

COURSE TITLE: Composition I

ENGL 1301

PROFESSOR: Camy Brunson

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**\*Office hours may be held virtually. Be in touch via email or phone to schedule an appointment.**

*“Have something to say, and say it as clearly as you can. That is the only secret of style.”*

-Matthew Arnold

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**Course Description:** This course includes a grammar review and a study of the principles of good writing, methods of paragraph and theme development, frequent essays, and collateral readings in literature and other humanities.

**Prerequisites:**

- Students must be TSI-compliant in both writing and reading.
- International students who do not have a TOEFL score of 550 must enroll in ENGL 0301 or 0302 or ESOL 0301 or 0302.

**Textbook:** Norton's *Let's Talk - a Pocket Rhetoric* (Lunsford), with *The Seagull Book of Essays* (Kelly) .....ISBN 9780393874396. This bundle also allows students access to online Inquizitive resources, which will need to be accessed upon beginning the course.

**Other supplies or necessary tools:** Access to computer with printer and internet access

**Core Objectives addressed:**

- Communication skills – to include effective written, oral and visual communication
- Critical thinking skills – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- Teamwork – to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal

- Personal responsibility – to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

**Course Purpose:** The purpose of English 1301 is to help students understand and apply the standards of correctness in formal thought and the written English Language. English 1301 helps students to think well by teaching them to read and write well through its focus on the writing process, on the use of appropriate grammar and diction, on the use of logic, and on the different methods of essay development. Collateral readings from all areas of the humanities are included.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of the course, the student will show competence in the course objectives listed below:

1. Understand that writing is an interactive process that includes prewriting, writing, and revision and apply those principles to the assignments/paper
2. Develop papers using appropriate and logical structures and modes
3. Write in a style appropriate to audience and purpose
4. Apply the principles of logic, unity, development, and coherence to create papers that are focused and effective
5. Understand and apply correct grammar and mechanics in writing to promote effective communication
6. Use Edited American English in academic essays
7. Make constructive suggestions for others' writing during peer editing or other critiques/presentations
8. Work collaboratively with other members of the class in order to complete group assignments
9. Read, reflect on, and respond critically to a variety of texts

**Attendance Policy:** According to the *SPC General Catalog (2015-16)*: “Students are expected to attend all classes in order to be successful in the course. The student will be withdrawn from the course when 1.) absences become excessive as defined by the course syllabus and 2.) in the instructor’s opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences.” \* *Instructor’s note:* Every effort must be made to achieve punctual and regular class attendance. You must be present in your own life! Your instructor will take attendance, and will note repetitive absences and/or tardies. In the case that an absence might be reasonably excusable, notify your instructor of the circumstances and make arrangements to take care of all work covered in class during the absence. This class will be taught interactively, so attendance is critical. In order to participate in each day’s activities, students must be present. **Students with excessive missed work or more than 5 unexcused absences may be dropped.**

- COVID policy: If you test positive for COVID or have been exposed, immediately notify Associate Director of Health and Wellness DeEtte Edens (dedens@southplainscollege.edu) for guidance. If she determines that you need to quarantine, she will notify your instructors. It is your responsibility to contact your

instructors to inform them, also, and to make a plan to stay caught up with course work while you are isolated.

**Classroom Behavior:** While electronic devices, drinks, gum, etc. are not strictly prohibited in class, I advise you to use these types of things minimally, quietly, and respectfully. *Cell phones should remain out of view during the class period unless there is an emergency you must attend to.* You are also doing yourself a disservice if your attention is not on the subject matter at hand. Keep in mind that we are trying to create a pleasant atmosphere for learning together! We may at times be loud and a bit unruly when discussing topics and assignments, but let us restrict our behavior to being cheerful, friendly, and appropriate in our language and manner. *Please refrain from talking, whispering, or passing notes when your instructor or fellow students have the floor.* Please also make every effort to arrive and depart in a timely manner as befitting the class schedule – avoiding disruptive entrances and exits when at all possible. *Note that if a student exhibits inappropriate behavior, such as sleeping, cell phone usage, unreasonable interruptions of lecture/classroom activity, or disruptive exits/entrances, student may be counted absent.*

**Disability Statement:** Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services Office at Levelland (Student Health & Wellness Office) 806-716-2577, Reese Center (Building 8) 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611.

**Discrimination Policy:** The instructor will do his or her best not to discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, ethnic background, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

**Diversity Policy:** In this class, the instructor will endeavor to establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all participants to learn about others, about the larger world, and about themselves.

**Academic Honesty:** Please see the *SPC General Catalogue* (online at <https://www.southplainscollege.edu>) for policies and ramifications regarding plagiarism and

cheating. Your instructor will be watching for signs of any such practice, and measures will be taken to ensure that the consequences for this type of behavior are serious. Respect yourself and others by putting forth original ideas and work in this class.

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#### **4.1.1.4 Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations Statement**

If you are pregnant, or have given birth within six months, Under Title IX you have a right to reasonable accommodations to help continue your education. To activate accommodations you must submit a Title IX pregnancy accommodations request, along with specific medical documentation, to the Director of Health and Wellness. Once approved, notification will be sent to the student and instructors. It is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor to arrange accommodations. Contact the Director of Health and Wellness at 806-716-2362 or email [cgilster@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:cgilster@southplainscollege.edu) for assistance.

**Classroom Behavior:** Since all communication will take place online, please make every effort to behave appropriately in that setting. Discussion between classmates and/or between Instructor and student should always be respectful and professional. Refrain from using offensive language or making derogatory comments. Repetitive or extreme misconduct may result in a drop from the course. Remember that we are here to learn, and we will benefit ourselves the most by maintaining a positive and mature attitude towards others.

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### **South Plains College English Department Essay Grading Standards**

To evaluate essays, the SPC English department uses a set of uniform grading standards. These standards designate that essays in composition classes should demonstrate at least a basic level of competence in college-level writing and be an appropriate foundation for writing in academic and professional environments.

#### **Grading Criteria for Essays**

Essays are evaluated on four bases: unity, support, coherence, and sentence skills. The criteria considered in each base include characteristics essential to the success of an essay. Depending on the assignment, certain bases and criteria may be weighted more than others, and the instructor's assignment may establish additional, more specific criteria.

#### **Base 1: UNITY**

- **Thesis.** The thesis statement concisely expresses the main idea of the essay, is appropriate for the assignment, and establishes a sustained and consistent focus for the paper. The thesis may preview the supporting ideas.
- **Body Paragraph Structure.** A body paragraph includes a main idea expressed in a topic sentence strongly tied to the stated thesis, unified supporting details, and clear connections among ideas.
- **Purpose and Audience.** The content and style are tailored for a specific purpose and audience.

## Base 2: SUPPORT:

- **Details/Development.** A well-developed essay supports the thesis with ample evidence; uses a variety of specific examples, facts, or other details; and explains the evidence to show its connections to the thesis.
- **Logic.** The essay presents clear, sophisticated, insightful ideas that recognize the complexity of the topic without inaccuracies or errors in reasoning.
- **Use and Documentation of Sources.** If research is used, the essay accurately quotes and paraphrases credible sources, effectively balances source material with the writer's own ideas, and cites and documents correctly according to the required standards of the style (MLA, APA).

## Base 3: COHERENCE

- **Organization and Transitions.** The essay demonstrates a logical progression of ideas, provides clear and smooth transitions among ideas, and uses structure appropriate to an academic essay.
- **Title, Introduction, and Conclusion.** An appropriate title is provided. An introduction captures the reader's attention, transitions to the topic by giving context or background information, and presents the thesis statement. A conclusion reemphasizes the essay's thesis and main ideas and provides a sense of closure.

## Base 4: SENTENCE SKILLS

- **Use of Standard American English.** The essay is written in Standard American English without major errors (fragment, fused sentence, comma splice, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference or agreement, verb form), and other errors in grammar, spelling, wrong word, punctuation, mechanics, or point of view.
- **Word Choice and Sentence Variety.** The student writes in a consistent, academic tone, using varied sentence structure and accurate and precise word choice.
- **Format.** The essay is formatted according to the standards set forth in the assignment, in the syllabus, or in the required style guide (MLA, APA).

## Assessment of the Grading Criteria

Essays may earn grades ranging from A to F based on the instructor's grading scale. Depending on the assignment, certain criteria may be weighted more than others, and the instructor's assignment may establish additional, more specific criteria. The quality of each of the criteria determines the letter grade. Not every essay will fit a single grade's description completely. Instructors may also include process assignments and drafts in their assessment of the final grade.

### "A" Essay (Superior)

To earn an "A," a paper meets all of the criteria below:

1. The paper fulfills all the basic requirements of the assignment (for example, topic, purpose, length, format).
2. **Unity:** The paper states a clear thesis, all topic sentences strongly support the thesis, and body paragraphs are unified around their topic sentences. The essay conveys a clear purpose and is tailored to a distinctive audience.
3. **Support:** Body paragraphs contain abundant, fresh details and examples that provide specific, concrete, logical evidence. If sources are required, the paper accurately integrates and correctly

documents credible source material to add insight, sophistication, and complexity to the paper's ideas.

4. **Coherence:** The organization of the paper is excellent and logical (emphatic order, chronological order, etc.), transitions are sophisticated, and the paper exhibits mastery of basic components (introduction, conclusion, and body paragraph structure).
5. **Sentence Skills:** The paper contains no major errors (fragment, fused sentence, comma splice, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference or agreement, verb form) and is virtually free of other grammar, spelling, wrong word, punctuation, mechanical, or point of view errors. Word choice and sentence variety (simple, compound, complex) are effective and powerful.

### **"B" Essay (Strong)**

To earn a "B," a paper meets all of the criteria below:

1. The paper fulfills all the basic requirements of the assignment (for example, topic, purpose, length, format).
2. **Unity:** The paper states a clear thesis, all topic sentences directly support the thesis, and body paragraphs display unity. The essay conveys good awareness of purpose and audience.
3. **Support:** Body paragraphs are well-developed with specific details, examples, and sound logic. If sources are required, the paper accurately uses and correctly documents credible source material to supplement its ideas.
4. **Coherence:** The organization of the paper is clear and helpful, transitions are helpful, and the paper exhibits strong basic components (introduction, conclusion, and body paragraph structure).
5. **Sentence Skills:** The paper contains no more than two major error types (fragment, fused sentence, comma splice, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference or agreement, verb form) and very few other grammar, spelling, wrong word, punctuation, mechanical, or point of view errors. Word choice and sentence variety are strong.

### **"C" Paper (Acceptable)**

To earn a "C," a paper meets all of the criteria below:

1. The paper fulfills all the basic requirements of the assignment (for example, topic, purpose, length, format).
2. **Unity:** A thesis is stated but may lack a strong claim or be obvious or predictable; topic sentences adequately support the thesis. One error in paragraph unity may occur. The essay's purpose and audience are adequately conveyed.
3. **Support:** Body paragraphs contain relevant details or logical reasons but need more specific examples/evidence. If sources are required, credible outside sources are usually integrated and cited correctly.
4. **Coherence:** Organization of ideas is satisfactory, transitions are logical, and the paper indicates competence in basic components (introduction, conclusion, and body paragraph structure).
5. **Sentence Skills:** The paper contains no more than four major error types (fragment, fused sentence, comma splice, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference or agreement, verb form). Some other grammar, spelling, wrong word, punctuation, mechanical, or point of view errors are present but not distracting. Word choice and sentence variety are strong.

### **“D” Paper (Developing)**

To earn a “D,” a paper will exhibit *one or more* of the weaknesses below:

1. The paper only partially fulfills one or more of the basic requirements of the assignment (for example, topic, purpose, length, format).
2. **Unity:** The thesis may announce the topic but no claim, contain more than one idea, or be too vague, too broad, or too narrow. Topic sentences are not tied to the thesis. Two errors in paragraph unity may occur. Essay conveys little awareness of audience or purpose.
3. **Support:** Details are sparse or vague and consist of generalizations, clichés, or repetition. If applicable, sources are insufficient and/or not always integrated or cited correctly.
4. **Coherence:** Organization is attempted but disjointed or confusing; transitions are sparse. The paper indicates awareness of but not competence in basic components (introduction, conclusion, and body paragraph structure).
5. **Sentence Skills:** The paper contains no more than six major error types (fragment, fused sentence, comma splice, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference or agreement, verb form). Several other grammar, spelling, wrong word, punctuation, mechanical, or point of view errors distract from the content. Informal word choices occur with little or no variety in sentence type and length.

### **“F” Paper (Unacceptable)**

To earn an “F,” a paper will exhibit *one or more* of the weaknesses below:

1. The paper fails to fulfill one or more of the basic requirements of the assignment (for example, topic, purpose, length, format).
2. **Unity:** The thesis is illogical, incomplete, or missing, so the essay lacks focus on one central idea. Topic sentences are missing, so body paragraphs lack unity. The essay ignores the purpose and audience.
3. **Support:** Details are illogical, irrelevant, or missing from body paragraphs. If sources are required, the paper fails to use sources, does not meet the minimum source requirements, uses source material inaccurately, uses sources that are not credible, fails to document fully or correctly, and/or includes plagiarism.
4. **Coherence:** Organization is incoherent, transitions are missing or illogical, or the paper indicates lack of competence in basic paper components (for example, lack of introduction and/or conclusion, lack of paragraphing).
5. **Sentence Skills:** Seven major error types (fragment, fused sentence, comma splice, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference or agreement, verb form) occur with numerous other grammar, spelling, wrong word, punctuation, mechanical, or point of view errors. Word choice is often inaccurate, immature, or inappropriate. Multiple sentence structure/syntax errors make the paper difficult or almost impossible to read. If one type or a combination of types of errors, regardless of whether they are major or minor, seriously affects the readability of a paper, it will receive an “F.”

### **Acknowledgments:**

Illinois Valley Community College: English Department Stylebook

Langan, John. *College Writing Skills with Readings*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition

### **Grading Breakdown:**

4 essays each weighted differently	600 points	
Low Stakes Writing (8 @ 25 each)	200 points	
Inquizitive Work (varies)	100 points	
Tutor Review (50 each for last two papers)	100 points	Total = 1000 points

A = 900-1000 pts.

B = 800-899 pts.

C = 700-799 pts.

D = 600-699 pts.

F = 599 and below

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**\*All syllabus policies and schedules are subject to change, per professor's discretion.**

### **Tentative Class Schedule – ENGL 1301**

This schedule serves to outline the material/subject matter we will cover in class. All major assignments will be accompanied by instructions detailing specific requirements and due dates via your instructor and/or BlackBoard. *Any written assignment submitted past the due date will receive an automatic deduction in points after the first 24 hours. Late assignments must be turned in within 48 hours of the due date to receive partial credit. After 2 days papers will not be accepted and you will receive a zero for the assignment. If there are excusable circumstances which might justify an extension on the assignment, arrangements must be made with your Instructor.* Please note that if there are readings or assignments due on a certain date, you need to be working on them and have them completed *before* they are due on the schedule. You are responsible for all outside work and assignment submission. *All Inquizitive assignments are to be completed by due dates as indicated. Your Instructor will only reopen assignments based on circumstances which can be reasonably supported with documentation.* This is a working schedule, and is subject to change during the semester. I will notify students of any modifications and will make sure all adjustments are reasonable.



## Unit 1

Explore Blackboard

Gain Inquisitive Access

Chapter 5 in *Let's Talk* / Read & Respond

In Class Low Stakes

Read essay on p. 148 of textbook and answer the questions on p. 54 / Rhetorical Situation  
**(Online Low Stakes Writing)**

Inquisitive work as assigned

First Essay: **Read and Respond** – Using Chapt. 5 strategies with *The Seagull Book of Essays* Selection (F. Douglass, pg. 61)

\*See instructor assignment sheet and details for essay

## Unit 2

Chapters 22 & 23 in *Let's Talk* / Getting & Keeping Attention – Writing Great Sentences

In Class Low Stakes

Read “keeping attention” strategies pp. 412 – 418 and offer some examples of how you could use at least three of them in your next essay (narrative) – **(Online Low Stakes Writing)**

Inquisitive work as assigned

Second Essay: **Narrating** - using Chapt. 11 strategies to write an essay based on a personal event/story

\*See instructor assignment sheet and details for essay

## Unit 3

Chapter 9 in *Let's Talk* / Analyzing

In Class Low Stakes

Read the Rachel Carson selection pp. 231-233 in *The Seagull Book of Essays* – answer questions on p. 139 of *Let's Talk* (only “analyzing a written text) – **(Online Low Stakes Writing)**

Inquisitive work as assigned

Chapter 18 of *Let's Talk* for tips on quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing (will use a source for analysis essay)

Third Essay: **Analyzing** – using Chapt. 9 strategies, choose Chopin’s “The Story of an Hour” (provided) or Momaday’s “An American Land Ethic” to analyze

\*See instructor assignment sheet and details for essay – note this essay has a required **tutor review for a grade**

#### Unit 4

Chapters 14, 18, and 20 in *Let’s Talk* for help with Argument Essay (source requirements)

Chapter 8 in *Let’s Talk / Arguing*

In Class Low Stakes

Read the Dalai Lama’s essay in *The Seagull Book of Essays*, pp. 438 – 442 and your opinions about his argument in this piece (**Online Low Stakes Writing**)

Inquizitive Work

Last Essay: **Arguing** – using strategies from Chapt. 9 choose a topic that appeals to you (seek instructor approval) and write an argument with support (sources will come from *The Seagull Book of Essays* and SPC library resources)

\*See instructor assignment sheet and details for essay – note this essay has a required **tutor review or library reference consultation for a grade**

