

ENGL 150 - 47: English Composition

Fall 2004: T & Th 4:00–5:20

Instructor: Shannon Whissell

Email: whissell@camosun.bc.ca

Phone: Lansdowne 370-3349 Interurban 370-_____ Cell _____

Offices: Lansdowne - Paul 328 Interurban - Campus Centre 120

Office Hours: Lansdowne - Tuesday & Thursday 3:00 – 4:00, or by appointment.

Required Texts and Supplies:

- Diana Hacker. *A Canadian Writer's Reference*. 3rd Edition.
- Robert Pirsig. *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*.
- Oxford Dictionary (Recommended)
- Card stock portfolio for handing in written work

Course Description:

This course centres on organizing and expressing ideas in clear and effective written prose. Instruction and practice in writing college-level expository prose, based on appropriate models, form the core. Individual assignments range from 500-2,500 words in length (course total of 4,000-4,500 words).

Prerequisites: C+ in English 12 or assessment

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to

Write expository prose for various purposes and audiences;

- develop a mature writing process which may include prewriting, planning, drafting, conferring, revising, and editing/proofing;
- select and use rhetorical patterns purposefully;
- write correct, clear, cohesive, and effective English; and
- vary style purposefully through manipulating sentence rhythms, sentence variety, vocabulary and figurative language.

Read mature expository and persuasive prose by student and professional writers;

- vary their reading approach for different purposes;
- analyze expository prose by identifying controlling ideas, supporting ideas, dominant rhetorical pattern, tone and features of style; and
- summarize expository prose in own words to reflect coherently the original's ideas, organization, and tone.

Research topics for expository papers;

- use a variety of sources, which may include personal knowledge, interview, print and other media;
- choose to summarize, paraphrase, or directly quote from sources;
- integrate the results of research into expository papers; and
- document sources fully and ethically, according to specified bibliographic conventions.

Schedule

Dates	Topics	Readings	Assignments
Sept. 7-9	Introduction to course: syllabus, expectations, class contract, blog College success Grammar quiz	<i>ZMM</i> chap. 1-6	
Sept. 14-16	Writing Process overview Assignment expectations Invention: topic & thesis	<i>ZMM</i> chap. 7-12 <i>CRW</i> p. 3-10	
Sept. 21-23	Structure: outline & template Overview of rhetoric & logic; persuasion	<i>ZMM</i> chap. 13-17 <i>CRW</i> p.10-12 & 37-42	Outline, topic & thesis (Thurs)
Sept. 28-30	Argument I: Examples, narration, description, process, classification	<i>ZMM</i> chap. 78-23 <i>CRW</i> p. 26-28	
Oct. 5-7	Argument II: Comparison and contrast, analogy, cause and effect, classification, definition	<i>ZMM</i> Chap. 24-28 <i>CRW</i> p. 28-31	Peer editing (Tues) Narration/description essay (Thurs)
Oct. 12-14	Grammar: Sentence basics; sentence structures and variety Punctuation-ville	<i>ZMM</i> finish <i>CRW</i> p. 194-205 & 235-272	
Oct. 19-21	Cohesion: paragraph types & transitions, topic sentences,	<i>CRW</i> p. 235-272	Peer editing (Tues) Compare & contrast essay (Thurs)
Oct. 26-28	Research: MLA style, library visit Evaluating & Gutting a source	<i>CRW</i> p. 295-318 & 340-344	
Nov. 2-4	Summary, quotation, paraphrase	<i>CRW</i> p. 318-320 & 331-340	Annotated bib. (Thurs)
Nov. 9-11	Summary quiz Tuesday No class Thursday		Summary quiz (Tues)
Nov. 16-18	Style I: Concision & clarity	<i>CRW</i> p. 124-147	
Nov. 23-25	Style II: Power & grace	<i>CRW</i> p. 81-108	
Nov. 30- Dec 2	Revision Editing	<i>CRW</i> p. 17-23	Peer editing (Thurs)
Dec. 7-9	Final touches on research papers; review		Final paper due! (Thurs)

Assignments

All assignments are required!! Skipped assignments will result in an F for the course!

In-class & peer editing: Everyone starts with a perfect mark for in-class participation and peer-editing. However, you lose marks at a rate of 1 mark per missed in-class assignment and 2 marks per missed peer editing session. In-class assignments happen almost every class and cannot be made up. It is in your best interest to attend class.

Class blog: Blogging is a relatively new, exciting web-based medium. A class blog has been set up for you to use as a group discussion and to interact with other people about subjects we discuss. You are expected to give 2 posts (beginnings of conversations), and 10 comments (contributions to a conversation) over the next 13 weeks. Marks will be based on number of posts, relevance of posts, and correctness of syntax.

Argument Papers:

Comparison & Contrast: Comparison and contrast is one of several important rhetorical methods and is used in a variety of writing situations. Specific topics for this 500-600 word paper will be assigned based on our readings and in-class discussions.

Narrative/Description: Narrative or descriptive argument methods are vital to creating a connection with your reader. It is also a chance to explore your personal style within the framework of an academic paper. Again, topics will be assigned based on the readings.

Summary Quiz: Summary is a skill used in all academic and business situations and is crucial in a world where we are exposed to more and more information every day. The summary quiz will present you with a classic essay or academic article and you will have ample time in class to read, evaluate and summarize the piece.

Grammar & Punctuation Quiz

This brief quiz will be given once early in the semester as a baseline (not for marks) for me to see what to focus on when we discuss grammar, mechanics, punctuation, spelling, etc. Near the end of the course it will be revived to see how much you have learned about sentence structure, word choice, etc.

Research Essay: The research essay is the single most common assignment in college and university study as it tests all of your literate and analytical abilities: research, structure, argument, writing, reading By breaking the assignment into separate parts you will begin to see how what you are learning applies to a larger work. Topics will be assigned.

Topic, thesis & outline: A beginning topic sentence, thesis sentence and template outline (we will discuss these in class) will give you focus as you begin your research.

Annotated bibliography: An annotated bibliography gives all of the standard bibliographic information about the source as well as providing one or two summarising sentences.

Final draft: The final draft will be a formal, properly referenced critical analysis of 2000 to 2500 words.

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Length</i>
In-class & peer editing	10%	Ongoing	n/a
Class blog	10%	Ongoing	2 posts & 10 comments
Argument Papers:			
Narrative/Description	10%	Oct. 7	500-600 words
Comparison & Contrast	10%	Oct. 21	500-600 words
Summary Quiz	15%	Nov. 9	approx. 3 pages (in class)
Grammar & Punctuation Quiz	5%	Surprise	n/a (Initial in Sept. Retest in Nov.)
Research Essay:			
Topic, thesis & outline	10%	Sept. 23	Completed template, topic, thesis
Annotated bibliography	10%	Nov. 4	10 sources
Final draft	20%	Dec. 9	2000-2500 words

Important Points

Due Dates: All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date.

Assignments brought late to class or by 4:30 on the due date will be docked 5%. Each day that an assignment is late it will be docked an additional 10%, to a minimum of 50%, after which they will not be accepted. Extensions will be given in exceptional circumstances **only when discussed prior to the due date**. Illness will only be accepted as a valid excuse with a doctor's note.

Letter Grade Conversions: These are standard across Camosun College.

A+	95%	B+	80%	C+	65%	F	<50
A	90%	B	75%	C	60%	W	Withdrew
A-	85%	B-	70%	D	50%	I	Incomplete

Assignment Submission: You must submit ALL assignments in order to pass this class; even if an assignment is so late that it will receive a zero, you must still hand it in. If you are missing any assignments on the day of final grade submission (December 13) you will receive an F.

Attendance: This class is designed as a workshop integrating lectures, group work, individual work, and discussions. Attendance is mandatory to do well. Unscheduled quizzes and in-class work will contribute to your learning and your mark. Missed in-class quizzes or missed peer editing sessions will result in a loss of 2% from your final grade.

Plagiarism: Academic offences are extremely serious and will be reported. In the first instance of academic dishonesty, the assignment will receive a zero. In the second instance, the offending student will receive an "F" for the course.

Important Dates:

September 21	Tuition fees due
October 11	Thanksgiving Day (College closed)
November 11	Remembrance Day (College closed)
November 9	Last day to withdraw without academic penalty
December 11	Last day of classes

Teaching Philosophy and Values

I truly enjoy teaching and see my job as helping you discover and become comfortable with tools that help you express yourself clearly and appropriately in the various formats you will use on the job. I am committed to keeping our class discussions respectful, open and fun. I am always available to discuss any concerns you have about content, the way the classes are progressing, or other issues that are hindering your ability to excel in class. The ultimate responsibility for your success is in your hands, but I will do all I can to help you reach your goals.

My personal values influence how I teach, manage a classroom and interact with you as a group and as individuals. These values include

Respect: To me, showing respect means more than being polite; it means valuing what others have to say and contribute as much as your own contribution. The academic classroom is a setting for open and spirited debate, for sharing ideas, and for having fun with learning. In order for all persons to participate language will be respectful and will encourage conversation rather than shutting it down (see next page on leading and blocking behaviours).

I will show you respect by starting class on time, by being open to feedback, and by handing back all assignments within two weeks of receiving them

Fairness: I do not grade on a curve. I believe that all students begin the course with an A and it is yours to keep or to lose. Each assignment will be marked on its own exhibited merits, not in comparison to others or influenced by in-class behaviour or prior assignments. If questions of academic dishonesty arise, every opportunity will be granted for the student to erase doubts.

Openness: You will learn best, and I will improve best as a teacher, if communication is open and the expectations, evaluation and measures of both your work and mine are made clear and are shared with each other. I will fully disclose any information that might help you be successful in your academic goals. I ask for the same consideration -- that you approach me with constructive feedback if you feel there are areas where my teaching can improve.

Mutual Learning: One of my favourite things about teaching is that I am always learning new things as well. I value the lessons about life, writing, self-expression and relating that students teach me. I will try to manage class discussions so that you are given the opportunity to teach each other and me as well as learning from my experience.

Fun!: Learning happens best and is most memorable in an atmosphere that is friendly and when everyone feels comfortable. Humour joins people across barriers, relieves stress and encourages mental stimulation. Humour will not only be tolerated, but will be encouraged in class within the broader goals of learning and being respectful. If you are concerned that my having fun means I am not taking my role as instructor seriously, please come and speak to me about it.

Task Oriented vs. Task Blocking Behaviours for Group Work¹

Much of the work in this class will be done through small and large group discussions and outside group work. The ability to work in a team is one of the most requested attributes on job advertisements and is an excellent attribute to cultivate, but it does not always come easily. The following task oriented skills will help your group, while the descriptions of blocking behaviours can serve as a reminder when things get rough.

Task Oriented Behaviours (these behaviours keep the group going)

LEADING: Helps lead the group by showing persistence in task-directed activities. Initiates discussion, tries to keep the members on the "right track": proposes goals and tasks to stimulate action within the group.

REINFORCING: Is encouraging and supportive to group members; demonstrates openness and acceptance of other members' ideas; gives recognition for contribution; encourages participation from all group members. These characteristics can be demonstrated verbally or nonverbally.

INFORMATION/OPINION SEEKING/GIVING: Asks other members for information or elaboration in order to clarify ideas. Offers data or elaboration in order to clarify own position related to the task.

SUMMARIZING: Restates major point of view and content that have been discussed.

CLOSURE: Reaches consensus on completion of task and makes plans for next steps.

MEDIATING: Persuades members to constructively analyze differences of opinion; searches for common elements; attempts to alleviate disagreement; is willing to compromise one's ideas for the accomplishment of the group's task.

Blocking Behaviours (these behaviours stop the group's progress):

ATTACKING: Verbal or nonverbal behavior which is perceived to be hostile or derogatory by other group members.

DOMINATING: One person takes power in a group which is not assigned or delegated by the other group members or predetermined by outside authority or status. The dominator tends to be the loudest, most frequent speaker and often interrupts others to make a point.

INTERFERING: Any verbal or nonverbal behavior which distracts the group members from the task at hand. These behaviors may be expressed pleasantly (i.e. joke telling) or unpleasantly (i.e. pencil tapping).

WITHDRAWING: Whether motivated by anger, boredom or some other emotion, a member stops participating in the group process in a way that is obvious to the other members of the group.

BEING DEFENSIVE: Overreacting to another member's challenge of one's statements.

¹ Courtesy of Barb Latham, as paraphrased from Alverno College.