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English 103: Composition and Critical Thinking
Los Angeles Valley College
English 103 Online, Section 7161
Spring 2017 Late start
Instructor: Trista Payte

“Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what we read ours.” ~ John Locke

Office Hours: By appointment. (see the welcome letter on Canvas)
E-mail address: paytetr@lavc.edu (or contact me through Canvas)

Required Texts: All texts will be provided to you on Canvas but I do recommend a simple writing handbook such as the Little Seagull.

Required Materials: Access to a computer/the internet: for email, reading assignments, supplemental readings, and essay prompts. Yes, that’s it!

Welcome to English 103. The purpose of the course is to help you obtain the reading, writing, and critical thinking skills necessary for success in the intellectual environment of the university and beyond. We will read and think deeply about a range of texts, and you will learn a variety of rhetorical writing strategies to use in response to the different occasions for writing you will come up against as you move forward into your academic and professional careers.

I look forward to working with each and every one of you. Don’t ever suffer in silence; we are all in this together.

Because this is a late start course, we will be doing the work of a full length English class in ½ the time. This means intensive and laborious work. Further, because it is an online course, you will have to be self-motivated and self-disciplined. If you are not prepared to work steadily and seriously, this is probably not the course for you.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Write coherently organized analytical essays that demonstrate sound reasoning, the ability to clearly connect evidence to claims, advanced critical thinking strategies, and an understanding of conventions of scholarly discourse.
2. Use critical thinking and advanced research skills to illuminate various political, social, ethical, and philosophical ideas.

Course Objectives

1. Develop hypotheses inductively by observing examples, patterns of analysis and effective structures.
2. Develop hypotheses deductively by stating assumptions or inductively derived conclusions and substantiating them with adequate support leading to well-defined conclusions.
3. Identify ambiguities and recognize them when developing the premises of their argument.
4. Demonstrate the ability to suspend their judgments for a period of time, so that they can draw

reasonable conclusions based on evidence and not on predetermined opinions.

5. Recognize fallacies in their own predetermined points of view and seek new positions that are more in line with prevailing evidence.
6. Avoid weak forms of argumentation that are based on fallacies, which are commonly found in both inductive and deductive reasoning.
7. Recognize and employ both inductive and deductive reasoning in writing. This includes the ability to distinguish between fact and inference, to recognize logical fallacies, and to identify and work with assumptions.
8. Determine whether the conclusions follow from, or are supported by, their premises.
9. Demonstrate the capacity to recognize and avoid the use of both stereotype and propaganda.
10. Avoid the use of informal fallacies and be able to identify vagueness, as well as clarify meanings.

I. Course Assignment Breakdown

Introductory Materials (there are 4 components) = 5%

Essay 1 = 15%

Essay 2 = 20%

Essay 3 = 20%

Essay 4 = 20%

Discussion Posts and Peer Responses = 15%

Final = 5%

II. Elements of the Course

- A. Introductory Materials:** There are 4 simple assignments that you are expected to complete before you do any of the other work in the course. For that reason, the module for week one will not open until you have completed them. They are meant to help me get to know you, help you get to know each other a bit, and to make sure you learn to navigate Canvas.
- B. Reading Assignments:** All readings will be posted or linked on Canvas as a way to keep your cost down. If you cannot access a reading for any reason, you must let me know ASAP so that I can help you solve the problem. Technological problems are not a valid excuse for incomplete work.
- C. Discussion Posts and Peer Responses:** You will be expected to summarize, analyze, and reflect on the assigned readings as assigned. Prompts will be provided for each post, but you should also use this space to write your own thoughts, feelings, and ideas about the texts. In addition to posting your response, you will read and respond to at least two peers' responses per prompt post. Late posts will not be accepted, as the discussion will move on. So get these done on time.
- D. Essays:** The essays are mandatory components of the class and you cannot pass without completing all four. As a result, I will accept them late, but you will receive a 1/2 letter grade deduction for each calendar day one is turned in past the due date. Each time an essay is due, it will be due at 11:59pm that day.

Essays must be in standard MLA format:

- double-spaced,
- Times New Roman
- 12pt font
- include a heading in the left-hand corner
- page numbers in the upper right corner.

If you do NOT know how to do this, please see the MLA handout on the Canvas page.

- III.** If you are a student with a disability, please register with Services for Students with Disabilities (818 947-2681) to be eligible for academic accommodation.

The Writing Center is in LARC, 2nd floor. Free services are available there for all students. I encourage you to take your drafts to the Writing Center for additional feedback.

- IV.** Email: Since email will be our primary communication method, you will need to check regularly. I will usually use Canvas to contact you, but I will also use the listserv through the college, so either check or forward your LAVC student email. Please email me from your student email address, or you can use Canvas to contact me as well. Allow me 24-48 hours to respond (although I will try to get back to you sooner as much as possible), especially if on a weekend. Use “Your Full Name,” followed by “English 103” in the subject line.

- V. Drop/Add Policy:** If you need to drop this class, do so before the last drop date. Check the LAVC schedule of classes for dates. If you do not drop this class officially, you will receive an "F" for this class. It is your responsibility to keep track of those dates.

ADA Statement

If you are a student with a disability requiring classroom accommodations, and have not contacted SSD, do so in a timely manner. SSD is located in the Student Services Annex, Room 175 or call SSD at (818) 947-2681 or TTD (818) 947-2680 to meet with a SSD counselor. If SSD has already sent the memo to instructor confirming accommodations required by student for this class, please meet with me to discuss arrangements.

Statement for Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism is the use of others' words and/or ideas without clearly acknowledging their source. When you incorporate those words and ideas into your own work, you must give credit where credit is due. Plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, is considered academic dishonesty and is not tolerated. Anyone found to be plagiarizing or cheating on assignments will:

1. Receive a zero (fail) on the assignment, and
2. Be referred to the Associate Dean of Student Services for further disciplinary action, following due process.

For further information on plagiarism, go to the Writing Center website

(www.lavc.edu/WCweb/plagiarism.html) and refer to the STANDARDS OF STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION in the current Schedule of Classes and Catalog.

Financial Aid

Financial Aid Financial Aid is available! Call (818) 947-2412. Go to the Financial Aid Office in the Student Services Center, first floor. For more info: <http://www.lavc.edu/financialaid/>.

Getting Help From Me:

I know that online courses can sometimes feel impersonal. I want you to feel free to ask for assistance at any time. But it is your responsibility to make sure you are on top of things, and you are making the choice to complete a high intensity, late start course. Do your best, and I promise to do the same. We are all in this together.

Please make sure to read the welcome letter for important contacting info and basic knowledge of the Canvas set up of the course, including how the schedule will work.



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