

SYLLABUS

Fall Semester 2014

West Los Angeles College

ENGLISH 103: COMPOSITION AND CRITICAL THINKING

ACT: 8-Week class beginning October 27 and ending December 21, 2014

Dr. Katherine Boutry

Section # 8039, 8052

Instructor Email: boutryk@wlaac.edu (not for submitting assignments)

Course Description

"The kind of critical reading that is required for good research is active and engaged; it involves careful thinking about what you are reading. Critical reading is going beyond the obvious meaning of a text to gain a more sophisticated understanding of it. Gaining this understanding involves being able to identify key points, such as an author's thesis, and any points that you find difficult to understand. But beyond understanding the material itself, you should also be prepared to *evaluate* it." Yagelski

This is an accelerated 3-unit transferable class, UC: CSU.

Prerequisite: English 101 with a grade of "C" or better. You may be asked to show proof of having passed English 101.

This course, which meets the transfer critical thinking requirement, is designed to develop critical thinking, reading, and writing skills beyond the level achieved in English 101. The course will focus on the development of logical reasoning and analytical and argumentative writing skills.

This site is set up to generate interactive responses in the form of notes,

marginalia, budding interpretations, and personal connections which can be polished into more analytical essays. Its object is to guide students to develop their different readings of a text, to move beyond subjective and experiential readings to create stronger, more communal "texts." Adding the collaborative element helps students become more aware of their own reading strategies and the personal and cultural agendas they bring to their reading, as well as develop new and more productive strategies of interpretation. Even on a strictly independent level, there is value in each student working at his/her individual pace and style (within reasonable limits), responding to text materials, Web links, and discussions.

Course Texts

Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (any edition is fine)

Boutry, Hofmann, Norris, *The West Guide to Writing* (available in the bookstore or online at kendallhunt.com)

A desk dictionary, 70,000+ words

Nonfiction articles (see below). Note that most of the articles are available in *The West Guide* except for a few, and those are available for free and legal download at the following sites provided. It is your responsibility to download and read the following articles before the reading is due.

Nonfiction articles in *THE WEST GUIDE*: Please note that if page number refer to a different edition than yours, please check the table of contents or the chapters listed to find the readings.

Wendy McElroy, "Victims from Birth" p. 321

Steven Rhoads, "What Fathers Do Best" p. 323.

Sascha de Gersdorff, "Fresh Faces": p. 214.

Jonathan Rauch, "A Moral Crossroads for Conservatives" p. 217.

Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" (see publisher supplement) or download for free online by title.

Peter Singer, "Singer's Solution to World Poverty", p.170.

Dr. Alfredo Quinones-Hinojosa interview, p. 373

Henry Louis Gates, Jr, Foreword to *An Anthology of Rap*, p. 162

The following articles are available for free and legal download. It is your responsibility to read them by Week 8 in preparation for the Final Essay Exam:

Phillip Vannini, "Will You Marry Me?: Spectacle and Consumption in the Ritual of Marriage Proposals" <http://dspace.royalroads.ca/docs/bitstream/handle/10170/167/WillYouMarryMe.pdf?sequence=1>

Darryl James, "Get Your Hand Out of my Pocket" <http://www.blacknla.com/news/Articles/DJPocket.asp>

Beth Bailey, "From Front Porch to Back Seat: A History of the Date"

<http://ushist2112honors.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bailey-courtship.pdf>

Student Learning Outcomes

Throughout the semester, you will be asked to demonstrate the following Student Learning Outcomes:

Critical Thinking:

Read Effectively

You will apply reading strategies such as close reading analysis and differentiating fact from opinion. Your discussion board comments, as well as regular reading quizzes and written papers, will be the means of assessing the effectiveness of your reading.

You will analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information to assess the validity and usefulness of an argument. We won't just ask whether a written essay is persuasive, we'll also analyze *why* it works and *how*. We will focus on writing strategies the writers have employed, paying special attention to introductions, use of evidence, tone, and conclusions. **This analysis will help you then apply these skills to your own writing and improve your communication skills.**

Communication

Communication skills will be developed in two key areas: written comments on the discussion board and formal assignments. We'll work on your verbal communication skills through participation and query. Therefore, class participation is very important. You'll also be asked to work in small groups on analyses and presentations of textual passages. In these situations it will be

important to consider carefully and to respond thoughtfully to your peers when making comments and assessing their work. Throughout, the class atmosphere will remain positive and constructive.

Part of responding thoughtfully to articles and to your peers is **being culturally literate**, aware and tolerant of differences, and willing to consider respectfully to viewpoints that differ from your own.

We will also develop your written communication skill set through writing papers, quizzes, and in-class essay exams. During the semester we will focus on paper writing strategies including structuring essays, introductions, thesis statements, use of evidence, and conclusion writing.

To make your writing persuasive, we will work on your research skills. Often the difference between a good argument and a weak one is the quality of evidence and research used.

Research

You will be asked to collect and organize research data. We will have a research orientation that will cover the university databases as well as how to evaluate sources and their reliability. During that module, you will find three sources from Proquest and Gale LRC for a research paper. We will also cover documenting those sources according to MLA style so that your sources are properly credited.

SLO's in Practice:

At the end of the course, the successful student will be able to:

Analyze problems by differentiating fact from opinion, using evidence and using sound reasoning.

Read and evaluate college-level material from a variety of sources;

Identify and analyze the structure of arguments underlying the texts read;

Evaluate strength of arguments; recognize and avoid logical fallacy;

Draw sound inferences from data given in a variety of forms;

Distinguish factual statements from judgmental statements, and distinguish knowledge from opinion;

Develop and practice the inductive and deductive skills needed for close

reading and lucid writing;

Research, evaluate and cite outside sources for use in the writing.

student's own

Communicate thought in a clear, well-organized manner to persuade, inform and convey ideas;

Demonstrate continued development in writing college-level English prose; use appropriate MLA citations/works cited;

Identify some of the deliberate abuses and manipulations of rhetoric so that they can identify them in general occurrence and avoid them in their own writing.

Learn to write effectively for different audiences and purposes, with an emphasis on argumentation and academic writing.

Cultural Diversity

Respectfully engage with other cultures in an effort to understand them.

Read a variety of viewpoints on culturally relevant issues

Technical Competence

Please carefully review the ETUDES system requirements located at: <https://etudes-ng.fhda.edu/portal/site/!gateway/page/4243c7b4-9b68-45fc-0016-148ad08653aa>. Make sure you have configured your computer correctly before the course starts.

Assignments will be word-processed.

Research for your essays will rely on Internet-based research.

Course Policies

****Because this is an accelerated course, any more than one week's "absence" from logging-in to the course will have a significant impact on your final grade.**

Dropping the Course and Exclusions

According to college policy, you may be excluded for not logging in the first week of school or for not following the Standards of Student Conduct (printed in the

Schedule of Classes). If you drop the course, be sure to do so at the Admissions and Business Offices. Otherwise, the grade drops to a "D" or "F". Pay attention to drop dates in the Schedule of Classes.

Assignment Due Dates

Pay close attention to due dates for assignments. *On due dates for essays, essays must be turned in online on our etudes site.* I do not accept essays e-mailed to me, or left in my mailbox. **I will not accept late assignments. There are no make-up quizzes or exams given, and assignments will not be reopened for any reason once an assignment is closed.**

On a more positive note, throughout the semester, I encourage you to contact me with any questions you might have. Please use the Writing Lab tutors available on the first floor of the library or online or any other tutorial services available on campus (such as EOP&S, DSPS, etc.) when you are working on drafts of your essays. Tutors expect you to come with some writing done. On-line resources for working on and improving your writing include <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>.

Your instructor does not CORRECT essays. English 103 students should be able to find their own errors. This means that students are responsible for proofreading their own papers. Unacceptable papers (for this level course) will be returned without a grade. Your instructor "evaluates" essays and makes suggestions for improvements in organization, use of evidence, critical thinking, and style.

Plagiarism is unacceptable and will result in a failing grade for the assignment and a permanent notation in your college file.

Never commit plagiarism - you can also refer to this website re. plagiarism: <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html>. **You must turn in your own, new work** (not a "modified" paper submitted for another class) and cite your sources appropriately, using MLA Style. We will go over MLA Style, but you are also expected to refer to your textbook for details relating to in-text citations and Works Cited.

Our textbook provides tips for improving your writing and reviewing important rules such as grammar, punctuation, research, active and passive voice, tone, etc.

Final Grade is based on my evaluation of **all** written work (quizzes, essays, exams), **as well as meaningful participation in the site discussion boards.** Each essay assignment through the semester earns increasingly more points, based

on the assumption that, over the semester and with practice, your writing/thinking/research will sharpen and improve. Research from credible sources and in-text citations, with correct MLA Style, are required of several writing assignments.

Please note that I do not allow extra credit work.

All points count, No student will pass this course who does not hand in all writing assignments.

Learning Disabilities: If you have specific and documented physical, psychiatric, sensory, or learning disability(ies) and would benefit from accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that we can maximize your learning experience in this course. You will need to provide written documentation from the DSPS Office about your learning disability(ies). Then, I will be legally able (and pleased!) to accommodate your needs.

Course Requirements and Expectations

"Attendance" Online

There are no set times that you need to log in online, as long as all your work is completed and submitted by the due dates. Check the due dates very carefully, as sometimes the distinction between 11:59 on a Sunday night and 12:01 on a Monday morning can be confusing. There is no time that you have to be on campus; this is an online class.

I expect you to read your syllabus and complete your assigned homework and reading without my having to remind you. Online participation, especially in discussion, is worth 10% of your grade. In order to get the 10%, you must post to the discussion topic every week and also respond to one classmate's post.

Guidelines for Discussion

Complete discussion forum entries usually consist of a well-rounded paragraph of at least five sentences.

Discussion forum entries (including responses) should include at least one piece of evidence taken from the reading or another classmate's post. Examples might include a quotation from another classmate's post or a summary of the passage in the text.

Please feel free to disagree with each other, but base those disagreements on the argument presented and the evidence at hand.

Racist, sexist, or other hate language is not appropriate, no matter what someone says to you. If you attack someone in this forum, your posting will be deleted by the professor and you will be reprimanded.

When in doubt about whether or not something is appropriate, don't write it. If something you read here makes you angry, message the professor about it. If you need to write an angry response to something, write it offline and let it sit for a day or so while you cool down; then edit it to appropriate posting content and post.

Please feel free to write your discussion forum entries in word and paste them in this forum so they can be grammar and spellchecked. As this is an English course, all discussion postings should be mostly free from grammar and spelling errors.

Please check the forum once or twice a week.

Essay Format

All essays must be typed. Format is standard MLA: 12 point Times New Roman double-spaced, 1 inch margins. Other fonts will not be accepted. Your four essays will be submitted online. Essays without a Works Cited page (except Essay 1) will automatically have 10 points subtracted.

Instructor Response Policy

You can expect me to respond to your emails and Private Messages within 48 hours (it usually takes less than 24). It's easier for me if you send your messages through the Private Messaging tool than if you email me.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Steady effort through the semester will help you succeed in this course.

Week 1 LOGICAL FALLACIES

10/ 27--11/2 Go over Syllabus thoroughly.

Introduce yourself in the Discussion Board.

Read Module: Week 1.

Please read the following: (Note, these readings are all in *The West Guide*)

"Be a Success in Class" especially "Make the Most of Your Online Classes"

Chapter 19: "Introduction to Logical Argument" concentrating on

"Avoiding Logical Fallacies" Section pp. 314-325.

Wendy McElroy, "Victims from Birth" (321-323)

Steven Rhoads, "What Fathers Do Best" (323-325)

Please watch the video lecture on "Victims from Birth". You will be doing the same type of exercise in written format on "What Fathers Do Best."

****Written Assignment #1:** Please list the Logical Fallacies you found in Steven Rhoads' article "What Fathers Do Best" and explain why they are fallacies. **Due online by 11:59 pm, Sunday, November 2 (Daylight savings).**

Week 2 **CLOSE READING: *THE BLUEST EYE*, Part One,**

11/2-9 Read in *The West Guide*: "Improving Reading Fluency" pp. 152-162

Read Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*, 1-131

Quiz #1 due online by Nov. 9. Please make a reading vocabulary list to be submitted every week for 20/100 or 1/5 points on quiz.

Submission occurs online in the quiz.

Please watch video lecture #1 on *The Bluest Eye*. Post on the Discussion Board.

Read Module: Week 2 including "Dick and Jane."

Post on the Discussion Board about Morrison's references to *Dick and Jane* in the novel. Why do you think she uses that for her chapter headings? (Feel free to look it up if you have never heard of *Dick and Jane*.)

Week 3 ANALYSIS: *THE BLUEST EYE*, Part Two.

11/9-16 Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*, 132-end.

Quiz #2 due online by May 4.

Watch (available at Netflix or online-- see link):

"Imitation of Life" Claudette Colbert 1934.

"The Littlest Rebel" Shirley Temple clip (20 minutes)

Please watch video lecture #2 and #3 on *The Bluest Eye*.

Read in *The West Guide*, pp. 407-414: "Intro to Literary Elements" Chapter 23 and p.422 study the "Glossary of Fictional Terms" and Chapter 25: pp. 435-444 about analyzing literature and close reading Toni Morrison.

Post on the Discussion Board about Shirley Temple. What is her significance to Morrison's novel?

Week 4 INTRODUCTIONS AND EVIDENCE

11/17-23 "Writing Introductions: Seven Strategies" (Chapter 13: pp,

223-232)

"Prove It!: The Five Types Of Evidence" (Chapter 12: pp. 207-214)

Sascha de Gersdorff, "Fresh Faces". Think about what kinds of evidence de Gersdorff uses. What kind of introduction strategy did she use? (pp. 214-217)

Read MLK, "Letter From a Birmingham Jail": please see publisher supplement. Also available online. Listen to link to "I Have a Dream" speech from Youtube.

Watch the video lecture on Martin Luther King.

Quiz #3 due online by May 11.

Post on the Discussion Board.

Week 5

11/24- 30

MIDTERM EXAM

Essay exam on all readings through Week 5, due online. I will ask you to think about topics that have come up in class from the readings we have read so far and tie them together into an essay. Please be sure to watch the class lecture videos before you take the Midterm.

Before taking the exam: Read in *The West Guide*: Chapter 20: "In-Class Essay Exam Strategies" (pp. 339-348).

Week 6

"BE A RESEARCHER"

12/1-7

Online QUIZ #4 on all readings below due 12/7.

Peter Singer, "**Singer's Solution to World Poverty**" (pp. 170-174)

Jonathan Rauch, "**A Moral Crossroads for Conservatives**" (pp. 217-223)

Dr. Alfredo Quinones-Hinojosa interview (pp. 373-375)

Henry Louis Gates, Jr, **Foreword to *An Anthology of Rap***, (pp. 162-165)

Read in *The West Guide*, the entire Section V: "**Be a Researcher**" (includes two chapters: "**Conducting Research**" and "**Documenting your Sources**" (pp. 349-404)

Submit online: Summary of ONE article you read above. (See *The West Guide*: "Reading": "**Writing a Summary**" p. 166-169)) Include a **Works Cited** in proper MLA format for that article.

Post on Discussion Board on Singer article. Do you agree with his premise?

Week 7

ANALYSIS OF VISUAL MEDIA

12/8-14

Read in *The West Guide*: Chapter 18: "Analyzing Visual Arguments" (pp. 291-310)

Choose an ad that reflects our cultural ideals/values. This will be your final essay assignment. You must be able to attach it to your final essay assignment so that I can see the ad.

Submit with your final paper: works cited of three sources in proper MLA format. If the citations are not in correct format, they will be returned ungraded.

Review in The West Guide: Section III: "Applying the Writing Process" pp. 175-206. **"Prewriting" and "Getting Down To Brass Tacks: Writing The Draft":** "The Thesis Statement" and "Topic Sentences;"

Read: "Writing a Conclusion," 233-238; "Holly's Seven Rules of College-Level Writing," 239-250; "Revising and Polishing" 251-260 and Chapter 6: (121-130):

Advanced Grammar and Style:

More Run-On and Fragment Solutions

Active Voice and Action Verbs

Using an Academic Tone

Submit **FINAL PAPER (5 pages-- 4 pages plus Works Cited)** online by 12/14.

Week 8

PUTTING YOUR SKILLS TOGETHER: THE FINAL EXAM

12/15-21

Read: Phillip Vannini, "Will You Marry Me?: Spectacle and Consumption in the Ritual of Marriage Proposals" <http://dspace.royalroads.ca/docs/bitstream/handle/10170/167/WillYouMarryMe.pdf?sequence=1>

Darryl James, "Get Your Hand Out of my Pocket" <http://www.blacknla.com/news/Articles/DJPocket.asp>

Beth Bailey, "From Front Porch to Back Seat: A History of the Date"

<http://ushist2112honors.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bailey-courtship.pdf> or:

<http://www.imissakian.org/resources/dating+changes+Bailey.pdf>

FINAL EXAM*** only on Week 8 reading,
due online by December 21.**