

SYLLABUS
Spring Semester 2014
West Los Angeles College

ENGLISH 103: COMPOSITION AND CRITICAL THINKING

16-Week class beginning February 9 and ending June 7, 2015

Dr. Katherine Boutry
Sections # 1019, 1021

Class Meets:

#1019: TU, TH 9:35-11 am in GC 420

#1021 TU, TH 11:10-12:35 am, in GC 160

Office Hrs.: TU, TH 1-3 & by appointment, Office: GC 210F

Email: boutryk@wlaac.edu (not for submitting assignments)

Office Tel: (310) 287-4470

Course Description

“The kind of critical reading that is required for good research is active and engaged; it involves careful thinking about what you are reading. Critical reading is going beyond the obvious meaning of a text to gain a more sophisticated understanding of it. Gaining this understanding involves being able to identify key points, such as an author’s thesis, and any points that you find difficult to understand. But beyond understanding the material itself, you should also be prepared to *evaluate* it.” Yagelski

This is a 3-unit transferable class, UC: CSU.

Prerequisite: English 101 with a grade of “C” or better. You may be asked to show proof of having passed English 101.

This course, which meets the transfer critical thinking requirement, is designed to develop critical thinking, reading, and writing skills beyond the level achieved in English 101. The course will focus on the development of logical reasoning and analytical and argumentative writing skills.

Course Texts

(*Bring your books/articles with you to every class, so you can follow along in class. We will be referring to the assigned reading each class period.)

1. **Toni Morrison, The Bluest Eye** any edition
2. **Nabokov, Lolita** any edition
3. **Boutry, Hofmann, Norris, The West Guide** (available in the bookstore or online)
4. **A desk dictionary**, 70,000+ words
5. **Nonfiction articles:**

Wendy McElroy, “Victims from Birth” in *The West Guide*.

Steven Rhoads, “What Fathers Do Best” in *The West Guide*

Sascha de Gersdorff, “Fresh Faces” in *The West Guide*

Jonathan Rauch, “A Moral Crossroads for Conservatives” in *The West Guide*.

Peter Singer, “Singer’s Solution to World Poverty” in *The West Guide*.

Henry Louis Gates, Jr., “Introduction” from *The Anthology of Rap* in *The West Guide*.

Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” in *The West Guide* at the very end before the index. If you have an older edition of the Guide, you can download MLK’s Letter for free at:

http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html

The following articles are available for free and legal download. They are not in *The West Guide* (It is your responsibility to download these and bring them to class):

Harrison Pope, *The Adonis Complex*, Amazon books first chapter available for free. We will only read the first chapter.

Christopher McDougall and Lou Schuler, “Buyin’ Bulk” available at:

<http://www.musclegrowth.org/forum/showthread.php?t=494>

Phillip Vannini, “Will You Marry Me?: Spectacle and Consumption in the Ritual of Marriage Proposals”

<http://dspace.royalroads.ca/docs/bitstream/handle/10170/167/WillYouMarryMe.pdf?sequence=1>

Darryl James, “Get Your Hand Out of my Pocket”

<http://www.blacknla.com/news/Articles/DJPocket.asp>

Beth Bailey, “From Front Porch to Back Seat: A History of the Date”

<http://ushist2112honors.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bailey-courtship.pdf>

Student Learning Outcomes

Throughout the semester, you will be asked to demonstrate the following Student Learning Outcomes:

Critical Thinking:

Read Effectively:

You will apply reading strategies we cover in class such as close reading analysis and **differentiating fact from opinion**. Your class participation and comments, as well as regular reading quizzes and written papers, will be the means of assessing the effectiveness of your reading.

You will analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information to assess the validity and usefulness of an argument. We won’t just ask whether a written essay is persuasive, we’ll also analyze *why* it works and *how*. We will focus on writing strategies the writers have

employed, paying special attention to introductions, use of evidence, tone, and conclusions. This analysis will help you then apply these skills to your own writing and improve your communication skills.

Communication

Communication skills will be developed in two key areas: verbal and written. We'll work on your **verbal communication skills** through in-class participation, query, and class presentations (individual and group). Therefore, class participation is very important. You'll also be asked to work in small groups on analyses and presentations of textual passages and to engage in peer review of other students' written work. In these situations it will be important to listen carefully and to respond thoughtfully to your peers when making comments and assessing their work. Throughout, the class atmosphere will remain positive and constructive.

Part of responding thoughtfully to articles and to your peers is being **culturally literate**, aware and tolerant of differences, and willing to listen respectfully to viewpoints that differ from your own.

We will also develop your **written communication skill set** through writing papers, quizzes, and in-class essay exams. During the semester we will focus on paper writing strategies including structuring essays, introductions, thesis statements, use of evidence, and conclusion writing.

To make your writing persuasive, we will work on your **research skills**. Often the difference between a good argument and a weak one is the quality of your evidence and research.

Research: You will be asked to collect and organize research data. We will visit the library for a research orientation that will cover the university databases as well as how to evaluate sources and their reliability. During that session, you will find four sources from ProQuest, JSTOR, and LRC for a research paper. We will also cover documenting those sources according to MLA style so that your sources are properly credited.

SLO's in Practice: To successfully complete this course, students will be able to do the following:

Critical Thinking

- Analyze problems by differentiating fact from opinion, using evidence and sound reasoning.
- Read and evaluate college-level material from a variety of sources;
- Identify and analyze the structure of arguments underlying the texts read;
- Evaluate strength of arguments; recognize and avoid logical fallacy;
- Draw sound inferences from data given in a variety of forms;
- Distinguish factual statements from judgmental statements, and distinguish fact from opinion;

- Develop and practice the inductive and deductive skills needed for close reading and lucid writing;
- Evaluate and cite outside sources for use in student's own writing;

Communication

- Communicate thought in a clear, well-organized manner to persuade, inform and convey ideas;
- Demonstrate continued development in writing college-level English prose; use appropriate MLA citations/works cited;
- Identify some of the deliberate abuses and manipulations of rhetoric in order to avoid them in your own writing.
- Learn to write effectively for different audiences and purposes, with an emphasis on argumentation and academic writing.

Cultural Diversity

- Respectfully engage with other cultures in an effort to understand them.
- Read a variety of viewpoints on culturally relevant issues.

Technical Competence

- **Out-of-class written assignments will be word-processed.**
- Students will pull articles from online subscription databases.
- Students will demonstrate proficiency in MLA format.

Course Policies

Attendance

Attend every class. Arrive before the scheduled time with the necessary materials, texts and preparation. This way, you don't miss important information and instruction. Any more than 2 absences will have a significant impact on your final grade in this course. Missing 3 classes will lower your maximum possible grade to a C. Missing more than 5 classes will fail you in the course. Arriving late and leaving early will count toward absences. Minimize distractions by staying in the classroom through the entire period and turning off cell phones.

I encourage you to exchange phone numbers/e-mail addresses with reliable classmates to find out what you missed if you were absent. I do not provide that service.

Dropping the Course and Exclusions

According to college policy, you may be excluded for more than three absences (or for missing any classes the first week of school) or for not following the Standards of Student Conduct (printed in the Schedule of Classes). If you drop the course, be sure to do so at the Admissions and Business Offices. Otherwise, the grade drops to a "D" or "F". Pay attention to drop dates in the Schedule of Classes.

Assignment Due Dates

Pay close attention to due dates for assignments as these are announced in class. *On due dates for essays, essays must be turned in to the instructor. I do not accept essays e-mailed to me, or left in my mailbox.* Absence does not excuse you from turning in writing. I will not accept late assignments. There are no make-up exams given.

Please note:

- No eating in class.
- Since fees have increased, now more than ever it is important to remember that no student has the right to interfere with any other student's learning process.
- No cell phones, iPods, texting, *period*.
- No arriving late, leaving early, or exiting during class counts as an absence.

On a more positive note, throughout the semester, I encourage you to see me during office hours. Please visit the Writing Lab on the first floor of the library or other tutorial services available on campus (such as EOP&S, DSPS, etc.) when you are working on drafts of your essays.

Your instructor does not CORRECT essays. English 103 students should be able to find their own errors. This means that students are responsible for proofreading their own papers. Unacceptable papers (for this level course) will be returned without a grade. Your instructor “evaluates” essays and makes suggestions for improvements in organization, use of evidence, critical thinking, and style.

Plagiarism is unacceptable and will result in a failing grade for the assignment and a permanent notation in your college file.

Never commit plagiarism – you can also refer to this website on plagiarism: <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html>. You must turn in your own, new work (not a “modified” paper submitted for another class) and cite your sources appropriately, using MLA Style. We will go over MLA Style, but you are also expected to refer to your textbook for details on in-text citations and Works Cited.

Our textbook provides tips for improving your writing and reviewing important rules such as grammar, punctuation, research, active and passive voice, tone, etc.

Your final grade is based on my evaluation of **all** written work (quizzes, essays, exams), as well as meaningful participation in class; therefore, it is important not only to attend, but to come prepared to discuss the readings and to write in class. Each essay assignment earns increasingly more points, based on the assumption that, over the semester and with practice, your writing/thinking/research will sharpen and improve. Research from credible sources and in-text citations, with correct MLA Style, are required of several writing assignments. *Quizzes cannot be made up.

Please note that I do not allow extra credit work.

All points count, including points for attendance and participation. No student will pass this course who does not hand in all writing assignments.

Learning Disabilities: If you have specific and documented physical, psychiatric, sensory, or learning disability(ies) and would benefit from accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that we can maximize your learning experience in this course. You will need to provide written documentation from the DSPS Office about your learning disability(ies). Then, I will be legally able (and pleased) to accommodate your needs.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Steady effort through the semester will help you succeed in this course.

Remember to bring your assigned articles and books to each class meeting.

Please follow the date that corresponds to your class meeting time.

Dates: **Due BEFORE class:**

Week 1 Reading Evidence

2/10 Syllabus
 Are arguments adversarial?
 Nabokov on reading.
 Student intro essay.
 Go home and review in *The West Guide*: **SECTION I: Be a Success in Class through “Find Your Voice and Make It Count”**

2/12 Read: Sascha de Gersdorff, “Fresh Faces” in WG or:
 http://www.bostonmagazine.com/articles/fresh_faces/
Read: in *The West Guide*: section: “Getting Down To Brass Tacks: Writing The Draft:” “Writing Introductions: Seven Strategies” and “Prove It!: The Five Types Of Evidence”

Week 2 Logical Fallacies

2/17 **Reading Quiz #1. (McElroy and Rhoads)**
 Read: Wendy McElroy, “Victims from Birth” in WG or:
 <http://www.ifeminists.com/introduction/editorials/2002/0409.html>
 Read Steven Rhoads, “What Fathers Do Best” in WG or:
 <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1422859/posts>
Please make a reading vocabulary list to be submitted every week for 20 points on quiz.

Read in *The West Guide*: Persuasive Essay Writing: “Logical Fallacies”
Please bring copies of both McElroy and Rhoads articles to class. In WG.

2/19 ****Assignment #1 due:** Please list the Logical Fallacies you found in Wendy McElroy’s article “Victims from Birth” and explain why they are fallacies.

Week 3 Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*

2/24 Read Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*, 1-32 **Quiz #2**

2/26 Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*, 33-80 **Quiz #3**

Week 4 The Depression, 1930’s films, and *The Bluest Eye*

3/3 Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*, 81-131
“The Littlest Rebel” 1935 Shirley Temple clip.

3/5 “Imitation of Life” 1934 Claudette Colbert screening.

Week 5 Values as Evidence in *The Bluest Eye*

3/10 *The Bluest Eye*, 132-163, in-class writing.

3/12 *The Bluest Eye*, 164-end. **Quiz #4**

Week 6 Analyzing Visual Arguments

3/17 ****Submit ad** for next paper Assignment #2
Choose an ad that reflects our cultural ideals/values.
How do cultural messages shape our sense of self?
Read in *The West Guide*: Chapter 19: “Analyzing Visual Arguments.” “Miss Representation” discussion.

3/19 **Advertisements**

Assignment: write up a two-page explanation of your ad and be prepared to present it in class. Discuss ads and brainstorm. You must bring in your ad.

Week 7

3/24 **Essay #2 due: Analysis of Visual Media.**
4-5 pages, 12 pt font, double-spaced. Attach a copy of the ad to paper.

*****Bring in 2 copies of your paper.**

Discuss midterm strategies

3/26 **Read MLK, “Letter From a Birmingham Jail” Quiz #5:**

You must bring your copy in to class, available at:

http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html

Read in *The West Guide: Chapter 21*: “How to Ace the Essay Exam”

Deductive Reasoning and The Declaration of Independence.
Optional: Read in *The West Guide*: “Deductive and Inductive Reasoning”

Week 8

3/31 **MIDTERM EXAM (ESSAY #3)**
In-class essay exam on all readings so far.

4/2 Go over midterm. Introduction to *Lolita*.

Week 9

4/6- 4/12 Spring Break—campus closed ☺

Week 10

Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*

4/14 Read Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*, pp. 1-35, Foreword and Part One, chaps 1-9

4/16 *Lolita*, Part One, chaps 10-18, pp. 35-79 **Quiz #6**

Week 11

4/21 *Lolita* pp.79-142 (finish Part One) **Quiz #7**

4/23 *Lolita* pp. 145-176 Part Two, chaps 1-3

Week 12

4/28 *Lolita* Part Two, chaps 4-19, pp. 176—229, **Quiz #8**

4/30 *Lolita*, Part Two, chaps 20-27. pp. 229-263. (See *The West Guide*: “READING”: “Writing a Summary” and “Tackling Assigned Readings”) Discuss summaries.

Week 13

***Lolita* Paper Research and Preparation**

5/5 **Submit final Paper Topic for Argument Essay #4**

LIBRARY SESSION I, MANDATORY. Meet in the library.

Read in *The West Guide*, the entire section “Be a Researcher” (includes two chapters: “Conducting Research” and “Documenting your Sources”
Reading: *Lolita* 263-287.

5/7

LIBRARY SESSION II, MANDATORY. Meet in the library.

You will each have time to look up useful articles for your paper. Come with a list of article searches you plan to do by subject or keyword.

You will need to have at least **four** sources for your final paper.

Submit: bibliography of four sources in proper MLA format. If the citations are not in correct format, they will be returned ungraded.

Reading: Finish *Lolita* 287-309

Week 14

5/12

Submit: Summary of ONE article you have researched for your final paper. Review in *The West Guide*: “**Prewriting**” and “**Getting Down To Brass Tacks: Writing The Draft**”: “The Thesis Statement,” “Topic Sentences;” and “Writing Summaries.”

Read: “Writing a Conclusion,” “Transitions,” “Holly’s Seven Rules of College-Level Writing,” “Revising and Polishing” and

Advanced Grammar and Style:

More Run-On and Fragment Solutions

Active Voice and Action Verbs

Using an Academic Tone

5/14

Conferences on drafting final essay. You must come in with 2 pages written and/or an outline.

Week 15

The Social Pressure to “Be a Man”

5/19

Submit **ESSAY #4 (5-7 pages)**

Discuss “**Singer’s Solution to World Poverty**” (in *West Guide*; bring book to class)

5/21

Read: **Harrison Pope, *The Adonis Complex***, on Amazon for free. We will read the Preface and first chapter pages “**Secrets of the Men at the Olympic Gym**”:

<http://www.amazon.com/The-Adonis-Complex-Identify->

[Obsession/dp/068486911X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1389224317&sr=8-1&keywords=adonis+complex](http://www.amazon.com/The-Adonis-Complex-Identify-Obsession/dp/068486911X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1389224317&sr=8-1&keywords=adonis+complex)

Christopher McDougall and Lou Schuler, “Buyin’ Bulk” available at:

<http://www.musclegrowth.org/forum/showthread.php?t=494>

Quiz #9

Week 16

Social Pressure on Relationships

- 5/26 **Read: Phillip Vannini, “Will You Marry Me?: Spectacle and Consumption in the Ritual of Marriage Proposals”**
<http://dspace.royalroads.ca/docs/bitstream/handle/10170/167/WillYouMarryMe.pdf?sequence=1>
Darryl James, “Get Your Hand Out of my Pocket”
<http://www.blacknla.com/news/Articles/DJPocket.asp>
Beth Bailey, “From Front Porch to Back Seat: A History of the Date”
<http://ushist2112honors.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/bailey-courtship.pdf>
Quiz #10
- 5/28 **Jonathan Rauch, “A Moral Crossroads for Conservatives”** in *The West Guide*. In class: Zach Wahls video. Honors presentations.
 Discuss Final Exam. Wrap-up discussions and final questions
- Week 17 Final Exam (Essay #5) in classroom on nonfiction reading since *Lolita*.**
- #1021 June 1, 11:30 am -1:30 pm**
#1019 June 3, 10:15 am-12:15 pm