

English 101: Writing I

Fall 2002

Part of the “Becoming Students and Citizens” Learning Community

Instructor:	Dr. Vicki Byard	Office:	Classroom Building 2017
Office hours:	MWF 9:30-10:00am, Thurs 9:30-11:00am, & by appt.	Office phone:	773-442-5815 (24-hour voicemail)

I prefer that you contact me by phone rather than email whenever possible. If you do leave me an email message, please understand that my schedule does not permit me to check my email on a regular basis and that it may be a week before I receive your message. If you ever wish to leave me a phone message and my voicemail is full, you may leave a message for me with the English Department’s main office at 773-442-5810.

Course Expenses

There are two textbooks required for this course, both available at the campus bookstore: *The Concise Guide to Writing (3rd edition)* and *A Commonsense Guide to Grammar and Usage (2nd edition)*. Throughout the course, you will also have the expense of photocopying (or printing off a computer) several copies of drafts of your papers so that other students can give you suggestions for revising them.

Course Format

Whereas in many college courses you will be assigned to write papers, the primary goal of this course is to teach you how to write papers better. Therefore, our class sessions will be devoted to guiding you during the process of writing your essay assignments. For each essay you write, we will first discuss the type of essay assigned and possible topics. We will then discuss the writing techniques important to each type of assignment. Next we will read and discuss sample essays written by professional writers and by students, analyzing the essays’ strengths and weaknesses so that you will know what to strive for and avoid in your own essay. We will also discuss planning and drafting strategies for each type of essay. Once you have written a draft, you will bring copies of it to class and get feedback on your work from a small group of other students in class. You will then have a few days to revise your essay, based on the feedback you have received from classmates, before submitting it for a grade. Thus, we will spend approximately two and a half weeks on every essay assignment. Each essay will be taught not only as an assignment for this course, but also as an example of the type of writing that will be required of you throughout your life: in other college courses, in your career, and in your personal life.

Course Requirements

Your grade in this course will be based on the following assignments:

- A “remembering an event” essay (15% of course grade): Your first assignment in the University Seminar course that is a part of this learning community is to write an autobiographical overview of the experiences that have influenced your decision to attend college. Your first assignment in English 101 will be an extension of that University Seminar assignment. You will develop a more detailed account of *one* of the experiences you included in your writing assignment for University Seminar, using the descriptive skills we discuss in class to make your autobiographical writing intriguing to

readers who don't know you.

- A “*profile*” essay (15% of course grade): This type of essay is much like a magazine or newspaper feature, which strives for a unique “angle” to engage readers’ interest while informing them about a topic. In keeping with the theme of this learning community, you will write your profile essay about a person or organization that you think exemplifies citizenship (to avoid overlapping with an assignment you are currently working on in your American National Government class, you may **not** write about a current political candidate for this assignment).
- An “*arguing*” essay (15% of course grade): Argument and persuasion are essential skills of both college success and citizen participation. The topic you choose to argue about in this essay must be related in some way to Jonathan Kozol’s book *Amazing Grace*, which is required reading in the American National Government course that is part of this learning community.
- A “*proposing a solution*” essay (20% of course grade): An essential component of citizenship is to create positive changes in society. For this assignment, you will be required to identify a problem that affects yourself and others and then propose a detailed solution to the problem. While you are working on this assignment, I will cancel our class meetings for one week so that I may meet with you individually to advise you on your projects. This assignment will be a part of all three courses in the learning community. The assignment will receive the same grade from each instructor in the learning community and will count 20% of your semester grade for each course. Three-fourths of the grade for this assignment (or 15% of each course grade) will be based on the written component of the assignment, while one-fourth of the grade for this assignment (or 5% of each course grade) will be based on the presentation of your project during the final exam period.
- *Test on sentence formation* (10% of course grade): You will be taught how to identify sentence fragments, comma splices, fused sentences, and complete sentences. The test will ask you to identify each of these types and to correct sentence errors to make the sentences complete.
- *Test on commas* (10% of course grade): You will be taught the major rules regarding how commas function in sentences. You will then be tested on your ability to correctly add commas to sentences that are written without commas.
- *Test on apostrophes, semicolons, and colons* (5% of course grade): After being taught the major rules regarding apostrophe, semicolon, and colon use, you will be tested on your ability to recognize the wrong use of these punctuation marks and your ability to use them correctly.
- *Numerous short writing assignments on Blackboard* (10% of course grade): All three teachers in this learning community will take turns posting questions on Blackboard to which you must respond. Expect about six short writing assignments on Blackboard during the semester. At the end of the semester, the three teachers will meet and decide what grade to give you for all the Blackboard assignments you have completed during the semester. You will receive the same grade from all three teachers, and that grade will count as 10% of your semester grade in each course in the learning community.

- *Computer/information literacy exercises*: One of the university's requirements for graduation is that all students have computer/information literacy. NEIU students complete this requirement during their English 101 course. On one day this semester (September 27), we will meet as a class in the library, and a librarian will explain and demonstrate the exercises you must complete for this requirement. You will then be given a deadline by the librarian for completing these exercises on your own. The exercises will take approximately forty-five minutes to complete. You will then submit the exercises to the librarian, who will grade them on a pass/fail basis and then inform me of who has successfully completed this requirement. Your performance on these exercises will not be calculated into your semester grade; however, if you do not complete this requirement, I am not permitted to give you a grade in English 101 (you would receive a grade of "Incomplete").

Because you have many assignments in this course through which you can affect your grade, no extra credit assignments will be offered. In addition, be aware that although in most circumstances a "D" is considered a passing grade, you must receive a "C" or better in English 101 and in all other General Education courses in order to complete the required General Education program. This grading policy is further explained in both the university catalog and schedule of classes.

Policies about Paper Format

Drafts of the papers do not need to be typed; however, writing them on a computer will make revising them easier and will save you the expense of photocopying them for small group critiques. All revisions you submit for a grade must be typed or computer-printed. Double space your papers, with one-inch margins, and use standard font size (10-12 point). Your first three essays must be a minimum of four full pages in length (but may be longer); the last essay, "proposing a solution," must be a minimum of six full pages in length. For all papers, please staple the pages, rather than using paper clips or report covers.

Policies about Late Work and Incomplete Drafts

In order to be fair to students who turn their work in on time, I do penalize late work. If you are late turning in either the initial draft (due when small groups meet for response), or the revision of a paper, you'll be penalized one letter grade for the assignment. If you turn in a paper more than a week late, the penalty then becomes two letter grades. Also, if your drafts that you bring for small group feedback do not meet the minimum page requirement twice during the course, the second paper which is short will be penalized one letter grade.

These policies apply even if you are absent; to avoid any penalties, make arrangements to have someone else turn in your work.

Policies about Attendance

It's imperative that you attend every class session. If you are absent, you must submit an absence sheet as soon as you return to class; oral explanations of absences will not be accepted and failure to turn in a written explanation on the day that you return to class will automatically mean that the absence is unexcused. Absences will be excused only for serious illnesses and rare emergencies. All decisions about absences are at the teacher's discretion. In keeping with the university policy, three unexcused absences will lower your semester grade one letter.

Policies about Academic Honesty

All assignments must be your own original work. It is plagiarism to present anyone else's ideas as your own, whether you use their words directly or put their ideas into your own words without crediting the person or source from which you obtained the idea. In keeping with university policy, plagiarism, cheating, or other academic dishonesty will be grounds for failing you for the assignment or course.

Tutorial Help

Free tutoring in writing for NEIU students is available at the Writing Lab, room 2046 in the Classroom Building. Occasionally, a tutor will be unoccupied and can help even when you don't have an appointment, but to ensure that a tutor will be available, it's best to make an appointment. You can do so in person or by phone (773-442-5480).

Course Syllabus

The readings listed in parentheses for each class meeting should be completed before class. The shortened title *Writing* refers to readings in *The Concise Guide to Writing*. The shortened title *Grammar* refers to readings in *A Commonsense Guide to Grammar and Usage*.

First Week

- Mon, Aug 26: Introduction to learning community classes and "citizenship" theme
- Wed, Aug 28: Introduction to the writing process (*Writing*, chapter 1); in-class writing
- Fri, Aug 30: Introduction to paper 1: remembering an event (*Writing*, chapter 2)

Second Week

- Mon, Sept 2: All university classes cancelled for Labor Day
- Wed, Sept 4: Introduction to Blackboard software (meet in CLS 2054)
- Fri, Sept 6: Techniques for papers remembering an event (*Writing*, chapter 2)

University calendar: Thursday, September 5 is the last day to add classes.

Third Week

- Mon, Sept 9: Sample papers remembering an event (*Writing*, chapter 2)
- Wed, Sept 11: Writing process for papers remembering an event (*Writing*, chapters 2 and 9)
- Fri, Sept 13: Explanation of small group feedback procedures; critique of sample papers remembering an event

University calendar: Monday, September 9 (7:45 p.m.) is the last day to get a full refund for dropping a course. Remember that if you drop any course in a learning community, you must drop all courses in that learning community.

Fourth Week

- Mon, Sept 16: **Draft of paper remembering an event due, with copies for small group;** small group feedback on drafts
- Wed, Sept 18: Grammar lesson on complete sentences (*Grammar*, lesson 1)
- Fri, Sept 20: **Revision of paper remembering an event due** (15% of semester grade); grammar lesson on complete sentences (*Grammar*, lesson 2)
- Sat, Sept 21: Learning community field trip to Peace Museum

Fifth Week

- Mon, Sept 23: Review of grammar lessons on complete sentences (*Grammar*, lessons 1 and 2)
- Wed, Sept 25: **Test on complete sentences** (10% of semester grade)
- Fri, Sept 27: Explanation of computer/information literacy requirement (meet in library)

Sixth Week

- Mon, Sept 30: Introduction to paper 2: writing a profile (*Writing*, chapter 3)
- Wed, Oct 2: Techniques for profile paper (*Writing*, chapter 3)
- Fri, Oct 4: Field research for profile papers (*Writing*, chapter 12)

Seventh Week

- Mon, Oct 7: Sample profile papers (*Writing*, chapter 3)
- Wed, Oct 9: Writing process for profile papers (*Writing*, chapters 3 and 8)
- Fri, Oct 11: Guest speaker: Eli Liebow discusses his involvement in the Civil Rights Movement

Eighth Week

- Mon, Oct 14: **Draft of profile paper due, with copies for small group;** small group feedback on drafts
- Wed, Oct 16: Lessons on commas (*Grammar*, lessons 3, 5 and 19)
- Fri, Oct 18: **Revision of profile paper due** (15% of semester grade); lessons on commas (*Grammar*, lessons 20 and 21)

Ninth Week

- Mon, Oct 21: **Test on commas** (10% of semester grade)
- Wed, Oct 23: Introduction to paper 3: arguing a position (*Writing*, chapter 5)
- Thurs, Oct 24: Learning community attends Jonathan Kozol's lecture on campus
- Fri, Oct 25: Techniques for paper arguing a position (*Writing*, chapters 5 and 11)

Tenth Week

- Mon, Oct 28: Sample papers arguing a position (*Writing*, chapter 5)
- Wed, Oct 30: Writing process for papers arguing a position (*Writing*, chapter 5)
- Fri, Nov 1: Critique of sample drafts arguing a position

Eleventh Week

- Mon, Nov 4: **Draft of paper arguing a position due, with copies for small group;** small group feedback on drafts
- Wed, Nov 6: Introduction to paper 4 and common final project of learning community: proposing a solution (*Writing*, chapter 6)
- Fri, Nov 8: **Revision due of paper arguing a position** (15% of semester grade);

Guest speaker: Erica Meiners discusses her involvement in educating

women ex-convicts; discussion of possible topics for “proposing a solution” project assigned in all three courses of this learning community.

University calendar: Friday, November 8 (7:45 p.m.) is the last day to drop a course. Remember that if you drop any course in a learning community, you must drop all courses in that learning community.

Twelfth Week

- Mon, Nov 11: **Topic due for “proposing a solution” project**; techniques for papers proposing a solution (*Writing*, chapter 6)
- Wed, Nov 13: Sample papers proposing a solution (*Writing*, chapter 6)
- Fri, Nov 15: Writing process for papers proposing a solution (*Writing*, chapter 6)

Thirteenth Week

- Mon, Nov 18: Individual conferences on plans for papers proposing a solution
- Wed, Nov 20: Individual conferences on plans for papers proposing a solution
- Fri, Nov 22: Individual conferences on plans for papers proposing a solution

Fourteenth Week

- Mon, Nov 25: Critique of sample drafts proposing a solution
- Wed, Nov 27: **Draft due of paper proposing a solution**; small group feedback on drafts
- Fri, Nov 29: All university classes cancelled for Thanksgiving holiday

Fifteenth Week

- Mon, Dec 2: Lessons on apostrophes (*Grammar*, lessons 27, 28, 29, and 30)
- Wed, Dec 4: Lessons on semicolons (*Grammar*, lessons 4 and 33)
- Fri, Dec 6: **Revision due of paper proposing a solution** (written component of assignment receives one grade from all three instructors and counts 15% of semester grade in all three courses); lesson on colons (*Grammar*, lesson 34)

Sixteenth Week

- Mon, Dec 9: **Test on apostrophes, semicolons, and colons** (5% of semester grade); students’ evaluations of the course

Final Exam Period

On Wednesday, December 11, there is a six hour exam period for this learning community (10am until 3:50pm). During this exam period, you will first take a final exam for the American National Government course. In the remaining time (approximately 4 ½ hours), we will enjoy food together while each student gives a short presentation of his or her final “proposing a solution” project to the class.

The presentation will receive a common grade by all three teachers, counting one-fourth of your grade for the “proposing a solution” assignment, or 5% of your semester grade in each course.