



ENGL 1101

ENGLISH
COMPOSITION

SECTIONS 101 & 105
FALL 2020



COURSE DESCRIPTION

ENGL 1101 is a composition course focusing on the skills required for effective writing in a variety of contexts, with emphasis on exposition, analysis and argumentation, and including an introductory use of a variety of research skills. These sections employ **global climate change and its related environmental, economic, and social concerns** as a theme through which to examine contemporary critical conversations and practice the relevant writing skills modeled therein.

Learning Outcomes:

To identify and employ a variety of rhetorical modes and techniques of persuasion and acquire reasonable mastery of conventions of college-level prose writing;

To develop and apply critical thinking skills in effective expository, analytical, and argumentative writing and to gain facility with the entire writing process from invention through revision;

To develop organizational strategies, incorporate and document additional textual materials to strengthen and support an argument.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Shannon Finck
Email: sfinck@westga.edu
Office: TLC 114-D
Office Hours: Appointments via Google Meets

MEETING INFORMATION

Section 101

Location: Pafford 106
Class Period: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30 - 1:45 PM, and asynchronously online

Guidelines for optional, in-person meetings during class time are forthcoming.

Section 105

Location: Pafford 306
Class Period: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00 - 3:15 PM, and asynchronously online

Guidelines for optional, in-person meetings during class time are forthcoming.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Required texts for this course—professional articles, short works of creative nonfiction, excerpts from longer works, videos, and films—will be found on Course Den, in the section labeled “Required Texts.” Materials are organized there according to the order in which they are assigned and include all of the bibliographic information you will need to cite them correctly in your work.

You will also need to bookmark the following resources (links on Course Den):

Purdue's Online Writing Lab (OWL) - Periodically, I will refer you to this site to practice basic writing skills, formatting, and documentation of sources. In general, this is a great resource for help writing and revising your work.

An Illustrated Book of Bad Arguments - This text, fully available online, provides a cute way to learn the logical fallacies that will weaken your arguments. It's based on George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

EXPECTATIONS

GRADING

I believe wholeheartedly that students and their efforts are valuable beyond numbers, beyond performance, beyond measure really. For this reason, I employ a grading system known as **contract grading**.

A number of other universities use a contract grading model, and you can find many examples of grading contracts online. For our purposes, the contract will resemble the chart below. You decide what grade to aim for, and then align your efforts in the class toward the terms of the contract that align with that letter grade.

Grading Contract for ENGL 1101

You don't see F on the chart below because nobody sets out to fail. It is, of course, possible to fail this course, but it's easier not to.

You will earn a grade of "F" in the course if you:

- (1) fail to complete more than one major assignment,
- (2) miss more than five class meetings, or
- (3) otherwise fail to meet the minimum requirements to earn a "D."

In short, one fails if one simply makes little to no effort to complete the work in the course.

A	B	C	D
Complete all major assignments in the course on time.	Complete all major assignments in the course on time.	Complete all major assignments in the course.	Complete all but one of the major assignments in the course.
Revise one or more of the major assignments based on instructor feedback.	Revise one or more of the major assignments based on instructor feedback.	Revise one major assignment based on instructor feedback.	X
Complete at least 90% percent of the weekly assignments in the course.	Complete at least 80% percent of the weekly assignments in the course.	Complete at least 70% percent of the weekly assignments in the course.	Complete at least 60% of the weekly assignments in the course.
Miss no more than 3 class discussions during the semester.	Miss no more than 4 class discussions during the semester.	Miss no more than 5 class discussions during the semester.	Miss no more than 6 class discussions during the semester.
Compile a portfolio of your writing and meet with the instructor to discuss it at the end of the semester.	Compile a portfolio of your writing and meet with the instructor to discuss it at the end of the semester.	Compile a portfolio of your writing and meet with the instructor to discuss it at the end of the semester.	Compile a portfolio of your writing and meet with the instructor to discuss it at the end of the semester.

This space is for you to fill in your own goals.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

Essay #1 - Engaging the Text

Purpose

The student reader/writer critically engages with a text, focusing on determining what the text is arguing and what the student reader/writer argues in response.

Skills

- Develop critical reading habits. Read slowly, deliberately, annotating the text and asking questions of it as you read.
- Use class discussion/group work to practice how to collectively unpack the text's argument.
- Clearly summarize the argument the text is making (doing so in the introductory paragraph) by choosing active verbs that capture the spirit of the original text's argument.
- Create a thesis-driven response to a text's argument. The thesis statement (controlling idea), in this case, is an argument in response to the argument summarized from the text, not the summary itself.
- Learn to use topic sentences—focused arguments that reflect the paragraph's dual role in the paper's internal organization (organizes the paragraph itself) and external organization (organizes the paper's overall structure/argument).
- Practice textual engagement and incorporating relevant support to strengthen an argument and make it more compelling. Support takes the form of quotes and paraphrasing. No secondary research will be a part of this essay.
- Begin developing genre awareness, both as a reader (What kind of text am I reading? What are its features? What makes it credible or not? Who wrote it? Where did it come from? What kinds of biases should I expect from it? What are my biases about the topic?) and as a writer (What kind of text am I writing? What are its features? What makes it credible? Who is my audience? What is my purpose?).
- Begin to develop an awareness of usage conventions of academic English.
- Begin understanding how habits and choices concerning those conventions impact readers and our own ethos as writers/thinkers.



Essay #2 - Analyzing Rhetoric

Purpose

Building on their work in Essay #1, the student reader/writer will focus on how a text presents its subject and argument (what).

Skills

- Continue deepening critical reading skills.
- Continue practicing summarizing a text's argument (in the student's introductory paragraph) choosing active verbs that respect the original's spirit. Students must read beyond the "what" of the paper – the argument itself – and begin to identify how the text performs its argument by identifying the formal and rhetorical choices (rhetorical appeals, organizational decisions, word choices, style, etc.) the text makes to produce its effects. In this essay, the thesis statement (controlling idea) is an argument about the rhetorical strategies the text uses to make its argument and whether or not those strategies are effective.
- Perform specific textual analysis to support the essay's argument. This paper will not require secondary research. Privilege direct reference to text (quotes over paraphrase, narrating a visual scene over plot summary). Continue developing genre awareness, understanding how rhetorical analysis differs from summary across different mediums/texts.
- Continue practicing using topic sentences, developing internal and external organizational conventions; topic sentences both introduce the argument the paragraph makes and advance the overall argument of the paper's thesis (controlling idea).
- Continue to develop awareness of usage conventions of academic English.
- Begin understanding how choices concerning those conventions impact readers and our own ethos as writers/thinkers.

Essay #3 - Synthesizing Arguments

Purpose

The reader/writer joins an ongoing critical conversation about a text and adds their own argumentative voice to that conversation.

Skills

- Join a critical conversation taking place across multiple texts/mediums.
- Continue developing genre awareness of the sources/voices involved in the critical conversation. A more specific understanding of Information Literacy begins to develop as an extension of students' growing genre awareness.
- Continue privileging direct reference to text (quotes over paraphrasing, narrating a visual scene over a plot summary) as students continue their practice of engaging with textual evidence. Using a thesis statement to advance critical conversation with a distinct argument in concert with others. While the argument might not be "entirely original," we want to encourage and challenge students to look for the conversation across multiple texts and add something unique to the scope of the conversation.
- Continue practicing using topic sentences, developing internal and external organizational conventions by writing sentences that both introduce the argument the paragraph makes and help advance the paper's overall argument.
- Begin introducing intertextuality as a way to explain why we use format conventions in academic writing (to keep who is saying what clear and to make sure the writer doesn't take credit for someone else's intellectual property). Intertextuality is sort of like the flip-side of "plagiarism," which is what can happen when intertextuality is handled poorly.
- Begin to gain a practical understanding of a formatting convention (MLA, APA, Chicago).

WEEKLY/ PROCESS ASSIGNMENTS

To become a “writer,” one needs do nothing other than read and write; to improve as a writer, one needs do nothing other than read and write. The repetition is intentional: writing isn’t something that can be learned through rote memorization; it’s a skill that requires modeling and practice.

To that end, each week, we’re going to read examples of published writing by accomplished and effective communicators, and then we’re going to write about and in the style of that work. Sometimes, you’ll keep what you produce to include in a major assignment, and other times, you’ll workshop what you produce with the instructor and your peers in order to receive feedback; and still other times, you’ll never use or even read what you produce again. Because the point is, on some level, simply to practice. I will use your willingness to practice and share your work as a measure of your effort to improve as a writer.

Weekly writing assignments will include all of the writing you post in discussions in response to reading assignments. Following the prompts posted to Course Den, students will reread and generate questions or brief reflections on specific aspects of the reading assignments. You will be responsible for demonstrating your knowledge of the reading and for constructing clear, succinct critical questions or observations. Please note that these are not reading responses in the sense that you tell me whether or not you liked the reading or agreed with it. I value your opinions, of course, and you will have opportunities to voice them appropriately, but the point of these short assignments is to practice writing, of course, as well as academic interrogation and craft analysis.

Some prompts will ask you generate some part of a major essay instead of responding to readings. Those are process assignments, and they will work roughly the same way, except that the discussion will take place in a small-group workshop of your writing, rather than a large-group discussion of a text we read together. I will set these groups up on Course Den, allowing some flexibility in how you interact.

Though I will give you minimal feedback on these assignments, I will participate in discussions, and you will receive full credit for seriously attempting them. There are eleven of them, so I can drop one at the end.

You should submit your responses by the Wednesday of each week. By the following Sunday, you should comment on at least two other students’ posts. These comments should not be merely evaluative (i.e. “good job” or “I like what you said”) but should, rather, engage with the ideas in the original post.

PROMPTS FOR BOTH WEEKLY AND MAJOR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS WILL CIRCULATE IN ADVANCE OF THEIR DEADLINES. PROGRESS TOWARD YOUR CONTRACT GOAL WILL BE TRACKED IN COURSE DEN. YOU DO NOT NEED TO LET ME KNOW WHAT GRADE YOU ARE ATTEMPTING--THAT'S UP TO YOU.

COURSE POLICIES

Assignment Submission

All major assignments should be submitted to the appropriate assignment folder in Course Den by midnight on dates they are listed due in the course schedule below. Emailed files will not be accepted, except in the case of verified server failure (like system-wide Course Den maintenance or something). All assignments should be double spaced in a 12-point plain font (i.e. Times New Roman) and follow consistently the set of formatting guidelines for your major/potential major (APA, MLA, or Chicago). All assignments need to be completed in or converted to .DOCX or .PDF formats. I grade in TurnItIn, which does not accept other file formats, so your assignments will not be accepted if they are in another format, like Pages or .TXT, even though these are common file types.

Late and Make-Up Work

Because I have a generous grading policy (outlined below), you may not submit major assignments late under any but the most extreme circumstances. If you are having trouble with an assignment, come and talk to me well ahead of that assignment's due date. I do not generally grant last minute extensions for assignments. Similarly, it is your responsibility to back up your work and to ensure that the submitted product is formatted correctly. Submission of corrupted files or "I thought I uploaded the file" are not accepted excuses for late work, so I strongly suggest you save your work to a USB drive or cloud storage regularly and double check that ALL of your submissions to Course Den. You may never make up weekly writing assignments from discussions that you missed, though there will be enough of these assignments that missing just a few will have a negligible impact on your class performance.

Etiquette

"Netiquette" is a set of rules for behaving acceptably in an online environment—an online classroom, in this case. In an online learning environment, some of the generally accepted rules for communicating digitally will still apply; however, some will be slightly different from those with which you might be familiar. The following bullet points cover some basics to communicating in an online classroom:

Be sensitive to the fact that you're interacting with live human beings via this technology, and human beings possess different cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds, different abilities, and different political and religious beliefs. It's okay to have intellectual disagreements or debates related to course content—in fact, it's encouraged—but failure to do so respectfully will not be tolerated by me or the community. Personal attacks and/or racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, or classist comments carry a one-strike policy here. This isn't Reddit.

Use good taste when composing your responses in discussions with others. Profanity, which I personally enjoy, should be avoided in the context of writing responses and workshop commentary, both because you cannot anticipate the reactions of your peers and because it is wise to use all writing you do in this environment as an opportunity to practice developing a professional communication style. Also consider that slang can be misunderstood or misinterpreted, so be careful with it. Don't, for instance, use all capital letters when composing your responses as this is considered shouting on the Internet and is regarded as impolite or aggressive. It can also be stressful on the eye when trying to read your message.

Be careful when using acronyms. If you use an acronym it is best to spell out its meaning first, then put the acronym in parentheses afterward, for example: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). After that you can use the acronym freely throughout your message. Use clear and consistent grammar and spelling, and avoid using text-messaging shortcuts. Should you require additional help with this, please visit Purdue's OWL (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html).

Preparedness

Learning to take detailed notes and annotate texts is crucial to succeed in most college classes, not just this one. You are expected to take notes as you read independently and to structure your responses to texts around those notes, referring to specific ideas and passages from course materials. Though I will not be monitoring this stage in your writing process after the first few weeks, it will be apparent from the quality of your work whether you kept good notes on the thoughts and questions you had as you read. I recommend highlighting or underlining ideas you find interesting or that seem important to you, language or concepts you do not understand, vocabulary with which you are unfamiliar and will need to look up, and moments in course readings you think you might be able to use as evidence for the arguments you will make in assignments. Use different colors or symbols to indicate which of these each moment you've marked reflects. For this reason, printing the readings from Course Den is recommended, though you can annotate digitally with many document viewers. Also for this reason, renting your textbooks is a bad idea, as the necessity of keeping your book free of markings will add extra steps to this process.

Communication

Though I will often communicate with you about course content and assignments using Course Den and welcome you to do the same, please email only from your UWG account to discuss final grades (because FERPA) or with time-sensitive questions or requests, as I am often likely to see this correspondence sooner. Though I will often reply to your emails promptly, please allow 24 hours for a response during the week (48 hours over the weekend) before sending a follow-up email or message and plan accordingly. Remember that email is another opportunity to practice good writing techniques—always include a greeting and a closing with your name.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Support

Accessibility Services: Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact Accessibility Services.

Center for Academic Success: The Center for Academic Success provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or cas@westga.edu.

University Writing Center: The University Writing Center assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or writing@westga.edu.

Online Courses

UWG takes students' privacy concerns seriously: technology-enhanced and partially and fully online courses use sites and entities beyond UWG and students have the right to know the privacy policies of these entities. For more information on privacy and accessibility for the most commonly used sites, as well as technology requirements visit the UWG Online site.

Students enrolled in online courses can find answers to many of their questions in the Online/Off-Campus Student Guide.

If a student is experiencing distress and needs help, please see the resources available at the UWG Cares site. Online counseling is also available for online students.

Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing. The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the Student Handbook.

UWG Email Policy

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.

Credit Hour Policy

The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

Mental Health Support

If you or another student find that you are experiencing a mental health issue, free confidential services are available on campus in the Counseling Center. Students who have experienced sexual or domestic violence may receive confidential medical and advocacy services with the Patient Advocates in Health Services. To report a concern anonymously, please go to UWGcares.

ELL Resources

If you are a student having difficulty with English language skills, and/or U.S. culture is not your home culture, specialized resources are available to help you succeed. Please visit the E.L.L. resource page for more information.

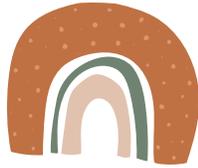
COVID-19

Online Instruction: Students should be aware and plan ahead for the possibility of having to complete all courses and/or exams online. This means talking with your instructors about what minimum technical requirements (software and hardware) will be required should your class move online or a student's personal needs dictate. This also includes making plans for internet access at whatever location participation may occur.

Face Coverings: Effective July 15, 2020, University System of Georgia institutions, including the University of West Georgia, will require all faculty, staff, students, and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use will be in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing. Face coverings are not required in campus outdoor settings where social distancing requirements are met. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area. Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons.

Student FAQs: For more information about UWG COVID-19 guidance for students visit the Student FAQ webpage.





CLASS SCHEDULE



Week/Unit	What to Read	What to Do
Week 1 8/12-8/16 Introductions	Scan the syllabus, so you know what to expect. You should also familiarize yourself with the modules in our class's Course Den. Click around in there! Learn where to find things and where to submit things! Preview some readings if you're really feeling it!	Watch my "Introduction Video;" then submit your own by midnight on Sunday 8/16. Ask me any questions you may have at this point about our class. I'm here to help!
Week 2 8/17-8/23 Climate News: Climate and Coronavirus	"Coronavirus, Climate Change, and the Environment A Conversation on COVID-19 with Dr. Aaron Bernstein, Director of Harvard Chan C-CHANGE" and Renee Cho's "COVID-19's Long-Term Effects on Climate Change— For Better or Worse" (both short readings linked on Course Den)	Weekly Writing #1
Week 3 8/24-8/30 Welcome to the Anthropocene: Pt. 1	"The End of Nature" by Bill McKibben and Jedediah Purdy's Introduction to <i>After Nature</i> Instructions & Resources for Essay #1	Weekly Writing #2
Week 4 8/31-9/6 Welcome to the Anthropocene: Pt. 2	"Learning How to Die in the Anthropocene" by Roy Scranton and "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Cthulucene" by Donna Haraway	Weekly Writing #3
Week 5 9/7-9/13 Welcome to the Anthropocene (or whatever): Pt. 3	Excerpts from <i>Manatee/Humanity</i> by Anne Waldman and <i>A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None</i> by Kathryn Yusoff	Weekly Writing #4
Week 6 9/14-9/20 Essay #1	No reading assignments. Focus on writing this week.	Submit Essay #1 to Course Den by Sunday, 9/20, at midnight.
Week 7 9/21-9/27 Climate Pasts & Futures: Pt. 1	"The Lost World" by Elizabeth Kolbert and "Rethinking Extinction" by James K. Boyce	Weekly Writing #5
Week 8 9/28-10/4 Climate Pasts & Futures: Pt. 2	"Easter's End" by Jared Diamond and "The City Without Us" by Alan Weisman Instructions and Resources for Essay #2	Weekly Writing #6

Week 9 10/5-10/11 Climate Pasts & Futures: Pt. 3	"A Quake in Being" by Timothy Morton	Weekly Writing #7
Week 10 10/12-10/18 Climate Pasts & Futures: Pt. 3 (cont.)	Watch Disney/Pixar's <i>WALL-E</i>	Weekly Writing #8
Week 11 10/19-10/25 Essay #2	No reading assignments. Focus on writing this week.	Submit Essay #2 to Course Den by Sunday, 10/25, at midnight.
Week 12 10/26-11/1 The Environmental & the Social: Pt. 1	"Petromelancholia" by Stephanie LeMenager and "The Siphoners" by David Mitchell	Weekly Writing #9
Week 13 11/2-11/8 The Environmental & the Social: Pt. 2	"Tales from a Black Girl on Fire..." by Camille T. Dungy and "Porphyrim Rings" by Jennifer Oladipo Instructions & Resources for Essay #3	Weekly Writing #10
Week 14 11/9-11/15 The Environmental & the Social: Pt. 3	Rob Nixon's Introduction to <i>Slow Violence</i> and "This Weight of Small Bodies" by Kimberly Blaeser	Weekly Writing #11
Week 15 11/16-11/22 Essay #3	No reading assignments. Focus on writing this week.	Submit Essay #3 to Course Den by Sunday, 11/22, at midnight.
Week 16 11/23-11/29 Thanksgiving Break	No reading assignments.	Nothing is due. Enjoy your break! You earned it.
Week 17 11/30-12/6 Final Exam Week	No reading assignments. Focus on revision this week.	There is no final exam in this class. Revision Portfolios are due no later than Wednesday, 12/2, by midnight.