



XAVIER UNIVERSITY

English 101 Course Handbook

Fall Semester, 2012



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Instructor Information

Instructor Brooks Rexroat holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in creative writing (fiction) from Southern Illinois Carbondale and a Bachelor of Arts degree in print journalism from Morehead State University (Kentucky). He is a Cincinnati, Ohio, native who has worked as a reporter of news, business, and sports, an editor, an advertising copywriter, and a collegiate track and field coach at Tennessee Tech University. His newspaper articles have been reprinted through aggregate services like the Associated Press and Associated Content in dozens of countries on four continents, and his fiction has been published in the U.S., Canada, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, and New Zealand. His literary work has appeared in the Montreal Review, the Cleveland Review, Boston Literary Magazine, Weave Magazine, and many others. He has taught courses in composition and creative writing at Southern Illinois University, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, and Xavier University.



Contact information

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Office Hours:

To be posted, first week of term

Professional Web site:

<http://www.brooksrexroat.com>

Note: Please contact your instructor through these channels. Attempts to contact him during the semester via social networking sites and personal email accounts will be ignored.

Introductory Letter

Dear Student:

I look forward to working with you this semester as we examine the craft of writing and consider—as a group and as individuals—how to improve upon existing skills and to integrate new ideas and techniques into our written work. What follows is a collection of information designed to help you succeed as a student and to help me instruct you more efficiently and effectively. You will find detailed clarifications of the expectations outlined in your syllabus, course documents, and the major essay assignments (should you wish to look ahead at what the semester holds), and a collection of unabridged, unedited advice from students who have taken this class with me during past terms. You'll also find some information about our unique strategy for using technology in this course, and you'll find a recap of policies and the answers to many of the questions students frequently ask during a normal semester.

While the syllabus remains the official course document, this handbook is intended as a resource to help you gain clarity, whether you're looking for information on my grading methods, or if you wonder what's coming up on your next essay. My goal as an instructor is to help you grow as a writer, and to empower you with skills you'll use regardless of your academic discipline and future scholastic or career goals. We'll work hard in this class; you'll be asked to read carefully and write extensively in preparation for our class sessions, during which you'll be asked to interact with the class as a whole, in small groups, with partners—and you'll be asked to function on your own as you write in response to daily writing prompts and work to solve problems and questions posed by our major essay assignments. Ours will not be a lecture class; you'll be asked to speak, argue, agree, and interact with the ideas and opinions offered by classmates. We'll push each other and improve as writers, thinkers, and students. Please feel free to ask questions at any time as we maneuver through the term.

We'll have some fun in this course, and we'll work hard. We'll mess up, we'll improve, we'll debate, and as a class, we'll push each other to become better writers and students. My chief rule as an instructor is this: everything we'll do in this course has purpose. If you're unclear as to why we're doing something, if you get confused along the way (you probably will—it's part of the learning process), or if you're curious about how the class is put together, I urge you to always ask. This document should serve, simply, as a starting point for that inquiry.

Best Regards,

Brooks Rexroat

Descriptive Overview of the Course

English 101 will prepare you to become a better reader and writer, with a focus on the rhetoric and construction of academic writing. The course will introduce you to the demands of academic literacy, which requires strong thinking skills and the ability to formulate and evaluate convincing and valid arguments.

English Composition will serve as a gateway to the academic community, in which carefully planned and well-executed writing plays a key role. In order to help you become an effective academic writer, the course will focus on crucial skills including argumentation, summary, paraphrase, rhetorical decision-making, analysis, critical reading, revision, and documentation/citation of sources.

Course Goals

The following goals for this course were established by the Xavier University Department of Writing Studies and will be met through a variety of in-class and homework assignments, major essay units, and classroom activities.

•Goal 1: Rhetorical Knowledge and Writing Processes

Students will be writers who have developed an effective writing process guided by the rhetorical elements of audience, purpose, and cultural context.

By the end of the semester, students should demonstrate the ability to:

- 1) Respond appropriately to different rhetorical situations, varying their approach, format, and structure in recognition of the shifting needs of audience, purpose, and context.
- 2) Demonstrate familiarity with concepts describing writing processes (invention, drafting, revising, editing) and use them effectively and efficiently in their own writing process.
- 3) Articulate the rhetorical choices they have made.

•Goal 2: Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing

Students will understand writing as an art that helps them solve problems analytically, creatively, and rhetorically and as a means of inquiry, thinking, communication, and argumentation.

By the end of the semester, students should demonstrate the ability to:

- 4) Understand and use rhetorical vocabulary to analyze writing by others and themselves.
- 5) Integrate their own ideas with those of others.
- 6) Explore an issue or question raised by another author and respond to it or challenge it in the service of developing their own view.

•Goal 3: Knowledge of Conventions

Students will be writers who understand the role and use of information.

By the end of the semester, students should demonstrate the ability to:

- 7) Observe the rules of academic honesty, intellectual property, and citation style(s).
- 8) Use rhetorically appropriate information from academic and popular sources to corroborate, expand, and alter personal knowledge.

•Goal 4: Writing in Community

Students will be writers who understand the power and ethical responsibility that come with the production of written discourse.

By the end of the semester, students should demonstrate the ability to:

- 9) Engage responsibly with topics that have ethical, moral, and cultural meaning.
- 10) Acknowledge and show respect for different views/opinions in their writing.

Instructor: Brooks Rexroat
Email: rexroatb1@xavier.edu
Section:

Office: Hinkle 217
Office Hours: TH 2:15-3:15
Meeting Times:

English 101: English Composition **Course Objectives, Requirements and Policies**

DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW

English 101 will prepare you to become a better reader and writer, with a focus on the rhetoric and construction of academic writing. The course will introduce you to the demands of academic literacy, which requires strong thinking skills and the ability to formulate and evaluate convincing and valid arguments. English Composition will serve as a gateway to the academic community, in which carefully planned and well-executed writing plays a key role. In order to help you become an effective academic writer, the course will focus on crucial skills including argumentation, summary, paraphrase, rhetorical decision-making, analysis, critical reading, revision, and documentation/citation of sources.

English 101 fulfills a Core Curriculum Requirement. It particularly reinforces the first goal, “students will be effective communicators in writing and orally,” and its first three student learning outcomes: 1) students will organize and express their ideas in writing and orally; 2) students will formulate clear, arguable theses, supported by evidence drawn from appropriate sources; and 3) students will utilize an effective writing process guided by audience, purpose, cultural context, and disciplinary standards.

COURSE GOALS

The following goals for this course were established by the Xavier University Department of Writing Studies and will be met through a variety of in-class and homework assignments, major essay units, and classroom activities.

•Goal 1: Rhetorical Knowledge and Writing Processes

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- 2) Demonstrate familiarity with concepts describing writing processes (invention, drafting, revising, editing) and use them effectively and efficiently in their own writing process.
- 3) Articulate the rhetorical choices they have made.

•Goal 2: Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing

Students will understand writing as an art that helps them solve problems analytically, creatively, and rhetorically and as a means of inquiry, thinking, communication, and argumentation.

By the end of the semester, students should demonstrate the ability to:

- 4) Understand and use rhetorical vocabulary to analyze writing by others and themselves.
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- 6) Explore an issue or question raised by another author and respond to it or challenge it in the service of developing their own view.

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•Goal 4: Writing in Community

Students will be writers who understand the power and ethical responsibility that come with the production of written discourse.

By the end of the semester, students should demonstrate the ability to:

- 9) Engage responsibly with topics that have ethical, moral, and cultural meaning.
- 10) Acknowledge and show respect for different views/opinions in their writing.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Materials

- *Everything's an Argument*, 5th ed.- Andrea A. Lunsford, John J. Ruszkiewicz, and Kieth Walters.
- A fresh, bound notebook that will serve as your course notebook.
- Additional readings as assigned via Blackboard.

Recommended Materials

- A portable or desktop file case or an accordion folder
- A portable USB storage device
- A college-level dictionary

Theme-Work

During English 101, students will select a theme around which each of the major unit essays will be focused. During the first few class sessions, we will work to select individual themes that are (A) interesting — choose something that will hold your attention for the duration of the course, through five major assignments and a series of shorter writing exercises; (B) controversial — topics must contain some element of controversy that can be argued during the composition of your major essays; (C) something you are comfortable exploring in written form and out loud during class discussions. Themes must be approved by the instructor, who holds final veto power.

Unit Projects

English 101 is divided into five units. By the end of each unit, you will produce a significant “formal” composition that accomplishes a particular objective and addresses a specified audience. For each unit, your instructor will distribute detailed assignment guidelines for the major composition associated with it.

Unit One—Persuasive Personal Narrative: For an audience of your 101 class, you will narrate and address the significance of an experience in which you have directly encountered some aspect of your theme. The narrative will be augmented by research. **Due: Sept 13**

Unit Two—Advertisement Analysis: For an audience of an employer in the field of advertising, you will fully analyze the audience, placement, and content of a print advertisement pertaining to your course theme and offer a recommendation as to how a stronger, more effective advertisement could be produced. **Due: Oct. 11**

Unit Three—Argument: For an audience of readers of an appropriate print publication, you will compose a guest column that presents a clear and purposeful argument and then persuades readers to take a specific constructive action related to your argument. **Due: Oct. 30**

Unit Four—Research Essay: For an academic audience, you will synthesize information from various sources into a research paper that expertly defends a strong thesis. **Due: Nov. 15**

Unit Five—Reflective Essay/portfolio: For an audience of your peers, you will reflect upon successes, stumbling points, and key moments you've encountered during the course, which will serve as an introductory document to a portfolio that includes polished, revised versions of two previous major assignments. **Due Dec. 6**

Format of Unit Assignments

All drafts of major essays for the course must be computer generated and submitted as both a hardcopy and as an electronic copy (sent by e-mail to rexroatb1@Xavier.edu prior to entering class on the assigned due date). Per MLA formatting guidelines, the first page must be labeled with your name, and the instructor's name, the course and section number, the date, and the unit number in the top left corner; subsequent pages must contain your name and the page number in the top right corner. Essays must be printed in black in on white paper with one-inch margins. Text should appear on one side of each sheet in 12-point Times New Roman font. Multiple pages must be connected with a *staple*.

Notebooks

We will write each day in class. These writings will focus on a variety of topics and will offer an opportunity to practice in a low-pressure, setting skills that should be demonstrated proficiently within major essay assignments. These writings will not be graded qualitatively, but should be collected, titled, and dated in a bound notebook that will be collected at the end of the term and examined as a portion of the class participation segment of the final grade.

Exam

In this class, you will be required to take a final exam *during the officially scheduled exam period*. The exam will ask you to generate an essay (employing strategies explicitly addressed in the context of English 101) on a subject matter to be announced near the end of the semester.

Percentages

Unit 1	20 percent (20 points)
Unit 2	20 percent (20 points)
Unit 3	20 percent (20 points)
Unit 4	20 percent (20 points)
Unit 5	10 percent (10 points)
Final Exam	5 percent (10 points)
Class Participation	5 percent (10 points)

Letter grades will be assigned according to this scale:

94–100: A	84–86: B	67–69: D+
87–89: B+	74–76: C	64–66: D
77–79: C+	80–83: B–	0–63: F
90–93: A–	70–73: C–	

Course Attendance Policy/Late Work

Excessive absences will prevent students from passing this course. Students who miss more than three (3) class sessions as a result of absence will forfeit five percent (5%) of their total course grade for each subsequent unexcused absence. Students who arrive to class in the tenth minute of scheduled meeting time or later will be marked as absent. *There is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences.* The only exceptions to this policy are university-excused absences, as long as they are cleared with the instructor well in advance of the absence.

Homework assignments and quizzes missed due absences may not be made up. Essays turned in after the assigned due date will face a 10 percent grade reduction for each class period they are late, up to one week, at which time, they will receive a zero. *If for some reason, you do miss class, it is your responsibility to get notes from one of your peers.* Attendance and participation involves more than a physical presence in the room. Students who arrive to workshop/peer review sessions without a current and complete draft of their essay, will be asked to leave and will be marked absent. Because this is not a lecture class and much of our class work focuses on some aspect of the current unit assignment, students are expected to be prepared for each session and up-to-date on assigned readings.

COURSE POLICIES

Submission of Assignments

All course assignments, including major essays, homework, and extra credit, must be submitted in paper form on or prior to the established due date. While essays will be collected electronically for several functions (including the use of plagiarism detection software), essays will not be issued a grade unless submitted in paper form within the acceptable timeframe listed above.

Plagiarism

According to the Xavier University Library, plagiarism is defined as:

- Plagiarism is using the work of another as if it were your own, without enclosing the words of others in quotations.
- Plagiarism is copying from the Internet, from a web page, or from another person without giving credit.
- Plagiarism is using ideas which are not your own without citing those ideas.
- Plagiarism can be applied to ideas, research, art, music, graphs, diagrams, websites, data, books, newspapers, magazines, plays, movies, photos, and speeches.

As you are responsible for learning how to write effectively at the college level, unintentional use of another author's material still constitutes plagiarism. You are responsible for understanding the standards that will be taught in this class and abiding by them. If you are in doubt about a potential plagiarism issue, *ask your instructor about the material before the assignment is due*. Presenting even unpublished material written by someone else (such as a paper written by a friend for English 101 or another course) as if it were your own work is an act of plagiarism. Violations of the plagiarism standards will be punished in accordance with University protocol.

Disruptive Behavior Policy

Behavior that disrupts the educational environment in English 101 and that interferes with others' learning opportunities will not be tolerated. Disruptive behavior in the context of the English 101 classroom includes (but may not be limited to)

- failure to treat your instructor and peers (including their work) in a respectful manner
- excessive tardiness
- violations of the policy for cell phone use (see below)

Students whose behavior disrupts or impairs the learning process of others will be asked to exit for the remainder of the class session and may be subject to further disciplinary action as defined in the student handbook. *The classroom is a community, and the nature of this course invites class wide discussion and debate. Members of the classroom community are encouraged to research and defend their own opinions and beliefs, but are obliged at all times to respect and treat with courtesy and respect their classmates and the course instructor.*

Cell Phone Policy

Any student who brings a cell phone--or other mobile communication device--to class is responsible for turning it off *before the beginning of the official start time*. If a family or personal crisis requires you to keep your cell phone turned on, you must keep the ringer set to silent *and must alert your instructor before class about the situation*. Doing so will minimize potential disruption as you prepare the instructor up front that you might need to accept a call. If you need to take an emergency call, quietly leave the classroom and communicate in a manner that will not disturb others.

Disability Support

Students who require accommodations for physical or learning disabilities should contact the Learning Assistance Center (<http://www.xavier.edu/lac/student-disability-services.cfm>).

Writing Center

The James A. Glenn Writing Center is available for use during the composition of any essay assigned during this course. The writing center is located in the Michael J. Conaton Learning Commons, Room 400. Because demand for appointments varies during the semester, it is recommended that you call the center at 513-745-2875 or visit in person to schedule an appointment well in advance of the assignment deadline.

Selecting Course Themes

In this class, you'll choose one theme and examine it in all your major essays, excluding the common essay assignment, which will follow a prompt issued by the Department of Writing Studies. Be sure to choose something that will hold your interest for four months, something you're willing to argue about, and something about which you'll be able to find plenty of resources. I'm willing to consider any ideas, so long as you can prove to me you can use your theme to accomplish all the major essays that are outlined in this handbook. Keep in mind, too, that you'll be sharing your work with classmates, your instructor, and others throughout the term. Don't choose something too personal—this has created difficulty for some students in the past. I hold final veto power on themes.

Creative Course themes that have worked nicely in the past:

- Sexuality in Shakespeare
- Humans and Water
- Public Education and the Arts

Each essay can examine a different angle of your larger theme. For example, the writer who chose "Humans and Water" wrote a narrative about her personal efforts to help build wells in developing nations. She wrote a persuasive essay asking golf course managers to practice some innovative sustainable practices that would grow their business while saving water. She wrote a research essay about efforts to get clean water to more people, and examined a bottled water advertisement during her analysis unit. Think of your theme as the canopy under which all your assignments will fall. Make it large enough that you'll have some flexibility, but snug enough that you won't have to reinvent the wheel when it comes time to choose a topic for each essay. Using a theme helps you to gain some in-depth knowledge about a topic while you polish your writing. It also helps you use research wisely. If you find a good academic resource early in the term, keep drawing from it. If we chose a new topic for each paper, you'd have to start from scratch each time, and it's more valuable, I think, to learn how to select and build upon a good set of resources.

I advise students to choose a theme they're passionate about, since we'll use them all semester. There's a catch, though: don't choose a theme *just* based on passion. There are plenty of things you'd probably like to write about, and during the course of your college career you'll get your chance. For this class, though, be sure to choose a theme you love and one you'll be able to write well about. One about which you'll be able to find good, solid academic resources. One that hasn't been argued into the ground already, like legalizing marijuana or banning/allowing abortion, or gun control. I'll ask you to develop innovative ideas, and that'll be hard to do on a topic that's been argued already by thousands of smart people. Choose something about which you'll be able to find plenty of academic sources, but something about which you'll still be able to make brand new claims.

Keep this in mind: part of Xavier's mission is to produce more ethical students. We're not going to solve the world's problems in this class, though we might like to. Still, choose a topic about which you'll be able to say something of lasting importance. Writing about baseball, for example, might limit you in that regard. Pick something important to you, something that you think should be meaningful to others. You'll interact with classmates during this course, so you'll have a chance to convince others that your passion is worthwhile and hopefully make some kind of difference. Take that opportunity to heart.



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Unit 1: The Persuasive Narrative

Major Essay Number One Assignment Prompt
English 101 Fall Term, 2012

Due Date:

Overview: For your first major essay assignment, write a persuasive narrative that explains to an audience composed of your instructor and classmates a significant personal experience in which you've directly encountered some aspect of your chosen course theme. A narrative is, at its heart, a clear and precise story written with a goal of informing and persuading your audience. Here, you should tell a clear, detailed story with logical ordering. Ultimately, the work should convince your classmates and instructor that your course theme is one worthy of the time and attention you (and we, as your readers) will give it during the term. Narratives must incorporate at least two outside academic sources that add credible detail to your explanation of the topic and your encounter with it. Through strong use of the narrative form, rhetorical appeals, topic selection, and writing style, your audience (your instructor and classmates) should be convinced to embrace your course theme as worthy of further examination as the academic semester progresses.

Examples: The following descriptions illustrate successful essays from previous class sessions.

Course theme: *Water Use and Conservation*

Narrative: The student described in detail her own experiments in water preservation and personal meetings she held with individuals from regions in which water was scarce.

Course theme: *Athletics in the University Setting*

Narrative: The student explained how athletics had clearly and demonstrably changed the course of his life, and how they had opened the door to additional college opportunities.

Your narrative must:

- Show strong command of the narrative form and be tailored to the needs of your target audience.
- Be convincing and persuasive, though it should not be written as a traditional academic argument. A well-told story is, by nature, persuasive, and this assignment is no exception. Use detail, emotion, description, and strong storytelling to help your audience connect with and understand the importance of your topic.
- Be interesting, original, and attention grabbing, while remaining truthful and plausible.
- Refer to at least two printed, published outside sources, which can be referenced casually. The sources should add credibility, factual knowledge, and persuasive elements to your narrative. A works cited page must be included, giving the full bibliographical information for these sources.
- Address a controversy that is relevant to your course theme. Controversy of some sort is necessary in order to hold an interesting or compelling debate. As we will discuss in class, controversy or conflict is often central to the narrative form and should be included here.
- Show a clear, meaningful connection you've developed to your chosen course theme. During your story, show us why this theme is important to you, why it is important to the greater world, and how it can become important to us as a class.
- Make use of the conventions/tools we will read about and discuss during class: controlled diction, ethos, pathos, logos, sense of audience, appropriate word selection, proper tone, etc.
- Be carefully written and revised (continuously improved through self-editing, classroom peer review, and external discussion with people including your instructor or writing center tutors) using clear language standard American English that is free of errors in punctuation, grammar, and usage.

Assignment Goals: This essay serves as a stepping-stone toward subsequent work. In this first essay, you'll share your personal connection to your chosen course theme; as we move through the course, your observations will become increasingly global, and essays will move from this personal account into larger writing about how your course theme is viewed by different people and groups. This is step one of a larger story you'll tell about your course theme.

Course Outcomes: Students who successfully complete this class will show mastery of a number of learning outcomes, as set forth by the Xavier University Department of Writing Studies. You'll demonstrate the following outcomes as we work on this assignment:

- Respond appropriately to different rhetorical situations, varying their approach, format, and structure in recognition of the shifting needs of audience, purpose, and context.
- Demonstrate familiarity with concepts describing writing processes (invention, drafting, revising, editing) and use them effectively and efficiently in your own writing process.
- Articulate the rhetorical choices you have made.
- Observe the rules of academic honesty, intellectual property, and citation style(s).
- Use rhetorically appropriate information from academic and popular sources to corroborate, expand, and alter personal knowledge.
- Engage responsibly with topics that have ethical, moral, and cultural meaning.
- Acknowledge and show respect for different views/opinions in their writing.

Suggested Essay Length: In the past, the very best narratives in this course have been four to six pages, though the nature of the individual narrative may demand greater length. Narratives shorter than four pages are likely lacking sufficient detail and scope to successfully accomplish the listed goals.

Essay Format: Essay must be submitted in paper form during the first sixty seconds of class on the assigned due date. As outlined on the class syllabus, double-spaced in black ink on only one side of a plain white page. Pages must be stapled, and your name must appear on each page. Additionally, a digital copy must be sent in .doc, .docx, or .rtf format before you arrive in class on the assigned due date. Because writing is a discipline that requires attention to detail, failure to comply with any of these conventions will result in a one-point deduction from your essay grade. See your syllabus for a more detailed description of expected assignment format.

Notes: Refer to course syllabus for information concerning late work, plagiarism, and revision opportunities. Failure to bring drafts to class for assigned peer review sessions will negatively affect the final grade. A grading score sheet specific to this assignment will be issued prior to the essay's assigned due date.

Major Essay Number One: Personal Narrative

Assignment Score Sheet

Student name:

Class Section:

Date:

Content

Uses a voice and tone appropriate for the topic and audience; clearly conveys a specific and meaningful point:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3 3.5 4

Uses the narrative form in an articulate fashion that shows depth of thought and creativity:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3

Essay quickly captures and then keeps audience's interest:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3

Demonstrates advanced usage of concepts and writing tools introduced at this point in the course:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Demonstrates a well-orchestrated and successful persuasive element:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Shows depth and strength in rhetorical choices and strategies:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Mechanics

Integrates sources in a useful way and cites them clearly using MLA conventions.

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Uses polished standard American English and language/jargon appropriate for the audience and topic.

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Scoring:

Point Total: _____

Point Deductions:

•Late essay _____

•Missing Drafts _____

•Formatting _____

Final Essay Grade: _____

Unit Two: The Analysis Essay

Major Essay Number Two Assignment Prompt

English 101 Fall Term, 2012

Due Date:

Overview: For your first major essay assignment, write a persuasive narrative that explains to an audience composed of your instructor and classmates a significant personal experience in which you've directly encountered some aspect of your chosen course theme.

A narrative is, at its heart, a clear and precise story written with a goal of informing and persuading your audience. Here, you should tell a clear, detailed story with logical ordering. Ultimately, the work should convince your classmates and instructor that your course theme is one worthy of the time and attention you (and we, as your readers) will give it during the term. A good place to start might be a telling of the moment at which you become engaged with the topic—how did someone convince you that the subject was crucial importance to you and those around you?

Narratives must incorporate at least two outside academic sources that add credible detail to your explanation of the topic and your encounter with it. Through strong use of the narrative form, rhetorical appeals, topic selection, and writing style, your audience (your instructor and classmates) should be convinced to embrace your course theme as worthy of further examination as the academic semester progresses.

Examples: The following descriptions illustrate successful essays from previous classes:

Course Theme: Body Image and American Teens

Memo: Student examined a cosmetics advertisement placed in a magazine marketed toward young teens, and analyzed the message presented by the model's body language, clothing, and build. The recommendation involved building an advertisement with a more positive message concerning body image.

Course Theme: Federal Health Care Reform

Memo: Student analyzed a pharmaceutical ad, researched the product, and recommended a more straightforward description of the product's side effects in order to build trust with the customer.

Your analysis must:

- Provide a clear, concise description of the advertisement, so that an executive unfamiliar with the ad is able to understand and make use of the analysis and recommendation.
- Be constructed of language that is clear, respectful, and appropriate for a workplace environment.
- Provide deep, detailed analysis of the advertisement, focusing on plausibility, rhetorical and visual appeals, audience, intended goals, context, potential fallacies, and overall persuasive potential. The analysis should include discussion of the ad's intended and achieved goals, the designer's selection of visual and textual content, use of color/imagery, metaphor, branding, and any additional aspects relevant to the work being examined. The analysis should be rooted in provable fact and backed by concrete observations and evidence, rather than opinion, assumption, or soft critique (example: *this advertisement is effective because reasons a, b, and c*, rather than *I think this ad is strong/pretty/good.*)
- Include a rational, clear, and fully supported recommendation that makes use of your analysis and offers firm guidance as to how the executive's firm could improve upon the advertisement or build a better one from the ground up. Recommendations must consider the precise product or service promoted in your selected advertisement and should be tailored to the same print publication and intended audience.
- Make use of at least one outside academic source. Use the source to add strength to your analysis or recommendation about the advertisement. A complete works cited page must accompany the final draft.

- Make use of the conventions/tools we've discussed or read about—ethos, pathos, logos, sense of audience, appropriate word selection, proper tone, style, etc.
- Be carefully written and revised using clear language (standard American English) that is free of punctuation and grammatical errors.

Assignment Goals: In the analysis essay, we examine the work of others. Rather than simply critiquing or passing judgment, our job here is to build depth in our inquiries and to ask why a designer would use certain words or offer a particular image in order to persuade an audience. In later essays, we'll work to become more persuasive writers, and so we'll use this assignment to consider the work of others before we build our own arguments.

Course Outcomes: Students who successfully complete this class will show mastery of a number of learning outcomes, as set forth by the Xavier University Department of Writing Studies. You'll demonstrate the following outcomes as we work on this assignment:

- Understand and use rhetorical vocabulary to analyze writing by others and yourself.
- Integrate your own ideas with those of others.
- Respond appropriately to different rhetorical situations, varying their approach, format, and structure in recognition of the shifting needs of audience, purpose, and context.
- Demonstrate familiarity with concepts describing writing processes (invention, drafting, revising, editing) and use them effectively and efficiently in your own writing process.
- Articulate the rhetorical choices you have made.
- Observe the rules of academic honesty, intellectual property, and citation style(s).
- Use rhetorically appropriate information from academic and popular sources to corroborate, expand, and alter personal knowledge.
- Engage responsibly with topics that have ethical, moral, and cultural meaning.
- Acknowledge and show respect for different views/opinions in their writing.

Suggested Essay Length: Persuasive advertisement analyses should be a minimum five typed pages (12 point, double-spaced Times New Roman, printed on one side of a white sheet of paper). This page length is a guideline, and you are free to operate outside it, but as always, consider the rhetorical consequences. There are three distinct sections to this essay, and each deserves a substantial amount of consideration. In the past, the most successful essays have been between five and seven pages.

Headings: As we'll discuss in class, key components of memos include a document heading (To, From, Sender, Date, and Headline) and subheadings throughout the document. At minimum, your essay should be broken into three sections: Description, Analysis, and Recommendation. You are welcome to break the document into as many additional subheadings as you deem appropriate, so long as they're supported by the text.

Essay Format: Essay must be submitted in paper form during the first sixty seconds of class on the assigned due date. As outlined on the class syllabus, double-spaced in black ink on only one side of a plain white page. Pages must be stapled, and your name must appear on each page. Additionally, a digital copy must be sent in .doc, .docx, or .rtf format before you arrive in class on the assigned due date. Because writing is a discipline that requires attention to detail, failure to comply with any of these conventions will result in a one-point deduction from your essay grade. See your syllabus for a more detailed description of expected assignment format.

Notes: Refer to course syllabus for information concerning late work, plagiarism, and revision opportunities. Failure to bring drafts to class for assigned peer review sessions will negatively affect the final grade. A grading score sheet specific to this assignment will be issued prior to the essay's assigned due date.

Major Essay Number Two: The Analysis Essay Assignment Score Sheet

Student name:

Class Section:

Date:

Content

Demonstrates deep and insightful analysis that goes beyond surface-level observations and backs all claims with specific evidence (either from the advertisement itself or from outside sources):

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3 3.5 4

Makes correct, efficient use of the memo form:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3

Clearly addresses the intended audience in an advanced manner; uses rhetorical choices appropriate for a business setting:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3

Provides a clear recommendation and a firm supporting argument:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Demonstrates advanced usage of concepts and writing tools introduced at this point in the course:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Uses a clear organizational strategy and shows depth and strength in rhetorical choices:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Mechanics

Integrates sources in a useful way and cites them clearly using MLA conventions:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Uses polished standard American English and language/jargon appropriate for the audience and topic.

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Scoring:

Point Total: _____

Point Deductions: _____

•Late essay _____

•Missing Drafts _____

•Formatting _____

Final Essay Grade: _____

Unit Three: The Persuasive Guest Column

Major Essay Number Three Assignment Prompt English 101 Fall Term, 2012

Due Date:

Overview: For Unit 3, you will select a specific target audience and the publication most likely to reach that audience and then compose a persuasive guest commentary. The persuasive commentary should address a single, specific topic (pertaining to your course theme) and should convince your target audience to complete a specific, physical action. The action should be appropriate, reasonable, and legal. A primary goal for this assignment is to write a powerfully persuasive argument in a real-life situation.

Examples: The following descriptions illustrate successful essays from previous class sessions.

Course Theme: Youth Self Esteem

Column: Student composed a column for Cincinnati City Beat persuading readers to do a kind thing during the course of their day

Course Theme: Arts Education in Public Schools

Column: Student wrote the National Education Association Magazine and asked teachers whose schools had faced cuts in art-related funding and staff to integrate the arts into academic classroom sessions through a series of innovative lessons.

Your essay must:

- Include, on the opening page, a summary in paragraph form of the following information: your target audience, the publication you've chosen, a reason the publication will reach your target audience, the publication's numerical and geographic distribution (how many copies are printed and where are they available) and the specific action you'd like your audience to take. This introductory page does not count against your word limit.
- Be between 800 than 1,000 words in length, using brevity, precision, and strong word choices to make the greatest possible impact in the shortest amount of space.
- Be interesting, original, and attention grabbing, while remaining truthful and plausible.
- Refer to at least one printed, published outside source, which can be referenced casually. A works cited page must be included, giving the full bibliographical information for this source.
- Address some sort of controversy. Controversy is a necessary element in order to hold an interesting or compelling debate. Do not write letters about incontrovertible facts; instead, focus on some debatable area and provide a solution or new strain of thought. Your essay should examine at least one strong opposing argument.
- Offer readers a compelling argument designed to sway their view or to engage in the writer's specified action. Letters should be convincing, informative, insightful, and should offer creative solutions or new ways of looking at an issue or question. Rather than listing or re-stating existing arguments, writers should offer new views on the topic and its solution.
- Ask readers to participate an act that will likely result in a tangible, measurable result. Signing petitions and organizing demonstrations, while sometimes productive techniques, would not qualify, since their results are generally not measurable. Choose an action the will produce a definite result.
- Make use of the conventions/tools we've discussed or read about—controlled diction, ethos, pathos, logos, sense of audience, recognition/avoidance of argumentative fallacies, strong rhetorical decision making, appropriate word selection, proper tone, etc.

- Be carefully written and revised using clear language standard American English that is free of punctuation and grammatical errors.

Assignment goals: Here, we begin to put together pieces from our previous essays. You will select an appropriate audience and build an essay that powerfully persuades those individuals to take action. You'll pay a great deal of attention to your audience, and because of the compressed nature of this form, you'll place greater value on each specific word as a rhetorical choice. In this essay, your argument should be bold, clear, precise, and rooted in provable fact.

Course Outcomes: Students who successfully complete this class will show mastery of a number of learning outcomes, as set forth by the Xavier University Department of Writing Studies. You'll demonstrate the following outcomes as we work on this assignment:

- Respond appropriately to different rhetorical situations, varying their approach, format, and structure in recognition of the shifting needs of audience, purpose, and context.
- Demonstrate familiarity with concepts describing writing processes (invention, drafting, revising, editing) and use them effectively and efficiently in your own writing process.
- Articulate the rhetorical choices you have made.
- Observe the rules of academic honesty, intellectual property, and citation style(s).
- Use rhetorically appropriate information from academic and popular sources to corroborate, expand, and alter personal knowledge.
- Engage responsibly with topics that have ethical, moral, and cultural meaning.
- Acknowledge and show respect for different views/opinions in their writing.
- Understand and use rhetorical vocabulary to analyze writing by others and themselves.
- Integrate their own ideas with those of others.
- Explore an issue or question raised by another author and respond to it or challenge it in the service of developing their own view.

Essay Format: Essay must be submitted in paper form during the first sixty seconds of class on the assigned due date. As outlined on the class syllabus, double-spaced in black ink on only one side of a plain white page. Pages must be stapled, and your name must appear on each page. Additionally, a digital copy must be sent in .doc, .docx, or .rtf format before you arrive in class on the assigned due date. Because writing is a discipline that requires attention to detail, failure to comply with any of these conventions will result in a one-point deduction from your essay grade. See your syllabus for a more detailed description of expected assignment format. As a cover page for this assignment, attach the information sheet listing your intended audience, chosen publication, and other information that will be useful in determining how well you've reached the specified audience. The more I know about the audience, the more clearly I can evaluate your work, and the more points you'll have an opportunity to earn.

Notes: Refer to course syllabus for information concerning late work, plagiarism, and revision opportunities. Failure to bring drafts to class for assigned peer review sessions will negatively affect the final grade. A grading score sheet specific to this assignment will be issued prior to the essay's assigned due date.

Unit 3: Persuasive Guest Commentary Grading Rubric

Student name:

Section:

Date:

Content

Establishes a clear goal and offers the selected audience a clear method of accomplishing the goal:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3 3.5 4

Presents a compelling, concise argument carefully designed to provoke the specified action:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3

In the context of the chosen publication, the essay captures and keeps audience's interest:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3

Addresses a specific audience using appropriate voice, style, and tone; shows strong rhetorical decision-making:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Brings new and creative thinking/problem solving techniques to the topic, rather than reciting a string of facts:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Demonstrates advanced usage of concepts and tools introduced at this point in the course:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Mechanics

Integrates sources in a useful way and cites them clearly using MLA conventions:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Uses polished standard American English and language/jargon appropriate for the audience and topic:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Scoring:

Point Total: _____

Point Deductions:

•Late essay _____

•Missing Drafts _____

•Formatting _____

Final Essay Grade: _____

Unit Four: The Research Essay

Major Essay Number Four Assignment Prompt

English 101 Fall Term, 2012

Due Date:

Overview: You will compose for an academic audience a research paper that brings to light new thinking on your topic. Using the support of at least six strong academic sources, you will prove your thesis and provide a compelling argument that leads readers to accept your thesis as viable new thought on the topic. The essay should be clear, and well-supported using well-documented sources and should use the conventions of persuasion and argument covered thus far in English 101.

Examples: The following descriptions illustrate successful essays from previous class sessions.

Course Theme: Gender Equity in College Athletics

Essay: Student proposed and proved a thesis that stated gender equity would be most effectively met by raising the number of opportunities for athletes in both genders, rather than limiting the number of participants in one gender in order to create an image of equity.

Course Theme: Popular Music in Culture

Essay: Student proposed and proved a thesis that stated American culture is driven by music of minorities and the oppressed, and that our society would not be a world-leader in cultural ideas without the popularized contributions of marginalized individuals.

The essay must:

- Include a clear, strong thesis that blends together pieces of existing ideas in order to present a interesting new thought on the topic. The thesis must be bold, original, and provable, using a variety of diverse, strong sources.
- Provide a number of clear backing points that lead the audience to accept your thesis. These points should form the bulk of your argument and should be well supported by fact and should lack argumentative fallacies.
- Make strong use of at least six academic resources that bolster your thesis. At least one source should argue against your thesis, which will give you the opportunity to build credibility by thoroughly dissecting an opposing argument.
- Take a logical form and structure appropriate for an academic audience, consisting of an introduction in which we learn the thesis, a body in which the thesis is defended, and a conclusion, in which the argument is summarized and completed.
- Show expert use of the conventions/tools that have been discussed or read about—ethos, pathos, logos, sense of audience, appropriate word selection, argumentative strategies, proper tone, sourcing and documentation, style, diction, analysis, argumentative theory, etc.
- Be carefully written and revised using standard American English that is free of errors in punctuation and grammar.

Assignment Goals: This essay builds upon the previous essays and uses all the conventions we've learned during the course. You've told your own story, you've picked apart the work of others, and you've persuaded an audience. Now, you'll say something brand new about your topic with the help of well-selected academic sources. Placed into conversation with each other, your sources should ultimately convince us to believe that your original and bold thesis is valid.

Course Outcomes: Students who successfully complete this class will show mastery of a number of learning outcomes, as set forth by the Xavier University Department of Writing Studies. You'll demonstrate the following outcomes as we work on this assignment:

- Respond appropriately to different rhetorical situations, varying their approach, format, and structure in recognition of the shifting needs of audience, purpose, and context.
- Demonstrate familiarity with concepts describing writing processes (invention, drafting, revising, editing) and use them effectively and efficiently in your own writing process.
- Articulate the rhetorical choices you have made.
- Observe the rules of academic honesty, intellectual property, and citation style(s).
- Use rhetorically appropriate information from academic and popular sources to corroborate, expand, and alter personal knowledge.
- Engage responsibly with topics that have ethical, moral, and cultural meaning.
- Acknowledge and show respect for different views/opinions in their writing.
- Understand and use rhetorical vocabulary to analyze writing by others and themselves.
- Integrate their own ideas with those of others.
- Explore an issue or question raised by another author and respond to it or challenge it in the service of developing their own view.

Length: Research essays should be between 8-10 typed pages (12 point, Times New Roman). This is a guideline, and you are free to operate outside it. However, a research essay that runs less than eight pages tends to be a document on which the writer has not spent a great deal of time. It is not hard to tell the difference, and essays will be graded accordingly.

Essay Format: Essay must be submitted in paper form during the first sixty seconds of class on the assigned due date. As outlined on the class syllabus, double-spaced in black ink on only one side of a plain white page. Pages must be stapled, and your name must appear on each page. Additionally, a digital copy must be sent in .doc, .docx, or .rtf format before you arrive in class on the assigned due date. Because writing is a discipline that requires attention to detail, failure to comply with any of these conventions will result in a one-point deduction from your essay grade. See your syllabus for a more detailed description of expected assignment format.

Notes: Refer to course syllabus for information concerning late work, plagiarism, and revision opportunities. Failure to bring drafts to class for assigned peer review sessions will negatively affect the final grade. A grading score sheet specific to this assignment will be issued prior to the essay's assigned due date.

Unit 4: The Research Essay Score Sheet

Student name:

Section:

Date:

Content:

Establishes and expertly defends a clear and thoroughly original thesis.

0 1 2 3

Makes cohesive use of focused supporting claims and specific details.

0 1 2 3

The essay presents new thinking on the topic and ultimately convinces the audience to accept the thesis as valid.

0 1 2 3

Demonstrates advanced usage of skills and concepts introduced and practiced during the course.

0 1 2 3

The argument is logically ordered and all claims are backed with clear supporting facts.

0 1 2

Uses advanced voice, style, and tone for a cogent academic discussion.

0 1 2

Mechanics

Integrates sources in a useful way and cites them clearly using MLA conventions:

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Uses polished standard American English and language/jargon appropriate for the audience and topic.

0 0.5 1 1.5 2

Scoring:

Point Total: _____

Point Deductions:

•Late essay _____

•Missing Drafts _____

•Formatting _____

Final Essay Grade: _____

Final Portfolio Guidelines:

The Portfolio is:

- Professional looking
- A capstone for the course
- A barometer of what you have learned, and what you feel you are capable of learning as a result of this course.
- A document that contains very specific items— nothing more, nothing less.

Those items include:

- Title page with name, section number and title of your unit five essay
- Table of contents
- Reflective introduction final draft (detailed below)
- Two revised essays, in whichever order you see fit. Revised version should be immediately followed by the original graded draft.
- Two examples of in-class writing or homework, typed, polished, and revised so that they are representative of the best work you accomplished apart from the graded essays.

The Reflective Essay:

•A guide through the final portfolio.

•A reflective essay that traces your steps through the course and offers insight on accomplishments achieved during the course. You're welcome to cite yourself and the materials you've completed.

•A chance to explain your progress, or lack thereof. Because of that, you may wish to include in your portfolio, not your best papers, but the ones which show the most progress and improvement from working to final draft. Use the essay to explain all those choices.

•An opportunity to reflect on what you still need to learn.

•A document that proves to me you can write these essays and then discuss them as part of a larger body of work. You are displaying both your ability and your growth, and the processes at work behind both.

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The Common Assignment

Learning, Intelligence, and Identity in the Digital Age English 101 Common Essay | Fall 2012–Spring 2013

This essay is required for students in your section of English 101—and an assignment like this one will be required for all English 101 students in the future. You will submit this paper to your instructor for a grade; after final grades have been submitted, the writing program director will remove names from the papers, and a committee of instructors will read your essay to understand how well students in English 101 are meeting the course goals and outcomes. You will work on this assignment in English 101 over several class periods, discussing the required readings, locating an additional source, and peer reviewing your drafts. Please read this assignment sheet carefully to make sure that you understand all of the requirements.

Assignment Outcomes

Students who complete English 101 and this assignment will demonstrate the ability to

- Respond appropriately to different rhetorical situations, varying their approach, format, and structure in recognition of the shifting needs of audience, purpose, and context.
- Use Standard Edited English conventions in ways that are suitable for their rhetorical purpose.
- Integrate their own ideas with those of others.
- Explore an issue or question raised by another author and respond to it or challenge it in the service of developing their own view.
- Observe the rules of academic honesty and intellectual property.
- Use rhetorically appropriate information from sources to corroborate, expand, and alter personal knowledge.
- Engage responsibly with topics that have cultural meaning
- Acknowledge and show respect for different views/opinions in their writing

Assignment Description

Choose one of the following themes below, and respond to it with your own argument. In your essay, you must make a claim and support it with evidence (from the required readings, from your own research, and perhaps from your own experience). Your audience for this essay is an educated, public audience—the audience that Nicholas Carr and Steven Johnson address in their writing.

- **Learning:** Digital technology has changed the way that we learn, read, and write. In what ways do you think digital technologies will continue to influence how and what we learn? Will digital technology lead to more complex thinking and learning? Will these technologies erode our ability to think deeply? Do our educational institutions reflect these changes in learning?
- **Intelligence:** Both Carr and Johnson make assumptions about what intelligence means. How might digital technology expand traditional definitions of intelligence? Does digital technology obscure or highlight certain ways of knowing or thinking? What is potentially gained and lost as we think about intelligence in new ways?
- **Identity:** Digital technology first raises questions of agency and power—do we use technology, or does it use us? How does digital technology influence what it means to be a person, both individually and in community? Digital technology also raises questions of identity. Both Carr and Johnson make assumptions the people about who use technology, but do people from different communities use technology differently? Is age, class, and/or gender significant?

This assignment may be interpreted in a variety of ways. You will begin with the required sources to become acquainted with the issues. Through class discussions and other activities, you will develop a specific focus and claim for your essay.

Source and Research Requirements

Your paper must explicitly refer to and include information and/or ideas from the following sources, which your instructor will provide for you:

Carr, Nicholas. "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" *The Atlantic Monthly* July/Aug. 2008: 56–63. Print.

Johnson, Steven. *Everything Bad is Good for You: How Today's Popular Culture is Actually Making Us Smarter*. New York: Riverhead, 2006. Print.

You must also explicitly refer to and include information and/or ideas from at least one additional source that you locate through a library database. We recommend using Academic Search Complete, which indexes both scholarly and public writing. While this source does not have to be scholarly, it must be credible and appropriate for your argument. You may find that other sources—such as personal experiences, web sources, and interview—also serve as appropriate evidence for your argument.

Formatting and Citations

The minimum length for this essay is 1000 words, and the maximum length is 1500 words. This essay must conform to all aspects of MLA (2009) formatting; you will need parenthetical citations within your paper and a Works Cited list with at least three entries (Carr, Johnson, and your own source).

Evaluation Criteria and Due Dates

Instructors will provide you with due dates for each component of this assignment. Instructors will also provide you with the evaluation criteria they will use to assign a grade to this essay.

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The Xavier University 100s Essay Contest

Every year, students participating in 100-level classes including English 101 are invited to enter the 100s essay contest. Your instructor may specifically encourage you to enter if a graded essay draft seems particularly strong, but as you revise, change, and improve your essays during the term in preparation for their inclusion in the final portfolio, you may find that your work deserves consideration in one of the outlined categories.

All students are encouraged to enter the competition, and I will gladly endorse your work—and work with you to further revise it in preparation for submission—if you choose to enter.

Entry forms will be made available at the following site:

<http://libguides.xavier.edu/content.php?pid=134985&sid=1733554>

Please feel free to ask if you have any additional questions about this opportunity.

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The James A. Glen Writing Center

Overview:

One of the most valuable resources available to you as a student of writing, the James A. Glen writing center offers free tutoring by students who have taken this course—or one quite similar to it—and are aware of the expectations and well equipped to offer you guidance and help as you take advantage of the numerous revision opportunities you'll have during this class. Tutors are friendly, knowledgeable, and can offer a valuable extra set of eyes as you work to polish your essay. Appointments are suggested (particularly during peak periods around midterms and preceding final examinations, but not always required).

When you visit the writing center, you'll be given an option to report your visit to an instructor. Please do this—it's a great way to demonstrate you're taking steps above and beyond what's required as you assemble your essays, and this information will be taken into account as I distribute participation-based points at the end of the term.

Writing Center Details:

Where: Room 400 in the Conaton Learning Commons

Phone: 745-2875

When: Monday-Thursday: 9:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Friday: 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Sunday 1:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Note: Hours subject to change as needed. Updated information will be offered when a peer tutor visits our classroom early in the term.

http://www.xavier.edu/writing_center/

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Classroom Technology

Google Documents

In many classrooms, peer review happens strictly with pen and paper. There are some benefits to this, and it can be an extremely useful practice. In this classroom, though, we'll take advantage of some extra possibilities afforded by technology.

During peer review sessions, you'll be asked to bring a laptop to class. If you don't have access to one, see me after the first class meeting and we'll make arrangements to get one for you. We'll review each other's work via Google docs. The reasons are numerous, but some of the key ones include:

- I can better monitor the work done during peer review sessions.
- You'll be able to get feedback in non-traditional ways and outside the class
- Having documents saved digitally and online cuts down on excuses for late work such as lost flash drives and crashed computers—your work will always be accessible. This cuts down the possibilities of you wasting time in panic during this term.

Setting up a Google Account

You'll need to have a Google account in order to participate in digital peer review. Here's how it works:

- Register at Google.com. Keep in mind, you'll need to share your Gmail address with your classmates and instructor in order to share classroom documents. If you have an existing Gmail account and don't want to share it with *all* your classmates (and instructor), you might want to register a second account for use specifically during this class. That's what I've done, and it works nicely.
- Click on the "Documents" tab on the main Google page, or on the email page.
- Open a new document and paste an existing word document, then save it. Alternatively, you can compose your essays, revise them, and print them directly from Google Docs. (There's no longer an excuse for essays turned in late due to crashed computers, lost flash drives, ect.—Google Docs saves automatically, and allows you to retrieve your essay from *any* computer connected to the Internet.)
- Click the "Share" tab and type or paste a classmate's email address into the cursor box.
- Examine and track the comments, remarks, suggestions and insight left by your classmates and instructor. Choose which ones you'll accept and reject as you work to strengthen your essay.
- Print a final version of the document and bring it to class on time on the assigned due date.

Student Comments About Digital Peer Review

Digital Peer Review can be a valuable tool for you and for your instructor. Don't take it solely from me, though; here's what students have said about the use of Google Docs in this course:

"This class' peer review sessions have been very helpful. I enjoy the ease of sharing essays, and the ability to make comments and view others' thoughts. I also like how I can continue to work outside of class. This whole year has been very helpful as far as peer review and I would say it was a very successful method."

"I was able to receive feedback from many students, not just one. Having multiple perspectives really helps to write a strong paper. I would definitely recommend using Google Docs in the future because it has been very beneficial in the review process. I am very glad we had class time to peer review and discuss the issues with our papers with classmates. I did not know about Google Docs before this class but I think I will definitely use it in my future work."

"I've had great success in this class with peer review. I really like peer editing over Google docs. The success in this class has helped me to know what to ask for when asking someone to review my work and it has helped me to look for specific mistakes when editing on my own. The digital peer review specifically helped me very much because I could receive so much more input from others and it was always there to go back and review. Overall I really like the use of peer review in class, especially digitally. It helped me a lot with my papers this semester and introduced a new way of peer editing."

"I can text my friends and ask them to look at a change I've made and am able to get immediate advice. With the busy schedules we all have, being able to get feedback from others in the class who actually know what the professor is looking for randomly throughout the weeks prior to the paper being due is beneficial. I think digital peer review is very helpful. I have never done this in any of my other classes, but will continue to do so after this class."

"I love doing digital reviews because I can see everyone's thoughts and feelings—not just one person's."

"In using peer review, I have noticed a lot of success with my papers. I like that I can digitally send my paper and have it edited by more than one person a class. It helps me improve my papers because I am not just relying on one student's feedback. I also like using digital peer review because I can edit my paper on the screen and print it directly from Google docs. Additionally, digital peer review is helpful because it can be done outside of class when meeting with someone is impossible."

Computers in the Classroom

You are welcome—in fact, encouraged—to use your computer during this class. You are asked to use your computer only during designated work periods (laptops should be closed during group discussion, presentations, or the instructor’s delivery of information about an assignment or a skill. Computers must be used only for purposes related to the classroom session—we’ll have plenty of work to do during our class meetings, so please feel free to enjoy social media sites and recreational Web surfing during the 23 hours we’re not in class.

Cell Phones in the Classroom

Cell phones should be turned off, unless you’ve received specific permission from the instructor (see syllabus). Teachers and students alike debate this policy, and it’s different in nearly every class. Here’s why we go phoneless in English 101:

Students often make the argument (and a fair one) that they’re paying for school and that they should get to decide how much attention they pay in a class. That might hold water in a lecture classroom. If you’d like to play Angry Birds rather than listen to a lecture, that’s your deal. This class, though, is set up in such a way that we’re constantly interacting with each other. We’re discussing topics in groups, working with each other’s drafts in peer review, debating topics and strategies—this class is built upon connection with the people in the physical seats around you. When you take your focus off them and transfer it to the cell phone, the integrity of the class falls apart. Your classmates get crummy feedback. You neglect to answer a question, when a classmate could’ve gotten something valuable from your smart response. So, no cell phones here. You’ve got 23 or so hours in a day to be popular with the rest of the world; for an hour, you can focus on classmates and writing.

(Also: it’s just straight-up lousy trying to pay attention when the person next to you is tapping away at a text-pad. Courtesy has a place in this classroom.)

Grading Methods

In this class, you'll routinely hear the phrase, "know your audience." For each essay you'll be assigned a specific audience, but to some extent it's appropriate to acknowledge that I'm a big part of your audience, since I issue the graded evaluations. That being the case, it's only fair to let you know from the beginning how you'll be graded on each assignment type.

How I grade essays:

Essays are graded on a twenty-point scale, based on the score sheet you'll be issued during that unit. Points are issued in half-point increments, and are based on the skills we've learned during the unit and the relevant course outcomes. Some point markers will remain consistent: you'll always be evaluated, for example, on how well and how fully you cite sources, how effectively you use Standard American English and language itself within the essay. Other points of evaluation during the term will include structure of the essay, the level of depth apparent in your analysis or observational writing, the level of persuasiveness you show, and more. You'll have access to the score sheet before you turn in your essay (samples are in this handbook, but are subject to change based on needs of the class).

How I Grade Notebooks:

You'll keep all your homework and in-class writing in your notebook, which I'll evaluate at the end of the term. Five points are available for a combination of your notebook and the other forms of participation you demonstrate during the course, such as peer review, in-class discussion, office visits, etc. Here's how points are distributed:

0: No notebook, and extremely limited/no participation.

1: Notebook is sparse and disordered; extremely limited/ no participation

2: Notebook includes most assignments, but they are incomplete and lack depth of thought or effort/ moderate participation

3: Notebook contains the minimum requirements: everything I've asked for is present but unspectacular in scope/average or normal participation

4: Notebook goes above and beyond normal—there are extensive notes and the required assignments are thoughtful and robust/exceptional classroom participation.

5: Exemplary work in written form and within the classroom—student has clearly gone above and beyond expectations in completing nearly every assignment.

How I Grade Portfolios:

Portfolios are read as one document, start to finish, and my chief criterion is this: based on the information presented during this course, how strong is this piece of writing? The portfolio will include a brief introductory essay explaining your growth and process through the course and narrating the revisions you've made, two carefully revised essays, and two samples of your best in-class work. All the materials will be evaluated based on the full course worth of knowledge. In other words, an essay that earned an "A" during the first week, if left un-revised, is not likely to be "A" work within a portfolio. Why? You've learned more in the intervening weeks, and you'll be held accountable for that improvement.

Student Advice

The following notes are unedited and unchanged, written by students who have successfully completed this course during previous terms. Please take a few moments to consider their advice as you embark on the course.

Dear Student:

“Don’t sweat the small things.” This old saying goes perfectly with this English 101 class. Throughout the semester, you will learn tips and tricks that will allow you to write a paper with almost no stress. I won’t reveal all of those to you in this letter, because you’re in school and you have to work a little bit. During this class you will learn things that will not only help you in the rest of your college career, but the rest of your life, too. Make sure you take time on your assignments and listen to what Professor Rexroat has to say; he is very knowledgeable and knows how to help you improve. Put your best effort into the class, and you will get the most out of it. Peace and Blessings.

“...you will learn things that will not only help you in the rest of your college career, but the rest of your life, too.”

-Art Major
Fall, 2011

Dear Student:

This course will prove beneficial in developing your ability to write for college. Make efficient use of peer review sessions, for they will prove most beneficial in improving your essays. Make sure you select a course theme that will hold your interest for the entire semester. I chose a theme I was very passionate about, and during the semester my already expansive knowledge was increased even more. Class discussion is a time for you to evaluate your topic, weigh your peers’ opinions about your theses, etc. against your personal attraction to the subject.

“Make sure you select a course theme that will hold your interest for the entire semester.”

Visit the instructor’s office hours frequently, especially if you have concerns regarding your research paper. He is willing to help and explain in greater detail which improvements he’d like to see in a casual environment after class.

Overall, you will get out of this class what you put into it. If you select an interesting course theme, present thoughtful thesis statements, visit the writing center for additional assistance (it really does help!), and seek instructor feedback, you will succeed in this course. Heed my advice and good luck on your semester.

-Electronic Media Major
Spring, 2012

Dear Student:

The absolute most important thing about this class is to pick a theme that you enjoy reading and writing about. This class involves a lot of writing, so make sure you are writing about something you love so you can do the best work you possibly can. Take advantage of every peer editing opportunity you can; don't limit yourself only to students in your own class. Ask your friends, family, high school teachers, Writing Center tutors—anyone who will take a look at your paper. The more opinions, the better. But don't forget, in the end it's up to you to decide which advice is best and create the best essay you possibly can.

“Ask your friends, family, high school teachers, Writing Center tutors—anyone who will take a look at your paper.”

-Chemistry Major
Spring 2012

Dear Student:

So you are about to enter Professor Rexroat's English 101 class? If you think this class is going to be a breeze check your attitude at the door; it was among the hardest classes I had this semester. But that's not to scare you off; it was hard for me because I had difficulty adapting my learning habits to this course. If you are able to follow the course program set out for you by Professor Rexroat, then I am sure that this class can be very enjoyable. Unfortunately for me, I didn't take this course seriously enough. I am a Biology major, and I figured that if I could survive tough science classes, then an English 101 course would be a breeze. I was wrong; Professor Rexroat's English 101 class demands effort. No matter how good

On one essay in particular (the guest column), I became particularly lost. I tried to skate by on my own knowledge and ended up suffering the consequences; I turned in an unrevised paper that became my worst grade this semester.

you think you are at writing, you must follow Professor Rexroat's writing process. Otherwise you will find yourself hopelessly lost. On one essay in particular (the guest column), I became particularly lost. I tried to skate by on my own knowledge and ended up suffering the consequences; I turned in an unrevised paper that became my worst grade this semester. So as you enter this class, make sure you do not take it for granted. It is a college level course, and must be approached with the respect it deserves.

-Biology Major
Spring, 2012

Dear Student,

Like most college classes, you get out what you put into this course. If you work hard and always have your work on time, then you will become a better writer and most likely earn a strong grade. If you don't put in any work, then you will no doubt earn a mediocre grade or worse. More important than that, you will not grow as a writer.

Also, be open to your classmates. They are your best friends in the classroom because they will help you revise your essays.

-Undecided Major
Fall 2011

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