



# WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE

Spring 2015: February 9 to June 7

## **We don't live in a democracy. Where do we live?**

<b>Course # + Title:</b>	English 101: College Reading and Composition (3 units)
<b>Instructor:</b>	Robin Wyatt Dunn
<b>Section Number:</b>	3980
<b>Meeting Days:</b>	Tuesday
<b>Lectures Times:</b>	6:45- 10:00pm
<b>Meeting Room:</b>	GC 160
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tues 5:30 - 6:30 and by appointment, Office GC280Q
<b>E-Mail:</b>	settdigger@gmail.com
<b>Course website:</b>	www.robindunn.com/wlac2015.html

### **I. Course description:**

Any act of reading and writing connects us with our ancestors, who struggled with many of the same problems we do. My hope for this course is that, in addition to polishing your skills as a reader and writer, you will develop further appreciation for the reasons we read and write, and the uses to which these powerful skills can be put.

You will be required to write a series of research-based essays in which you accurately, clearly and coherently synthesize ideas and information from a variety of sources and points of view. English 101 is the composition course that transfers to four-year colleges and universities. Accordingly, the assignments in essay writing, rhetorical analysis and critical reading are rigorous. This course will prepare you to speak, read, and write more fluently and confidently. It will also give you a little background on what used to be called "Western Civilization" and what we can now simply call: civilization.

### **II. Required texts:**

The Epic of Gilgamesh. *Gilgamesh: A New English Version*. Trans. Stephen Mitchell. ISBN: 978-0743261692 Atria Books, 304 pgs.

*The Assignment: Why Am I Writing this Essay?* by Rebecca Goodman and Martin Nakell. Fountainhead Press, 384 pgs. ISBN: 978-1598713749

*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. by Sherman Alexie. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers. 229 pages. ISBN: 978-0316013697

### **III. Course Prerequisites:** English 28

**IV. Student Learning Outcome:** upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to argue a point and support it (in writing) using extensive evidence from outside sources.

### **Course Objectives:**

- Read effectively and critically for gathering information, for meaning, for cultural understanding and enjoyment.

- Write effectively for a variety of audiences, using the conventions of Standard English, a clear focus, appropriate support/evidence and logical organization with few errors (grammar, punctuation, spelling, sentences).
- Collect and organize research data, using credible sources to write a convincing/persuasive document.
- Use appropriate MLA citations/works cited.
- Analyze, synthesize and evaluate information to assess the validity and usefulness of an argument.

### **Institutional Learning Outcomes:**

A. Critical Thinking: Analyze problems by differentiating fact from opinions, using evidence, and using sound reasoning to specify multiple solutions and their consequences.

B. Communication: Effectively communicate thought in a clear, well-organized manner to persuade, inform, and convey ideas in academic, work, family and community settings.

C. Self-awareness/Interpersonal Skills: Apply self-assessment and reflection strategies to interpersonal, work, community, career, and educational pathways.

D. Technical Competence: Utilize the appropriate technology effectively for informational, academic, personal, and professional needs.

E. Cultural Diversity: Respectfully engage with other cultures in an effort to understand them.

F. Ethics: Practice and demonstrate standards of personal and professional integrity, honesty and fairness; apply ethical principles in submission of all college work.

### **V. Grading:**

Your final grade will be assessed according to your performance on the following assignments:

#### **Assignments**

14 reading responses (10%)

3 research essays (60%)

Attendance and Participation (10%)

Final Exam (20%)

#### **The Reading Response:**

The point of the reading response is twofold. As it is a graded weekly assignment on your reading, it will encourage you to keep up with your reading. And as it a written assignment, it will serve as writing practice, and as an opportunity for you to find your voice as a writer.

What does this mean, and what do I want to see in the reading responses?

Length: 250 words (one typed double spaced page, Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1-inch margins)

Content:

This is a response, not an in-depth analytical essay. How you felt about the reading, what it made you think of, ideas it generated, things you found confusing, offensive, exciting, et cetera—all these topics are fertile ground for the reading responses. Their aim is to *engage* you with the writers you are reading.

**Please note:** There will be NO extra credit or make-up assignments. Your grade will be determined solely on your performance on the assignments listed above. Your final grade is based on the points you earned. All assignments are due on the date indicated and late assignments will NOT be accepted. All assignments must be typed.

I will uphold the college policy on academic integrity. I will not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty. ANY form of plagiarism will be reported. Please read the college policy on academic integrity in the current WLAC catalogue.

**VI. Grading Scale:** Letter grades: A=89.5-100%. B=79.5-89.4%. C=69.5-79.4%. D=59.5-69.4%. F=below 59.4%.

**VII. Course Requirements:**

- A. Attend all class meetings. If an absence is anticipated, please inform me ahead of time. Students with more **than three absences will be dropped from the course.** Leaving class early or arriving late frequently will count as an absence. Please follow dropping deadlines carefully as stated in the college schedule of classes.
- B. Participate in all classroom activities and demonstrate commitment towards course. **Participation and attendance is a course requirement and is part of your final grade.**
- C. Do not miss any assignments, as it will drastically affect your overall class grade. All essays must be submitted to pass the course.
- D. **Turn off cell phones:** no text messaging or answering phone calls allowed in class. Please place your phones on silent and off your desk. They assist in removing the focus from your learning.
- E. Adherence to District and Campus Rules of Conduct, including academic honesty and plagiarism regulations, as stated in the College Catalog
- F. Enroll in the writing lab and see a tutor regularly. I urge you to take advantage of it early in the semester, and not wait till the third quarter to see a tutor.
- G. Engage with your education!

**VIII. Disability Accommodation Statement:** Students with a verified disability who may need a reasonable accommodation(s) for this class are encouraged to notify the instructor early and contact the Office of Disabled Student Programs and Services in SSB 320 at 310-287-4450 as soon as possible. All information will remain confidential.

**IX. District Academic Dishonesty Policy:** 9803.28 Academic Dishonesty. Violations of Academic Integrity include, but are not limited to, the following actions: cheating on an exam, plagiarism, working together on an assignment, paper or project when the instructor has specifically stated students should not do so, submitting the same term paper to more than one instructor, or allowing another individual to assume one's identity for the purpose of enhancing one's grade.

**X. Basic Skills Enrollment Limitation:** Title 5, California Code of Regulations, limits student from taking more than 30 units of "remedial" course work, which is defined as "nondegree-applicable basic skills courses." For more information on the limit and alternative noncredit courses that provide basic skills services, please contact a college counselor.

**XI. Writing Lab:** I encourage students to visit the Writing Lab, located on the first floor of the library, to get help in writing their papers or online at <http://www.wlac.edu/online/owl.asp>. Writing tutors can help you in sharing your response to the instructor's assignment. They do not, however, proofread or edit your writing. They also expect you to bring in clear directions for the essay assignment.

**XII. Semester schedule of topics and assignments:** This schedule may be subject to change depending on performance and interests; if changes occur, I will notify you ahead of time. Follow the schedule below promptly so that you complete all assignments in a timely fashion. In other words, *Do not leave what you can do today for tomorrow.*

## SCHEDULE

Nakell = *The Assignment: Why am I writing this essay?*  
 Alexie = *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*  
 Gilgamesh = *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

<p><b>Class 1: Feb 10</b>          What is a democracy?          What is reading and writing?          Icebreaker</p> <p>Opening of Gilgamesh</p>	<p><b>Reading for next class:</b>          pgs 21-25 Nakell          pgs 75-80 Nakell          Gilgamesh, pgs 68-90 (books 1&amp;2)</p>
<p><b>Class 2: Feb 17 (reading response due)</b>          How do we write an essay?</p> <p>Discussion of the ancient world.          Open discussion on writing problem solving.          Discuss reading</p>	<p><b>Reading for next class:</b>          Gilgamesh pgs 91-117 (books 3&amp;4)</p>
<p><b>Class 3: Feb 24 (reading response due)</b>          Library orientation, 6:45pm - <b>meet in Library</b></p> <p>How do we research an essay?          Class discussion on reading.          Discussion of sexuality, master/servant relations.</p>	<p><b>Reading for next class:</b>          Nakell pgs 281-284 (Alice!)          Gilgamesh 118-140 (books 5&amp;6)</p>
<p><b>Class 4: Mar 3 (reading response due)</b></p> <p>Class discussion on reading. The city versus nature.          Engagement in writing.</p>	<p><b>Reading for next class:</b> Gilgamesh pgs 141-168          (books 7,8,9, and part of 10)</p>
<p><b>Class 5: Mar 10 (reading response due)</b></p> <p>Class discussion on reading.          The quest narrative.          The expository and the hortatory essay.</p>	<p><b>Reading for next class:</b> Gilgamesh 168-199          (finish book)</p>
<p><b>Class 6: Mar 17 (reading response due)</b></p> <p>Finish discussing Gilgamesh.          Go over reading responses.</p>	<p><b>Reading for next class:</b> Alexie pgs 1-28</p>
<p><b>Class 7: Mar 24 (essay 1 due)&amp; (reading response due)</b>          Introduction to themes of race, class, sexuality,          gender, politics, religion.</p>	<p><b>Reading for next class:</b> Nakell 301-305,          Alexie pgs 28-52</p>
<p><b>Class 8: Mar 31 (reading response due)</b>          Class discussion on reading. Discussion of themes of the          and reading and writing in Los Angeles.          Discussion of punctuation in writing.</p>	<p><b>Reading for next class:</b> Alexie, pgs 52-80</p>

<b>Apr 4- 10 Spring Break</b>	
<b>Class 9: Apr 14 (reading response due)</b> Discuss reading Review essay planning/ writing strategies. Grammar review.	<b>Reading for next class:</b> Nakell pgs 307-309, Alexie, pgs 80-106
<b>Class 10: Apr 21 (reading response due)</b> Discuss reading. Discussion of style in writing. Point of view.	<b>Reading for next class:</b> Alexie pgs 106-134
<b>Class 11: Apr 28 (2nd essay due) &amp; (reading response due)</b> Discuss reading. Consideration of audience in writing.	<b>Reading for next class:</b> Nakell pgs 311-314 Alexie pgs 134-159
<b>Class 12: May 5 (reading response due)</b> Discuss reading. Discussion of the paragraph in writing.	<b>Reading for next class:</b> Alexie pgs 160-188
<b>Class 13: May 12 (reading response due)</b> Discuss reading. Discussion of the use of “I” in essay writing.	<b>Reading for next class:</b> Nakell pgs 315-319, Alexie pgs 189-213
<b>Class 14: May 19 (reading response due)</b> Discuss reading. Discussion of literature and its reception. Further review of how to plan essays.	<b>Reading for next class:</b> Finish Alexie
<b>Class 15: May 26 (3rd essay due) &amp; (reading response due)</b> Discuss reading. Open discussion on writing problem solving.	<b>Reading for next class:</b> Nakell pgs 327-337

**FINAL: Jun 2, at regular meeting time. Bring blue books.**

## **XII. VERY Important:**

### **Class format:**

Students are expected to arrive to class on time with the necessary materials and **having completed the assigned reading and writing** in advance of class. Classroom activities will include discussion of assigned readings, in-class writing and some (short) lectures.

**XIII. Best wishes:** I hope to make this class the best learning experience of your educational career. I am committed not only to building confidence and motivation in your reading and writing skills but also to providing exciting material that is relevant to a diverse population, creating a comfortable environment where communication is constant, and challenging you towards higher-academic thinking. Feel free to contact me whenever if you have questions or interest about class topics and discussions.

*“We need books that affect us like a disaster, that grieve us deeply, like the death of someone we loved more than ourselves, like being banished into forests far from everyone, like a suicide. A book must be the axe for the frozen sea within us.”*

— Franz Kafka

*“Successful people are not gifted; they just work hard, then succeed on purpose.”*

—G.K. Nielson

## **Evaluation of Assignments**

Your instructor does not CORRECT essays. I may point out errors and patterns that need attention, but English 101 students should be able to find their own errors. This means that students are responsible for proofreading their own papers. The instructor evaluates essays and makes suggestions for improvements in organization, use of evidence, thesis formulation, critical thinking and style. You also have the benefit of peer evaluations for which you need to bring 2 copies of your essay to class. You will also have the opportunity to consult with tutors in class and in the Writing Lab.

\*Please keep all your graded essays.

**CLARITY:** In any assignment you turn in for a grade, the first and final element I look for is clarity – both clarity of expression and clarity of argument. The first set of criteria, typically referred to as the “surface” level of composition, contains the following aspects:

1. Mechanics – refers to conventions such as manuscript format, format for quotations, underlining/italics, capitalization, spelling, hyphenation and use of the apostrophe.
2. Syntax – refers to basic sentence grammar and structure. Mistakes in Syntax include faulty word order, errors in verb tense and subject-verb agreement, dangling modifiers, in other words, unacceptable use of language.
3. Punctuation is considered to be an aspect of syntax which helps to shape your meaning.
4. Usage indicates the degree of formality or informality of vocabulary or syntax.
5. Style refers to choices of words and sentence patterns. It also is part of your “voice” as a writer.

The second set of criteria, pertaining to argumentation, is referred to as the “global” level of composition:

1. Introductory paragraph: The introduction ideally generates interest in your topic, establishes the tone, touches in brief on the points you will cover and suggests a method of development of your main topic. It can generally be thought of as an upside-down triangle.
2. Thesis statement (controlling purpose, main claim): The thesis formulates the point and direction of your paper; it typically occurs as the final sentence of the introductory paragraph. For the sake of this class, all theses will be argumentative, that is an assertion to be logically examined/argued through critical thinking, adequate explanation and support for the points you are making.
3. Topic sentences and paragraph unity. Topic sentences announce the topic for a new paragraph and generally make a claim (subclaim) in support of the thesis or main claim. All sentences in a paragraph are devoted to demonstrating that claim.
4. Transitions: Transitions are essential to effective written communication. They direct the reader’s attention to shifts in thought; transitions lead the reader from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph.

5. Evidence: Strong and credible evidence is vital for the demonstration of your supporting claims and may take the form of expert testimony, historical precedence, analogy, facts or statistics, plus sound reasoning with support.
6. Conclusion: In the conclusion, the writer draws out the implications of the argument as well as highlights the significance of the subject for the audience. Conclusions generally make the leap of universalizing, that is, reopening the tightly circumscribed focus of the essay back to the reader's world at large.
7. Audience appreciation: The writer demonstrates a perceptive awareness of audience needs. In the case of the academic audience, the writer establishes an ethos of working from within a discourse community. Quoted material is introduced, contextualized and commented on so as to draw connections between the quotations and the writer's argument. The evidence is sufficient to persuade an educated audience.

## Grading Criteria

“A” – work is exceptional in quality, well organized and demonstrates a sensitive and resourceful use of language. It gracefully and effectively presents details, evidence and examples to prove its thesis. It responds to the assignments in its focus and scope. The writing uses lively, well-chosen and precise vocabulary. It contains almost no errors in usage and spelling. It demonstrates technical proficiency (grammar, punctuation, spelling, in-text citations and so on), which enhances meaning rather than makes the essay hard to read.

“B” – The paper may be less thorough and graceful than A work, is technically proficient (in grammar, usage, spelling, etc.) AND outstanding in some aspect of style, premise and/or presentation.

“C” –The paper is acceptable. It is clearly organized, coherent, shows technical competence and meets the assignment as to content. It usually repeats accurate but commonplace ideas. It contains few serious errors in usage and spelling.

“D” – The paper is barely adequate. Although it may be confusing, it shows some effort to engage the topic. It is usually full of serious errors.

“F” – Paper is not acceptable. It is confusing, chaotic, full of errors in thought and usage. Plagiarism is F work.

**Final Grade** is based on instructor evaluation of **all** written work as well as meaningful participation in class; therefore, it is important not only to attend class as often as possible but to come prepared to discuss the readings and to write in class. For this required class for transfer, research from credible sources and in-text citations which use correct MLA Style are incorporated into/required of all writing assignments as this is expected and required at 4-year colleges and universities. Other assignments as specified also earn points toward your final grade, and cannot be made up.

<b>Spring 2015: Traditional Semester</b>	
Session Period	February 9 - June 7
Applications Accepted Beginning	October 13, 2014
<b>Registration Begins</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GROUP 1: Veterans, EOPS/Care, DSPS, Foster Youth, CalWorks</li> </ul>	Nov 17, 2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GROUP 2: Continuing Students (fully matriculated)</li> </ul>	Nov 20, 2014

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GROUP 3: New &amp; Returning Students (fully matriculated)</li> </ul>	Nov 27, 2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GROUP 4: Non-Matriculated Continuing Students*</li> </ul>	Dec 8, 2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GROUP 5: Students with 101 or more degree applicable units Districtwide. Continuing students who are not in good standing (on academic or progress probation for two semesters).*</li> </ul>	Dec 16, 2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GROUP 6: New &amp; Returning Students applying after the cut-off date to assign priority registration appointments.</li> </ul>	Dec 19, 2014
<i>*in order to maintain your registration appointment time, you must be in good standing, have fewer than 100 degree applicable units, and if required, be fully matriculated.</i>	
Residency Determination Required	February 8, 2015
Special Registration Hours: FEB 2 - FEB 20	Mon - Thur: 8:30am - 7:00pm  Fri: 8:30am - 2:00pm
M-F CLASSES Begin	Feb 9, 2015
Sat CLASSES Begin	Feb 21, 2015
<b>FINALS</b> ( <a href="#">PDF schedule</a> )	Jun 1 - 7, 2015
<b>LAST DAY TO</b>	
Recency/Third Attempt Petitions	Jan 23, 2015
Prerequisite Clearance/Challenge Petitions	Jan 23, 2015
Add/Audit Traditional Classes	Online: Feb 8, 2015  In-person: Feb 20, 2015
Drop a Class with a refund/no fee owed	Feb 20, 2015
Drop a Class without a "W"	Feb 20, 2015
Drop a Class with a "W"	May 8, 2015
File Pass / No Pass	Feb 20, 2015
<b>GRADUATION PETITION ACCEPTED</b>	Nov 17- Apr 24
<b>GRADUATION CEREMONY</b>	tentatively June 9, 2015
<b>CAMPUS CLOSED</b>	Presidents' Day: Feb 13 - Feb 16  Cesar Chavez Day: Mar 31  Spring Break: April

4 - April 10

Memorial Day: May  
25

*NOTE: Short-term courses and other accelerated program classes have different deadlines. Please check with your instructor.*