

English 300-705: Writing and Reading in the Disciplines

ONLINE COURSE (3 credit hours)

Professor Justin L. Mathews

Office: Cherry Hall 212

Office Hours: By appointment

E-mail: mathejl@wku.edu

Technical Support: (270) 745-7000 or wku.edu/it/chat

Prerequisite

English 100 or equivalent

Course Description

This is a course in writing emphasizing argument. Emphasis is placed on the development of a fluent, precise, and versatile prose style. There will also be continued instruction and practice in reading critically, thinking logically, responding to texts, developing research skills, writing substantial essays through systematic revision, addressing specific audiences, and expressing ideas in standard and correct English. Includes grammar and mechanics review. **Lecture course.**

Colonnade (Fall 2014 and later) Learning Outcomes Met by this Course

English 300 helps to fulfill the written communication (WC) Colonnade Foundations requirement.

Upon completion of English 300, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Write clear and effective prose in several forms, using conventions appropriate to audience (including academic audiences), purpose, and genre.
2. Find, analyze, evaluate, and cite pertinent primary and secondary sources, including academic databases, to prepare written texts.
3. Identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view, and construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response.
4. Plan, organize, revise, practice, edit, and proofread to improve the development and clarity of ideas.
5. Distinguish among various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments.

REQUIRED Course Texts

Behrens, L., & Rosen, L. J. (2016). *Writing and reading across the curriculum* (13th ed.). New York, NY: Longman. ISBN: 0133999017

Lester, J. D., & Lester, Jr., J. D. (2010). *Writing research papers: A complete guide* (14th ed.). New York, NY: Longman. ISBN: 0205236413

Other Equipment Needed

- Access to a computer (preferably your own—students who borrow or rely on other people's computers are the ones who tend to have problems in class) with a reliable Internet connection.
- Microsoft Word or a comparable word processing software that allows you to save files in .doc, .docx, or .rtf file format
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (a free download from Adobe.com)

Use of Technology

This is an online course where all required work will be completed online through the use of Blackboard and the Internet. If you do not know how to use Blackboard, research says the learning curve is at least TWO WEEKS, and you don't have that kind of time in this class, so I recommend that you withdraw now.

Student Email and Blackboard Announcements

All students should check their WKU email accounts at least every 1-2 days and the Blackboard Announcements page each time they log in. Not checking email/reading the Announcements is not an excuse for not knowing of information given via those mediums.

Attendance Policy

Online attendance is monitored; however, I am able to run an individual's activity report for Blackboard. This means that if you email me to say that you're behind or confused by the assignments, I will know how often you have checked in to the

course. *It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from the class if he/she does not wish to continue enrollment past the first week.*

Important Dates

Classes Begin: **January 27**

Last day to add a class or to drop one without a grade:
February 3

Spring Break: **March 9-13**

60% point: **April 5** (Students who stop attending class or participating in online class before this date should be assigned an FN rather than an F.)

Last day to drop a class with a W: **April 9**

Final examinations: **May 11-15**

Evaluation

An important note: **Students who do not submit the major assignments will automatically fail the course.**

The course grade will be based on the work outlined in this syllabus and schedule, as well as any additional work given. Grades are always available on Blackboard (My Grades), so I don't answer emails that ask, "What's my grade?"

My grading scale: 100-90=A 89-80=B 79-70=C 69-60=D
Below 60: F

Late Work

Coursework is not accepted late for any reason. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with class assignments. The class schedule has clear due date for each assignment on it. If the schedule changes, a new schedule will be announced and distributed via email and Blackboard.

A Word about Due Dates of Assignments

All official due dates are listed on the schedule in this syllabus. I try to keep Blackboard up-to-date on this, but I may miss one here or there. Therefore, the dates that things are due are listed here, in this syllabus on the schedule. These dates override any other date you see on Blackboard. If I change a due date (as in extend a deadline), I will email everyone a new copy of the schedule (it is VERY rare that this happens).

Work Submission

All papers are to be typed and formatted according to the format and style sheet appropriate to your discipline. Information on this is included in both your Lester and Lester text. Submitting work in the wrong format will result in deductions. ***Work must be submitted in the space provided for it on Blackboard. Papers must be submitted in .doc, .docx, or .rtf file format or else I can't open/grade them.*** Papers not submitted in one of those three file formats will receive a zero grade (I can't grade it if I can't open it!). Emailed assignments will not be accepted unless I ask you to do so.

A word about "corrupted files": these are obviously not accepted, nor are they given extensions to correct, so once you submit your paper, go back and check the paper you submitted via MyGrades to make sure it is still able to be opened; email me a working copy BEFORE the due date if the one on Blackboard somehow got corrupted. Uploading "corrupted files" (which can be downloaded from the Internet) is a technique cheaters use to get more time on assignments, which is unfair to those of you who are hard-working, honest students, and I don't tolerate it.

My Plagiarism and Cheating Policy

I do not tolerate academic dishonesty of any kind. You will receive a zero on any assignment on which this occurs (including discussion boards), and I will submit your name and information to my Department Head. Some work will be submitted to plagiarism detection software. More than one violation will result in a failing grade for the entire course.

Withdrawal Policy

It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from the class in a timely manner if he/she wishes to do so. A student who "drops" the class without completing proper paperwork will earn a failing grade. The only exception to this is someone who has a catastrophic life event that compromises his/her ability to complete the course (prolonged hospitalization, for example) after the withdrawal date.

Incompletes (Grades of “I”)

Typically, incompletes will not be granted for any English Foundations course. When extenuating circumstances arise—for example, if a student in the military and is deployed, or if a student has a personal or medical crisis that comes up toward the end of the semester—the student must discuss the situation with the instructor if possible and the instructor will consider an incomplete. The instructor will only consider an incomplete for students who are in good standing (C or higher) in the course.

Writing Center Assistance

The Writing Center is located in Cherry Hall 123 on the main campus and also offers online consultations for students who live at a distance or who cannot visit during our operating hours. Our writing tutors have been trained to provide helpful feedback to students at all phases of a writing project: they can *help you* brainstorm ideas, structure your essay, clarify your purpose, strengthen your support, and edit for clarity and correctness, but they will not revise or edit the paper *for you*. See instructions of the website www.wku.edu/writingcenter for making online or face-to-face appointments, or call (270) 745-5719 during our operating hours (also listed on our website) for help scheduling an appointment.

ADA Notice

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, Room 1074. The SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at sarc.connect@wku.edu. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

Let's eat grandma!



Let's eat, grandma!

**PUNCTUATION
SAVES LIVES!**

Program Assessment Notice

As part of a university-wide accreditation study, a small sample of papers will be collected from randomly-selected individuals in all ENG 100, 200, and 300 classes this semester. The papers will be examined anonymously as part of a program assessment; results will have no bearing on student assessment or course grades.

Resolving Complaints about Grades

The first step in resolving a complaint about grades is for the student to attempt to resolve the problem directly with the course instructor. See the Student Handbook, available at <http://www.wku.edu/handbook/> for additional guidance.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Assessments (130 points)

There are quizzes through the semester over some of the readings in Lester and Lester and Behrens and Rosen. Should writing errors be rampant, we will have grammar quizzes, too, with Purdue's OWL used for studying.

Discussion Boards (200 points)

Here are some rules/guidelines to help you be sure to gain maximum credit on each board.

1. Remember that the Discussion Boards are supposed to take the place face-to-face class meetings. You wouldn't normally talk for a whole class, but these will take time, just like reading to prepare for class and listening to a classmate before responding in class.
2. There are not times you are required to log-in, but there are due dates. See the schedule for the due dates.
3. Your responses should be MEANINGFUL and use detailed paragraphs (that's 5-8 sentences). Citations should be used as appropriate. Use the citation style appropriate to your field of study for the citations on the boards, just as you will in your papers. Practice makes perfect!
4. If I ask you to respond to a classmate, you must also be MEANINGFUL, which means that if you just post, "That's a good idea" or "I disagree," you won't get credit. It is okay to say, "I agree because....." and then explain yourself.

5. I do not generally grade grammar/spelling/punctuation/documentation on discussion board, but if you make excessive mistakes, I will warn you. If you do not improve after that, I will begin deducting points for those errors. Remember that this is an English class (and that in any class you should always write to the best of your ability)!
6. IM- and texting-speak are not permitted and will gain you a grade of 0 if it is habitual.

The Papers (700 points)

ALL PAPERS MUST:

1. Be submitted in the spots designated for them in Blackboard; I will NOT accept handwritten or emailed assignments.
2. Be written in the style/format appropriate to your discipline; an automatic deduction of one letter grade per paper will occur if this rule is not followed.
3. Be written in a formal, academic tone (third person point of view, avoidance of passive voice when possible, in the verb tense appropriate to your style).
4. Contain appropriate documentation in-text of any material you take from any source. To not do so is plagiarism.
5. Have a bibliographic page (Paper 3 is the only exception to this).
6. Be submitted on time in the spots designated for them on Blackboard.
7. Meet the minimum page requirement. **For papers that do not meet the minimum page requirements, a percentage based on the total number of pages will be deducted from the grade. For example, if the paper is four pages, and you submit three, 25% will be deducted from your grade. If the paper is 10 pages, and you submit nine, 10% will be deducted from your grade. Additionally, papers that do not meet the page requirement will receive minimal feedback.**
8. Must include the rubric attached at the end as the final page. Note, this does not count toward your page requirements. Papers that do not include the rubric will receive less feedback.

Paper 1: Critique (150 points)

You will compose a critique using the format discussed in Chapter 2 based on an essay you choose from Chapter 12 of Behrens and Rosen. See the prompt and rubric for details for the topic of this paper.

Paper 2: Synthesis (150 points)

Via the discussion boards, each student will discuss readings from Chapters 11, 14, and 15 in Behrens and Rosen. Using the readings from one of these chapters, you are to create an argument synthesis, which you will submit for a grade for Paper 2.

2. Use the practices/discussions about the articles from which you will draw your argument wisely. Some brief guidelines:
 1. Use Chapter 5 in Behrens and Rosen to guide your writing of this paper; ask for help if you need it.
 2. The paper must use a minimum of two (2) sources and a maximum of four (4). Using sources only found in your Behrens and Rosen text is acceptable.
 3. The paper should be a *minimum* of four (4) complete pages of text in length and no more than six (6). There will be a 20-point deduction per missing page of the required length of text.

Paper 3: Annotated Bibliography (150 points)

Each student will compose an annotated bibliography of the sources to be used in Paper 4: Research Paper. This is an important step in the research paper process; those who do NOT take it seriously tend to do poorly on Paper 4. Details about how to complete this assignment will be given in the assignments area. There is a specific format to follow, and significant deductions will occur if you choose not to follow them.

Paper 4: Research Paper (250 points)

You will compose a research paper original to this class about a topic of interest in your field of study. Lester and Lester will be read pretty much in its entirety to help take you from the point at which you stand now with your paper (nothing done) to the final draft. It's a great book that students have told me time and again that they enjoy using—use it for the resource that it is. Some general “rules”:

- A. You must use 8-10 sources. At least four (4) of them must be from peer-reviewed journals; find these in the library's online databases.
- B. The paper must be a minimum of nine (9) full pages of text and no more than twelve (12). That's *text* and does not include the cover page and abstract (if your format uses them), or the bibliographic or notes page(s), or tables or charts. Ten points per page of missing text will be deducted should your paper not be at least 9 pages long.
- C. This paper must be argumentative in nature, not informational.
- D. This paper should be written in laymen's terms; that is, anyone studying any field should be able to read and understand it. This is NOT to be a paper written for specialists in your area. Remember this when considering

use of jargon and/or terminology.

- E. There are many ways in which you can develop an argument. You may wish to follow the basic order established in Lester and Lester, Chapter 3 (p. 31) or you may want to just extend the “five paragraph essay” format to a fuller paper. Regardless of how you organize the paper, you need to make sure you do a few things....
- Your introduction must introduce readers to the topic, give its significance, and share (via the thesis statement) what will be proven about it. Remember that this should contain a thesis statement that will focus the paper (it should be the point you want to make/your argument).
 - You must analyze three to five (3-5) major points that contribute to your argument. When you choose your topic, take a few minutes to write down what you wish to prove/discuss about your topic that is applicable to fulfilling your thesis statement. Use these points to guide your information search, and revise them as needed.
 - You must utilize your skills of synthesis with the information you find. You may want to do this as you cover points (discuss how it compares to the information already presented) or after you’ve discussed all of your points.
 - You must include a discussion of the global significance of your topic.
 - You must present a solution, make a call to action, or make a recommendation about the topic of the paper. What you suggest must be appropriate and feasible. This can be after you present your analysis and evidence, or you may want to discuss it as part of your conclusion.
 - Lastly, be sure to practice good grammar/punctuation/style/writing skills. Be sure to follow the writing guidelines for your discipline’s style.

List of Forbidden Topics: Over many years of teaching, I’ve seen a several topics that either are overdone or never done well. You cannot do your research paper over one of these topics. This is not open for debate.

Abortion	Capital Punishment	Euthanasia	Gun Control
Teen Pregnancy	Church v. State Issues	Same-Sex Marriage	Drug Legalization

TITLE IX POLICY

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU’s Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy (#0.2070) at <https://wku.edu/eoo/documents/titleix/wkutitleixpolicyandgrievanceprocedure.pdf> and Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040) at <https://www.wku.edu/policies/docs/251.pdf>.

Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121.

Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are “Responsible Employees” of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU’s Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU’s Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.

**Your continued enrollment in this class constitutes
your acceptance of this syllabus in total.**

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Discussion Board Note: The discussion boards that are in *italics* are those that have to do with research papers. These are to be treated as journal entries and do not require responses to each other. All due dates are the last possible dates to post *and* respond to your classmates. All late discussion board posts will receive a 0. No exceptions.

Quiz Note: All quizzes are due on Friday at 11:59 of the week in which each is assigned.

Week 1: January 27-31

First, Do This:

- Introduce yourself on Discussion Board

Reading Assignments:

- Lester and Lester, Chapter 1, "Writing from Research" + Quiz #1
- Lester and Lester, Chapter 7, "Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism" + Quiz #2
- Behrens and Rosen, Chapter 1, "Summary, Paraphrase, Quotation"

Discussion:

- **January 29:** Discussion #1: Getting Started
- **January 30:** *Discussion #2: My Documentation Style*

Other Work:

- Do some thinking and research for possible papers topics for Paper 4: Research Paper.

Week 2: February 3-7

Reading Assignments:

- Lester and Lester, Chapter 2, "Finding a Topic" + Quiz #3
- Behrens and Rosen, Chapter 12, "The Changing Landscape of Work in the Twenty-First Century"

Discussions:

- **February 5:** Discussion #3: Summary of an Article
- **February 6:** Discussion #4: Summary of Figures and Tables

Other Work:

- External research on work in the 21st century (as preparation for the critique).

Week 3: February 10-14

Reading Assignments:

- Behrens and Rosen, Chapter 2, "Critical Reading and Critique"
- Lester and Lester, Chapter 3, "Organizing Ideas and Setting Goals" + Quiz 4

Discussions:

- **February 14:** Discussion #5: Critical Reading and Critique
- **February 15:** Discussion #6: Practice Critique

Other Work:

- Begin writing Paper One: Critique

Week 4: February 17-21

Reading Assignments:

- Behrens and Rosen, Chapter 11, "First Impressions: The Art and Craft of Storytelling"
- Lester and Lester, Chapter 4, "Gathering Sources Online" + Quiz 5

Discussions:

- **February 19:** *Discussion #7: Research Paper Topics I'm Considering*

On Your Own:

- Finish Draft of Critique (**Final Draft Due: 2/21**. Take the next couple of days to visit the Writing Center, make

an appointment with me for review, or have a friend look at your essay.)

- **Submit Critique by 11:59 CST on February 21st**

Week 5: February 24-28

Reading Assignments:

- Behrens and Rosen, Chapter 4, “Explanatory Synthesis”
- Behrens and Rosen, Chapter 14, “Happiness and Its Discontents”
- Lester and Lester, Chapter 5, “Gathering Sources in the Library” + Quiz 6

Discussion:

- **February 26:** Discussion #8: Learning about Synthesis
- **February 27:** Discussion #9: *Research Paper Short Proposal* (see p. 25 in Lester and Lester).

Week 6: March 2-6

Reading Assignments:

- Behrens and Rosen, Chapter 4, “Argument Synthesis”
- Behrens and Rosen, Chapter 15, “Obedience to Authority”
- Lester and Lester, Chapter 6, “Conducting Field Research” + Quiz 7

Discussion:

- **March 4:** Discussion #10: Practicing Synthesis #1
- **March 5:** Discussion #11 *Now that I’ve Seen Other People’s Topics...*

On Your Own:

- You should, by now, be doing preliminary research on your research paper topic!

Week 7: March 9-13: SPRING BREAK

On Your Own:

- Review your writings for the two chapters of readings we have read so far. Choose one to revise and fully develop into Paper 2: Synthesis. See the Assignment Descriptions in the syllabus and the prompt for details.

Week 8: March 16-20

Reading Assignments:

- Behrens and Rosen, Chapter 13, “Thesis, Introduction, and Conclusion”
- Lester and Lester Chapter 8, “Reading and Evaluating Resources” + Quiz 8
- Lester and Lester Chapter 9, “Writing Effective Notes and Creating Outlines” + Quiz 9

Discussion:

- **March 18:** Discussion #12: Practicing Synthesis #2
- **March 19:** Discussion #13: *What I’ve Found So Far*

On Your Own:

- Begin drafting Paper 2: Synthesis (**Due March 27**)

Week 9: March 23-27

Reading Assignments:

- Lester and Lester Chapter 10, “Drafting the Paper in an Academic Style” + Quiz 10
- Lester and Lester Chapter 11, “Blending Reference Material into Your Writing by Using MLA Style” (even if you aren’t using MLA style, this gives very good information for how to write Papers 2 and 4!) + Quiz 11

Discussion:

- **March 25:** Discussion #14: *Backtracking*

On Your Own:

- Edit, revise, and finish Paper 2: Synthesis
- **Submit Synthesis by 11:59 CST on March 27th**

Week 10: March 30-April 3

On Your Own:

- Read through the handout on how to do the Annotated Bibliography
- Continue gathering sources for Annotated Bibliography
- Look ahead at the research paper prompt

Reading Assignments:

- Lester and Lester Chapter 12, “Writing the Introduction, Body, and Conclusion” + Quiz 12
- Lester and Lester Chapter 13, “Revising, Proofreading, and Formatting the Rough Draft”
- Lester and Lester Chapters 14-17 (read through only the one appropriate for your style)

Discussion:

- **April 1:** *Discussion #15: Practice Annotation*

On Your Own

- Use some time to finish researching for your Paper 4.
- I encourage you to look through the “Your Research Project” ideas on p. 151-152 of Lester and Lester for ideas on organizing and getting ready to draft. Nothing to do/turn in for points here, but some of these ideas may work well for you.

Week 11: April 6-10

On Your Own:

- Edit, revise, and finalize Paper 3: Annotated Bibliography
- Begin pre-writing for your research paper
- Submit Annotated Bibliography by 11:59 CST on April 17th

Discussion

- **April 8:** *Discussion #16: Research Proposal* (Using the Lester and Lester model)
- **April 9:** *Discussion #17: Backtracking, Part II*

Week 12: April 13-17

On Your Own:

- Begin drafting and outlining Paper 4.
- Make an appointment for conferencing if you like (students who do this tend to have better research paper grades in the end—HINT!)
- I encourage you to examine the “Your Research Project” on p. 193 and 211-212 of Lester and Lester for ideas to help in drafting your paper.
- I encourage you to look at the Editing Checklist on p. 219 of Lester and Lester, the Proofreading Checklist on p. 221, and to consider the “Your Research Project” ideas on p. 221.
- **Submit Annotated Bibliography by 11:59 CST on April 17th**

Discussion

- **April 15:** *Discussion #18: What’s Left to Do?*

Week 13: April 20-24

On Your Own:

- Draft, Edit, Revise, and Finalize Paper 4
- Use this “free time” to visit the Writing Center, my office, or have someone look at your paper.

Discussion

- **April 22:** *Discussion #19: Final Checks*

Week 14: April 27-May 1

- Put your paper aside. Let it rest. Take some time to visit my office or chat with me and use this time to reflect on the strength of your argument.

Week 15: May 4-8

On Your Own

- Submit Paper 4: Research Paper due no later than 11:59pm CT on **May 8**.

Discussion

- **May 6:** *Discussion #20*: Reflection