not reach this requirement. If that is the case, you would receive an “N” (incomplete) for the course.**

The following are the types and value of the assignments you will complete in ENGL 135.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment Type** | **Assignment** | **Date Due** | **Value** |
| Self-assessment/reflection | Moodle Reading Journal | Ongoing | 10% |
| Short writing assignments | 1. Summary (approximately 500 words) 2. Research Proposal (300 words) 3. Annotated bibliography (500 words) | 1. Jan. 19 2. Feb. 6 3. Mar. 8 | 1. 10% 2. 5% 3. 10% |
| Rhetorical analysis (in-class) | A rhetorical analysis of a text (1000 words) | Feb. 27 (in-class) | 15% |
| Essay/research paper | An essay or research paper requiring multiple sources (1250 words) | Mar. 29 | 25% |
| Final exam | Date to be assigned by university | TBA | 25% |

Note: **Hard copies** of assignments are due **at the beginning of class on the due date** (with the exception of the on-line Moodle Journal entries and the in-class essay). I do not accept electronic copies of assignments, unless you have requested and received advance permission.

Late assignments will be accepted without an excuse**, but 5% will be deducted for each 24 hours (or portion thereof), to a maximum deduction of 35%.** If you think you have a good reason for being late, you should request an extension before the due date. Documentation of illness or strife will allow for exemption from late penalties.

**Grading**

The writing you do in ENGL 135 will be evaluated according to the Department of English’s grading standards for first-year writing, which provide detailed criteria for each letter grade. The grading standards are available on the course Moodle page as well as at the following page: <http://english.uvic.ca/undergrad/grading_standards.html>. Your work will also be evaluated in terms of how well it meets the requirements of the assignment and your achievement of the learning objectives of the course.

The following table shows how the letter grade or percentage score you receive on an assignment corresponds to the university’s standard grading system:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Grade Points** | **%** | **Description (from the University of Victoria Undergraduate Calendar)** |
| A+ | 9 | 90–100 | **Exceptional** (A+), **outstanding** (A), and **excellent** (A-) performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students, these grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectations, and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter. |
| A | 8 | 85-89 |
| A- | 7 | 80-84 |
| B+ | 6 | 75-79 | **Very good** (B+), **good** (B), and **solid** (B-) performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students, these grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or an excellent grasp in one area balanced with a satisfactory grasp in the other area(s). |
| B | 5 | 70-74 |
| B- | 4 | 65-69 |
| C+ | 3 | 60-64 | **Satisfactory** (C+) or **minimally satisfactory** (C) performance. These grades indicate a satisfactory (only) performance and knowledge of the subject matter. |
| C | 2 | 55-59 |
| D | 1 | 50-54 | **Marginal** performance. This grade indicates a superficial grasp of the subject matter. |
| F | 0 | 0–49 | **Unsatisfactory** performance. |

**Course policies and expectations**

The following course policies and expectations apply to all sections of ENGL 135, including ours.

**You can expect your instructor to**

* be on time and prepared for class
* teach to the course goals
* give clear instructions for assignments and exercises
* advise and support students in their course work
* treat students with respect
* act in a fair manner
* be available during office hours or, if necessary, arrange an alternative time to meet
* evaluate students fairly and constructively, based on criteria made clear to students beforehand
* return assignments in a timely manner
* give useful feedback

**Your instructor will expect you to**

* attend all classes except in case of illness or emergency
* prepare for class by completing readings and assigned work in advance
* actively participate in classroom activities
* ask questions if you do not understand
* submit all assignments according to instructions, complete, and on time
* use instructor comments and feedback to improve future work
* cooperate with and act respectfully toward other students and the instructor
* communicate with the instructor about problems or concerns as soon as possible
* put focused and disciplined effort into the course assignments

**Attendance**

The university expects students to attend all classes in which they are enrolled. University policy allows an instructor to refuse a student admission to class because of lateness, misconduct, inattention, or failure to meet the responsibilities of the course.

According to the [university’s policy on attendance](http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2010/FACS/UnIn/UARe/index.html), students who neglect their academic work, including assignments, may be refused permission to write the final examination in a course. **For this course, a minimum 75% attendance is required to qualify to write the final exam.**  Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. If you fall ill, contact me by email so that you are not penalized for missing a class.

**Grade appeals**

If you feel that an assignment you submitted has been unfairly evaluated, your first step is to discuss your concerns with your instructor. As your instructor is using the [grading standards for first-year writing](http://english.uvic.ca/undergrad/grading_standards.html), be prepared to show your instructor how your work matches the standards for the letter grade you feel you should have received.

If you are not satisfied with your discussion with the instructor, you may apply for a [formal grade review](http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2010/FACS/UnIn/UARe/Grad.html), which is described in detail in the UVic academic calendar.

**Academic honesty**

The writing you do in ENGL 135 must be your own. Presenting the work of others, whether it is used without attribution (plagiarism) or submitted by you but written by someone else (cheating), violates the university’s policy on academic integrity.

The university has prepared several web pages to help you understand the university’s policy, what constitutes plagiarism and cheating, and how to avoid them. These include the following pages:

* [Plagiarism](http://library.uvic.ca/site/lib/instruction/cite/plagiarism.html) from the UVic Libraries website; explains what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.
* [What You Should Know About Cheating and Plagiarism](http://www.uvss.uvic.ca/ombudsperson/pubsguides/plagiarism.pdf) from the UVic Ombudsman’s Office.
* [Policy on Academic Integrity](http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2010/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcI.html) from the University of Victoria academic calendar; gives the definitions of plagiarism, cheating, and aiding others to cheat; the procedure for dealing with violations of the policy and the penalties. (This document is available on the course Moodle page.)

In addition to these handouts, here are a few points about plagiarism to keep in mind when you write:

* The best way to avoid inadvertent plagiarism is to ask your instructor for guidance. Some students end up plagiarizing because they aren’t sure how to correctly incorporate the work of others into their writing. Your instructor can help you learn how to quote, paraphrase, and cite your sources correctly.
* Students who are found guilty of plagiarism or cheating face serious consequences. According to the university policy, “A largely or fully plagiarized assignment should result in a grade of F for the course.”
* If a student is found guilty of violating the university’s policy on academic integrity, the offence will be added to the student’s record and will remain there for four years after the student graduates.

**Schedules**

You will receive a **Reading and Assignment Schedule** each month in class. Copies of these schedules are also available on the course Moodle site. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have done readings and submitted assignments on the due dates listed on the schedules.

**Brief assignment descriptions**

**1. Moodle Reading Journal Ongoing, worth 10%**

The reading journal will be completed on-line via the course Moodle site. Consult the monthly schedules for Reading Journal entry due dates. For each entry, I will set three to four questions/tasks to be completed before the class when a certain reading or topic is to be discussed.

Each entry is worth 1% of the total Reading Journal Grade. If you answer all the questions/tasks very well, you will receive a grade of Outstanding (100%) on that Journal entry. If the journal entry is merely satisfactory (complete, but containing some flaw in terms of content, effort, or careful reading), you will receive a Satisfactory (60%) on that Journal entry. If the Journal entry reflects significant problems in terms of content, effort, or careful reading, it will receive an Unsatisfactory (0%). So, you would need to receive Outstanding grades on 10 journal entries in order to achieve a grade of 100% on this portion of the course grade.

**2. Summary Approximately 500 words, due January 19, worth 10%**

This assignment will require you to write a formal summary of an assigned reading text.

**3. Research Proposal 300 words, February 6, worth 5%**

This is a persuasive writing assignment, in which you will write a formal proposal seeking approval of a research topic that will lead to your short research paper. If you fail this assignment, you will be required to rewrite it until you submit a passing proposal.

**4. Rhetorical analysis 1000 words, due in-class Feb. 27, worth 15%**

For this paper, you will describe the rhetorical purpose and strategies of an assigned text and evaluate its effectiveness. Note that this is an in-class assignment, but it will require prior preparation.

**5. Annotated bibliography 500 words, due March 8, worth 10%**

This annotated bibliography assignment asks you to provide brief summaries and documentation information for three individual scholarly articles relevant to the subject of your approved research topic. Use your own words, rather than quoting from or closely paraphrasing the articles themselves, their abstracts, or other writers’ comments on them. These assignments will be checked carefully for plagiarism, including uncredited paraphrasing, so make sure you understand this issue before you submit the assignment.

**6. Short research paper 1250 words, due March 29, worth 25%**

Building on your proposal and annotated bibliography, you will write an argumentative essay that takes a clear position on a specific issue or problem related to your approved research topic. You will need to quote and/or synthesize information from at least two of the articles appearing in your annotated bibliography. You may and should add additional research sources for this essay.

**7. Final exam TBA, 25%**

A three-hour final examination will be scheduled by the university during the official exam period.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT THIS COURSE OUTLINE, PLEASE CONTACT ME.