

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Below you will find descriptions of the class assignments. If you have any questions, be sure to ask me.

➔ IN-CLASS DIAGNOSTIC ESSAY

You will write a fifty-minute essay during class time. Bring lined paper and a pen or pencil.

Grading Standard: credit (CR). I will use this essay only to determine class needs. (Note: I don't return this essay unless you pick it up a year after the quarter ends. You may, however, ask me how you did after the second week of class.)

➔ WEEKLY PRINTOUTS

At the beginning of each week, go to my website and print out the handouts for the topics listed on the syllabus. Some students also choose to print out related overheads.

➔ THESIS STATEMENTS FOR ESSAYS 1, 2, 3 AND 4

You will write out a brief thesis statement: no more than three sentences naming the topic and giving me a quick idea of what direction you plan to take it in.

Grading Standard: credit (CR)

➔ ESSAYS

You will write and revise four essays outside of class time. Essays should be three to five pages. Three essays will undergo the class workshop process and get comments from me. So that you can have the most time possible to work on revisions, I will read and make suggestions on the drafts, but I will not assess a full grade until you turn in the final draft. Late drafts will incur a loss of points on the final grade.

At the end of the quarter you will select one of the first three essays to receive the full 100-point grade. Hint: pick the strongest one and revise it more than once before you turn it in on the last day of class.

ESSAYS 1, 2 and 3: These essays will go through the workshop process then receive comments from me. In addition, we will discuss them at your scheduled conference. **IMPORTANT: Essay 3 is a research essay** and requires a minimum of 5 sources.

Grading Standard: Selected essay—100 points, other essays—6 points each (WPE score)

(Note: The point value is small here so that your grade won't suffer while you're practicing your writing skills—The small number does not indicate that you can skip an essay however. **You must turn in all assignments to pass the class.**)

ESSAY 4: This essay provides you with the opportunity and responsibility to go through the entire revision process on your own. You may, however, ask me specific questions about it at your conference or in my office hours. Examples of specific questions are, "Is the support in this section adequate?" or "Should paragraph five come before paragraph eight?" Your goal is to become self-reliant.

Grading Standard: 200 points

➔ IN-CLASS ESSAYS

You will write three essays in class so that you can practice for the exit writing exam and any other extemporaneous essay you may need to write at the university. In-class essays may be based on your class readings and you may use the books for reference during the exam period. We will be using the first two in-class essays for class practice in scoring. I will provide topics. Bring lined paper and a pen or pencil for each essay.

IN-CLASS ESSAY 1 Grading Standard: 6 points (WPE score)

IN-CLASS ESSAY 2 Grading Standard: 6 points (WPE score)

IN-CLASS ESSAY 3 Grading Standard: 200 points

➔ IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

You will have in-class writing assignments almost every class day. Many of them are group assignments, which cannot be made up. Don't miss class.

SHORT WRITING SAMPLES

Grading Standard: 5 points each

SCORING PRACTICE

Grading Standard: 3 points for each of three essays: 3 points for a completely correct analysis, 2 points for a partially correct analysis, 1 point for giving it a try (9 points total)

SCORING WORKSHOPS

Grading Standard: 5 points per essay (remember, we're not commenting on spelling or grammar unless they are detracting from the meaning)

5 = All four of your comments on the essay are accurate.

4 = Three of the comments on the essay are accurate.

3 = One comment is missing, or only two of the comments are accurate.

2 = Two comments are missing, or only one of the four is accurate.

1 = Only one comment submitted.

➔ QUIZZES

Quizzes generally cover lecture notes and readings for the previous week or two (up to and including the day of the quiz), but expect to see items from any previous lecture on mechanics, style, or writing techniques.

Grading Standard: 10 points each

➔ RESUME DRAFT

Following the directions on my website, you will write a résumé. Although it is a draft, I expect you to use a word processor.

Grading Standard: 5 points—as long as you avoid *Word*[™] templates, and include contact information, an education section, and an experience section

➔ CONFERENCES

During the conference weeks, I will be conferencing with each of you individually in my office. Arrive at your appointed time as conferences will be very difficult to reschedule. If you are not scheduled for a conference, spend the class time working on your Blackboard assignment, revising your essays, and studying your class notes.

Bring the drafts of your essays with my comments and the first in-class essay. Be sure to bring specific questions if you have any new drafts as the conference is not long enough for me to read an entire paper.

Grading Standard: CR

➔ BLACKBOARD CONFERENCE WEEKS ASSIGNMENT

During the conference weeks you will have an assignment to complete through Blackboard.

PART ONE

Each student will post a short excerpt from a professional author. Pick three to ten sentences that you consider good quality and interesting.

1. Before the deadline for part one, go to

Discussion Board>Favorite Pieces of Writing (on some browsers, the Discussion Board is under Communication)

2. Click on **Favorite Pieces of Writing** and then **Add New Thread**
3. Submit your favorite piece of writing in the box that will come up. As part of the posting, state why you find these pieces especially appealing: use the criteria for judging a piece of writing that we have covered in class.

Tip: type it out in your word processing program, spell check, then paste it into the discussion board. **NO ATTACHMENTS PLEASE.**

PART TWO

1. Before the deadline for part two, read all of the pieces submitted and post comments on three of them. However, no piece should receive more than three comments. If you see that a piece already has comments from three different people, do not add any more comments to that piece. Comments should offer observations on how the pieces fit the standards of good English writing—without repeating comments already made.
2. Add comments by clicking the Reply button at the end of the piece. Please respond to the pieces submitted, not the comments made by the other students.

See the Blackboard discussion board for a sample piece that I have submitted.

Grading Standard: 2 points for submitting the piece, 3 points for proofreading it before submission, 5 points for the analysis you write on your own piece, 3 points each for the comments you make on other people's submissions (includes 1 point each for proof reading), and one free point for doing the assignment (for late assignments, deduct 5 points)—20 points total.

➔ **RANKING EXAM**

On the last day of classes, I will give you a set of essays to assess. You will rank the essays according to the standards we have discussed in class and give an explanation of why you assigned that rank.

Grading Standard: 50 points

➔ **PORTFOLIOS**

You will turn in a portfolio of your work at the end of the quarter for final grading. See the box below for directions.

➔ **FINAL EXAM**

Although we have a scheduled time, writing classes do not require final exams. During our scheduled time, you may find me in my office. (In case you're wondering, I rarely finish final grades before the day they are due.)

PORTFOLIO DUE THE LAST DAY OF CLASS

Your portfolio consists of the following:

- A file folder that will allow your essays to lie flat. On the tab write
Your name
Class and section number (example: English 134-12)
Quarter (example: Fall 2005)
- Essay 1, 2, or 3 (choose your best) final revision with its drafts and comment sheets. Staple the newest draft on top.
- Essay 4 final draft only