WRIT 101: Composition, Writing to Sustain Place ONLINE

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Course Description

In College Writing 101, you will engage in a study of your place in Montana. This course is designed to challenge you to learn the skills you’ll need to excel as a scholar at the University of Montana. Throughout the semester you will learn to engage rhetorical habits of mind in order to write confident, graceful, research-based academic essays that explore topics vital to your life.

The purpose of WRIT 101 is to help you develop your abilities as a writer and reader of texts to encourage you to think critically and communicate effectively in the world. I’ll ask you to inquire into different personal, academic, and civic contexts and compose and read different genres. I’ll also help you develop flexible reading, writing, and research processes to help you develop as a college writer. Much of your work will involve different kinds of collaboration, including small group workshops and. Because writing development is an important process that takes place over time and across different writing situations, all WRIT 101 classes use portfolio evaluation as the primary means to assess your work in class.

Course Texts

1. Andrea Lunsford, et al, Everyone’s An Author
2. Moodle Classroom Materials

Major Inquiry Projects

Expect to write and revise three different projects and one reflective introduction over the course of this class, in addition to other informal writing in and out of class. I will give you a detailed assignment sheet as we begin each of these major assignments.

- Inquiry project 1: Life place essay (1,000 words)
- Multimedia essay project: My life place
- Inquiry project 2: Op-ed (700-1,000 words)
- Inquiry project 3: Personal academic argument (2,000-3,000 words)
- Portfolio process report (500-750 words)

Your three major inquiry projects will give you the opportunity to compose in a range of genres for a range of academic and civic situations. You’ll have opportunities to use observations and experience as evidence, as well as learn strategies for composing effective arguments and conducting academic research.

You will have the chance to develop all of your major projects through a process of inquiry and drafting. You’ll compose papers in and out of class, alone and with your small group. All inquiry projects must be completed for you to pass the course. I will respond to these projects with written comments focused on suggestions for revision.
You’ll be asked to keep an electronic folder of all of your writing throughout the semester. At midterm you’ll write a reflection on the working folder, and, at the end of the semester, you’ll construct a final portfolio that will include your three inquiry projects and a process report. All three of your inquiry projects are required to be turned in for peer review and then my review before revising for the portfolio. It’s essential that you keep all of the work you produce in the course.

Common Policies and Procedures

General Class Expectations:
   a. All reading assignments will be completed by the assigned date.
   b. All writing assignments must be turned in on time.
   c. Attend class.
   d. Actively, vocally, and appropriately participate in class discussions.
   e. Any individual assignments (including requests for conferences) will be completed by the assigned date.

Grading*
I encourage you to talk with me at any time to better understand my comments or to discuss your overall progress and success in the class.

1. Participation: 35%. This includes discussion inside of the weekly units in Moodle.
2. Multimedia essay: 15%. This essay will be graded separately from your other three, and as you can see it comprises a larger portion of your grade. It is imperative that you complete this essay to the best of your ability.
3. Final portfolio: 50%. Your portfolio includes the final drafts of your three inquiry projects along with a process report detailing your revisions. Students who do not turn their work in for peer and professor review cannot earn a passing grade on the portfolio, since it represents a process undertaken throughout the course.

*You must earn a C- in this class to be awarded credit
*You must turn in your portfolio and complete all major papers by their deadlines in order to receive credit for this course.

Grading Policy: Students enrolled in WRIT 101 are graded by the traditional letter grade A, B, C, D, F or are given NC for no credit. The NC grade does not affect grade point average. It is reserved for students who have worked unusually hard, attended class regularly and completed all assignments but whose skills are not at a passing level at the end of the semester.

Participation. Participation includes logging into Moodle prepared and on time, taking part in class discussions (this involves “listening”/reading as well as writing/“speaking”), asking questions, contributing your knowledge and insights in whatever form is appropriate, and striving to make all your contributions excellent. It also includes doing the required reading and writing for each class. Note: Please see Participation Grade Descriptors for more information, and also see the participation rubric located in Moodle on our home page and under “Resources”. You will receive weekly participation grades based on the discussion forums in our Moodle classroom.

Late Work. Late work is unacceptable. If you miss a draft deadline, you’ve missed a crucial chance for feedback on your work, and that feedback is required for your portfolio. If you aren’t ready with a response to a group member’s draft, you’re letting down someone who is counting on you for help. If you aren’t prepared for class, you limit your own voice and contributions to the class and community of writers and readers. If you ever have a problem with an assignment, talk to me in advance of the deadline and you may be able to negotiate a special
arrangement. *Deadlines are not negotiable after you’ve missed them.* Work is due per the weekly unit deadlines posted in Moodle. You will not get credit for work included in your final portfolio that was not first drafted in the weekly units.

**Office Hours.** Office hours provide us with an opportunity to talk one on one. I am available every weekday from 9-10am via Skype. I will also be logged into the classroom at that time, which has messaging and IMing functions. We can also connect via telephone. In order to make a telephone appointment, send me your number, the best time to talk, and the topic you would like to speak about.

**Communication.** I’m happy to talk with you via university email, course mail or Skype if you have a question about the course or an assignment. Please do not email me drafts or attachments unless invited to do so. I will respond to emails Monday through Friday within 48 hours.

**Classroom Community.** Community is important in a small workshop class; we will work together to create an environment that promotes collaborative learning and effective, thoughtful discussion. The student conduct code asks students to “respect the rights, privileges, and dignity of others” – these are important (even sustainable) ways to engage in class discussion, particularly when the topic might be provocative.

**Resources Beyond Moodle.** The Mansfield Library and the Writing Center are excellent sites for researchers and writers to get additional support. You will be asked to participate in at least one session on library research and take a draft of a paper to the Writing Center for feedback from one of their tutors as a way to expand your circle of writing support.

**Academic Conduct.** You must abide by the rules for academic conduct described in the Student Conduct Code. If you have any questions about when and how to avoid academic dishonesty, particularly plagiarism, please review the Conduct Code and talk with your instructor. The Council of Writing Program Administrators describes plagiarism as follows: “plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.” Academic honesty is highly valued in the University community and acts of plagiarism will not be tolerated.

**Students with Disabilities**
Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Please speak with me privately after class or in my office. Please be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator.

**Participation in University Assessment**
This course requires an electronic submission of an assignment stripped of your personal information to be used for educational research and assessment of the writing program. Your papers will be stored in a database. This assessment in no way affects either your grade or your progression at the university.

**Pilot Online Writing Lab**
This semester, our course is part of a pilot project I am working on in conjunction with The Writing Center. Our mission is to provide online students with high quality writing tutoring. You will be asked to submit work and possibly to meet virtually with writing tutors. Your feedback and input is essential to our process, so we will ask you for it!
Evaluation Criteria for Portfolios

The evaluation criteria your instructor will be discussing and applying with you throughout the semester reflects the Outcomes Statement for WRIT 101, a document which identifies the goals you should strive for as an English 101 student. The following questions are those your instructor will use to evaluate your submission portfolio.

1. Does the portfolio include required elements?

2. How does the portfolio demonstrate engagement in inquiry as a means of learning? In particular, can the student use strategies like exploration, explanation, evaluation, and reflection as inter-related means of inquiry?

3. How does the portfolio demonstrate focus on a purpose appropriate to different writing situations, including different audiences?

4. How does the portfolio demonstrate writing in multiple genres with an awareness of how genres shape reading and writing?

5. How does the portfolio demonstrate use of specialized language from the discipline of composition to support learning?

6. How does the portfolio demonstrate a student’s understanding and engagement in the collaborative and social aspects of learning? Can the student give and receive feedback on written texts?

7. How does the portfolio demonstrate a student’s appreciation of the challenges of communicating effectively across differences?

8. How does the portfolio demonstrate a student’s development of a flexible writing process?

9. How does the portfolio demonstrate a student’s knowledge and use of research and reading as processes?

10. How does the portfolio demonstrate a student’s knowledge and use of a variety of technologies to facilitate research and writing?

11. How does the portfolio demonstrate a student’s knowledge and use of conventions for different genres, including documentation and control of features like punctuation, grammar, syntax, and spelling?

12. How does the portfolio demonstrate inquiry and knowledge about the “big issue” of sustainability?
Portfolio Grade Descriptors
The following rubric will be used to grade your portfolio. Please note that very few students rise to the level of “Superior” for a final portfolio grade. Please consider and reflect on these descriptors throughout the course as a process of gauging your own writing performance and to understand how to improve. Please also note that student who do not participate in the weekly units, workshops for peer review, as well as students who do not get professor feedback on the three projects, will automatically get an “Unacceptable” ranking.

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td><strong>A 90-100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>Superior</strong> portfolios will demonstrate initiative and rhetorical sophistication that go beyond general expectations. A portfolio at this level is composed of well-edited texts representing different writing situations and genres that consistently show a clear, connected sense of audience, purpose and development. The writer is able to analyze his or her own writing, reflect on it, and revise accordingly. The portfolio takes risks that work.</td>
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<td><strong>B 80-89%</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strong</strong> portfolios meet their rhetorical goals in terms of purpose, genre, and writing situation without need for further major revisions of purpose, evidence, audience, or style/mechanics. The writer is able to reflect on his or her own writing and make some choices about revision. The writer takes risks, although they may not all be successful.</td>
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<td><strong>C 70-79%</strong></td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong> portfolios meet the basic requirements, yet the writing would benefit from further revisions of purpose, evidence, audience, or writing style/mechanics (or some combination) and a stronger understanding of rhetorical decision-making involved in different writing situations and genres. The writer composes across tasks at varying levels of success with some superficial revision. The writer has taken some risks in writing and exhibits some style.</td>
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<td><strong>D 60-69%</strong></td>
<td><strong>Weak</strong> portfolios do not fully meet the basic evaluative standards. Most texts are brief and underdeveloped. These texts show a composing process that is not yet elaborated or reflective of rhetorical understanding related to composing in different genres and for a range of writing situations. Texts generally require extensive revisions to purpose, development, audience, and/or style and mechanics.</td>
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<td><strong>F 0-59%</strong></td>
<td><strong>Unacceptable</strong> portfolios exhibit pervasive problems with purpose, development, audience, or style/mechanics that interfere with meaning and readers’ understanding. Unacceptable portfolios are often incomplete. A portfolio will also earn an F if it does not represent the writer’s original work.</td>
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Plagiarism Policy
Amy Ratto Parks, Director of Composition

If I suspect that something a student has written has been plagiarized, in full or in part, intentionally or unintentionally, I take the following actions:

- I alert the student of areas of the text that are suspicious
- the student receives no credit on the paper, pending failure, and it is up to him/her to prove that he/she turned in original work
- each student is asked to provide me with hard copies of the research she/he used in writing the paper
- if the student cannot provide documentation of her/his research, the student will fail the paper

These measures are also put into action when a paper is poorly cited. When a student brings his/her research to me I use the time to talk with them about citation and make sure that they understand how and when to cite in the future.

In the case that the student is unable to provide evidence of his/her original work, or in the case that I have evidence that the student has intentionally plagiarized his/her work:

- the student will automatically fail the given assignment
- the student may fail the course unless, at my discretion, I offer alternative assignments and/or conditions
- I may pursue a plagiarism citation unless, at my discretion, I offer alternative assignments and/or conditions
- the student may receive alternate assignments, etc. to avoid failure. In this instance, all conditions must be met. I need to see evidence of excellent work and effort, and work must be completed on time.
- all other previously established conditions in the class (i.e. attendance, participation, homework grades, etc.) still stand and can still cause a student to fail the course
- in the case of blatant or egregious offenses, I will not negotiate against course failure and will pursue a University Citation of Plagiarism