

In Search of a Voice and Other Adventures:

College Reading and Composition I--English 101-8314
Online Fall 2013 (8 weeks: 26 August-20 October)

H. Vishwanadha

e-mail: hvishwanadha@gmail.com

vishwah@wlac.edu

My voice restore for me

My mind restore for me

.....

It is finished in beauty

It is finished in beauty.

from the Navajo "Night Chant"

1. This course will focus on effective expository prose and critical reading--necessary survival skills for your success in college and the professional world. In addition, we shall improve our research skills through assignments in the library.
2. This class is taught entirely online and runs **eight weeks** from **26 August to 20 October**. You are expected to have **a working computer with a reliable connection to the web via the internet throughout the semester**. Make sure you have installed on your computer the necessary software to submit assignments in a format compatible with the ETUDES platform and my computer (Word 2003 format or Rich Text Format for all documents). You should become familiar with the ETUDES platform and other aspects of the online learning environment. The home page of the online courses at myetudes.org is the main portal to gain access to the course home page that has all the course materials. The web site also includes helpful videos, FAQs, and other useful information to help orient you to the ETUDES platform. Browse these sources as soon as possible. Take note of the Help Desk. For any technical questions or problems, contact the Help Desk at 310.287.4305 or chaconj@wlac.edu. Regular participation in all online discussions is required.

Additional information about distance learning and online courses, visit www.wlac.edu/online

3. Writing is a complex, enriching process. All of us should systematically go through the prewriting/discovery, rough draft, and revision phases of the composing process. Rewriting is the best form of writing. We shall continually revise our essays to make them informative, thoughtful, and effective.

4. The absolute TRUTH about composition according to Vishwanadha:

We write not just for grades and teachers but for real human beings.
We write not just correctly but effectively and gracefully.
We write not just to fill up paper but to inform and persuade.
Rewriting is the best form of writing.

5. Required texts:

- a) A. Gawande. Complications. A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science. New York: Picador, 2002.
- b) S. Winchester. Professor and the Madman. New York: Harper Perennial, 2005.
- c) A Pocket Style Manual. Ed. Diana Hacker. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007.
- d) A good desk dictionary.

6. Assignments:

Essays (about 4)	55%
Timed-writing assignments (about 5)	25%
Threaded discussions	15%
Journal (at least one entry a week)	5%

Carefully review the document titled "101EssayGrading Rubric," which is posted in the "Course Policies and Procedures" section

- 7. There is no midterm or final examination. We will write several essays and timed-writing assignments throughout the semester. The last essay will be completed and submitted by Thursday 17 October and the last timed-assignment by Friday 18 October. Details will be given later in the semester.
- 8. There is no formal research paper. The essays (including Essay IV) will require research of secondary sources. We shall follow the usual procedures for academic research (compiling a working bibliography of reliable sources, taking careful notes, and documenting all borrowed information) as outlined in Hacker's Pocket Style Manual. Specific instructions for composing and submitting these essays will be given in the course of the semester. Students are required to adhere to these instructions. Essays not following these instructions will not be accepted.
- 9. The course grade--a cumulation of all the written work--will be determined according to the following scale:

A+	12	B+	9	C+	6	D+	3		
A	11	B	8	C	5	D	2		
A-	10	B-	7	C-	4	D-	1	F	0

- 10. Class Participation:** Active and regular participation in all the activities every week (reading, discussions, essays) is required. The discussions are a vital part of the course. Not participating in a weekly discussion or not submitting an assignment is equivalent to being absent for the entire week. Two or more unexcused absences will result in your being dropped from the course. Remember, all assignments will have specific due dates, and after the deadline has passed the system will not allow you to submit late assignments. Make sure you submit your work by the deadline specified to receive proper credit.
- 11.** Any assignment more than one week late--except under extenuating circumstances--will lose one letter grade. Please complete all assignments, both written and oral--on time. Not submitting a major writing assignment, such as an essay or timed essay, will result in a drop of one letter grade in the **course grade**.
- 12. Individual Conferences (Office Hours):** Although we do not meet on campus, I expect you to “meet” me regularly via email throughout the semester. Don’t hesitate to ask questions and seek advice about any aspect of the course and about your writing. I check my emails regularly, several times a day, including weekends. And I reply promptly.
- 13. Course SLO:** Argue a point and support it (in writing) using extensive evidence from outside sources.
- 14.** Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:
- read and critically evaluate college-level material;
 - distinguish between factual statements and opinions;
 - identify the thesis or main idea of a text;
 - understand and evaluate the primary argument and assumptions of a nonfiction text;

 - understand and apply the basic principles of college-level research, such as locate sources, read and annotate them, and use them appropriately in the student’s own writing;
 - learn to write effectively for different audiences and purpose, with an emphasis on informative and persuasive writing;
 - appreciate the nuances and richness of written and oral expression in the English language;

- use writing to construct a community of critical thinkers and responsible citizens.

This course helps improve our skills in critical thinking, critical reading, effective research, and persuasive writing. We will write and revise essays throughout the semester to help develop these skills and to measure our progress in improving these skills.

Please adhere to the principles outlined in the “Standards of Student Contact” in the “Things to Know/Policies,” pp. 114-16, in the Printed Class Schedules and Policies link at the college website, www.wlac.edu.

You will find clear discussion of the nature of academic writing, the procedures for submitting essays in college, and the nature of plagiarism and how to avoid it in Diana Hacker’s A Pocket Style Manual and at www.dianahacker.com/writersref. I shall refer to appropriate sections in the book throughout the semester. Read them carefully and follow the instructions.

Finally, before you consider dropping the class, talk to me. It's never as bad as you think it is. Best wishes.

Tentative Schedule

Weeks		
1-2	Narrative/Process Analysis Review of Thesis Discussion of Gawande: Author’s Note, Introduction and Part I (pp. 11-106).	Essay I and In-Class Paper 1
3-4	Research Discussion of Purpose Discussion of Gawande, pp. 109-52.	Essay II and In-Class Paper 2
5-6	Definition Discussion of Winchester: Chapters 1-6	Essay III and In-Class Paper 3
6-8	Comparison and Contrast Discussion of Winchester:	Essay IV and In-Class Paper 4

Chapters 6-10