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WRIT 101.13: College Writing I

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WRIT 101: College Composition I

Instructor Information

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Course Description

WRIT 101 is designed to challenge you to learn the literacy skills you'll need to excel as a scholar at the University of Montana and beyond. In this way, WRIT 101 is so much more than a required, general education course. More specifically, the ability to articulate ideas, share thoughts, and communicate concerns is fundamental to participation in communal, academic, and civic dialogues. The literacy skills emphasized in WRIT 101 such as reading, writing, and thinking critically, act as the foundation to effective communication (i.e. sharing observations and impressions, voicing questions and anxieties, and articulating positions and arguments). On a daily basis you enter conversations that require mastery of these literacy skills. I imagine you frequently speak, listen, read, and write to friends, family, community members, classmates, professors, and colleagues. Thus, the idea behind WRIT 101 is not something new. What this course will give you, though, is the opportunity to build on those literacy skills and hone your ability to communicate ideas across myriad of situations and settings.

Because writing development is a recursive process that takes place over time and across different writing situations, all WRIT 101 classes use episode-based portfolio evaluation as the primary means to assess your work. This means that over the course of the semester you will receive copious amounts of feedback, suggestions for revision, and encouragement to take risks in your writing. Your essays will receive grades, but the bulk of your final grade in the course will be based on how thoughtfully and purposefully you engage in the process of revision. The reasoning behind this pedagogy is that focusing on revision (process) interrupts the fixation on grades (product). Each of the major assignments represents an episode within your portfolio.

The course will be divided into three units, each of which will involve the writing of a different kind of essay called a major assignment. For each major assignment, the approach, style, structure, and content will be determined by your audience and purpose.

Course Texts

A Guide to College Writing I
Triple Divide
Course website/Moodle

Important Note about Required Course Texts: Due to the interactive nature of WRIT 101 the required textbooks are designed as workbooks. This means you will be expected to use these texts dynamically—you will need to sign forms, complete checklists, record your annotations, reflect on revisions and conferences, perform invention work, complete journal entries, etc. By the end of the semester your workbook will be well loved with many pages missing. For this reason, you must purchase a **new** copy of the texts from the UM bookstore. Since a used copy will be missing critically important material the bookstore will NOT be selling any used copies. Please refrain from selling used copies to your peers who are taking the course in a different semester, as you will not be helping them by selling them an incomplete book that they cannot use.

Major Assignments

Expect to write and revise three different major assignments and one reflective theory of writing (does not get revised) over the course of this class, in addition to other informal writing in and out of class. I will give you a detailed assignment sheet as we begin each of these major assignments.

- Major Assignment #1: Narrative Essay
- Major Assignment #2: Argumentative Essay
- Major Assignment #3: Cultural Analysis (archival project utilizing UM's *Sentinel* yearbooks)
- Major Assignment #4: A Writer's Recipe (aka Your Theory of Writing)

Common Policies and Procedures

General Class Expectations

You will be expected to:

- attend all class meetings and conferences (see attendance policy, below)
- arrive to class on time and prepared
- thoroughly read all assigned texts
- provide evidence of that close reading in discussion, journal entries, freewriting, major assignments, reading quizzes*, etc.
- participate actively and constructively in class discussions
- participate in in-class writing exercises
- participate in peer workshops and group work
- compose and submit out-of-class writing assignments
- conduct various types of research
- draft and revise essays of various lengths and purposes
- submit all work on time (on the hour and day it is due; see Late Policy)

**Quizzes will be given if a majority of the class is not keeping up with the readings. A quiz will count toward your participation grade.*

Grading

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.

- ★ **Participation: 20%** (Attendance, being on time for class, in-class participation, contributions to peer workshop and small group work, freewriting assignments, presentations, timely submission of ALL pre and post-conference worksheets, library research journal from the textbook, etc.)
- ★ **Journal Entries: 10%** (Journal entries are assessed as a portfolio of informal writing. This means that each journal is not graded individually, but the entire body of work spanning from entry 1-10 is assessed as a single submission.)
- ★ **Annotated Bibliography: 10%** (This assignment is not revised)
- ★ **Episode-Based Portfolio: 15%** (Major Writing Assignments 1-3 are each worth 5% in pre-revision stage)
- ★ **Major Assignment #4: 15%** (This assignment is not revised)
- ★ **Revision: 30%** (Major Assignments 1, 2, & 3)

**You must earn a C- in this class to be awarded credit

**You must turn in your portfolio and complete all major assignments by their deadlines in order to receive credit for this course.

Grading Policy

Students enrolled in WRIT 101 are graded by the traditional letter grade A, B, C, D, F or are given NC for no credit. The NC grade does not affect grade point average. It is reserved for students who have worked unusually hard, attended class regularly and completed all assignments but whose skills are not at a passing level at the end of the semester.

Grading Scale

A =92-100 %

A -= 90-91.9 %

B+ = 87-89.9 %

B = 82-86.9 %

B- = 80-81.9 %

C+ = 77-79.9 %

C = 72-76.9 %

C- = 70-71.9 %

D = 60-69.9 %

F = 0-59.9 %

Class Attendance/Absence Policy

Students who are registered for a course but do not attend the first two class meetings may be required to drop the course. This rule allows for early identification of class vacancies to permit other students to add classes. Students not allowed to remain must complete a drop form or drop the course through CyberBear to avoid receiving a failing grade.

Students who know they will be absent should contact me in advance.

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and complete all assignments for courses in which they are enrolled. I may excuse brief and occasional absences for reasons of illness, injury, family emergency, religious observance, cultural or ceremonial events, or participation in a University sponsored activity. (University sponsored activities include for example, field trips, ASUM service, music or drama performances, and intercollegiate athletics.) I will excuse absences for reasons of military service or mandatory public service; please provide appropriate documentation.

Cultural or ceremonial leave allows excused absences for cultural, religious, and ceremonial purposes to meet the student's customs and traditions or to participate in related activities. To receive an authorized absence for a cultural, religious or ceremonial event the student or their advisor (proxy) must submit a formal written request to the instructor. This must include a brief description (with inclusive dates) of the cultural event or ceremony and the importance of the student's attendance or participation. Authorization for the absence is subject to approval by the instructor. Appeals may be made to the Chair, Dean or Provost. The excused absence or leave may not exceed five academic calendar days (not including weekends or holidays). Students remain responsible for completion or make-up of assignments as defined in the syllabus, at the discretion of the instructor.

M-W-F classes

More than three absences from a M-W-F class will compromise your grade. 6 or more absences from a M-W-F class will result in a failing grade. Here's the breakdown:

- ★ 4th absence: final grade drops one letter grade (example: A drops to B)
- ★ 5th absence: final grade drops two letter grades (example: A drops to C)
- ★ 6th absence: final grade is an F

Here's the reasoning behind the attendance policy. Without attending class, you cannot perform your role as a student involved in learning, planning, inventing, drafting; discussing reading and writing; learning and practicing rhetorical moves and concepts; or collaborating with your instructor and classmates. Remember, however, that's why a few absences are allowed; please reserve those for emergencies.

I reserve the right to adjust the policy in cases of significant, documented illness or emergency. Please note that instances of poor time management on your part do not constitute extenuating circumstances. If you must miss class, you are responsible for obtaining any handouts or assignments for the class from a classmate. Make sure you talk with me in advance if you are worried about meeting a deadline or missing a class.

Participation

Participation includes coming to class prepared and on time, taking part in class discussions, asking questions, contributing your knowledge and insights in whatever form is appropriate, and striving to make all your contributions excellent. It also includes doing the required reading and writing for each class. Lateness will hurt your grade because it is an unnecessary interruption and because latecomers are likely to miss valuable information. Please see *Participation Grade Descriptors* for more information.

Technology

Cell phones *must be put away* during class. If you are asked more than once to put your phone away, you will lose participation points for the day. If you have an emergency and need to use your phone, please leave the classroom. Laptops are allowed for taking notes in class. If students begin to use their computers for non-productive purposes, I will no longer allow the use of laptops in the classroom.

Contact

I will do my best to answer your emails within 24 hours. I will not answer emails after 9pm, so please do not wait until the night before an assignment is due to ask questions.

Late Policy

- ★ Homework assignments *will not be accepted late*. Emailing assignments is only acceptable if illness causes you to miss class; students who miss class due to illness must still bring in a written copy the day they return (this is the only exception to the lateness policy—I will accept a homework assignment the next class if I received an emailed version from a sick student by class time on the day it was due).
- ★ Major assignments submitted late will not receive revision comments from me; tardiness will cause you to miss out on important feedback, which often impacts your final revision grade.
- ★ Major assignments submitted late will be impacted in the episode-based portfolio grade. Late essays and/or the annotated bibliography will be docked one letter grade per day unless you get my approval for an extension **before** the due date.
- ★ If you are absent the day a major assignment is due you must contact me to discuss the situation—you are not automatically given an extension until the next class period.
- ★ You are always welcome to complete assignments early if you will be missing class.

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. Academic honesty is highly valued in the University community and acts of plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Composition Program Plagiarism Policy for WRIT 101

According to the University of Montana Student Conduct Code, plagiarism is “representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one’s own.” The Composition program recognizes that plagiarism is a serious academic offense, but also understands that some misuse of information can occur in the process of learning information literacy skills. Therefore, if student writing appears to have been plagiarized, in full or in part, intentionally or unintentionally, or due to poor citation, the following will procedure will take place:

- The student will be made aware of areas in the text that are not properly integrated or cited.
- The student will receive no credit on the paper; it is up to him/her to prove that he/she turned in original work.
- The student will be asked to provide the teacher with copies of the research she/he used in writing the paper.
- The student and teacher will meet to discuss research integration.
- If the student cannot provide documentation of her/his research, further disciplinary action will be taken.

In the case that the student is unable to provide evidence of his/her original work or in the case that the teacher has evidence that the student has repeatedly plagiarized his/her work, the teacher will consult with the Director of Composition for direction with further disciplinary action.

In the case of blatant or egregious offenses, or in the case of repeated plagiarism, the Director of Composition will work with the Dean of Students to determine further disciplinary action.

Students should review the Student Conduct Code so that they understand their rights in academic disciplinary situations. [The Student Conduct Code](http://www.umt.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students/) can be found at <http://www.umt.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students/>.

Respect

You are expected to treat all participants in the course with courtesy and respect. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Students with Disabilities

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Please speak with me privately after class or in my office. Please be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator. DSS at UM encourages “...students to request modifications early in the semester. Students are also advised by Disability Services to make an appointment with the instructor in advance...Retroactive modification requests do not have to be honored.” For more information, visit the DSS [FAQ page](http://www.umt.edu/dss/Faculty/Frequently_Asked_Questions.php) (www.umt.edu/dss/Faculty/Frequently_Asked_Questions.php).

Episode-Based Portfolio Letter Grade Descriptors for WRIT 101

A

Superior portfolios will demonstrate initiative and rhetorical sophistication that go beyond the requirements. A portfolio at this level is composed of well-edited texts representing different writing situations and genres that consistently show a clear, connected sense of audience, purpose and development. The writer is able to analyze his or her own writing, reflect on it, and revise accordingly. The portfolio takes risks that work.

B

Strong portfolios meet their rhetorical goals in terms of purpose, genre, and writing situation without need for further major revisions of purpose, evidence, audience, or style/ mechanics. The writer is able to reflect on his or her own writing and make some choices about revision. The writer takes risks, although they may not all be successful.

C

Consistent portfolios meet the basic requirements, yet the writing would benefit from further revisions of purpose, evidence, audience, or writing style/mechanics (or some combination) and a stronger understanding of rhetorical decision-making involved in different writing situations and genres. The writer composes across tasks at varying levels of success with some superficial revision. The writer has taken some risks in writing and exhibits some style.

D

Weak portfolios do not fully meet the basic evaluative standards. Most texts are brief and underdeveloped. These texts show a composing process that is not yet elaborated or reflective of rhetorical understanding related to composing in different genres and for a range of writing situations. Texts generally require extensive revisions to purpose, development, audience, and/ or style and mechanics.

F

Unacceptable portfolios exhibit pervasive problems with purpose, development, audience, or style/ mechanics that interfere with meaning and readers' understanding. Unacceptable portfolios are often incomplete. A portfolio will also earn an F if it does not represent the writer's original work.

Participation Letter Grade Descriptors for WRIT 101

A

Superior participation shows initiative and excellence in written and verbal work. The student helps to create more effective discussions and workshops through his/her verbal, electronic, and written contributions. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful, thorough, specific, and often provide other student writers with a new perspective or insight.

B

Strong participation demonstrates active engagement in written and verbal work. The student plays an active role in the classroom but does not always add new insight to the discussion at hand. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful, specific, and helpful.

C

Satisfactory participation demonstrates consistent, satisfactory written and verbal work. Overall, the student is prepared for class, completes assigned readings and writings, and contributes to small group workshops and large class discussions. Reading and writing assignments are completed on time. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful and prompt, but could benefit from more attentive reading and/or specific detail when giving comments.

D

Weak participation demonstrates inconsistent written and verbal work. The student may be late to class, unprepared for class, and may contribute infrequently or unproductively to classroom discussions or small group workshops. Reading and writing assignments are not turned in or are insufficient. In workshops or conferences, suggestions to group members may be missing, disrespectful, or far too brief and general to be of help.

F

Unacceptable participation shows ineffectual written and verbal work. The student may be excessively late to class, regularly unprepared, and not able to contribute to classroom discussions or small group workshops. This student may be disruptive in class. Reading and writing assignments are regularly not turned in or are insufficient. In workshops or conferences, the student has a pattern of missing, being completely unprepared, or being disruptive.