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Office: Simpkins 213, Macomb Campus  
Office Hours: MW 11-noon; WF 9-10 and by appointment  
Teaching times: MWF 10-10:50  
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**Course Description:** Introduction to college writing, with an emphasis on the writing process, reflective writing, and critical thinking. *Graded A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, U, F.*

**Nature, Purpose, and Objectives of Course:** Most students enter their Freshman Composition Course with fear and loathing. However, while we will be working hard in this class, the work will lead to the academic style of writing needed. You will build upon already acquired writing skills by developing critical thinking and reading skills; obtaining drafting, revising, and editing strategies; and learning various styles of academic writing.

**Required Texts:** PLEASE NOTE that since this is an online class, it is IMPERATIVE that you have the textbooks immediately in order to do the assignments as required and assigned for the points necessary to pass the class.

- \* Ballenger, Bruce. The Curious Writer Concise Edition, 4th edition
- \* Hacker, Diana. A Pocket Style Manual 7<sup>th</sup> edition

**Required Materials and Knowledge/Skill:**

- Frequent access to a computer with a Word program and the ability to use the “Review” functions on the Word program to include your notes and suggestions to your peers’ rough drafts. **NOTE: This is absolutely required. I will be grading and commenting on your drafts with this program; you will not be able to see those comments—and benefit from them—if you do not have this program.**
- Use of your WIU ecom email account
- Extensive use of Western Online (You can easily access WO from <http://wiu.edu>.)
- Basic email and web knowledge with the ability to send and receive attachments, plus save files to your computer and a backup source such as a thumb drive
- Post-it notes

**Suggested Materials:**

- \* Dictionary and thesaurus
- \* Printer – Even though the course will be online and you will most likely do the majority of your writing on the computer, lots of editing, proofreading, and revising happens on paper. In one regard, you will see a benefit of writing on paper before putting your work on the computer: peer review of rough drafts. Printing your peers’ rough drafts and reading with pen in hand will allow you to make notes of your suggestions as you go but only type your final suggestions on your peers’ papers online.

**Course Requirements:**

- \* Keep up with the weekly reading and writing assignments on the Home Page under the Content browser.

\* Five major papers:

1. Descriptive (2-3 pages/600-900 words): This paper will encourage you to begin thinking critically as you learn the expectations of college level writing.
2. Summary/Response (2.5-3.5 pages/750-1050 words): You will choose one of the provided articles to summarize and respond to as directed.
3. Commentary/Proposing a Solution (4-5 pages/1200-1500 words): This essay asks you to take a position on an issue and provide clear examples from your personal knowledge to back up your thesis. You will concentrate on the use of examples and transitions while improving introductions and conclusions.
4. Revised Commentary (5-7 pages/1500-2100): The mini-research project culminates in a complete rewrite of the Commentary paper. The process includes a library visit, collaborative group work with research processes and sources, and focus on integrating research material and documentation. The paper itself is a true *re-write* – a re-visioning that requires you to rethink, reorganize, and add new material to your original text – that further develops the skills of summary and analysis of texts, and introduces the concept of synthesis on a limited scale.
5. Writing Progress this Semester (3-4/900-1200 words). There will be various assignments, both reading and writing, that will accompany each of these major papers. So this last paper will be your assessment of your writing process and progress throughout the semester.

NOTES about papers:

-You will receive specific assignment sheets as we begin each paper. Not following the instructions as outlined on the assignment sheet will negatively impact the grade on that particular paper.

-I am available to provide assistance with any aspect of your writing process. Whether you need feedback on your work or help with revision, my JOB is to work with you. However, my personal GOAL is to make you a better writer.

-All writing assignments must be in MLA format, which is explained in Hacker and referenced throughout the course.

-Sources must be properly referenced when used.

\* Participation in peer review process of two papers

\* One required conference “meeting” with me: We can do this in my office, via phone, or FaceTime. We can do phone calls during my office hours; we can do facetime then as well, with notice. Just send an email or text to let me know you are preparing to contact me via facetime to ensure I don’t have other students there at the time.

\* Online exercises, on grammar and mechanics, associated with the Hacker manual

\* Correspondence with peers and instructor over the Western Online Discussion Boards as well as Zimbra.

**Communication:**

\* Communicating with me will be easy: you have my office hours and contact information. I also can view my email on my phone. Therefore, you will get a faster response from me if you use regular WIU email—Zimbra—rather than just the posting on Western Online, since I don’t open WO every time I get online. However, if you have posted a rather lengthy or significant comment on the Discussion Boards and want to ensure that I see it right away, email me to let me know.

\* Each time I put a new File or Folder on the Home Page, I will send a group email via guava to your Zimbra email accounts.

### **Completing Assignments:**

\* When completing assignments which include the use of documents posted on the course site, first download and save it as a Word document, then underline/type ideas or answers as directed in the assignment. Make sure to save the file to your computer and jumpdrive, and then submit it following the directions below.

\* Assignments which ask you to produce papers or exercises from the textbook or assignment sheet without any accompanying downloadable document are much simpler: do the work and then save the file to your computer as an rtf. file before submitting it as directed below.

### **Submitting Assignments:**

\* All of your assignments will be submitted online, via Western Online Discussion Boards or Dropboxes. When I have graded your work, the grade will appear in your Grade Report. In the case of the Western Online posting of comments and your grade, you will simply look at your original submitted posting and click on my posting, which will be beneath your original posting. (This sounds complicated, but once you see it and use it, you'll understand it quickly.)

\* The Discussion Boards are a very handy way to send assignments. Many postings you make there will be readable by all those involved with the course (instructor and all the students). This includes general postings, discussions, and postings of papers for review. There will be assignments on the Discussion Boards that will be marked as private, meaning they will be readable only by the author and myself.

\* When you submit your final drafts of major papers, they will only be accessible by me, the instructor.

\* To access these boards, click on "Discussions" bar on the left side of the WO screen and then click on the appropriate link.

\* If you are completing a short assignment, you can simply type your sentences into the message box. For this, use the "Create Message" or "Create New Entry." Once you are done typing, please "Preview" your work in order to proofread and make the inevitable necessary changes before you send it off. Then click on "Post."

### **Instructions for most postings:**

1. Complete your assignment or posting on a Word document, and then save it to your computer as an rtf.file.
2. Next, on WO, click on the "Discussions" bar on the left hand side of the screen.
3. Click on the correct topic for the post.
4. **Place your name (last, first) in the subject box.**
5. Then ATTACH your document to the entry using "Add Attachments."
  - a. Once you click that, you will be sent to a browsing box.
  - b. From here, click on "My computer" to bring up your documents.
  - c. Choose the correct document and click on it to highlight it.
  - d. Then click on "open;" this will attach it to the WO topic. Once it is attached, the title of the document will appear under the "Add Attachments" box.
  - e. Click "Post" so that your work is actually uploaded.

**BE VERY CAREFUL about where you place your postings.** If you comment on another person's entry, please post your comment as a "Reply" so that it is recorded UNDER the original entry. That way, we can all follow the thread of the conversation. This is especially important when commenting on peer drafts.

### **Assignment Due Dates:**

\* All assignments and papers have specific due dates and should be submitted by those dates and times. (You can always work ahead, but make sure you are still completing requirements such as the peer reviews as scheduled and required.) Please note that if the assignment is due on Monday, you may submit it anytime up to 11:59 CST Monday night and still be considered “on time.” If the time stamp indicates that the assignment came through at 12:00 A.M. Tuesday or after, it is late and will not be graded UNLESS you have made prior arrangements with me. Trust that I would rather read a final “I-can’t-get-it-any-better-than-this” draft than something you cobbled together at the last minute and aren’t really proud of. If that means that you need an extension, you will need to communicate that to me AND receive my agreement **prior to the due date**. (In this example of the assignment due on Monday, you would need to request and receive approval for an extension no later than Sunday. I don’t usually check email after 9 pm, so you will need to make your request earlier in the day.)

\* As mentioned previously, each major paper assignment will have reading and writing that will occur in preparation. I promise that I will not ask you to complete assignments that will waste your time; I know you don’t have time to spare doing the work. (And I don’t have spare time to grade it.)

\* **If you are experiencing difficulties, need assistance, find yourself unable to meet a given deadline, or extenuating circumstances arise, please contact me BEFORE you get behind.** Please note as well that WIU has an excellent Writing Center; you can send them email or even call for assistance: [mwcenter@wiu.edu](mailto:mwcenter@wiu.edu) or 309.298.2815.

### **Course Policies:**

Deal with issues that might negatively impact your performance in this or any class immediately. Contact your advisor! For extended absences beyond your control, contact the Office of Student Development and Orientation, 298-1884, Seal Hall 301 who will notify your instructors.

Papers receiving lower than a D/U may be rewritten only after consulting with me about the problems. You may be asked to work with a tutor on the revision. If you then choose not to do so, the original grade will be recorded. A revised paper along with the originally graded paper is due to me no more than one week from the date it was returned.

If you are expecting me to return calls, please state your name clearly in your message. You can also send me email which I do check frequently at work and home.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this or any class in the University. There are several ways plagiarism occurs. See <http://wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php> for further explanation. The penalties are severe, and every instance must be reported.

You have Rights and Responsibilities as a WIU Student: <http://wiu.edu/provost/student/> One such right is to privacy. Therefore, you are not to provide/allow access to your own or your classmates’ work to anyone without a signed permission waiver.

In accordance with University policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. For the instructor to provide the proper accommodation(s) you must obtain documentation of the need for an accommodation through Disability Resource Center (DRC) and provide it to the instructor. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor's attention, as he/she is not legally permitted to inquire about such particular needs of students. Students who may require special assistance in emergency evacuations (i.e. fire, tornado, etc.) should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow in such an emergency. Contact Disability Resource Center at 309.298.2512 for additional services.

**Grading:** You should keep track of your grades for every assignment in this class – and others – to always know where you stand. You can always refer to the Grade Report to check your progress. The expectations for each assignment will be provided either through the textbook or the assignment/work sheet. If you do not understand the assignment or instructions, ask for clarification.

*Points are earned as follows:*

Descriptive paper	50	Summary/Response	100
Commentary/Proposal	150	Revision/Argument	200
Self-Assessment/Writing Progress	50	Hacker Exercises (HE)	104 (approx.)
Home work	75 (approx.)		
		Total	729

Grades given in this English 180 are as follows.

A 93-100%	C+ 77-79	NOTE: The U grade, which does not affect GPA, is available only to those students who complete the course to the best of their abilities but can't reach the <u>C required to pass the composition courses.</u>
A- 90-92	C 73-76	
B+ 87-89	D/U 60-72	
B 83-86	F 50-59	
B- 80-82		

Dates to remember:

January 19: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – University closed

February 2: Last to withdraw with 100% refund\*

February 12: Lincoln's birthday – University Closed

March 16-20: Spring Break; Early warning grades available March 16

April 5: Last day to drop\*

\*If you were force-enrolled in this course, you will need the permission of the instructor and the Director of Writing in order to drop. If you wish to drop this course, you will need to speak with me first, and I will forward your request to the Director of Writing for consideration (permission is not granted automatically). Because you need permission to drop, you should begin the drop process early.

**This syllabus is our contract!** By remaining enrolled in this class, you agree to abide by the terms outlined here and in the Department information sheet. If you have a problem with any of the policies or practices in this syllabus, or if you are not prepared to work hard, you should drop this class now. **As we discover more about ourselves as individuals and writers, our timeline for assignments may change. You will be made aware of these changes in class. Remember that attendance is required and participation is essential.**