

# SYLLABUS

**ENGLISH 103: Composition and Critical Thinking**  
**Spring 2014 – Section 8055 Online**  
**J. Pilaro, Adjunct Assistant Professor, Language Arts**

Instructor's email address: [pilaroj@wlac.edu](mailto:pilaroj@wlac.edu)

Office Hours: Sundays 5pm-7pm

3 Units

Course Description: 103 Composition and Critical Thinking (3) UC:CSU

*Prerequisite: English 101 with a grade of "C" or better.*

This course 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, analytical and argumentation writing skills.

Course starts 4/14/14; you must access the course by 4/20/2014 or you will be dropped. (See section below on required attendance.)

**PLEASE NOTE:** ATTENDANCE IS BASED ON TIMELY SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN AND DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENTS.

## **Student Learning Outcomes:**

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

- Research, evaluate and cite outside sources for use in his/her own writing;;
- Identify, differentiate and evaluate arguments in readings;
- Analyze and defend points of view;
- Produce essays that are organized, logical, and relatively free of errors;
- Formulate clear and engaging arguments that are supported by specific evidence.

In this class, we are engaged in writing to convince others of a specific point of view or argument. "Critical thinking" asks us to consider many other perspectives. You as the author can decide which views are compatible or in conflict with your own. When you write persuasive essays your intent is to convince someone to agree with you about an issue.

## **WAYS to achieve our goals**

- Collect and organize research data, using credible sources to write a convincing/persuasive document.
- Analyze, synthesize and evaluate information to assess the validity and usefulness of an argument.

## **Reading will online or provided by the instructor**

**Hours:** This course will be taught entirely online, no on-campus visits are required. You are required to log in three or more hours per week.

**Assignments:**

There will be four types of course assignments:

1. Writing Essays
2. Required Reading
3. Completing 2 Timed Writing Tests
4. Participating in Discussion Questions

**Grading Policy:**

There will be three “out-of-class” writing assignments (1000-1500 words), many will include some aspect of research and citing sources using current MLA style, including one revision. You will also write two timed writing exams (a Mid-term and Final). For the exams, you will not know the questions in advanced. These essays will count as formal writing assignments. The grades on these essay assignments will be primary in determining your final grade.

Writing Assignments (Essays and Writing Exams): 80%

Other Assignments/attendance (Discussions, quizzes, etc.): 20%

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

**Course Policies:**

Plagiarism will result in failure for the assignment. Plagiarism is using someone else’s writing as your own. This includes cutting and pasting together from a collection of sources. It also includes improper documentation of outside sources. We will go over this in in class.

**Learning Disability:** If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your ability to carry out assigned coursework, please contact The Center for Students with Disabilities. They will review your concerns and determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

West Los Angeles College Webpage: [www.wlac.edu](http://www.wlac.edu)

**SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS**  
**subject to change**

**English 103 – Sections 8055 – Spring 2014**

**Week 1:** Discussion postings due

Reading due: Handout on argument terminology and “Introduction: Notes for Young Writers” by Annie Dillard; “Three Spheres” by Lauren Slater; and “Prayer Dogs” by Terry Tempest Williams

**Week 2:** Reading due: “What Is It We Really Harvestin’ Here?” by Ntozake Shange; “The Brown Study” by Richard Rodriguez; “Killing Wolves” by Sherry Simpson and “Being Brians” by Brian Doyle  
Discussion posting due

**Week 3 :** Essay 1 due

Reading due “Chimera” by Gerald N. Callahan and “Mixed-Blood Stew” by Jewell Parker Rhodes

**Week 4:** Essay 2 due

Discussion posting due

**Week 5 : Midterm Exam (Essay 3)**

**Week 6:** Read: “Introduction” and “Smell” from A Natural History of the Senses

**Week 7:** Reading due: “Taste” “Touch”  
Discussion posting due

**Week 8:** Final Exam and Revision due