

Introductory Writing: What's college *for*, anyway? Massasoit Community College Spring 2013

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ENGL 099
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Office Hours:

Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays: 8:00 – 8:45

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 8:15 – 9:15

“I know you've heard it a thousand times before.
But it's true—hard work pays off.
If you want to be good, you have to practice, practice, practice.”
Ray Bradbury

What can you expect from this course?

- You can expect for this class to feel like a workshop, an artist's studio, or a practice field—we will meet to improve your work for our Composition I course.*
- You can expect to learn and practice a variety of writer's habits that will help you to become a better college writer.
- You can expect to receive the support and guidance you need to be a successful college student. **
- You can expect me to be the same hard-working and kind professor I am in our Composition I course—and to have the same high expectations for you I have there.

What do you need for this course?

You need the same materials for this class as you do for our Composition I class:

- A 3-ring binder divided into 5 sections and labeled accordingly:
 - Free Writing
 - Writer's Notebook
 - Class Notes
 - Essays
 - Research
- Our course text: *They Say, I Say with Readings* (it must be the 2012 edition, the one that says “with readings”)
- A USB drive

* Please note that this course does not count for credit. My hope is that this class will help you to pass and receive credit for Composition I this semester.

** Please note that this course replaces College Experience. You do not need to register for College Experience if you are taking this course.

How will this class “work” with Composition I?

This is a special section of Introductory Writing that we do not offer to all students. It allows you the chance to complete both this class and English Composition I in the same semester. In order to take these courses together, you must adhere to the following conditions:

- You must fully participate in both courses. If you stop attending or participating in Introductory Writing, you will be withdrawn from or fail English Composition I.
- You must pass Introductory Writing in order to pass English Composition I.
- If you pass Introductory Writing but do not meet the criteria for passing English Composition I, you will still receive credit for Introductory Writing. In this case, you may enroll in Composition I the following semester.

You will need to sign the last page of this syllabus and give it to me indicating that you understand these conditions.

What is our class schedule?

Our class will meet Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays following our Composition I course. Our schedule will follow the Composition I schedule; on most days, we will be working on extending and improving our work for Composition I. We will also include in our schedule some time to discuss college success. Please use your Composition I schedule for all homework assignments and for a general idea of what each day will hold for you in this course.

Catalog Course Description

This course is designed to strengthen basic student writing. It includes the study of usage, mechanics, and sentence development. It involves intensive practice in writing clear, unified paragraphs and includes practice in writing essays which indicate readiness to succeed in English Composition I. **Note:** Credits earned in this course cannot be applied toward graduation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Write with greater confidence;
- Write an essay that contains a thesis and a clear beginning, middle and end;
- Organize an essay into clear, unified paragraphs that connect to each other and support a main idea;
- Integrate examples and ideas from texts into an essay to support a thesis;
- Identify and use good examples from research sources to support their ideas;
- Demonstrate some awareness of audience;
- Use all steps in the writing process – including brainstorming, revision and self-assessment – with some independence;
- Demonstrate basic skill with standard academic English, and limit errors so they do not interfere with meaning.

Core Competencies: Critical Thinking, Technology Skills, Oral Communication, Quantitative Skills, Reading, Writing

How will you be graded in the course?

In Composition I, your course grade is about the quality of your writing. The quality of your writing is important here, too (your Composition I essays must be scoring at least in the “not yet” column of every category to pass this class).

What your actual passing grade for Introductory Writing will be is based on the *habits* you are learning and using as a writer. Some of these habits include:

- Becoming a prepared and interdependent student in class
- Participating in class by asking questions, commenting, or thinking aloud
- Pre-writing or planning for writing
- Using your Reader’s Notebook
- Writing frequently
- Writing essays with a beginning, middle, and end
- Summarizing what others have written
- Responding to others in writing with your own ideas
- Reflecting on your progress as a writer
- Revising your work
- Helping to revise someone else’s work by providing them feedback
- Editing your work and improving your language, grammar, and style

Every time our class meets, you will work on developing these important habits. In fact, you will create your own online blog (connected to our class’ blog) which will feature a handful of essays you write for this class. The blog will be your opportunity to demonstrate the habits of a writer. Your writing there, your peer responses to your classmates’ writing, your in-class discussions about the themes connected to your blog...all these will be considered in your final grade for the course. Participating—and keeping up with—all of this work is essential to your growth as a writer, and to a successful grade in this class. To receive credit for a class, you must have a) completed/participated in the day’s assignment successfully, and b) completed the assignment on time. If you are absent, if you write carelessly, and/or if your work is late, you will not receive credit for that day’s work.

Our class will meet 35 times this semester, so fulfilling your class obligations—practicing the habits of a good writer and a good college student—is your responsibility every time we meet. Your grade will be based on the percentage of times you fully participate in our class’ daily work. So, for example, if you fully participate 35 out of 35 times this semester, you can expect an A for the class.

How important is attendance?

As you know from our class grading policy, coming to class is required and essential for a passing grade in this class. Communicating with your professor is very important in college; let me know if you are going to miss a class, and provide a reason. Please note that if you miss five (5) classes this semester, you must schedule a conference with me to discuss your continuation in the course. You will be considered a non-participating student and should drop the course if: a) you do not meet with me after your fifth absence, or b) you are absent nine (9) times from the class.

How can you improve your writing outside of class?

I will make myself available to help you as frequently as I can. Please email me or speak with me before or after class; I am happy to meet with you during my office hours, by appointment, or via email.

We also will have a Writing Fellow working with us this semester. Her name is Suzanne, and she will be with us during some of our class sessions. She will also be available to meet with you in the Writing Center for extra writing support.

You can also contact the Academic Resource Center located in the lower level of the Student Union (extension 1801). They offer academic support, free of charge, including writing tutoring in the ARC's Writing Center. As an Introductory Writing student enrolled in this pilot, you are required to visit the Writing Center three (3) times this semester.

The ARC's World Language Center also offers free ESL tutoring for English Language Learners. I encourage you to use every resource you can to better your writing this semester.

What about your learning needs?

I care very much about students with learning differences; as you will discover, thinking about how we learn and develop differently is part of who I am personally and professionally. For that reason, please let me know how I can accommodate you in this class.

In addition, students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in the classroom are encouraged to contact a disability counselor on campus as soon as possible. Students at the Brockton Campus with learning disabilities should contact Andrea Henry at extension 1805. Students with physical disabilities at the Brockton Campus should contact Mary Berg at extension 1425.

How can you help to create a classroom community?

Because we are a writing community, there are behaviors that will further our work. Please commit with me to embodying the following values of our community. Together let's...

- Come to class on time and fully prepared for class with our binders, a pen, our syllabus, and our book.
- Show kindness to everyone in the class and be ready to work with one another.
- Participate in discussions in respectful ways; listen well and respond appropriately.
- Quiet our personal devices, and when we receive emergency phone calls or texts, respond to them outside the room.
- Feel free to take care of our personal needs (water, the restroom, emergency calls) without disrupting other learners.
- Use college resources—the library, ARC, Writing Center, Counseling Center, and Student Life—as much as we can.

Course Outline

Note: This schedule may change according to your learning needs and the collaborative nature of our class; you will always be informed and involved in those changes.

Week One	<i>College Habits</i>	Building community
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	Writing as conversation: Introducing ourselves in writing The Writer's Notebook
Week Two	<i>College Habits</i>	Building community Online course space: Getting used to online discussions
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	Essays: Beginning, middle, end Reading: Addison's <i>Two Years Are Better than Four</i> (211) Blog Writing Practice: Responding to Addison
Week Three	<i>College Habits</i>	Building community & networking Goal-setting: Why are we here? What's our story? Visiting the Writing Center—make 1 st appointment
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	Essays: Thesis, thesis, thesis Blog Peer Reviews Introduction to revision
Week Four	<i>College Habits</i>	Practices of personal reflection, inspiration, and motivation Time management Active reading
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	Essays: Connecting your ideas to your thesis Reading: Foster Wallace's <i>Kenyon Commencement Speech</i> (198) Blog Writing Practice: Responding to Foster Wallace More revision
Week Five	<i>College Habits</i>	Learning & personality styles: Making college work for you Skim reading; reading for information College scavenger
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	Revisiting the Writer's Notebook Using templates for they say/I say... Blog Peer Reviews
Week Six	<i>College Habits</i>	The ENGAGEMENT challenge Visiting the Writing Center—make 2 nd appointment
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	Essays: Making connections Reading: Jobs' Stanford Commencement Address Blog Writing Practice: Responding to Jobs
Week Seven	<i>College Habits</i>	The ENGAGEMENT challenge follow-up Online blogs: The College Freshman Experience
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	Revisiting the Writer's Notebook Blog Peer Reviews Researching: Choosing an initial focus, finding what YOU need, ignoring the stuff that "sort of" fits

Week Eight	<i>College Habits</i>	Organizing for research Revisiting time management
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	Works Cited Reading: McCullough's Wellsely High School Commencement Speech, <i>You're Not Special</i> Blog Writing Practice: Connecting sources (all 3 commencement speeches) Researching
Week Nine	<i>M3/18-22</i>	NO CLASSES: SPRING BREAK
Week Ten	<i>College Habits</i>	Panel Discussion: Is college worth it? And how do we make it so?
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	Essays: Writing a really great introduction Blog Writing Practice: Responding to our Panel
Week Eleven	<i>College Habits</i>	Time Management: The final stretch of the semester Our 30 Day Challenge (thanks to Matt Cutts via TED)
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	Essays: Staying focused and using metacommentary Blog Peer Reviews and 30-day blogging
Week Twelve	<i>College Habits</i>	Visiting the Writing Center—make 3 rd appointment How's our 30 day challenge going?
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	IW Revision Circle Blog: Featuring our best (and newly revised) essay 30-day blogging
Week Thirteen	<i>College Habits</i>	Revisiting our goals How's our 30 day challenge going?
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	Blog: Self-reflection essay Blog: More on our best (and newly revised) essay 30-day blogging
Weeks Fourteen & Fifteen	<i>College Habits</i>	Wrap-up Discussion: So what is college FOR anyway? And how will it serve you? Finishing our 30-day challenge
	<i>Writing Habits</i>	Reading each other's blogs and responding to them

Committing to Introductory Writing & Composition I

Please read this form, sign it, and return it to me during the first week of class.

In order to take both Introductory Writing (ENGL099) and English Composition I (ENGL101) in the same semester, you must commit to the following conditions:

- You must fully participate in both courses. If you stop attending or participating in Introductory Writing, you will be withdrawn from or fail English Composition I.
- You must pass Introductory Writing in order to pass English Composition I.
- If you pass Introductory Writing but do not meet the criteria for passing English Composition I, you will still receive credit for Introductory Writing. In this case, you may enroll in Composition I the following semester.

I understand the conditions listed above, and commit to completing both Introductory Writing and Composition I in this semester to the best of my abilities.

Signed: _____

Print your name: _____

Date: _____