

West Los Angeles College

English 28: Intermediate Reading and Composition
Section 3956
Instructor: Mark Salerno (e-mail: arshile@earthlink.net)

Spring 2015
W 6:45 PM - 10:00 .p.m.
Room: GC 240

DESCRIPTION:

Course Catalog Description: English 28 gives students practice in paragraph construction and essay writing, with an emphasis on critical thinking and critical reading of non-fiction essays and books.

Welcome to English 28! This will be a fun and engaging class in which you will learn and practice the basic skills that you will need to be successful in all of your other academic work and in your careers after graduation. There is nothing that you will do as an adult that will not require you to think, read and write, and in English 28 you can learn to do these things effectively and be empowered. I'm not saying that this semester won't be full of hard work and difficult challenges, but these challenges will be worthy of you and will make you a better student. Lastly, if you are the type of student who thinks that they are "just not good at English," you can change that right now if you are willing to make the effort! *Prerequisite: Grade of C or above in English 21 or appropriate score on the College English Placement Examination.*

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The successful student will leave English 28 knowing how to read and analyze short, college-level texts on a variety of topics. The student will also know how to make brief oral arguments that are clear, well-organized and logical. The student will be able to write clear, logical and well-organized short essays. The student will have knowledge of the ten essential points of grammar.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successfully completing English 28, the student will be able to argue a point and support it (in writing) with multiple examples and limited outside sources.

Drop Date:

Friday, February 20, is the last day to drop without a "W."

TEXTS:

Required:

Samuel Cohen, *50 Essays*, 4th ed.

Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*.

Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*.

PDF Files Posted on etudes.com.

Notebook

Dictionary

Optional:

Hacker and Sommers, *Rules For Writers*, 7th ed.

REQUIREMENTS:

- You are required to have a notebook for this class.
- In-class writing exercises. You are required to bring adequate loose leaf paper and ink writing implements to class.
- You will be required to speak in class and make oral presentations.
- There will be quizzes on the readings, on vocabulary and on grammar.
- There will be daily reader response assignments (essays written in longhand).
- There will be student teaching events in which students teach the class.
- You will read approx. 40 pages per week for this class.
- We will have assignments to be posted on etudes.com, including Chats and Discussion threads.
- Group work and peer review.
- In addition to in-class essay assignments, you will produce five homework writing assignments of 700-1,000 words in length. For every writing assignment, you must hand in a First Draft and a Final Draft. Label your drafts. All First Drafts must be in longhand. All Final Drafts must be typed according to the MLA Format. Some of these events will incorporate the use of sources. If more than one page, staple in the upper left hand corner. No plastic covers, folders, etc.
- Homework hardcopy assignments are due on my desk at 6:45 p.m. of the date assigned. A Word file of the Final Draft is due in my Inbox by 6:00 p.m. on the same day.
- There will be grammar workshops in class, and you will be required to demonstrate mastery of ten essential rules of grammar and punctuation by the end of the semester.
- There will be a Midterm (March 25) and a Final (June 3).

TEXTBOOKS FOR THIS CLASS:

Students are required to bring the following to class: *50 Essays*, *Rules For Writers*, *Death of a Salesman*, *The Glass Menagerie*, a hardcopy dictionary, a notebook, a writing implement (blue or black ink pen), and several sheets of loose leaf paper. Showing up to class without the appropriate text(s) earns a failing grade for your work that day.

READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Reading assignments are required, not optional. You will not be permitted to participate in the class discussion unless you have read the entire assignment.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Late assignments will be marked down one full grade for lateness (an A becomes a B, etc.) if it is handed the following week. After one week, your grade becomes an F, but you still must complete and hand in the assignment in order to pass the class.

FIRST AND FINAL DRAFTS:

You must hand in a First and Final Draft for every assignment. All First Drafts must be in longhand. All Final Drafts must be printed according to MLA Format requirements.

ATTENDANCE:

Regular class attendance is required of all students. You may be dropped from the class if you are absent from more than one class meetings. In other words, if you are absent twice, you may be

dropped from the class. Tardiness, like absences, is considered an academic matter. Be punctual. You will be marked tardy if you come into class after the instructor has read the roll. You will be marked absent if you come into class 10 minutes or more after the roll has been read or if you leave class early. Three tardies will count as one absence. If you drop the class, it is your responsibility to have your name removed from the roster. Otherwise, you will be given a grade of "F" at the end of the semester.

ILLNESS:

Do not come to class if you are sick.

MISSED CLASSES:

If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to make up all work. Do this is by contacting a fellow student. If you miss a class on a day that an assignment is due, e-mail the assignment on that day and bring the hardcopy to class when you return to class.

CLASS DISCUSSION:

Class time is your time. Use it wisely and well. If you have questions, ask them. It is likely that there are other students in the class with the same or similar questions. To earn a passing grade, you are required to make at least one significant contribution to each class meeting. In-class participation accounts for 30% of your grade for the course.

CLASSROOM DECORUM:

In order to maintain an atmosphere conducive to experiment and creative interchange, it is important that classroom decorum be rigorously observed. Talking out of turn, whispering in class, moving around, leaving the room, doing assignments for another class, texting, or making any extraneous noise is both rude and distracting. Students are required pay attention in class and make constructive contributions at each meeting.

NOTES:

You are required have a notebook. Take notes in every class and while you are doing your homework.

DICTIONARIES:

You are required to have a full-sized, late-model English dictionary and you must bring it to every class. Electronic dictionaries are not recommended. Electronic translators are not allowed.

GRADES:

Your grade for the course will be earned as follows:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage of Grade</u>
Preparation and In-Class Participation	30%
Quizzes	10%
Essays #1-5	40%
Midterm & Final	20%

You must complete all written assignments in order to pass this class. If you are sick for an exam, I will give you a makeup assignment or count another grade twice. There are no Incompletes. All grades are final.

Grading on Quizzes

Pass = 3 out of 5 correct answers.

Grading on Essays

A = A correct thesis paragraph with 3+ sentences clearly stating and developing a thesis (an abstract noun, a concept word) that responds the question. Each body paragraph is 3+ sentences long and presents 1-2 pieces of evidence (direct quotation from the text). A conclusion paragraph that does more than restate the thesis. Demonstrates a strong understanding of the reading.

B = As above, but needs development of the analysis, further organization and development of paragraphs.

C = This is a functioning essay, but the thesis statement is not clear enough or is underdeveloped, usually because it is a description of an idea instead of the statement of an idea, or it is a summary of the text. Beginning to see some grammar and punctuation errors. Careless presentation. Some ESL or idiom problems.

D = Lacks analysis. Lacks ideas. Grammar and punctuation errors. Significant Basic English problems with sentences and paragraphs. Fails to meet MLA Format and Essay Style Format. Fails to meet minimum assigned length. Fails to provide First and Final Draft. Fails to submit a Word file of Final Draft by e-mail.

F = Fails to meet MLA Format and Essay Style Format. Fails to meet minimum assigned length. Fails to provide First and Final Draft. Fails to submit a Word file of Final Draft by e-mail.

E-MAIL:

You must have a functioning e-mail account for this class. All e-mails regarding this class should have "WLA Engl 28" as part of the subject line or will not open them. I will not use e-mail to discuss your grades, or to tell you what your grade for the course is at the end of the semester. You must check your e-mail for messages from me at least once a day.

PLAGIARISM:

Plagiarism is when you use the words or ideas of another without giving proper acknowledgement. The first time you are suspected of plagiarism, you will be given an "F" on the assignment. The second time you are suspected of plagiarism, you will be given an "F" for the course.

DO NOT BRING THESE ITEMS INTO THE CLASSROOM:

Food, drink, candy, chewing gum, nonprescription medicines are not allowed in the classroom at any time.

CLASS SESSIONS:

This class is scheduled to meet from 6:45 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The college expects that all students will be in class during the designated time. The college does not allow students to arrive late or to leave early. If your work commitments, family commitments or commuting time prevent you from attending the each entire class, you must select a class that better suits your schedule.

PROPER ENROLLMENT:

Anyone who is not properly enrolled in this class will not receive a grade for the course. If you are not properly enrolled, your name will not appear on the rosters or on the Grade Collection Form. No one is allowed to Audit this class.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOMMODATION:

If you require special accommodations, please discuss your situation with the professor. To receive accommodations for a special need or disability, students must register with the Office of

Disabled Student Program and Services at the beginning of the semester. Tape recording of lectures and discussions will not be permitted without the consent of the instructor.

CONFERENCES:

My office hours are Wednesday, 6:10 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. in GC 270 (the faculty offices across from our classroom). It is always a good idea to make an appointment in advance.

NOTICE:

Everything on this syllabus is subject to change without warning.

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Class Schedule

Assignments are due on the date they are listed. This schedule is subject to change at any time. Be certain to double-check all assignments with the instructor.

Feb 11: Roster. Introduction to the Syllabus. Read and be prepared to discuss Alexie (Cohen 15), Douglass (Cohen 118), Malcolm X (Cohen 273), King (Cohen 221). In-class essay.

Feb 18: Reading and Writing: Tools and Strategies. MLA. Read Hacker and Sommers 524-527. Read and be prepared to discuss Alexie (Cohen 15), Douglass (Cohen 118), Malcolm X (Cohen 273), King (Cohen 221). Quiz.

Feb 25: Cofer 103, Mukherjee 290, Mairs 259, Tan 417. Quiz. In-class essay.

Mar 4: Grammar Workshop #1: Commas. Read Hacker and Sommers 292-318. Essay #1 Due.

Mar 11: Plato 303, Didion 111, Didion PDF. Quiz. In-class essay. Student Presentations.

Mar 18: Carr 91, Gladwell 169. Quiz. Student Presentations.

Mar 25: Black Power. In-class essay.

Apr 1: Midterm

Apr 8: Holiday

Apr 15: Vowell (PDF), Rampell (PDF). Grammar Workshop #2: Agreement. Read Hacker Pages 196-217. Essay #2 Due.

Apr 22: Film.

Apr 29: Grammar Workshop #3: Adjectives and Adverbs. Read Hacker Pages 226-231. Essay #3 Due.

May 6: *The Glass Menagerie*. Quiz. In-class essay.

May 13: *Death of a Salesman*. Quiz. Essay #4 Due.

May 20: Film.

May 27: Course Review

Jun 3: Final Exam at 7:30 p.m. Essay #5 Due.

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Assignment 1

Note: My Office Hours are W 6:10 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. in GC 270.

Date Assigned: 1/4/15

Date Due: 2/11/15

- 1) Get a notebook. Bring it to class.
- 2) Get a copy of *50 Essays, Rules For Writers* (recommended, not required), *The Glass Menagerie*, and *Death of a Salesman*. Bring them to class. Buy these books online. Order them immediately so that they are not delayed in shipping.
- 3) Get a dictionary. Bring it to class.
- 4) In-class essay. Bring at least three sheets of loose leaf paper.
- 5) Read and be prepared to discuss Alexie (Cohen 15), Douglass (Cohen 118), Malcolm X (Cohen 273), King (Cohen 221).
- 6) If you have not done so already, send me an e-mail (arshile@earthlink.net), so that I can build an e-mail address list for the class. All e-mails regarding this class must have "WLA Engl 28" as part of the subject line or I will not open them. In the body of this first e-mail, write the full name under which you are registered with the college.

English Grammar

The Ten Most Common Grammar Mistakes

(According to a nationwide survey by Andrea Lundsford of Ohio State University and Robert Connors of the University of New Hampshire)

1. Wrong tense or verb form
2. Run-on sentence
3. Sentence fragment
4. Lack of agreement between subject and verb
5. Wrong word
6. Inconsistent tense
7. Comma errors
8. Missing possessive apostrophe
9. Misplaced modifier
10. Lack of agreement between pronoun and antecedent

Essay Style Format

NOTICE : Failure to follow this format in your essays and exams will result in a failing grade. For example, if you hand in an essay that does not have at least three sentences in the thesis paragraph, the essay will earn a failing grade.

- 1) In the first sentence of the first paragraph, introduce the name of the thing you are discussing, and, if appropriate, its author. For example, in an essay on *In Our Time*, you might begin: "In Ernest Hemingway's collection of short stories, *In Our Time*, . . ." This way, your reader immediately knows what is to be discussed in your essay.
- 2) The "thesis" is the main idea of an essay. Always introduce your thesis in the first paragraph of your essay, preferably in the first sentence. For example: "In Ernest Hemingway's collection of short stories, *In Our Time*, the character Nick Adams progresses from one story to the next through three stages of development and growth."
- 3) The first paragraph of your essay should be at least three sentences long. It should not only present your thesis, but develop it. State what other ideas are important to your thesis, and let the reader know what direction your essay is headed in. For example: "In Ernest Hemingway's collection of short stories, *In Our Time*, the character Nick Adams progresses from one story to the next through three stages of development and growth. The first stage is comprised of a series of 'initiation' experiences. The middle can be thought of as Nick's 'experience of the world' stage. In the last stage, we see that Nick has in some way come to rest, and he pauses to gather his strength and face his future."
- 4) A topic sentence is the first sentence of a paragraph and introduces the main idea of that paragraph (you could think of it as the "thesis" of a paragraph). Every paragraph should have a topic sentence. Every subsequent sentence in a paragraph should relate directly to the paragraph's topic sentence.
- 5) Do not simply summarize. Do not retell the "story." It is enough to refer to the parts of a text that you are discussing and that are relevant to your thesis. The best way to refer to a text is to quote it.
- 6) Do not use slang in your essay. Use only standard English. Slang is imprecise and too casual, and they weaken your essay. Allow yourself to be serious in your essay.
- 7) Do not use contractions in your essay. A contraction is a word compounded of two words, like "don't" instead of "do not," or "won't" instead of "will not." Contractions are a form of spoken language, and therefore have no place in a written essay. Furthermore, they are too casual, and they tend to destroy a serious and objective tone.
- 8) Remember that mere opinion is not a thesis, nor is it an argument. We are not interested in opinions. We are interested in whatever ideas you may have that, by strong argument, you prove

are worthy of our attention. A strong argument is an argument that logically presents an idea and evidence to support that idea.

9) Since your essay is about your ideas, and not about you, there is no need to introduce yourself into the fabric of your writing. For example, do not bother to say "I feel that the character Nick Adams progresses from one story to the next through various stages of development and growth." It is better to leave out the "I feel that," and simply state your idea: "The character Nick Adams progresses from one story to the next through various stages of development and growth."

10) Always be consistent in your use of verb tenses. If you begin using the present tense, then maintain it throughout your essay. If you begin with the past, then stay with that. Switching back and forth is bad style because it confuses your reader. When you make reference to a story, it is usually best to employ the simple past. For example, do not say: "In 'Indian Camp,' Nick and his dad go across the lake, where his dad delivers an Indian lady's baby." Rather, say: "In 'Indian Camp,' Nick and his dad went across the lake, where his dad delivered an Indian lady's baby."

11) Titles of poems, short stories and essays are placed in quotation marks. Titles of books and movies should be underlined or *italicized*.

12) Revise and carefully proofread. If you are unsure of something, consult a reference text (like a grammar book or a dictionary) or ask someone for help.

13) Neatness always counts. Carefully type your essay. Set your space and margins according to MLA Format. Don't expect people to read your work and not be negatively impressed if it is sloppy and carelessly put together.

14) Quotations must be exact. If they are part of one of your sentences, they must fit grammatically into that sentence. Follow MLA Format.

15) Do not use "I" or "you" in your essay. When you use "I," you make yourself the subject of your sentences. Do not make yourself the subject of your sentences in a critical essay. Make your ideas the subject of your essay. Furthermore, when you use "you," you are addressing somebody who isn't there or you are referring to the generic "one."

16) Plagiarism is when you use someone else's words or ideas without giving them proper credit. It is all right, and often very good, to refer to the ideas of others. However, you must make it clear in your writing whose ideas they are and where they came from. Having someone else do your work and putting your name on it is also plagiarism. Plagiarism is not a custom of the culture of the United States and will not be tolerated in this institution.

17) Do not ask questions in your writing. This device is called the Rhetorical Question. There are better strategies to use.

18) Avoid using semicolons.

