

## **WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE**

Course: English 28 – Intermediate College Reading & Composition  
Semester: Spring 2014 Section: 8078

Location: Online; <http://www.myetudes.org>

Time: Flexible; assignment deadlines vary by type; due on Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays

Instructor: Erika Szostak

Email: Please contact me via the private message facility in Etudes; [szostaer@wlaac.edu](mailto:szostaer@wlaac.edu)

Office Hrs: I will be available online every Monday from 1:00-2:00pm PST. If you see that I am online at other times, feel free to post a message in the chat room or send me a private message anytime.

(Please note that I live in the U.K. so it is 8 hours later for me here than it is for you in L.A.) If you have a Skype account and would like to schedule a video chat, my Skype name is erikasozostak.

### **Course Description:**

This is an intermediate course in written composition and critical thinking. It is a prerequisite to English 101. The course emphasizes academic writing based primarily on critical reading. Seven compositions of 500-750 words are required, in addition to other weekly writing assignments.

English 28 is reading and writing-intensive; students will practice paragraph construction, essay writing, vocabulary and grammar skills, with an emphasis on critical thinking and critical reading and comprehension of books and essays.

The purpose of this course is to aid the student in developing/applying the skills necessary for success in college-level writing courses, including academic and personal writing. In this class, we will work on learning what it means to think and read critically and move from writing and recognizing effective paragraphs to writing personal narratives to short academic essays in a variety of rhetorical modes.

### **Course Objectives**

- Learn basic research methods and ways to evaluate authority and credibility of sources.
- Collect and organize research data, using credible sources to write a convincing/persuasive document.
- Review and master the skills necessary for performance in rhetorical situations that occur in the personal and professional life of the college educated.

- Listen and speak (actively, effectively) by questioning, clarifying and supporting one's ideas and the ideas of others.
- Learn to take private thoughts and turn them into public documents by providing adequate support of theses in the form of specific textual references to assigned readings as well as other sources and to integrate the student's own information, ideas, experiences and observations with the ideas of others.
- Read actively, effectively and critically as a means of gathering information, for meaning and gaining cultural understanding and enjoyment.
- Write compositions which respond effectively to a topic based on one or more assigned readings and using the conventions of standard English, a clear focus, appropriate support/evidence and logical organization. In these compositions, students will state, develop and support a clear thesis.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Identify and restate an author's thesis or main idea.
- Identify an author's main supporting points and organizing features.
- Explain an author's tone and how it functions in the text.
- Think critically about texts.
- Discuss readings.
- Give opinions about readings and be able to defend that opinion.
- Navigate challenging texts.
- Use sufficient examples and details in writing.
- Recognize when writing off-topic.
- Research a topic.
- Summarize a reading passage and paraphrase the writing of other people accurately.
- Write a thesis statement.
- Compose essays that respond effectively to a topic based on one or more assigned readings.

- Prepare essays of 500-750 words that include clearly stated thesis statements and detailed support.
- Provide adequate attribution to readings.
- Employ references to one's own experiences, ideas and observations.
- Assemble essays that have clearly organized introductions, bodies and conclusions.
- Develop well-supported, unified, coherent paragraphs.
- Employ vocabulary specific to convey intended ideas.
- Employ various aspects of standard English grammar, punctuation, spelling and usage.
- Demonstrate mastery of subject/verb agreement, sentence structure, the apostrophe, and pronoun reference.
- Revise writing for content and mechanics by using student's own writing mistakes to learn from.
- Employ MLA style.

### **Required Texts & Materials**

1. This is an online course; thus, you **must** have access to a valid and private email address of your own, a computer, a modem and an internet browser like Firefox or Explorer, and preferably a printer. Public computers with internet access and printing capability are available in the campus library.

You will login to the course at <https://myetudes.org/portal>.

See <http://www.wlac.edu/online/login.asp> for help with logging into the course.

2. Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference, with Strategies for Online Learners*, 7th ed.

ISBN-10: 0-312-55199-1

ISBN-13: 978-0-312-55199-5 3. Various online essays for download / printing; to be distributed in class.

### **[Textbook companion site for quizzes & exercises:](#)**

You must go to [this website](#) and register as a student, using **szostaer@wla.edu** as your instructor's email address. Carefully double-check the spelling of your instructor's email address. If you make a typo, I will not see your results and you will not receive credit for doing the exercises.

Grades earned for exercises completed on this website will not appear automatically in your Etudes grade book; your instructor must manually enter them so don't panic if you don't see that you've received credit for these immediately. I transfer the grades to Etudes once a week, on the weekend after the exercises are due.

URL: [http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/writersref7e/default.asp#t\\_612701](http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/writersref7e/default.asp#t_612701)

### **Writer's Reference Tech Support:**

If you have any problems accessing the exercises on the Writer's Reference site or with your Writer's Reference exercise grades showing up in my grade book, you can contact their technical support at **1-800-936-6899** Monday - Thursday, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 a.m., EST; Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. EST; Saturday, 11:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m., EST; Sunday, 11:30 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.

### **Tutoring**

For help with English and all other Writing Classes offered at WLAC, please visit the Writing Lab located in the right hand corner of the HLRC's first floor. The lab is open from 8:00am – 6:00pm Monday through Thursday. WLAC also offers an online writing lab. You are encouraged to take advantage of these free services. The Writing Lab also helps students with writing essays for scholarship and transfer applications. The lab does not proofread or edit papers, but it does provide guidance on organization and development of a paper as well as general overview of grammar.

To gain access to WLAC's Online Writing Lab (OWL), simply enroll in the course entitled Supervised Learning Assistance - Section #8978. Once enrolled, you will see the course tab "WLAC TUT 001" whenever you login to ETUDES-NG. Enroll anytime during the semester to access free online tutoring. You can enroll online by clicking [here](#).

Contact: The Online Writing Lab

<http://www.wlac.edu/online/owl.asp>

The Writing Lab, (310) 287-4420

Tutoring Center, (310) 287-4318

**Disability Accommodation Statement** Students with a verified disability who may need a reasonable accommodation(s) for this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact the DSPS Office or the Office for Special Services as soon as possible. All information will remain confidential.

For accommodations for test-taking or completing assignments, visit DSPS on the ground floor of the library. There, a kind and competent professional will help you to determine if you have an LD. If you are diagnosed with an LD,

then you will be able to teach your instructor how to teach you effectively. Contact: Disabled Students, (310) 287-4450

## **Schedule**

Even though we will not have a traditional class meeting at a particular time in a particular physical location, we will still have a series of regular deadlines which must be met. Though some of you may wish to rush through the class, you will be expected to work at the pace set by the instructor. This is especially important as many of your assignments will involve peer feedback, and weekly assignments will build logically and chronologically upon previous assignments and class discussions.

Weekly Format: Remember to always check the schedule! Items posted in the online Announcements sections take precedence over due dates posted here.

Available as of 12:00am Saturdays: Weekly modules (i.e. lectures) on rhetorical strategies and style, writing exercise assignments, essay readings for the reading comprehension & vocab quizzes

Due as of 11:59pm Wednesdays: Writer's Reference readings & practice exercises; module quizzes; writing exercises in response to modules

Due as of 11:59pm Fridays: reading comprehension/vocabulary quizzes; working drafts of essays

## **Due Dates**

The due dates of all assignments must be met. **All assignment due dates are listed in the weekly Announcement postings, which are accessible in Etudes by clicking on the "Announcements" link on the left side of the screen.** These announcements are also emailed to you directly. No late work will be accepted. If you have a conflict with a deadline, you must contact me PRIOR to the deadline to make alternative arrangements to turn in your assignments. If you contact me before the deadline, I am flexible; if you contact me afterward already having missed it, I am not.

Assignments are listed on the class schedule by due date; do not wait until the current date to check what is due that day. Always check the schedule to see what is due on forthcoming days.

If an assignment is listed as due at 11:59pm on a Friday, that means the assignment must be fully completed and submitted by that time. It does not mean that you can log in at 11:58 to begin your assignment. You are advised to give yourself enough time to login and complete your work well in advance of the time it is due.

## **Attendance**

Obviously, you have some flexibility with this, as you may login any time between deadlines. However, daily and weekly deadlines must still be met.

**Always check the Announcements to see what these are.** If I see no activity from you for two weeks, you will be excluded from the course. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused missing of deadlines. I am not trained to diagnose illnesses, validate doctor's notes, and I will not interpret your reasoning for missing deadlines. Also, I assume you can manage your own responsibilities days and you know how many assignments or deadlines you miss.

If you miss a deadline, you are still responsible for the material covered by that assignment and for all assignments. It is your responsibility to contact me or your classmates regarding anything you miss.

### **Classroom Decorum**

Our course website is our classroom. Students are responsible for conducting themselves as professionals in the classroom and on campus at all times. Unprofessional or rude behavior disrupts the classroom and may lead to the student's dismissal from class. Severe misbehavior by a student may lead to permanent dismissal from the college.

Sometimes our class discussions will involve topics which are controversial and arouse strong emotions. In these matters, you are expected to remain respectful of everyone at all times and to exercise maturity and responsibility in your presentation of ideas. I encourage you to speak freely in class; you may always feel free to disagree, but refrain from making any racist, sexist, discriminatory or derogatory comments.

Failure to abide by these guidelines will result in expulsion from class.

Email messages should be sent in a timely manner to me via the private message facility in Etudes, and you should not expect an immediate reply. If you have a question about an assignment, your email should arrive well in advance of the due date. If you must email me privately regarding a general question about the class, please read all documents carefully before doing so to see if your question has already been answered.

Online, writing in ALL CAPS is equivalent to shouting at someone. It's not polite and it's difficult to read. Please use regular sentence case capitalization. Messages posted and/or emailed in ALL CAPS or all lower-case, that lack punctuation or which utilize text speak (e.g. "u" instead of "you") will be ignored/deleted.

### **Grades**

You are always free to ask me about your grade or to check your progress by looking at the online gradebook, which you can access by clicking on "Gradebook" on the left side of the course homepage, at any time during the semester. The average or "C" student will complete assignments, participate

in this class and will achieve the course objectives in an average or minimal way. "A" grades are awarded for work that indicates a clear effort to go above and beyond minimum requirements.

Scale: A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-69, F = 0-59

Students must earn a C or better in order to pass this course and move on to English 101. Grades above a "C" are earned by superior student work and obvious class preparation and engagement. Grades will be based on the following types of assignments:

- Rhetorical Mode Essays: These essays will be written in response to a variety of prompts based on our readings
- Online exercises on grammar and rhetorical strategies will be taken at your textbook companion website. To access these exercises, you must first register as a student on this website and enter [szostaer@wlac.edu](mailto:szostaer@wlac.edu) as your instructor's email.
  - Reading comprehension and vocabulary quizzes
  - Module quizzes
  - Writing exercises
  - Midterm Essay Exam
  - Final Exam & Final Essay

### **Late Work**

Late work will not be accepted. If you will miss a deadline, you must contact me BEFORE you miss it in order to make alternative arrangements to turn in your assignments.

### **Make-ups**

Make-up quizzes & tests will be allowed only if alternative arrangements are requested in advance of the due date.

### **Paper Format**

All writing assignments submitted for a grade must be typed in black ink, double-spaced, set in a legible, standard size 12 font like Times New Roman, Arial, Cambria or Calibri, have 1" margins on all sides and adhere to current MLA style guidelines. Paragraphs must be separated. Some browsers that aren't entirely compatible with Etudes don't allow for this.

**Be sure that you are using Firefox or Internet Explorer when you post your work in Etudes.**

Each paper must be labeled with your name, instructor's name, the course title and section number, due date and assignment type (e.g. "Descriptive Essay – First Draft") in upper left hand corner, and student's last name and page number in upper right hand corner. The assignment title should be centered and in bold only, one line above the first line of the essay text. An example of what this looks like follows here:

Your full name

Instructor: E. Szostak

WLAC English 28, Section 8078

Assignment due date

Assignment type

### **The Title of Your Essay**

As you'll notice, the title of the essay is in bold only; it's not italicized, in quotation marks or underlined. Your title should also follow this format. Note that all words except minor prepositions or articles in your title should be capitalized. Also, the first line of each paragraph of your essay should be indented. Do not skip lines between paragraphs.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty of any kind will result in a grade of zero in the paper in question and referral to the Office of Academic Affairs.

#### 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 misrepresentation.

**\*CHEATING:** using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids, or computer-related information. This includes allowing other people to upload work for you or to take your online quizzes.

**\*PLAGIARISM:** representing words, data, works, ideas as one's own when they are not; presenting the work of others without giving proper credit (including author tags or signal phrases, quotations marks, works cited pages and parenthetical citations). **\*FABRICATION:** presenting as genuine any invented or falsified material. **\*MISREPRESENTATION:** falsifying, altering, misattributing or misstating the contents of documents or other materials related to academic matters, including schedules, prerequisites, & transcripts.

To the list above I add \*SELF-PLAGIARISM, which refers to “recycling” your own work. You must submit original work for each assignment, even if you have taken this course before. It is not acceptable to re-submit previously submitted papers (unless specifically advised to do so in the context of a revision assignment) or papers that you have written for another class.

It may seem especially tempting to plagiarize in an online course given the relative ease of cutting and pasting material from the internet. However, it is extremely obvious when students do this; on average, I catch about eight instances of this behavior per semester.

I do not tell you this because I want you to think that I am out to get you. Instead, I want you to understand that plagiarism is so easy to catch because it is a genuine corruption of your personal voice, which is as individual as a fingerprint. When a student plagiarizes, it’s like hearing another, unfamiliar voice suddenly speak from the page, and it is quite jarring for the reader. Often students plagiarize because they fear trying out their own ideas, they procrastinate until they have no other option, or they don’t understand how to credit a source. If you find yourself in one of these situations, contact me and I will be happy to help you. However, I cannot help you after the offense has occurred.

### **Final Note**

All of that being said, please know that I love teaching and I am here to help you succeed. I want you to succeed – I take great pleasure in seeing students do A-level work - and I look forward to observing the development of your personal voice. Best wishes for a great semester!