

English 131: Composition/Exposition

Spring 2015 / Section W

Instructor: Denise Grollmus
Class Time: T/Th 1:30-3:20
Classroom: Raitt (RAI) 107
Course Website: <https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/964973>

Office Location: Savery 417
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Course Description

The goal of English 131 is deceptively simple. Ostensibly, this course is designed to help you become a better writer. But what does “better writer” *even mean*? And a writer of what? Of poetry? Of instruction manuals? And what does “better” writing look like? Is it a matter of making fewer grammatical mistakes (answer: in part)? Employing fancier language and academic jargon (answer: NO)? Even more mystifying: how exactly does one become this so-called “better writer?”

I swear: the point of asking all these questions is not to induce an anxiety attack. It is to illustrate the crucial first step one must take in order to improve one’s writing. That step is what we call **inquiry**. By being curious, skeptical, and critical—by asking questions—we open ourselves up to receiving the necessary information we need in order to better form our ideas, our beliefs, and our arguments in all contexts and **rhetorical situations**.

Now, to answer a few of the questions I posed above. What sort of writing will we be doing in this class? As you know, writing takes on various forms that we often refer to as **genres**, which can be as broad as poetry or prose and as narrow as black feminist science fiction or legal briefs. Because we are working in the context of a college-level English class, we will largely focus on **expository writing** in the humanities. When we hear “expository writing” we usually think of tediously dry research reports. But exposition is something we actually do everyday, and it is *always* a creative process. It appears in novels, newspapers articles, movies, and business plans. We sometimes use exposition when we post to Facebook or tell someone about how our day went. In fact, many of the tools we’ll be learning aren’t applicable only to academic exposition. They are crucial to all genres of verbal expression and are tools you will continue using and sharpening even after you leave this class. In fact, a big part of this class is about learning how to transfer the skills you learn here to tasks beyond this classroom.

The question of how you will improve as writers is probably the easiest to answer. We become better writers by writing. And then revising. And then writing some more. And then revising again. We also become stronger writers by becoming stronger readers. And in this class, we’ll be doing a lot of reading, writing, and revising. The class is structured into two modules that each includes two short assignments and one major project. As we write, we’ll also read from a variety of texts that we will carefully dissect and which we can model (or not) in our own work.

Most importantly, we’ll have a very clear guide for our course in the form of specific **course outcomes** (see below). These outcomes will help us stay on task and focus on developing those skills that are crucial to our success. As we read, write, and revise, we’ll frequently reflect on which outcomes (or goals) we’ve mastered and on which we can still improve and how. These outcomes will also help determine our overall performance in this course, which will be represented in our final portfolios.

Though I’m aware that no one has chosen to take English 131 (and that many of you might now see it as little more than an annoying requirement), it is my hope that you will come to see this class as one of the most productive, useful, and enriching of your college experience. But mostly, I hope that this course will help you to become a more conscious and confident writer, reader, and thinker.

Required Course Materials

- *Contexts for Inquiry* (**I encourage you to purchase the cheaper version without the supplemental readings**)
- All other supplemental readings and materials will be made available on our Canvas course website

COURSE OUTCOMES

1. To demonstrate an awareness of the strategies that writers use in different writing contexts.

- The writing employs style, tone, and conventions appropriate to the demands of a particular genre and situation.
- The writer is able to demonstrate the ability to write for different audiences and contexts, both within and outside the university classroom.
- The writing has a clear understanding of its audience, and various aspects of the writing (mode of inquiry, content, structure, appeals, tone, sentences, and word choice) address and are strategically pitched to that audience.
- The writer articulates and assesses the effects of his or her writing choices.

2. To read, analyze, and synthesize complex texts and incorporate multiple kinds of evidence purposefully in order to generate and support writing.

- The writing demonstrates an understanding of the course texts as necessary for the purpose at hand.
- Course texts are used in strategic, focused ways (for example: summarized, cited, applied, challenged, re-contextualized) to support the goals of the writing.
- The writing is intertextual, meaning that a “conversation” between texts and ideas is created in support of the writer’s goals.
- The writer is able to utilize multiple kinds of evidence gathered from various sources (primary and secondary – for example, library research, interviews, questionnaires, observations, cultural artifacts) in order to support writing goals.
- The writing demonstrates responsible use of the MLA (or other appropriate) system of documenting sources.

3. To produce complex, analytic, persuasive arguments that matter in academic contexts.

- The argument is appropriately complex, based in a claim that emerges from and explores a line of inquiry.
- The stakes of the argument, why what is being argued matters, are articulated and persuasive.
- The argument involves analysis, which is the close scrutiny and examination of evidence and assumptions in support of a larger set of ideas.
- The argument is persuasive, taking into consideration counterclaims and multiple points of view as it generates its own perspective and position.
- The argument utilizes a clear organizational strategy and effective transitions that develop its line of inquiry.

4. To develop flexible strategies for revising, editing, and proofreading writing.

- The writing demonstrates substantial and successful revision.
- The writing responds to substantive issues raised by the instructor and peers.
- Errors of grammar, punctuation, and mechanics are proofread and edited so as not to interfere with reading and understanding the writing.

Assessment/Grading

Think of me NOT as the grantor of grades, but as the recorder of grades. I don't decide how well you do in this class—YOU do. I simply record the grades for the work you've done. To that end, I'm also NOT an obstacle toward getting a good grade. Instead, think of me as your greatest resource. Take advantage of my presence. Ask me questions. Send me emails. Visit me during office hours. I'm here to help you succeed. I want to see everyone in this class do a great job. I feel much better recording 3.5s and 100%s as opposed to 0s and 1.9s. Not only do I see your grades as a reflection of your work, but a reflection of my teaching, as well. To that end, it's helpful if I'm clear about how exactly grading works in this class. So here we go:

Portfolio = 70% of grade

In this course, you will complete two major assignment sequences, each of which is designed to help you fulfill the course outcomes. Each assignment sequence requires you to complete two short assignments (2-3 pages) leading up to a major paper (5-7 pages). The idea isn't that you execute each of these sequences perfectly, but that you take risks, try new things, and improve as you proceed through these two sequences. The shorter assignments will each target one or more of the course outcomes at a time, help you practice these outcomes, and allow you to build toward a major paper at the end of each sequence. You will have a chance to revise significantly each of the major papers using feedback generated by your instructor, peer review sessions, and writing conferences. Toward the end of the course, having completed the two sequences, you will be asked to compile and submit a portfolio of your work along with a critical reflection. The portfolio will include the following:

- 3-5 showcase pieces that you will select from your work, including at least one major paper
- A compendium that includes all of your papers, both short assignments and major projects
- A critical reflection that explains how the selected papers demonstrate your mastery of the course outcomes

A portfolio that does not include all the above will be considered "Incomplete" and will earn a grade of 0.0-0.9. The grade for complete portfolios will be based on the extent to which the pieces you select demonstrate the course outcomes. This portfolio will be worth 70% of your final grade and it will be something that you are developing from day one of this class. That being said: because you will not be turning in your portfolio until the end of the quarter, you will not be graded on any of your assignments until that time. The great benefit of this portfolio system is that you are able to develop new skills and techniques before being assessed. Therefore, your grade will be based on how well you address the course outcomes at the end of the quarter rather than the beginning.

Participation = 30% of grade

Participation includes attendance, in-class work, and completion of homework on time and according to guidelines. I keep close track of what you turn in as well as its quality. If you ever have any questions about how you are doing in this regard, please come see me in office hours.

Attendance Policy

Your regular attendance is required and your participation grade will be lowered for poor attendance. Please communicate with me about your absences as much as possible. **If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the assignments, class notes, and course changes from a classmate.** If you miss class on a day that written work is due, you are still expected to turn your work in on time. In-class work cannot be made up.

Late Policy

Late work will not be given any written feedback. Students submitting late work are welcome to come to office hours to receive oral feedback, but those assignments will receive a "0" and will affect participation grades. Be sure to manage your time wisely and anticipate upcoming deadlines, which are all listed on the course schedule. And always come talk to me if you are struggling to keep up with the fast pace of the class. I'm happy to help in any way I can. **I also give extensions, but only if you ask me 48 hours BEFORE the due date.**

Conferences

You are required to attend one conference with me during the quarter. I'll be scheduling these mandatory conferences between the first peer review and the due date of your first major paper. You are also welcome to come

and talk to me during office hours any time, too. If you can't make my office hours, I'm also happy to schedule an appointment with you outside of my office hours. I highly recommend you take advantage of this opportunity.

Extra Credit

There will be numerous opportunities to receive extra credit throughout the quarter. Extra credit is worth one missed homework assignment or missed class session. Extra credit assignments are also a great way to get some extra practice and feedback. One of the ways you can earn extra credit is by taking your work to the Odegaard Writing & Research Center or CLUE (see links below). In order to receive extra credit for meeting with a writing tutor, you will want to get the tutor's signature, along with the date and time of your visit. You must also turn in a reflection that answers the following questions in at least 250 words: 1. What did you ask the tutor to look for in your paper? 2. What feedback did you receive? 3. How will you incorporate this feedback into this (and future) work?

University Policies

Academic Integrity Clause

Plagiarism, or academic dishonesty, is presenting someone else's ideas or writing as your own. In your writing for this class, you are encouraged to refer to other people's thoughts and writing--as long as you cite them. As a matter of policy, any student found to have plagiarized any piece of writing in this class will be immediately reported to the College of Arts and Sciences for review.

Complaints Clause

If you have any concerns about the course or your instructor, please see the instructor about these concerns as soon as possible. If you are not comfortable talking with the instructor or not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact the following Expository Writing Program staff in Padelford A-11: Director Candice Rai, crai@uw.edu or Assistant Directors AJ Burgin, aburgin@u.washington.edu; Ann Shivers-McNair, asmcnair@uw.edu; Yasmine Romero, yromer@uw.edu. If, after speaking with the Director or Assistant Directors of the EWP, you are still not satisfied with the response you receive, you may contact English Department Chair Brian Reed, (206) 543-2690.

University of Washington Resources

Accommodations

If you need accommodation of any sort, please let me know so that I can work with the UW Disability Resources for Students Office (DRS) to provide what you require. This syllabus is available in large print, as are other class materials. More information about accommodation may be found at <http://www.washington.edu/students/drs/>.

Campus Safety

Preventing violence is everyone's responsibility. If you're concerned, tell someone.

- Always call 911 if you or others may be in danger.
- Call 206-685-SAFE (7233) to report non-urgent threats of violence and for referrals to UW counseling and/or safety resources. TTY or VP callers, please call through your preferred relay service.
- Don't walk alone. Campus safety guards can walk with you on campus after dark. Call Husky NightWalk 206-685-WALK (9255).
- Stay connected in an emergency with UW Alert. Register your mobile number to receive instant notification of campus emergencies via text and voice messaging. Sign up online at www.washington.edu/alert.

For more information visit the SafeCampus website at www.washington.edu/safecampus.

CLUE

Center for Learning and Undergraduate Enrichment

Website: depts.washington.edu/clue

OWRC

Odegaard Writing & Research Center

Website: depts.washington.edu/owrc

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change)

WEEK 1	IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES	HOMEWORK
Tue 3/31	Introduction to Course and First Sequence Assignments; Audience and Genre <i>Outcome 1</i>	Reading: - Review Syllabus Carefully - Read <i>CI</i> 15-18 (“Shitty First Drafts”) and 21-50; - Read Links on Canvas: “Writing for Your Audience” and “Consider Your Audience” Writing: - Shitty First Drafts Reading Response on Canvas - Chapter One Reading Guide
Thu 4/2	Rhetoric and the Rhetorical Situation; Audience and Genre <i>Outcome 1</i>	Reading: - <i>CI</i> 94-127 - “Trend Piece” Writing: - Genre Analysis on Canvas - Chapter Three Reading Guide - Start writing SA1
WEEK 2		
Tue 4/7	SA 1 Due (post to Canvas by midnight) Rhetorical Analysis and Genre Analysis <i>Outcome 1</i>	Reading: - <i>CI</i> 131-213 - “How to Reclaim The F-Word? Just Call Beyonce” Writing: - Chapters Four and Five Reading Guide - F-Word Rhetorical Analysis on Canvas - FINISH SA1 by Midnight
Thu 4/9	Reading for Understanding VS Reading Rhetorically <i>Outcome 2</i>	Reading: - <i>CI</i> 214-251 - Your Two Articles for SA2 Writing: - Chapter Six Reading Guide - Post links to your two articles for SA2 - Synthesis Worksheet
WEEK 3		
Tue 4/14	Reading Critically and Intertextually; Summarizing, Paraphrasing and Quoting; In-text Attribution (non-MLA) <i>Outcome 2</i>	Writing: - Write SA2
Thu 4/16	SA 2 Due (post to Canvas by midnight) Synthesis and Organization; Introduction to Complex Claims and Major Project One <i>Outcomes 2 and 3</i>	Reading: - Sample MP1s - “A Modest Proposal” PDF on Canvas Writing: - MP1 Complex Claim and Sources on Canvas - FINISH SA2 by Midnight
WEEK 4		
Tue 4/21	Complex Claims Workshop; Writing an Effective Introduction; Outlining <i>Outcome 3</i>	Reading: - <i>CI</i> 447-475 (revision and peer review)

		Writing: - MP1 Draft
Thu 4/23	MP 1 Rough Draft Due (bring computer to class) Peer Review; Revision plans; Lower Order Concerns <i>Outcome 4</i>	Writing: - Revise MP1
WEEK 5		
Tue 4/28	NO CLASS Conferences <i>Outcome 4</i>	CONFERENCE Writing: - MP1 Revisions
Thu 4/30	NO CLASS	Writing: - MP1 Revisions
WEEK 6		
Tue 5/5	Lower Order Concerns Workshop; <i>Outcomes 1, 2, 3</i> Conducting Academic Research; Academic Abstracts <i>Outcome 2</i> MP 1 Final Draft Due Wednesday (post to Canvas by midnight)	Reading: - CI 252-320 (Chapters 7-9) -Review LOC website links from class Writing: - Canvas: Paragraph Fluidity - Extra Credit: LOC Peer Review - MP1 due by midnight Wednesday
Thu 5/7	Introduction to Second Assignment Sequence; Academic Prospectus, Academic Research, Motivating Research Through Lines of Inquiry Bring your computer to class SA3 is due Monday, May 11 at midnight <i>Outcomes 3, 4</i>	Reading: - CI 1-14; 55-93 - MLA Citation Readings - “Abstract and Annotated Bibliography” PDF on Canvas - Sample SA3s and SA4s Writing: - Write SA3: Prospectus - MLA Citation Worksheet Researching: -Find 4 sources for your MP2, at least two of which MUST BE scholarly
WEEK 7		
	SA3 Due Monday at Midnight	
Tue 5/12	Academic Writing; MLA Citation; Abstracts and Annotated Bibliographies <i>Outcome 2</i>	Reading: - CI 372-446 (Chapters 12 and 13) Writing: - Canvas: Abstract - Complex Claim Draft
Thu 5/14	Complex Claim Workshop; Organization SA 4 Due (post to Canvas by midnight Friday)	Reading: -Sample MP2s Writing: - MP2 Draft - Canvas: Academic Genre Analysis - Finish SA4 by Midnight
WEEK 8		
Tue 5/19	MP 2 Rough Draft (bring computer to class) Peer Review; Revision plans <i>Outcome 4</i>	Reading: - Rhetorical Grammar Reading Writing: - Revise MP2
Thu 5/21	Lower Order Concerns Workshop; Introduction to the Portfolio <i>Outcome 4</i>	Reading: - CI 891-918 - Sample Portfolios Writing: - Revise MP 2 - Portfolio Reading Response

		on Canvas - Portfolio Grading Worksheet
WEEK 9		
Tue 5/26	Strategizing your portfolios; Portfolio planning workshops MP 2 Draft 2 Due (post to Canvas by midnight)	Writing: Outcomes 1 and 2
Thu 5/28	Portfolio workshops <i>Outcomes 1-4</i>	Writing: Outcomes 3 and 4
WEEK 10		
Tue 6/2	Portfolio Workshops <i>Outcomes 1-4</i>	Writing: Portfolio Revisions
Thu 6/4	Portfolio Workshop; Wrap-up; Course Evaluations PORTFOLIOS DUE ON MONDAY AT MIDNIGHT	Writing: Portfolio Revisions