

Writing the Research Paper

English 201, Fall Quarter 2010

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** Please contact me through our course e-mail as I always check this first! **

Required Texts:

Barnet and Bedau, Current Issues and Enduring Questions, 8th ed. ISBN 0312459866

Weidenborner, Writing Research Papers, 7th ed. ISBN 0312414439.

Introductory Remarks

This English 201 course is taught completely online; you are not required to attend classroom sessions on campus. However, this is not a correspondence course, completed on your own timetable in isolation. There are specific deadlines, and you will be communicating with your instructor and classmates regularly.

If you signed up for this course thinking that it would have less work than a course in the classroom, you were mistaken. Please be advised that the workload may be very difficult for you if work and/or family demands do not allow you a minimum of two to three uninterrupted hours every weekday to work on the assignments for this class. I have tried to focus and space assignments to facilitate as many learning styles as possible, but extra time may be needed, especially around paper writing/editing time.

Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be able to write a humanities-style research paper which includes as part of its composition or process:

- An objective summary of college-level material which identifies primary and supporting assertions
- An evaluation of different types of evidence (i.e., tone/ diction, logical reasoning)
- A synthesis of source material with own writing

- An original and clearly supported thesis
- Proper in-text citations and works-cited page (MLA format)
- A breadth of varied primary sources which demonstrates a familiarity with library research skills

Student Responsibilities

Software/Computer Requirements: First, and probably most important, the student enrolled in this course MUST have a computer and some attendant software and services, including a word processor (Office 95/Word 7.0 or better minimum), an Internet Service Provider, and a browser (Netscape Communicator or Internet Explorer). Perhaps more importantly the student must be familiar with the use of the above-mentioned items. Whatever web browser you use, be sure to upgrade to the newest version.

Submission of Assignments: Please note at the very beginning of the quarter that you must turn in all assignments in the following formats: .doc., .docx (Word), .rtf (Rich Text File), or .pages (Pages for Mac users). If your work is not in these formats it will not be accepted and will be counted as late. Make arrangements as necessary early on to avoid late work.

All essay assignments must be double spaced with a 12-point font and no extra space between paragraphs. We will be learning to follow the rules of MLA formatting so you will need to make sure that your essays follow MLA guidelines. Written assignments must be submitted by midnight on the due date.

Technical issue: Be aware that I do not teach computer skills; I teach English. I will help if I can, but I am no expert in computer systems. Always keep me informed if you have problems with the technology, and I will try to find help for you. However, I expect that you bring some expertise with you to help in solving any problems that arise. Ultimately, your computer and Internet services are your responsibility. If you are signed up for the OAS section and you have computer problems, you may use the computer labs on the BC campus if you have an emergency. Additionally, please read and print the following linked page to help you if we run into technology problems with VISTA: [Server Problems](#).

Video files: You will occasionally be required to access audio or video files. These files will be in a format accessible to most computers with typical software and will be usable even if you have a slow internet connection. However, you may find it easier to access these files from a faster system. Of course, if you are near campus, you can always use the computer lab in the N building—it even comes equipped with staff to help you out. An alternative would be your local library. Almost every public library has computers with fast internet connection for your use. Some will even loan out a laptop for you to use while in the library. Remember these options any time you experience hardware, software, or server problems.

My Expectations

As you know, every teacher has expectations. Here are mine:

I expect that you signed up for this course because you want to learn to read, think, and write critically.

I expect that you have come to this class with a working usage of modern English grammar as English 201 does not teach grammar. If you struggled with passing English 101, then you will have real difficulty with this course. I encourage you to utilize the Writing Lab's virtual tutor or go to the Writing Lab on campus for help with grammar problems. All papers with major grammatical errors lose points in this class.

I expect that you will participate in all class activities, including peer reviews, seminars, and essay discussions. You must complete every assignment in a timely manner to pass this course.

I expect that you will take care to back up your assignments on more than one disk and/or store them on your hard drive AND a disk or other portable media. It is your responsibility to keep track of this material. If some computer catastrophe should occur, you will still be responsible for producing the work by the due date in order to get a grade. Be careful--save and back your work up regularly!

I expect that you will show respect to everyone by responding to e-mail and discussion postings in a way that is not judgmental, degrading, or derogatory. Even though we may disagree with the interpretations of others, please use some self-restraint and compassion in dealing with these issues. Logical and questioning responses are encouraged. Choose your words and the tone of your message with utmost care. I also expect tolerance for others' abilities and learning styles. Please notify me immediately if you feel another student has not extended these courtesies to you.

I expect each final draft will be submitted to the appropriate locations and in the manner specified on the assignments page by the date shown on the specific assignment page and the class calendar. Papers submitted after that date will lose one letter grade for each day that it is late (including weekends). I will not accept papers more than 4 days late. Do not wait until the last minute to submit your work to avoid losing points for late work.

I expect academic honesty. I expect that you will neither do work for others nor use work done by others. Cheating and/or plagiarizing will not be tolerated. Plagiarizing is cheating, as is copying answers on a test, glancing at nearby test papers, swapping papers, buying papers, using ideas from other sources without proper documentation, writing papers for others, or having them written for you. BC utilizes a plagiarism detection software, and I use it for random spot checks. Plus, if I even remotely suspect your paper is plagiarized, I will submit it to this site. If you cheat or plagiarize, the following actions will be taken:

You will receive a grade of "0" on the work (no exceptions).

A report of the incident will be filed in the Dean of Students' Office. This report may become part of your permanent record or the Dean may choose to pursue further disciplinary action.

Personal conferences on your paper can be held in my office if you can to come to the campus at a convenient time; otherwise, an e-mail conference can be held. You will NOT be able to just "catch me" in my office so please contact me first to set up an appointment BEFORE coming to the campus.

Grading:

COURSE REQUIREMENT	% of grade
Discussions	20
Argument Analysis Essay	15
Informative Research Paper	15
Preliminary Bibliography & 3 Potential Topics	15
Final Research Project	35
TOTAL	100%

Peer Reviews:

Count for half of your grade for each individual assignment. Through helping others with their writing, you will learn a great deal about what makes good writing. Additionally, if you want others to give you thorough and constructive feedback, you must do the same.

To figure out your grade at any time, simply divide the total points you have earned by the total points you have submitted to that point. I use standard percentage markings:

94-100% = A, 90-93% = A-, 87-89% = B+, 84-86% = B, 80-83% = B-, and so on. . .

You must complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in this course. The instructor reserves the right to adjust assignments or points as needed throughout the quarter. Students will be notified when this happens.

Reading: There will be a substantial amount of reading in this course. The average amount is 20 pages per day. I strongly suggest that you read these pages as early in the week as possible.

Your best plan is to read them the weekend before so that you will be ready to participate in the Discussions. Every other weekly assignment is based upon the reading and if you don't do it you will not learn. My assumption is that by enrolling in a college course you are here to learn. DO THE READING.

Discussion: I have created an individual forum in the discussion area for weekly discussions. Instructions and requirements for participating in discussions are posted in the Course Info area. I do my best to participate in the discussion, however, I cannot possibly respond to every comment or answer.

You are required to participate in discussions every week. Grading for each weekly discussion will be based upon the depth and quality of your participation, not the number of times you post. You must respond to ALL of the reading and to the posts of at least two classmates. These posts must be relevant, thoughtful, and respectful. A simple "I agree/ disagree" is not sufficient. Discussion threads open on Mondays and close the following Monday at midnight. Note that late posts will not receive credit.

You can find specific instructions for these discussions in Course Info > How to Use the Discussion Room.

Papers: In this class you will write 1 argument analysis paper (3 - 4 pages), 1 informative research paper (2-4 pages), 3 potential research topics (1 - 2 pages), a preliminary bibliography (1 - 2 pages) plus a final large (6-8 page) research paper. The process for writing, revising and submitting work is on a tight timeline. We will follow this process for all papers:

You will post an original, self-revised draft of each paper to the discussion area in the appropriate peer review forum by the date on the calendar. This draft **MUST** be attached to a message in the correct forum. If you expect to get help on your papers, you must post them early. Papers posted late in the review process may be overlooked by other students as the deadline nears.

While you wait for comments on your paper, you will give peer comments on two other group members' papers which have been posted. I will give direct feedback on your peer comments for Formal Paper 1 only so that you know how to do this important work. Specific guidelines for this process can be found under **Course Info > How to Peer Review**.

After giving comments, collect the comments on your paper. Then, revise and edit your paper before submitting it to me by the date and time listed on the calendar, using the editing tools provided under **Course Info > Grading Rubric**.

Sample Research Papers: You can find sample research essay on pages 301-313 in Current Issues and pages 296-328 in Writing Research Papers. Take note of not just the content but also the format.

Peer Review: Much of what you will learn in this course will come from participating in a peer review of others' papers. Do not fail to participate in this area of the course. See the Assignments area/Peer Tools & Instructions link located under Course Content for how to complete this critical work. In general, to participate successfully in peer review, you will complete these tasks:

(1) You will analyze two other students' papers using the Peer Review guidelines. You **MUST** follow the Peer Review guidelines completely that I have provided in order to earn full credit for comments on student papers. After you have analyzed and evaluated each student paper, copy-and-paste your evaluation of each paper as a **REPLY** to the paper you reviewed in the peer review forum. Remember this work must be completed at least 24 hours before the paper's due date and time according to the class calendar. I have set aside class days for this work; do not fail to do it. If you fail to meet these deadlines, you will **NOT** receive points.

(2) **THOROUGHLY** evaluate the content, organization, and editing with at least one full typed page of commentary posted on the Peer Review Discussion Thread. You may create a new post for these comments. In addition, you should go through the draft and make comments on the draft itself (highlighting, different colored text, or the comment tool in word) at attach this edited version with your post.

(3) Peer Reviews must be submitted on time. There will be no extensions.

How Do We Communicate With Each Other?

In the toolbar at the top of each page, you will find links to class announcements, your mailbox, your gradebook, and the class discussion area.

Announcements will be posted for you as needed throughout the quarter. Please read these announcements carefully so that you will know of any important changes or issues in the class.

Course e-mail: A mailbox has been provided for private e-mail communication between you and I or you and other classmates. Please use this rather than my BC email (carrie.tomberlin@bellevuecollege.edu) for everything but the most dire of emergencies. Since I get between 40 and 50 e-mail messages every day, I will appreciate "URGENT" notices in the subject line, but only if you have a real emergency. I do my best to respond in a timely manner to all messages, whether or not they are urgent. Monday - Friday I will respond to all e-mails within 24 hours.

E-mails sent after 5:00 pm on Fridays will be answered on Monday morning. Please do not use e-mail to submit your work unless you have contacted me for approval **FIRST**.

Course Progress: The **My Grades** link will take you to the grade book for this class. This area will contain all of the grades for your work **WHEN** I have completed the grading.