

The University of Tennessee at Martin
Department of English and Modern Foreign Languages
English Program
(Peabody High School)
Spring 2022

English 111
English Composition

Three credit hours

Prerequisites: Placement by high school GPA and ACT Scores

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Course Description

The course will introduce students “to the fundamentals of written discourse,” focusing on the development of rhetoric and writing skills applied to different purposes with emphasis on logic, organization, levels of usage, grammar and mechanics, information gathering, and audience awareness. The course will look at the different types of rhetorical writing including: literary criticism, argumentative/persuasive essays, narrative essays, and expository writing. Students complete ENGL 111 and 112 in sequence. In order to proceed to ENGL 112, students must complete ENGL 111 with a grade of C or higher.

Required Texts and Materials

Each student is responsible for the following materials:

- Three-ring binder (1”- 1 ½”) for notes and writings
- Black or blue ink pen or a pencil; a red pen for grading.

Strongly suggested but not required:

- A flash drive with no more than 4 GB of data availability (these are for written assignments and can be kept by Mr. Thomas is desired)

All texts will be provided (usually in digital format), but students can elect to buy physical copies if they wish. Here are a few examples:

- Eliot, T.S. *The Waste Land*
- Graff, Gerald & Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say / I Say*. 3rd ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2014.
- Shakespeare, William. *Othello or Hamlet*
- Silko, Leslie Marmon. “Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit”

Course Objectives

The aim of this course is to develop students into critical thinkers in order to prepare them for both college courses and for world beyond school. This will involve discussion-based (Socratic method) class atmosphere and expressing original ideas through evidence-based written works. Students will be expected to participate in discussions and by the end of the course they will be

expected to have the ability to develop and express original ideas/concepts using support from texts.

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- A. Further develop a variety of discourses that make up expository writing (e.g. literary criticism, scientific research, compare/contrast, causal analysis, argumentation)); demonstrate writing abilities from process to product*; and distinguish among opinions, facts, and inferences which is the heart of research writing.
- B. Produce thesis-directed writing that develops major points in a logical and convincing manner, in a process that involves reading, writing, and revising through which students discover ideas and develop those ideas into coherent sentences, paragraphs, and essays using standard American edited English diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics.
- C. Write in a variety of situations including those they are likely to encounter in other classes (e.g. journals, timed essays/exams, out-of-class writing), and those that involve writing beyond the university experience.
- D. Engage with ideas through multiple sources (e.g. essay, fiction, film, hypertext, poetry and drama) and use these sources, particularly **essay and fiction**, as a basis for analysis, reflection, and writing.
- E. Analyze and evaluate written expression by listening and reading critically for elements that reflect an awareness of situation, audience, purpose, and diverse points of view through explorations of style, organization, logic, rhetoric and grammar.
- F. Synthesize and organize into a piece of writing information gathered from multiple sources.

**The writing process includes planning, organizing, composing, revising, editing, and presenting.*

Reading Assignments

4-5 literary works comprise the core readings we will explore in depth this year, each accompanied by supplemental materials such as informational texts. It is crucial to your success in this course that reading assignments be completed on time and that you read every day. Major works (and certainly poems) require more than one reading in order to understand their complexities. We will emphasize the close-reading of texts individually and in groups as we interpret a work in light of textual detail and its social/historical contexts, then explore those interpretations and reactions in Socratic Seminars that discuss open-ended questions, examine multiple meanings, and make evaluations of the texts. A full list of texts and reading schedule will be provided separately.

Writing Assignments

Class writing assignments will be frequent and include writing to understand, to explain, and to evaluate literary works. The general principles governing all written work are as follows:

Critical (5-6 essays for the semester)

- **Students can expect to write an interpretive or analytical essay, on average, every 2-2 ½ weeks on the core works and/or ancillaries.** These thesis-driven pieces will focus on exposition, analysis, and argumentation/evaluation.
- **All formal writing assignments will include a specific grading rubric based on TN State Standards and collegiate standards.**
- Some major papers will undergo a process of **peer-review** and **self-evaluation** against the rubric in the context of pair-share or read-around workshop groups. These papers are then submitted to me for a final evaluation where I provide a grade as well as feedback and

written comments relative to vocabulary, phrasing, diction, sentence structure, organization, generalizations vs specific details, coherence, rhetorical choices, structuring the argument, and other matters of style. If I find that the class, as a whole, is experiencing a common problem in any of these areas, I will make it a matter of direct instruction in a designed lesson.

- Students will be allowed to rewrite these major papers and resubmit them prior to deadlines that I will announce beforehand. These will be re-evaluated with additional teacher comments
- Less formal pieces designed to stimulate one's thoughts and feelings regarding a passage or topic would be Journal Entries, Active Reading Notes, prose responses to paintings or photographs, and quickwrites. Not all of these will be collected.

Evaluation / Grade assessment

Each student is evaluated at the end of a nine-week grading period, but the over-all grade in the class will be a cumulative score. The student's grade will come from these four areas:

- Typed papers (5-6) – 40%
- Quizzes – 15%
- In-class Writings – 15%
- Classwork, homework – 5%
- Participation / Discussion boards – 10%
- Final Paper – 15%

Grades are not dropped. However, all typed paper grades (except the Final) may be raised by editing papers based on feedback from the teacher.

UTM uses the standard collegiate grading scale below.

| | |
|---------|---|
| 100-90: | A |
| 89-80: | B |
| 79-70: | C |
| 69-60: | D |
| 59-0: | F |

Peabody will add 4 points to your UTM grade for your high school transcript.

Standards for evaluating essays:

The following list is a general outline of how papers will be evaluated:

A = Superior work: All requirements are met and most are exceeded. The idea is developed with exactness, creativity, and originality. The thesis clearly presents all elements of the topic. The essay is organized through topic sentences and paragraph patterns. The essay also contains effective transitions; parallel structure; varied sentence beginnings, lengths, and types; lively verbs; examples; concrete details. This paper has few, if any, errors in grammar, mechanics, spelling or usage.

B = Good Work: All requirements are met and some are exceeded. The writing is above average and possesses the qualities of good writing. Although good, this paper lacks some of the originality and vigor of the A paper. The B essay includes relevant points and supports general statements with specific details. There is a clear thesis and paper maintains focus throughout. The introduction is effective, transitions are used and the conclusion is thoughtful. There may be some variety in structure, detail, and vocabulary. This paper may contain a few errors in grammar, mechanics, spelling or usage.

C = Average Work: Meets minimum requirements and exceeds a few. This paper does not have the originality and expression of the above average papers. The C essay conveys the thought adequately, but is less exact in expression. It follows a “formula” introduction and conclusion. All transitions are logical and the paper demonstrates the writer’s effort to revise some sentence variety and vocabulary. There may be errors in grammar, mechanics, spelling, or usage.

D = Poor but passing: Does not meet all requirements; does not express ideas correctly or effectively. The thesis may be unclear, vague, or underdeveloped. The essay may be too brief or too general. Little attention is paid to the introduction, conclusion, or transitions. This essay contains numerous mechanical or spelling problems.

F = Unacceptable work: Minimum requirements are not met. There are serious grammatical errors and the essay is not logical or well organized.

Attendance & Late Policy

English 111 is a class that demands a lot of reading and writing; therefore, it is important to be in attendance each day and/or do the required reading/writing on time. Student attendance is essential for success in this class. However, in the case of an excused absence, all make-up work is the responsibility of the student. Students have two days to make up work for one day’s absence, and an additional day for each consecutive day’s absence.

If a student returns from an absence and an announced test or assignment is due upon the return, then the student is expected to take the test or turn in the assignment when he / she returns.

Papers are expected to be turned in on the assigned due date. If an assignment is late, the grade will be dropped five points for each day it is late.

See Mr. Thomas for assignments that were missed.

Students with Disabilities

Any student eligible for and requesting reasonable accommodations due to a disability is required to provide a letter of accommodation from the Student Success Center within the first two weeks of the semester.

Other Policies:

- A. Plagiarism in an instructional setting occurs when a write deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. Students whose actions constitute plagiarism are guilty of academic misconduct and will **fail** the course. For further details, please see the UTM Student Handbook.
- B. All work is due on time. All late papers will be lowered **one** letter grade per day late.
- C. If any student misses the mid-term exam, he or she must contact the instructor to set up a time for the make-up exam. The make-up exam must be taken at the agreed upon time or a zero will be recorded.
- D. No late work will be accepted during the week of finals.**
- E. The instructor reserves the right to revise this syllabus as necessary.

In this class, all students are expected to please:

- turn in all papers typed.
- turn in all assignments **with your name**; otherwise, no grade will be issued
- print all typed papers and essays in black ink.
- turn in all assignments that are written on notebook paper with **the frayed edges removed**.
- abide by the dress code.

- keep all cell phones turned off and out away; cell phones are allowed for educational purposes and only with teacher permission.
- keep earbuds / headphones put away and out of sight; they will not be allowed under any circumstance.
- have drinks in a container with a twist-off cap or in a sealed cup with a straw. No open containers with drinks, please.
- be in your seat when the tardy bell rings. Please ask permission to get out of your seat.
- be responsible.
- be respectful of PHS faculty, staff, facilities.
- be respectful of your peers.
- be respectful of YOURSELF!

Plagiarism Policy:

Much of my classroom management and instruction is based on **a foundation of mutual trust** between student, parents, and teacher. Most difficulties can be resolved quickly in the classroom. However, **there are some student behaviors which quickly erode mutual trust** in the classroom, and which should therefore be avoided. Some of these behaviors include truancy, subversive classroom disruptions, dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism.

Plagiarism is an extremely important problem and is found at alarmingly high numbers among high school students. Plagiarism is actually **stealing** someone else's words and/or ideas. Plagiarism is "an act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorization and the representation of that author's work as one's own, as by not crediting the original author" (Dictionary.com Unabridged). In higher education, if a student is caught plagiarizing then it often results in a failing grade for the class and in some instances (depending on the severity) expulsion from the university/school. Getting ideas from other sources is fine (and even recommended) but proper credit must be given to these sources through the use of citations.

Plagiarism involves a student's submission of ideas, thoughts, phraseology, or organizational patterns that are not his or her own. It is the misrepresentation of one's own work and/or that of another, and/or the falsification of information, data, or records. Plagiarism also includes the stealing of tests, answers, or other academic materials, or the having of these on one's person.

Remember: **Plagiarism** is a form of theft and will not be tolerated (even in its most seemingly innocent form). **Students found cheating, copying without teacher permission, or plagiarizing in any other way will be subject to immediate disciplinary action by administration.**

The common punishment: If a student is found to be plagiarizing material, the student will receive a grade of a 0 for that assignment. They *may* have the opportunity to complete the assignment within one week of receiving the 0 plagiarism grade with the teacher's discretion; however, the highest grade that can be earned at that point will be a 50 (much better than a 0).

Parental support in upholding this standard is greatly appreciated

Wrap-up

Remember that this class is a college-level class through The University of Tennessee at Martin and that you are held to higher standards in this class than in a normal high school class. Texts we explore and ideas that we discuss and write about are of a mature nature will be of a higher order and are expected to be handled in a mature fashion.

I hope you find this class enjoyable, challenging, and ultimately rewarding. I hope you gain new insights about writing and yourself as a result of this class. I look forward to a productive and meaningful semester.

Details of this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the teacher.

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN

WE HAVE RECEIVED AND READ A COPY OF THE COURSE SYLLABUS AND CLASSROOM RULES FOR MR. THOMAS'S DUAL CREDIT ENGLISH 111 CLASS.

I UNDERSTAND ALL EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES: INCLUDING ATTENDENCE AND PLAGIARISM.

PARENT NAME (Please print): _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

STUDENT NAME (Please Print): _____

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____

PERIOD _____

DATE: _____

PARENT CONTACT INFO

Daytime/Work Number: _____

Home/Cell Number: _____

Email: _____