

Rutgers Newark Writing Program

Communication Skills 099

355-21-099-section

Semester and Year

Meeting Days and Times, Classroom Location

Instructor

Email

Office

Office Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide strong preparation for the work that will be expected of students in English Composition 101. Emphasis is placed on the development of critical reading strategies and analytical writing skills, including the effective incorporation of sources, the systematic organization of ideas in analytical essays, and the effective presentation of complex ideas and information to a defined audience in precise language. The course also stresses grammar and language skills.

LEARNING GOALS

At the successful completion of Communication Skills 099, students should be able to actively grasp and engage the ideas that are being presented in class and in readings; to annotate and to comprehend readings of basic to moderate complexity; to identify the main points presented by a writer and the strategies used by the writer to support this position; to propose, develop, and support sustained, analytical essays; to maintain an independent voice while effectively quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing a primary text; to use correct Standard English, demonstrating increasing control of grammar and syntax.

BLACKBOARD AND EMAIL

To participate successfully in this course, you must have a university address that is connected to Blackboard. I will be emailing you through Blackboard and posting PDF's and assignments on this site. It is your responsibility to check your email daily for various announcements. "I didn't get the email" is not an excuse.

FORMAL ASSIGNMENTS

You will write 4 take-home papers in this class.

All home assignments must be typed and double-spaced in 12-point font with your name, class section and date on the left corner of the first page. **You must print out and staple your assignments. Do not send me electronic copies of your work unless I specifically give you permission to do so.**

IN-CLASS WRITES

You will write 4 full-period graded in-class essays. Two of these will be based on readings we will not discuss in class. If you are absent on the day of an in-class write, you must arrange to make-up the test. This is your responsibility.

LATE WORK

Work will be penalized by ½ grade for every late day. Work handed in a week or more after the due date will result in automatic failure of the assignment. However, to pass this class, you must complete all assignments. (No “taking an F” for one paper; even if you receive A’s on all other assignments, you will fail the course if you skip a paper or an in-class write). Please note that I will not accept late papers on the last formal assignment. If you are absent the day of an in-class write, you must make arrangements with me to make up the assignment.

READINGS AND WEEKLY READING ASSIGNMENTS

Read each of the assigned texts closely. Come to class prepared to discuss these readings and offer your analyses of the texts.

At the beginning of every week, you will type, print out, and submit a Reading Response. This will be a one-paragraph summary of the reading, and an analytical paragraph that includes a quote analysis. I will not accept late or emailed reading responses (unless you are absent on the day it is due, in which case you should hand in a hard copy the next day you are in class). You must complete and receive a check or check plus on at least 10 out of 15 responses to receive a positive participation grade.

You will also complete in-class quote analyses that will count toward your participation grade. Weak performance on these in-class assignments will count against your overall grade.

JOURNAL

You will maintain a notebook dedicated to this class (and this class only). This should be a bound notebook (not a binder). This will be for in-class writing exercises, group work, grammar practice, and other writing-related activities. I will collect your journal twice over the course of the semester. The journal should be well-maintained. Each entry should be dated and titled.

PARTICIPATION

The success of this course depends heavily on your preparation, participation, and enthusiasm. If you are timid, make an effort to participate in class discussions. If you are usually gregarious, make an effort to step down once in a while to allow other voices to be heard. **All cell phones and communication devices must be turned off and put away during my class.** You will receive one warning if you use your cell phone in class and you will be marked as absent if the problem persists. If you need to make an emergency phone call or send a text message, please leave the room. No laptops are permitted, unless we are having an in-class “work day.”

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS

You must attend all classes. You are permitted three absences. Your grade will go down a ½ letter for every missed class beyond three. Please note that I do not draw a distinction between excused or unexcused absences. Use your three days for emergencies, sickness, and mental-health days, etc. You are responsible for making up any work you missed.

Class will always begin on time. Do not be late to class. Three instances of lateness (over 5 minutes) will be counted as one absence. Please do not leave class for prolonged periods of time, as this will count as a “late.”

PORTFOLIO

You must save and keep track of the corrected copies of all written assignments. At the end of the semester, you will be evaluated based on the contents of the portfolio and your performance on the written essays. You are required to hand in the portfolio on the due date, or you will not pass the class.

GRADING WEIGHTS

Formal Paper 1 and 2: 10% each

Formal Paper 3: 15%

Formal Paper 4: 20%

In-Class 1: 5%

In-Class 2: 10%

In-Class 3: 10%

In-Class 4: 15%

Participation: 5%

WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center offers tutorial support to all undergraduate students on the Rutgers-Newark campus. This is a free service designed to strengthen your reading, writing, and research skills. It's easy to make an appointment, so please be sure to take advantage of this support service. See the attached flyer for specific information on hours and appointments.

If you are required to go to a tutor and you fail to attend regularly, your grade will be affected.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Rutgers University is committed to providing equal educational access for individuals with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. An individual with a disability who is qualified for admission will have the same access to programs, services, and activities as all other students. Any student requiring special consideration should contact Allen Sheffield, the Director of Disability Services. The office is located in Suite 219 of the Robeson Campus Center. The phone number is [973.353.5375](tel:973.353.5375), and the email address is ODSNewark@Newark.Rutgers.edu.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is defined as stealing the words or ideas of another. This typically happens when students check the internet for material to use in their essays. There is a no-tolerance policy for any type of plagiarism, and all incidents will be reported to both the Writing Program and the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs. Attached is the Writing Program's plagiarism policy. Please read it carefully and let me know if you have any questions.

Writing Program Academic Integrity Policy

The Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "the use of another person's words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit." In Writing Program courses instruction is given and emphasis is placed on attribution and citation skills. Intentionally committing plagiarism is a serious offense that results in severe consequences. Writing Program instructors are required to report students who intentionally violate this policy to the Director of the Writing Program and to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs.

The most common academic integrity violations by writing students are:

-“Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.”

-“Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one’s own words another person’s written words or ideas as if they were one’s own.”

-“Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.”

The Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy establishes levels of violations and recommends sanctions. Depending upon the severity of the case and the level of the violation, the sanctions for these violations include: failure in the course, mandatory participation in a series of noncredit academic integrity workshops, and/or suspension.

If you are in doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism or are concerned that you are misappropriating someone’s words or ideas, speak immediately with your instructor. For more information, you can also consult the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found at http://judicialaffairs.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_Effective_9_01_2011.pdf.

On each assignment, you must include and sign the following pledge:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized help on this assignment.”

Reading and Assignment Schedule

(Subject to changes and adjustments: please check your email daily and pay attention to announcements in class)

Week One

W 1/17 Diagnostic

Th 1/18 Essay Structure Review

Week Two

M 1/22 Storytelling/Rhetoric Exercise

W 1/23 Malcolm Gladwell: "Trouble Makers"

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2006/02/06/troublemakers-2>

Th 1/24 Grammar Practice: Sentence Construction

Week Three

M 1/29 Roxane Gay: "The Price of Black Ambition"

<http://www.vqronline.org/essays-articles/2014/10/price-black-ambition>

W 1/31 Grammar Practice: Punctuation

Th 2/1 ***In-Class Essay #1***

Week Four

M 2/5 Amy Chua: from "Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother"

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/19/books/excerpt-battle-hymn-of-the-tiger-mother.html>

W 2/7 Essay Practice: Topic Sentences

Th 2/8 ***Formal Paper #1 Due***

Week Five

M 2/12 Wesley Yang: "Paper Tigers" <http://nymag.com/news/features/asian-americans-2011-5/>

W 2/14 Yang (continued)

Th 2/15 Yang (continued)

Week Six

M 2/19 Katherine Dunn: "Just as Fierce"

<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/1994/11/just-fierce/>

W 2/21 Grammar Practice: Correcting Fragments and Run-On Errors

Th 2/22 Paragraph Construction

Week Seven

M 2/26 Alexander Chee: "Girl" (WILL HAND OUT OR SEND PDF)

W 2/28 ***Formal Paper #2 Due***

Th 3/1 Grammar Practice: Dangling Modifiers

Week Eight

M 3/5 Kurt Vonnegut "Dispatch from a Man Without a Country"

<http://www.spokesmanbooks.com/Spokesman/PDF/90Vonnegut.pdf>

W 3/7 ***ICE#2***

Th 3/9 Grammar Practice: Collective Nouns and S/V Agreement

Week Nine

SPRING BREAK

Week Ten

M 3/19 George Orwell: “A Hanging”

http://www.george-orwell.org/A_Hanging/0.html

W 3/21 Essay Practice: Transition Paragraphs

Th 3/22 Grammar Practice: Comma Splices

Week Eleven

M 3/26 Christopher Hitchens: “The New Commandments”

<https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2010/04/hitchens-201004>

W 3/28 Essay Practice: Quote Analysis

Th 3/29 ***ICE#3***

Week Twelve

M 4/2 Bobby Henderson: “Open Letter to the Kansas Schoolboard”

<https://www.venganza.org/about/open-letter/>

W 4/4 Essay Practice: Quote Analysis

Th 4/5 ***FP#3 Due***

Week Thirteen

M 4/9 David Foster-Wallace: “This is Water”

<http://www.metastatic.org/text/This%20is%20Water.pdf>

W 4/11 Peer Review Workshop

Th 4/12 Peer Review Workshop

Week Fourteen

M 4/16 Roger Ebert: “Go Gentle Into That Goodnight”

https://www.salon.com/2011/09/15/roger_ebert/

W 4/18 Revising Awkward Sentences

Th 4/19 Paragraph Revision

Week Fifteen

M 4/23 Writing Workshop

W 4/25 Writing Workshop

Th 4/26 FP#4 Due

Week Sixteen

M 4/30 ICE#4

Revisions and Portfolios Due

Rutgers University-Newark Writing Program: Essay Evaluation and Grading Criteria

The Writing Program grades holistically by evaluating the student's essay as a whole, balancing its strengths and weaknesses, in order to arrive at an overall grade.

Grade of A: An essay that earns an A demonstrates a high degree of competence and meets the following criteria:

- Presents an argument that responds to the writing assignment thoroughly and insightfully
- Demonstrates a nuanced understanding of the assigned texts
- Is very well focused, organized, and developed at the *essay level*, integrating assigned texts and/or research
- Is very well framed and developed at the *paragraph level*, including effective assertions, analysis, and textual evidence
- Demonstrates strong facility with language, using effective vocabulary, syntax, and sentence variety
- Demonstrates strong control of the grammar, rules of usage, and mechanics of standard English

Grade of B: An essay that earns a B is written in a clearly competent manner and meets the following criteria:

- Presents an argument that responds to all of the elements of the writing assignment effectively and thoughtfully
- Demonstrates a solid understanding of the readings
- Is effectively focused, organized, and developed at the *essay level*, integrating assigned texts and/or research
- Is effectively framed and developed at the *paragraph level*, including appropriate assertions, analysis, and textual evidence
- Demonstrates good facility with language, using appropriate vocabulary, syntax, and sentence variety
- Shows good control of the grammar, rules of usage, and mechanics of standard English, but may have some errors

Grade of C: An essay that earns a C demonstrates adequate competence but is limited in one or more of the following ways:

- Presents an argument that responds to the writing assignment adequately, but may be somewhat limited
- Demonstrates a competent, though sometimes superficial, understanding of the readings
- Is adequately focused at the *essay level*, though the paragraphs could be more effectively organized or explicitly connected and the assigned texts and/or research could be better integrated
- Is thinly developed at the *paragraph level*, inconsistent in its inclusion of assertions, analysis, or textual evidence.
- Demonstrates satisfactory facility with language, but may have limited control of syntax and minimal sentence variety
- Demonstrates adequate, though sometimes inconsistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics

Grade of D: An essay that earns a D approaches competence, but has one or more of the following flaws:

- Presents an argument that is unclear or seriously limited in its response to the writing assignment, or does not present any argument
- Demonstrates an inadequate reading, or a misreading of the texts
- Is unfocused, disorganized, or underdeveloped at the *essay level*
- Is inadequately developed at the *paragraph level*, lacking assertions, analysis, and/or textual evidence
- Demonstrates errors in the use of language or syntax, which may interfere with meaning
- Demonstrates errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics, which may interfere with meaning

Grade of F: An essay that earns an F lacks competence, since it has one or more of the following flaws:

- Fails in its response of the writing assignment
- Is incomplete/severely underdeveloped
- Contains severe grammatical or syntactical errors that persistently obscure meaning