Course Syllabus

English 1A: Reading and Composition:

XL NOW/First Year Experience

Section: 1779
meeting times: 1:00 – 3:15 T/TH room: V211
4 units
(prerequisite: one of the following: (1) Engl. 100; (2) ESL 33b; (3) placement based on the English assessment process.)

Required: concurrent enrollment in English 900 Writing Center Lab and in Math 131 (#2217)

Special note: Math 131, English 1A are a block of courses and part of XLNOW, the First Year Experience Program. Permission to enroll in this block must be obtained prior to registration. STUDENTS MUST REGISTER FOR BOTH SECTIONS: #6458 and #5318.

The Writing Center: As part of the requirements for this class, you must enroll in one section of English 900 Writing Center Lab. This lab class requires you to spend one hour each week (the same hour) in the English Division’s Writing Center. Located in C341 and C345, the Writing Center is designed to both supplement and complement the work we will do in our class. Faculty and peer tutors will offer one-on-one and group teaching activities. In addition, the lab offers computer-assisted tutorial software that will address grammar, mechanics, Internet research, and general reading and writing skills. Your regular attendance at the Writing Center will count towards your mid-term and final grade for this course. Remember to bring proper identification as required by the Writing Center (Lancer card, course schedule receipt, and 900 Assignment sheet) every time you attend the lab.

Required Materials:
Composing a Civic Life, Michael Berndt and Amy Muse
Maus I, Art Speigelman
Little Brown Handbook, H. Ramsey Fowler and Jane E. Aaron
Internet access, email account

Highly recommended for the course:
small stapler
folder or binder to keep work

Course Requirements:
total percentage for the semester = 100% made up of the following:
A) four out of class essays (50%)*
B) rough drafts/peer editing (7%)
C) service learning component (5%)
D) quizzes and homework (5%)*
E) reading journals (5%)*
F) midterm (10%)*
G) final exam (8%)*
H) class participation and attendance (5%)*
I) Writing Center Lab is equivalent to one essay grade (5%), determined as follows:

- 14-15 hours = A+ (100%)
- 13 hours = A (95%)
- 12 hours = B (85%)
- 11 hours = C (75%)
- 10 hours = D (65%)
- 6-9 hours = F (50%)
- Fewer than 6 hours = 0 points

*note these are rough estimates of your final grade and are subject to change

Course Description:
English 1A is a transfer level, college composition course that will help to prepare you for writing college level essays. As part of the XL Now program, this course is linked with Math 131—intermediate algebra—in content areas as well as being made up of the same cohort, or group of students. As part of a learning community, this is a special course that Professor Mortensen and I have created that will challenge you to think about the communities you live in—local, national and global—how you both impact them and are impacted by them, and to see how mathematics are used as the basis of much support and research for essay writing. A learning community is a set of classes that are linked during an academic term, often around an interdisciplinary theme, and enroll a common cohort of students. A variety of approaches are used during the semester to make connections between the course material with the intention of reinforcing the material taught in each course, highlighting the interrelatedness of the disciplines, and to build a community among the students and faculty. Another special feature of this course will be a service learning component.

What can expect to learn by the end of the semester?
Good question! Upon successful completion of this course you should be able to…

1. Write cogent, well-developed arguments that clearly articulate a thesis supported by textual evidence in class as well as out of class.
2. Read critically by summarizing, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating college-level texts.
3. Select, evaluate, interpret, and synthesize sources in the service of an argument.
5. Use effective strategies for pre-writing, composing, and revising of essays.
6. Demonstrate the interrelatedness between mathematics and English.
7. Recognize and identify the impact of civic action in a community: global, national, and local.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.
---Margaret Mead

What is Service Learning?
Service Learning is a teaching/learning method that connects meaningful community service experiences with academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility. It enhances what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community by engaging in community service that promotes civic responsibility and applying the concepts of our coursework in a practical manner. In other words, it’s putting our ideas about civic responsibility into action, not just because it’s an important part of maintaining any society, but because doing so can be a powerful way to learn about society and what we are studying and writing about.

Two questions I would like you to consider this first week of class:
- What is civic responsibility?
- Is civic responsibility important? Why or why not?
What kinds of Service Learning activities will we be doing?
For this semester we will be participating for about 7 hours, working in the community for Habitat for Humanity. A more detailed handout will be provided to you regarding the service learning requirements for this class. If you have any concerns about your ability to participate in the service learning component please see me; there will be an alternate assignment available for anyone who cannot participate.

Do I have to participate in Service Learning?
No, there will be an alternate assignment if you cannot participate in SL; however we will be participating in the service learning as a cohort and not only will it be fun, but it will add to the sense of community we are fostering in our class and so I highly recommend that you make every effort to participate.

Weekly Requirements:
A course schedule* will be made available to you soon. Weekly schedules will vary slightly but will consist of: class discussions, small group work, homework (including readings, a reading log journal, and various grammar exercises), online discussion and chat via WebCT, and four essays spaced out throughout the semester. Keeping up with the reading is essential. In the course schedule I will have a reading schedule, and I recommend that you keep AHEAD of the reading schedule. *subject to change

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.” -- Zora Neale Hurston

Essays:
We will be writing four out of class essays and two in-class essays (midterm and final). One of the out of class essays will be a research essay. You will write multiple drafts for all essays—rough and final—and will receive credit for all drafts.

*Note: For each out-of-class essay assigned during the semester, you will need to meet with a tutor in the Writing Center to work on your essay. Working with a tutor on your essay can be done during the prewriting, rough draft or final draft stages of essay writing. Each final draft essay you turn in will need to be accompanied by a tutor conference slip to receive credit for the tutoring. If you do not have the tutor slip, your essay will be marked down five points.

Format for essays
All essays and drafts must be:
* typed
* double spaced
* 12 pt. Font
* 1" margins
* note: there should only be ONE regular double space between paragraphs

Papers that do not follow the proper format run the risk of not being accepted

Revisions
Because writing is a process and successful writing depends on writers going back and revising their work, you will revise each essay based on peer editing comments before turning in the final draft. If one of your first two essays is below passing (D or lower) you may revise it for a better grade; final grade for the essay is an average of the two. Revisions are due within two weeks of getting the essay back. Note: a revision requires substantial changes and additions, not just superficial grammatical changes, and you must meet with me before you begin revising. All changes on the new version must be underlined or highlighted.

Peer Editing
Peer editing will take place on the day your rough draft is due. It is mandatory and worth 10 points; if you are absent the day of peer editing or you do not have a draft, you will receive no credit. In order to get credit for peer editing you must have a “good faith” draft (a “good faith” draft is equal to 75% of the final
For peer editing to be successful, each student must come prepared with a full draft; not being prepared will affect your grade.

**Late Work** (pay careful attention!)
I do not accept late class work, assignments, homework etc. Late essays (rough drafts and final drafts) will be marked down 5 points for every day they are late, including essays turned in after class on the day they are due. There are no exceptions to this policy. However, because “life” intercedes with school work occasionally, each student is allowed two late tickets which allow her/him to turn work in one week late. Twice during the semester I will accept late work—other than that no late work will be accepted so use them wisely. **Late essays will not receive written comments**, but you may make an appointment with me to go over the essay during office hours. **Please note: you cannot pass the class unless you turn in and receive credit for all of the required essays.**

**Attendance**
Being present in class and prepared is essential to success and we will be moving through material quickly. Your participation and group work cannot be made up in the event of an absence. Roll will be taken at each meeting and the PCC attendance policy will be enforced—a student who misses two weeks of class can be dropped. And please be on time to class. Three tardies is equivalent to one absence and missing more than 25 minutes of class also equals an absence.

If you are absent, **you** are responsible for finding out what you missed; **you are still responsible for the work due the day you return to class.** Use the class phone/email list that will be circulated during the second week of the semester if you need to get assignment information from a classmate.

**Grading**
All final draft essays will be graded as well as your homework, short writing assignments, various exercises, quizzes, the midterm and the final, but take note that other things are considered in computing your final grade as well:
- attendance
- participation in class discussions and small group work
- being an active learner
- seeking help from me or from a tutor to improve your writing
- substantially revising your rough drafts
- coming to class prepared

**Please note:** All essays must receive a grade in order to pass the class

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**Important note:**
Save all copies of your essays on disk and in hard copy form. **Always back up your work on floppy disk or in hard copy form as your work on it. Never throw out any graded work until after you know your grade for the semester.**

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**Plagiarism**
Plagiarism is a serious violation of college rules and regulations and will result in a zero/“F” for the assignment and could lead to disciplinary action including: referral to division dean or college administration. If the assignment is an essay, there is a strong likelihood that the “zero/F” will result in the student failing the course. Plagiarism is stealing or passing off the ideas or words of another’s as one’s own; this includes using existing material or ideas without crediting the source. Please see me if you need any clarification about this. Assignments that are found to be plagiarized will not receive any credit; you cannot pass the class without receiving credit for all essays.

**Additional things I’m sure you already know:**
• No electronic devices in class: cell phones, mp3 players, cd players, etc. I don’t want to see them on your desk or in your ear and I absolutely should never hear them. If your phone rings in class you will lose ten points for the semester (equal to a quiz or two reading journals) or you can bring donuts for the entire class as an apology for the disruption.
• Be on time to class: arriving late and/or leaving early is distracting to the entire class.
• Be polite and listen when someone is talking in class; do not carry on conversations with your neighbor when someone else in class is talking

[Writing] is a lot like inflating a blimp with a bicycle pump. Anybody can do it. All it takes is time.
-Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

Helpful information:
A writing class takes a lot of time and patience. Learning to write is not something one can learn by memorizing a set of formulas or rules, it takes practice and more practice and some guidance. The following information you may find useful in your journey to become more skilled writers.

English 900/Writing Center Lab: Although students enrolled in English 1A are only required to attend one lab hour per week, consider going more often and working with tutors on your essays as often as needed. In addition to tutoring, the writing lab also offers computer-assisted instruction in writing, grammar, and punctuation, a reference library, grammar handouts, videotapes, and small group tutoring. The lab is a wonderful resource for writing students to strengthen writing and computer skills at the same time.

Office Hours: I strongly encourage students to meet with me in my office hours throughout the semester—don’t wait until the last few weeks of the semester!

Computer labs: There are several computer labs across campus for students to use for essay writing, internet and library database research.
  • TLC—this is a special lab reserved for students enrolled in TLC classes (that means you!).
  • Library (3 labs)
  • Computer Café—lower level of the Campus Center (free computer use, $5 print card for printing)
  • Instructional computer labs (one hour at a time, first-come, first-served basis) D101, D104, D105

Library card: one of the most useful tools you will have for this class is a library card. Not just for checking out books anymore, a PCC library card is your ticket to using all the resources of the library--inter-library loan, periodical and reference database access (on or off campus), computers labs and more. Check out the library resources: http://www.paccd.cc.ca.us/library/Services.html

I look forward to a good semester with you all.

Our class website can be found at the following url:

http://faculty.pasadena.edu/aslawlor/index.html