

English 103 Composition and Critical Thinking – fall 2013

Section: 0234

Prerequisite(s): English 101

Instructor: Gina Ladinsky, Assistant Professor of English

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Office Hours: MW: 12:10-1:45; T Th:12:10-1:20

Office Location: Office 15 - Instructional Bldg.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Develops critical thinking and writing skills and emphasizes logical reasoning, analysis, and strategies of argumentation using expository prose as subject matter. The course is designed to improve critical thinking in written arguments by applying established modes of reasoning, analyzing rhetorical strategies, evaluating logical fallacies, and detecting bias.

COURSE CONTENT:

- Define and access types of argument
- Formulate a clear, arguable thesis statement. Arrange an organized well-argued essay in support of the thesis
- Analyze and calculate the influence of both stated and unstated assumptions
- Identify and analyze the structure of arguments; evaluate their validity
- Identify common fallacies of language and thought. Criticize refutations and objections.
- Progressively refine writing skills by constructing sound arguments, avoiding logical fallacies, supplying sufficient support for claims, and using outside sources
- Conduct research from a critical thinking perspective

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Produce unified essays to total 6,000 words over the course of the semester that show a mastery of critical thinking, logical organization, and mechanics
- Analyze and evaluate academic articles and literature
- Utilize library research materials and document evidence
- Write a clear, well-organized analytical research paper employing appropriate evidence to support the arguments or conclusions using documentation and deductive and inductive reasoning skills

TEXTS:

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| <i>Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing - A Brief Guide to Argument.</i> Sylvan Barnet and Hugo Bedau. 7 th edition |
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| The book is on reserve for you in the library. eBooks are fine too. |
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REQUIRED MATERIALS & SUPPLIES:

- Notebook with lined paper
- Dark ink pens
- Two Large Blue Books
- The **reading for the day** and the **syllabus** are **mandatory** for each class meeting

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS:

- Access to Etudes:
 - This course has an Etudes shell that provides the class calendar, readings, essay assignments, lectures, handouts, and grades, etc. As a registered student, you have been added to the Etudes shell. Simply follow the directions to login by going to LAMC’s website and click “Online Classes” at the top of the page. Then click Etudes and follow the directions. **The shell will not be available for login until 8a.m., on Sunday, one day before the semester begins.**
 - Etudes login help is available at: <http://etudes.org/student-help.htm>
 - **Reading quizzes** will open one week prior to the reading due date, and will close as shown on Etudes.
 - You will be in charge of **printing all handouts** for the semester. Please print double-sided.
 - It is required that you **check Etudes at least once a week** or more often for announcements, and updates.
 - You will be required to check **your overall grade** as we move through the semester. **If you fall below 70%, please come by my office to discuss what can be done to help you succeed.**
- Ability to use Microsoft Word and type 25 wpm

METHODS OF PRESENTATION:

- Lecture
- In-class writing
- Collaborative/workshop activities.
- In-class discussions
- Small group discussions
- Peer editing sessions and in-class conferences

METHODS OF EVALUATION:

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| Essays, Essay Exams, Peer Review, Reading Quizzes, and Quick Writes |
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POINT ACCUMULATION:

| Required activity | Number of assignments of this type | Total points possible | Percent of grade |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Essays and Exams | 6 | 250 | 68% |
| Peer Review | 4 | 40 | 10% |
| Reading Quizzes | 9 | 65 | 18% |
| Quick Writes | Each class meeting | 15 | 4% |
| Total Points | | 370 | 100% |

Please keep all returned assignments. In the unlikely case that you feel you handed in an assignment that the instructor did not record, you must have the graded work in your possession for evidence. Your grade will be based on the following:

ESSAY GRADING: The grades you receive on your essays will be **progressive** in that your writing is expected to improve throughout the semester. Here is the breakdown:

| Paper | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D+ | D | D- | F |
|-------|----|------|----|------|------|----|------|------|----|------|------|----|----|
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | 20 | 19 | 18 | 17.5 | 17 | 16 | 15.5 | 15 | 14 | 13.5 | 13 | 12 | 10 |
| 3 | 35 | 33.5 | 32 | 31 | 30 | 28 | 27 | 26.5 | 25 | 24 | 23 | 21 | 20 |
| 4 | 50 | 47.5 | 45 | 44 | 42.5 | 40 | 39 | 37.5 | 35 | 34 | 32.5 | 30 | 29 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|----|----|
| 5 | 65 | 62 | 59 | 57 | 55 | 52 | 50 | 48.5 | 46 | 44 | 42 | 39 | 37 |
| 6 | 80 | 76 | 72 | 69 | 68 | 64 | 62 | 60 | 56 | 53 | 52 | 48 | 45 |

GRADING SCALE:

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|----------|-----------|---|
| A | 90-100% | Superior. Mastery beyond course requirements |
| B | 80-89.9% | Above average. Consistent progress; meets all course requirements |
| C | 70-79.9% | Average. Meets basic course requirements |
| D | 60-69.9% | Below average; partial fulfillment of requirements; minimal effort and progress |
| F | Below 60% | Fails to meet minimum course standards |

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES:

- **No assignments or papers may be turned in late.**
- In **emergency circumstances**, exams or papers may be taken or turned in late with **instructor approval**, but these will result in a reduction in points, regardless of the reason for the absence or lateness, and **documentation** of the emergency is required.
- Papers are due at the beginning of class. **If you arrive more than 20 minutes late, one letter grade, will be deducted.**
- To receive full credit, assignments must be turned in **on time** and **exams** must be taken on the date scheduled. I reserve the right to make an exception on a case-by-case basis.

EXTRA CREDIT POLICY:

There is no extra credit. If you do not hand in each paper assigned and complete the bulk of the work with a passing grade, you will most likely **not pass this course**.

ATTENDANCE, DROP AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY:

- **Attendance and preparation are mandatory.**
- Class participation, including small group discussions and collaboration, is a necessary aspect of this course and **attendance will ultimately influence your final grade.**
- The college allows **three unexcused absences**. If you miss four classes, I *may* drop you.
- Each additional unexcused absence beyond the allowed three will reduce your final grade by one-half letter.
- If you have emergencies or special circumstances, **contact me**. All excused absences will require **documentation**.
- Work and non-emergency doctor's appointments will not qualify as an excused absence.
- **Students must NOT expect faculty to initiate withdrawal procedures for them.** If you wish to drop this class, you may do so through the college website.
- Coming **late** disrupts the class. **Three late arrivals will count as an absence.** Also, leaving class early will have the same effect-three = one absence.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

- Any form of plagiarism, which is the use of someone else's words that you count as your own, is an offense punishable by failure of this course or the assignment. Further, any form of plagiarism is considered academic dishonesty and may result in disciplinary action. You may be required to upload out-of-class writing assignments to a plagiarism site. If so, further instructions will be given in class.
- Please be extremely careful that you do not engage in any behavior that could even be construed as cheating. **Violations could result in failing grades and subsequent academic disciplinary action.** Examples of **behaviors that are not permitted** include but are not limited to: Copying

another student's homework and inappropriate behaviors during an exam such as talking with another student, looking at or copying from another student's paper, removing exam materials from the classroom, or arriving with written material of any kind in your blue book.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT:

- Please conduct yourself as you would in a business environment: on-time attendance, respect for others, respectful language and personal integrity.
- Private conversations with the instructor should be held during office hours, not during class time.
- Inappropriate language or physicality in the classroom is never permitted.

CLASS POLICIES:

- **Electronic submissions** of assignments, including papers **will not be accepted**.
- **Stay Home if You Are Sick:** Please follow the advice of the **Center for Disease Control** (CDC) and stay home if you are sick. Email me and I will work with you. If you arrive in class and are coughing and/or sneezing, I will give you a sterile facemask to wear during class, so that you don't get others sick. Also, cover your occasional cough with your sleeve. Hopefully we can all enjoy a fairly healthy semester.
- **Attendance:** Will not assure a student a passing grade.
- **Food and Drink:** Food or drink is prohibited in the classroom with the exception of water bottles, which are permitted as long as they remain closed when not in active use.
- **Cellphones, tablets, laptops and other devices:** Electronic device use is permitted in this class, including the use of eBooks for any assigned text. Devices must be kept **on the desk**—not in your lap. Activities using these devices must be limited to activities **supporting concurrent class topics**. Students using devices for other purposes will lose the privilege of device use during class.
- **Please consider the environment** and use the **front and back sides of paper** both for typed papers, for handouts that you print from Etudes, and for all handwritten work.
- **Fairness and Respect:** No matter where you come from outside our class, you have entered an environment (our classroom) that is fair, where everyone works on the same level playing field. I will show no favoritism for any reason. If you ever feel that I have treated you unfairly or have disrespected you in ANY way, please let me know so we can quickly fix the problem. My job is to work with you **so that you will learn as much as possible in our class**.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

- Los Angeles Mission College accommodates students with disabilities. If you qualify for any special accommodations due to a disability, you will need to officially process your request through the Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) office as close to the beginning of the semester as possible. Also notify me at the beginning of the semester, so I can make arrangements to accommodate your needs. If you believe you have a learning disability that has not yet been documented, please see me and make an appointment at the DSPS office for assistance.

COLLEGE RESOURCES AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR LAMC STUDENTS:

- **Click the “Important Student Information” link under “Announcements” in Etudes** for important information on **student resources at LAMC**, including **emergency procedures**.

DISCLAIMER:

Some elements of the syllabus may be changed at the instructor's discretion. The changes will be communicated via Etudes announcements, which are emailed to your LAMC email. Students will be

given at least 48 hours notice of changes whenever possible.

Instructor errors: Please let me know, promptly and courteously, if I have made a mistake in class, or if I have made a mistake in grading or in posting your grade to Etudes. I appreciate the feedback, because I want to correct errors as soon as possible.

If there is any aspect of this syllabus which you do not understand, or to which you take exception, please let me know within the first week of class.

THE CLASS CALENDAR: The “Class Calendar,” which includes due dates for all reading and writing assignments is posted for you in **Etudes** under “**Modules**” and can also be found on my LAMC Website.