

First Year English Writing Class Syllabus
Spring 2018, Rob Whyte D570

Introduction

Bring lots of paper and pencils to class because you are going to do a lot of writing.

My main goal in this class is to change the way you think about writing. English writing should not be a boring exercise filled with grammar lessons. Writing is a creative activity. It is sometimes fun and almost always challenging because it needs imagination, logic and thinking.

To make writing an enjoyable experience that helps improve your composition skills, we will try many kinds of activities. These include creative writing, storytelling, summaries, descriptions, book reports and maybe poetry. This is not an academic writing class, so you won't be writing essays.

You will also learn a few specific skills that will make your writing more interesting and more accurate. These skills include sentence patterns and basic mechanics, like punctuation.

Objectives

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Write with style by knowing and using different types of sentences (e.g. complex and compound).
2. Demonstrate a good working knowledge of words, especially verbs, by completing in class exercises and maintaining a vocabulary notebook.
3. Write well organized text by learning and using basic paragraph rules.
4. Write text that people want to read by starting passages with a great first sentence.
5. Write with few errors by completing text editing exercises and rewrites.
6. Express your own ideas in words by writing short stories
7. Define "good writing"

Methods

In most classes, you will be writing. When you finish a first draft, you will hand in your work. I will read it and give you feedback. Then you will rewrite each piece one or two more times. Most weeks, there will be a short lecture that teaches you a new writing skill.

Textbook and Materials

There is no textbook for this class. Students will need to access the teacher's website to get weekly updates and materials to print or download. That website is www.eslwriting.org.

Students need to bring a notebook to create a vocabulary list and a legal size pad for writing assignments given to the teacher.

Grades

Attendance 10%

Midterm 25%

Final 25%

Participation 10%

Quizzes 20%

Short story analysis 10%

Other Important Ideas

You will need 4 things to every class: a writing tool (e.g. a pencil), notebook, writing pad and dictionary. Phone dictionaries are okay. Students who do not bring these learning tools to every class may not be satisfied with their final score. Students who regularly fail to bring all four learning tools to class, or the homework, may be marked absent.

At the end of the semester, do not ask me to change your grade because you have a special situation. You need a scholarship? You want to get a job? You want to go to graduate school? These are all good things. If you need a high score in this class, work hard, study hard and come to every class on time ready to learn. Unless I made a calculation error, I will not change your final score.

Do not copy writing from other places or people. That is plagiarism and will be marked as a zero. Write your own ideas and you will get better.

You must check your attendance on the school app regularly. Updates will not be performed for long periods of time. This syllabus is subject to change according to the needs of class participants as determined by the teacher.

Please silence your phone, and in the event of an emergency call, please excuse yourself from the classroom. No recording of any kind is allowed during class.