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WRIT 095.00: Introduction to College Writing

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WRIT 095: Introduction to College Writing

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The Course

WRIT 095 is a college-level course designed to introduce you to the kinds of reading, writing, and thinking you will be doing in the academic setting of the university. Course content will help you build on the competence you bring from your experience as a reader, writer, learner, and language-user in other settings and will support your development as a writer as you locate yourself in the university community. Discussions and writing assignments provide practice in the sorts of reading and writing you will encounter not only in disciplines across the campus but also in both business and civic communities.

The Work

A composition course is unlike most of the classes you will take while at the University of Montana. In other classes, there will be a specific amount of well-defined material to be covered, and, often, lecturing is the common mode for distributing that information. Although your instructor will give you information and guide you as you develop effective writing strategies and practices, becoming a better writer does not happen from listening to lectures. Your writing will improve as you commit time to the readings and assignments and time to writing multiple drafts in a variety of genres. Along with developing rhetorical knowledge, writing strategies, and practices so that you can express your ideas clearly and effectively, you will come to see writing as a way of learning. All of this means that you will need to dedicate considerable time and effort to your work, both in the classroom and at home.

About writing

Writing is a process that helps people discover their ideas and understandings as well as convey them to others. All aspects of that process will be important elements of your writing for this course--from brainstorming and making quick jottings of ideas to preparing final, edited papers

Writing and reading in a variety of genres allow for practice in the sorts of thinking, reading, and writing necessary in academic, business, and civic communities

Writing, reading, speaking, and listening are complementary activities

WRIT 095 Outcomes

The outcomes describe what students should strive to acquire by the end of the semester. *These outcomes are adapted from those established by the Council of Writing Program Administrators in 2000.*

By the end of WRIT 095, students should begin to:

Rhetorical Knowledge

Produce focused writing that is developed and persuasive

Understand the needs of different audiences

Understand the place of writing-- its value as currency --in academic, professional, and civic communities

Critical Thinking

Engage in inquiry and writing as ways of learning

Understand the collaborative and social aspects of learning

Identify and reflect on their own literacy practices and develop self-reflection to assess writing

Reading

Build multiple reading strategies to observe, analyze, and synthesize texts

Develop strategies to read their own texts and analyze their rhetorical choices

Writing

- Acquire strategies to draft and shape written texts, including development and organization
- Employ invention and informal writing to help generate and explore ideas
- Use strategies to edit texts
- Control conventions of spelling, grammar, and punctuation

Required work for the semester will include:

Three major writing assignments:

- Writing a literacy narrative
- Analyzing a text – final draft 800 to 1,000 words
- Writing an evaluation – final draft 800 to 1,000 words

Other ongoing work for the course will involve:

- Assigned reading materials
- Informal writing/journal responses and exploratory essays
 - These will be done in class and at home for the next class (and typed when specified), and students may be asked to share in these informal writings and observations
- Small group and class participation
- Writing workshops (details during class)
- A writing portfolio

You will have an opportunity to revise essays after receiving comments and suggestions from classmates and the instructor

Course texts and materials:

- The Norton Field Guide to Writing*, Richard Bullock, 3rd ed., W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Journal and other general writing materials
- Materials for a writing portfolio or optional e-portfolio

Grades

Final Grade

I encourage you to talk with me at any time to better understand my comments or to discuss your overall progress and success in the class. Success in this class depends on:

- Meeting all the requirements
- The quality of your written, electronic, and oral work
- Your willingness to enter into the spirit of inquiry, which includes intelligent and appropriate contributions to the class discussions, engagement with topics and lessons, and quality effort on your projects.

Your final grade will be based on the following percentages:

1. Participation: 10%
2. Informal writing: 10%
3. Final portfolio: 80%

Please note: There is no credit applied to attendance. Students are expected to attend all class meetings and complete all assignments for courses in which they are enrolled. [Academic Policies and Procedures](#)

Required Technology: Campus E-mail Accounts and Moodle:

Please activate your campus e-mail account right away. Every student is issued a university e-mail account, and there is no cost. Go to any technology help desk on campus for assistance on either campus. *You will need to activate your email before you can access Moodle).*

This course requires essential computer skills so that you can access email and negotiate Moodle. *Early in the semester, UM offers a number of Moodle workshops. If you are unfamiliar with Moodle or if you have limited computer experience, please attend these workshops.* You will be expected to work with computers for appropriate class assignments, and most correspondences will be conducted via email/Moodle. Most class materials and instructions will be posted in Moodle. You will submit all required work electronically. *With the exception of some initial explanations during our first classes, please do not expect extra time in class for any learning curve you might face with technology.* Likewise, please do not expect any extensions on due dates for an assignment because of any technical difficulties you have not conquered. Backup all work.

Course Requirements and Policies

Participation and Preparedness:

Course assignments are designed to produce your best results, both in course performance and in overall learning. The more assignments you neglect, the poorer your performance will be. Make use of this experience by completing all assigned homework and drafts and by participating in class and with your peers. This class is based on the discussion and production of writing in multiple genres and about a variety of issues and topics. I am relying on your contributions to class discussions and to the work of your classmates. Approach this component of your course as another rhetorical situation. I am the grading audience, but your peers are an audience as well. Course expectations include intelligent and appropriate contributions to the class discussions, engagement with the topics and the lessons, and quality effort on your projects.

Writing

You will have the opportunity to develop all of your major projects through a process of inquiry and drafting. You will compose papers in and out of class, alone and with your small group. For some of your writings, you will be required to bring enough draft copies to share with your group or ask you to email your papers to group members for workshop. We will include whole-class workshops into the drafting process. *All inquiry projects must be completed for you to pass the course.* I will respond to these projects with written comments focused on suggestions for revision

Procedural basics for written work

1. Complete all reading and writing assignments on time. Be sure that all written assignments (except for in-class work) are word-processed.

2. Use the following format for submitting written assignments unless instructed otherwise or unless you're following specific genre conventions:

Provide a basic header in the upper left hand corner of page 1:

- Your name
- Course section and number
- Instructor's Name
- Date

Double-space the text

Use one-inch margins

- Use a standard 12point font & Times New Roman
 - Number all pages in the upper right hand corner starting with page 2
 - Use a works cited page as needed
3. Keep copies of all your work, as hard copy and on CD, disk, or memory card
 4. Save everything in your working portfolio.

Common Policies and Procedures

Registration-related issues

Students who are registered for a course but do not attend the first two class meetings may be required by the instructor to drop the course. This rule allows for early identification of class vacancies to permit other students to add into classes. Students absent and not allowed to remain must drop the course by CyberBear or turn in a drop slip to the Registration Counter in Griz Central or the Registrar's Office at the Missoula College to avoid receiving a failing grade. Students who know they will be absent should contact the instructor in advance.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. You cannot learn if you are not exposed to the ideas and the work of the course. Be in class, be on time, and be prepared for the work of the day. If you do so, you will do well in the course.

If you must miss class, you are responsible for obtaining any handouts or assignments for the class. Make sure you talk with your instructor in advance if you are worried about meeting a deadline or missing a class.

T/R classes

More than two absences from a T/R class will compromise your grade. Five or more absences from a T/R class will result in a failing grade.

3rd absence: final grade drops one letter grade

4th absence: final grade drops one letter grade

5th absence: final grade is an F

MWF classes

More than three absences from a M-W-F class will compromise your grade. Six or more absences from a M-W-F class will result in a failing grade.

4th absence: final grade drops one letter grade

5th absence: final grade drops one letter grade

6th absence: final grade is an F

Late Work. If you miss a draft deadline, you've missed a crucial chance for feedback on your work. If you aren't ready with a response to a group member's draft, you're letting down someone who is counting on you for help. If you aren't prepared for class, you limit your own voice and contributions to the class and community of writers and readers. For all these reasons, *late work is unacceptable*. If you ever have a problem with an assignment, talk to me in advance of the deadline and you may be able to negotiate a special arrangement. Deadlines are not negotiable after you've missed them.

Academic Conduct. You must abide by the rules for academic conduct described in the [Student Conduct Code](#). If you have any questions about when and how to avoid academic dishonesty, particularly plagiarism, please review the Conduct Code and talk with your instructor. The Council of Writing Program Administrators describes plagiarism as follows: "plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately

uses someone else's language, ideas or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source." Academic honesty is highly valued in the University community and acts of plagiarism will not be tolerated. The appropriate use of sources is, however, one topic of study in this course.

Office Hours. Office hours provide us with an opportunity to talk one on one. You may drop in during these times or make an appointment with me to talk about any questions you have about your progress in the course.

Communication. I'm happy to talk with you via email if you have a question about the course or an assignment. Please do not email me drafts or attachments. I will respond to emails Monday through Friday within 48 hours.

Classroom Community. Community is important in a small writing classroom. We will work together to create an environment that promotes collaborative learning and thoughtful discussion. The student conduct code asks students to "respect the rights, privileges, and dignity of others" – these are important ways to engage in class discussion, particularly when the topic might be provocative. Please be sure to shut off cell phones and pagers during class and conference to prevent unnecessary disruptions. If an emergency requires you to leave your phone on, please speak to me at the beginning of class.

Disability Services:

The University of Montana is committed to providing equal access to programs for students with disabilities. [Disability Services](#) promotes an accessible learning environment and provides services to students with disabilities. The office also advocates responsibility for an accessible and hospitable learning environment through the removal of informational, physical, and attitudinal barriers. The process for appropriate accommodations begins with a student contacting DSS. For more information, call (406) 243-2243.

Academic Support Services:

We believe that all students can succeed if they put their minds to it. The [Academic Support Center](#) offers a variety of services to help students reach this goal. ASC staff tutor in many subject areas, provide academic counseling, and assist students in the transition to college. The best news is that all of these services are free and available to all students. For more information, please call 406.243.7826.

- Tutoring
- Retention Support
- COMPASS Testing (free of charge)

[The Mansfield Library](#) and the [Writing Center](#) are also both excellent resources for researchers and writers. You may be asked to participate in a session on library research and take a draft of a paper to the Writing Center for feedback. Experienced writers do not hesitate to seek out second readers of a draft, and the WC is a great resource.