

English 50: Basic English Composition

Rubidoux Annex, Fall 2014

Instructor: Bri Lafond

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Class Location: RXHS T-4

Writing Center Location: RXHS T-10

Class Meeting Times: Mondays & Wednesdays, 7:15am – 9:20am

Course Description:

According to the Course Catalog, English 50 “prepares students for college-level reading and academic writing” (*Riverside City College Catalog* 47). As such, in this class, you will do a lot of reading, writing, and analyzing in order to develop useful strategies for academic writing. You will learn to pay particular attention to writing as a process and learn to provide constructive feedback to others and incorporate reviewer feedback into your own writing.

Prerequisites:

Prerequisite(s): ENG 60B: English Fundamentals: Paragraph to Essay or ESL 55: Advanced Writing and Grammar or qualifying placement level.

Required Texts:

Pharr, Donald, and Santi V. Buscemi. *Writing Today: Contexts and Options for the Real World*. 2nd ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2008. Print. ISBN: 9780073533223

In addition to this book, there will be additional readings available as downloadable .pdf files and/or web links in our shared class Dropbox. I will discuss how to access these files in class.

Grading:

English 50 is graded using a standard A through F scale.

Grade Breakdown:

10%	Attendance and Participation
5%	Writing Lab Attendance and Activities
15%	Group Project and Presentation
40%	Papers 1 – 4 w/ Supporting Documents
30%	Final Paper and Supporting Documents

Attendance & Class Participation

Earning points for this category is not as simple as showing up to class. You will need to show up ready to discuss the readings, ask and answer questions, and participate in class discussion. If class discussion seems to be going poorly and/or people don't seem to be doing the reading, I will implement quizzes to gauge who has been engaging with the texts. Occasionally I will assign impromptu writing exercises that will require you to write on a chosen subject with little to no warning. These writing exercises are more casual than the formal papers you will write; therefore, I don't expect perfect grammar, punctuation, etc. You should consider these exercises as practice to sharpen your writing.

Writing Lab Attendance and Activities

On the schedule below, you will find readings each week under the heading "Writing Center." Since each of you has a unique Writing Center lab class, your deadline for completing this reading each week is before your own lab appointment. Each week, you will need to attend your lab class (50 minutes each week) and complete the activity related to these assigned readings. These activities are located in our class Dropbox folder (I'll discuss how to access this folder in class).

You can miss **up to three sessions** of your lab course without penalty; however, some lab appointments will automatically include missed sessions due to school holidays. For example, if you choose a Monday lab class, you will automatically miss two sessions due to the Labor Day and Veteran's Day holidays. This means that you can only miss one additional lab hour without penalty. If something comes up and you have to miss an additional lab hour beyond these three excused absences, please let me know as soon as possible so we can make alternate arrangements.

Group Project and Presentation

One of the formal projects for this class will include working collaboratively with a group of your peers to rhetorically analyze a series of commercial advertisements and present your findings to the class. We will discuss this project in more detail when it is formally assigned.

Formal Papers and Supporting Documents

You must complete each of the formal writing assignments for this class in order to earn credit. Each of these assignments consists of the actual paper as well as supporting documents. For example, we will conduct in-class workshops in which you work with your classmates to review and revise your work in progress; you have to participate in these workshops and fill out the accompanying Response Chart to earn credit for the assignment. Any part of an assignment that requires peer feedback must be completed by a fellow classmate in our own section of English 50: no roommates, no parents, no

siblings. If you are absent on a day we hold an in-class workshop, you must find the time outside of class to get your workshop documents completed.

We will discuss each of these assignments in more detail when they are formally assigned.

Course Policies & Information

Plagiarism:

In short: don't do it. Ever. To elaborate, RCCD's *Student Handbook* says that plagiarism is defined as "presenting another person's language (spoken or written), ideas, artistic works or thoughts as if they were one's own" and that being caught plagiarizing "shall constitute good cause for discipline, including, but not limited to, the removal, suspension or expulsion of a student" (64). Though I copied and pasted that definition from the *Student Handbook*, I acknowledged my source, making it a citation rather than plagiarism. You must acknowledge any source you use in order to avoid plagiarism. We will discuss citation practices in much more detail as the class progresses, but you should be familiar with the college's official policies regarding plagiarism. You can learn more about these official policies by reviewing the "Rights and Responsibilities" section of the *Student Handbook*.

Attendance:

While I don't have an official policy on "excused absences" for the lecture portion of this class, I understand that sometimes things come up and you may have to miss class. You are still responsible for classwork that takes place on the days you are absent. If you miss an in-class workshop day, you must make it up by asking three of your classmates (in THIS class) to review your draft and fill out your Response Chart outside class time. I will not accept a final assignment that requires peer review without a completed Response Chart. My attendance policy for Writing Center hours is outlined under the "Writing Lab Attendance and Activities" section above.

Lab Hours:

10% of your grade for this class is made up of Writing Center attendance. When you signed up for this course, you also should have signed up for a weekly appointment at the campus Writing Center. My attendance policy for Writing Center hours is outlined under the "Writing Lab Attendance and Activities" section above.

Completion of Projects:

You must complete ALL MAJOR PROJECTS in order to earn credit for this course.

Extra Credit:

I will periodically offer extra credit opportunities of one or two points towards your final grade.

Computer Access:

You must have access to a computer in order to maintain email correspondence with me as well as to retrieve online texts via Dropbox. There are many computers available to RCCD students both at Rubidoux Annex and at the City College main campus.

Electronic Devices:

I encourage the use of laptops, tablets, e-readers, and similar technology in conjunction with this class. However, these electronic devices should only be used for class-related activities. If people abuse this privilege, I will revoke this permission and require students to bring printed versions of online readings to class. Cell phones should be turned off in the classroom (not on vibrate, as a vibrating phone can be just as distracting as a ringing one).

ADA Compliance:

If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me after class or contact the Office of Disabled Student Programs & Services (DSP&S) at (951) 222-8060 or TDD (951) 222-8061.

Entry-Level Skills

According to the Course Outline of Record, which determines the content of this course, students entering English 50 should be able to do the following:

1. Identify main ideas and strategies employed in pre-collegiate-level texts and be able to analyze and summarize such texts.
2. Write unified, coherent and largely grammatically correct short essays with intermediate-level skill.
3. Identify writing as a process and adjust writing for audience, purpose, and mode with intermediate-level skill.

If you feel at all uncertain about your preparedness for English 50, please see me immediately in order to discuss your options.

Learning Outcomes

By the time you successfully complete this course, you should be able to do the following:

1. Recognize thesis, audience, purpose and evidence in advanced pre-collegiate texts.
2. Compose developed, unified, stylistically competent essays of 650 -1000+ words that:
 - Are relatively free from errors in grammar and mechanics;
 - Employ one or more patterns of development;

- Respond to advanced pre-collegiate texts;
 - Adjust for audience and purpose with advanced-intermediate skill;
 - Control voice, tone, and level of formality with advanced- intermediate skill;
 - Use evidence effectively, with advanced- intermediate skill, to support a thesis;
 - Demonstrate awareness of the writing process and an ability to critique their own work and the work of others with advanced-intermediate skill.
 - Employ, at advanced-intermediate level, the standard methods of academic written discourse for guiding readers through an analysis or argument (e.g., introductions and conclusions, transitions, topic sentences).
3. Understand the purpose of textual source citations, and be able to employ MLA conventions for documenting sources and citing parenthetically, with basic-level skill.

Course Schedule*

*Subject to change

WT = *Writing Today: Contexts and Options for the Real World*

DB = Class Dropbox

Week One

Monday, August 25th

- Introductions
- Review of Syllabus

Wednesday, August 27th

- “Superman and Me” by Sherman Alexie, DB **[print for class]**

~ Writing Center

- ~~“Writing with a Reader’s Eye,” WT p. 19—21~~
- ~~“Shaping Your Essay: Prewriting,” WT p. 24—35~~

Week Two

Monday, September 1st

- **NO CLASS: LABOR DAY HOLIDAY**

Wednesday, September 3rd

- “Chapter 7: Narration,” WT p. 173 – 207
- “Writing with a Reader’s Eye,” WT p. 19 – 21
- “Shaping Your Essay: Prewriting,” WT p. 24 – 35
- **PAPER ONE ASSIGNED**

~ Writing Center

- “Shaping Your Essay: Focusing, Organizing, and Drafting,” WT p. 35 – 50

Week Three

Monday, September 8th

- “Why Johnny Can’t Fail” by Jerry Jesness, WT p. 247 – 251

Wednesday, September 10th

- **PAPER ONE ROUGH DRAFT DUE**
- **In-Class Peer Review Workshop**
- “Responding to Other People’s Writing” from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Writing Center, link in DB
- “Responding—Really Responding—to Other Students’ Writing” by Richard Straub, DB

~ Writing Center

- “Reshaping Your Essay: Global Revision,” WT p. 78 – 98

Week Four

Monday, September 15th

- **PAPER ONE DUE**
- “Chapter 13: Comparison and Contrast,” WT p. 385 – 403

Wednesday, September 17th

- **PAPER TWO ASSIGNED**
- “Chapter 13: Comparison and Contrast,” WT p. 404 – 421

~ Writing Center

- Grammar and Mechanics Chapter and Exercises (TBA)

Week Five

Monday, September 22nd

- “Melancholy Elephants” by Spider Robinson, link in DB

Wednesday, September 24th

- **PAPER TWO ROUGH DRAFT DUE**
- **In-Class Peer Review Workshop**

~Writing Center

- “Critical Thinking in College Writing: From the Personal to the Academic” by Gita DasBender, DB
- “Living Like Weasels” by Annie Dillard, link in DB

Week Six

Monday, September 29th

- **PAPER TWO DUE**
- “Chapter 1: The Essay: Determining Purpose, Audience, and Approach,” WT p. 3 – 23

Wednesday, October 1st

- **GROUP PROJECT ASSIGNED**
- “Backpacks vs. Briefcases: Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis” by Laura Bolin Carroll, DB

~ Writing Center

- “Writing ‘Eyeball to Eyeball’: Building a Successful Collaboration” by Rebecca Ingalls, DB

Week Seven

Monday, October 6th

- **GROUP WORK DAY**

Wednesday, October 8th

- **GROUP PROJECT DUE**
- **GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

~ Writing Center

- “Writing ‘Eyeball to Eyeball’: Building a Successful Collaboration” by Rebecca Ingalls, DB

Week Eight

Monday, October 13th

- “Chapter 3: Process Analysis,” WT p. 244 – 263

Wednesday, October 15th

- **PAPER THREE ASSIGNED**
- “Chapter 3: Process Analysis,” WT p. 263 – 277

~Writing Center

- “Consider Your Audience” by Joseph Moxley, link in DB
- “What to Think about When Writing for a Particular Audience” by Amanda Wray, link in DB

Week Nine

Monday, October 20th

- “How to Cheat on an Exam” by “macho” (student writer), link in DB

Wednesday, October 22nd

- **PAPER THREE ROUGH DRAFT DUE**
- **In-Class Peer Review Workshop**

~ Writing Center

- Grammar and Mechanics Chapter and Exercises (TBA)

Week Ten

Monday, October 27th

- **PAPER THREE DUE**
- “Chapter 11: Definition,” WT p. 316 – 333

Wednesday, October 29th

- **PAPER FOUR ASSIGNED**
- “Chapter 11: Definition,” WT p. 333 – 349

~ Writing Center

- “What is ‘Academic’ Writing?” by L. Lennie Irvin, DB

Week Eleven

Monday, November 3rd

- “In the Blink of an Eye: A Firsthand Definition of Blindness” by Staci Harper (student writer), link in DB

Wednesday, November 5th

- **PAPER FOUR ROUGH DRAFT DUE**
- **In-Class Peer Review Workshop**

~ Writing Center

- “I Need You to Say “I””: Why First Person Is Important in College Writing” by Kate McKinney Maddalena, DB

Week Twelve

Monday, November 10th

- **NO CLASS: VETERANS’ DAY HOLIDAY**

Wednesday, November 12th

- **PAPER FOUR DUE**
- “On the Other Hand: The Role of Antithetical Writing in First Year Composition Courses” by Steven D. Krause, DB

~ Writing Center

- Genre Chapter (TBA)

Week Thirteen

Monday, November 17th

- **FINAL PAPER ASSIGNED**
- “Chapter 14: Argument,” WT p. 422 – 439

Wednesday, November 19th

- “Chapter 14: Argument,” WT p. 439 – 457

~ Writing Center

- “Library and Internet Research” from *Writing Commons*, link in DB

Week Fourteen

Monday, November 24th

- “Walk, Talk, Cook, Eat: A Guide to Using Sources” by Cynthia R. Haller, DB

Wednesday, November 26th

- **REVISION PARTNERS ASSIGNED**
- “Annoying Ways People Use Sources” by Kyle D. Stedman, DB

~ Writing Center

- Work on Final Paper and/or Peer Response Letter

Week Fifteen

Monday, December 1st

- “Composition as a Write of Passage” by Nathalie Singh-Corcoran, DB

Wednesday, December 3rd

- **FINAL PAPER ROUGH DRAFT DUE**
- **REVISION PARTNER LETTER DUE**
- **In-Class Peer Review Workshop**

~ Writing Center

- Work on Final Paper and/or Peer Response Letter

FINALS WEEK: TBA