English Composition Course Syllabus

**ENGL&101 (1030), Summer 2018**

INSTRUCTOR: Dan Tremaglio

CLASS TIMES: M-Th 7:30AM-9:20

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OFFICE: R230

HOURS: TBD

THE TEACHING PHILOSOPHY I SUBSCRIBE TO

If a course were a backpacking expedition, the teacher should be like the guide. A teacher is definitely not the guy already up the mountain, yodeling down tips on how to avoid rattlesnakes and chasms while he kicks back at the top, making s’mores. The teacher hikes the same trail as everyone else. Maybe he’s been up that path of few times before, and hopefully he has a half decent map with him, but a teacher should be learning and discovering and occasionally bemoaning the trip just like everyone else.

That’s why I signed up, the learning and discovering part. I’m looking forward to more of it this quarter.

WELCOME TO ENGL&101

The main idea here is that professional writers aren’t the only ones who write. No matter who you are, no matter what field you go into, sooner or later you’ll be asked to write a page or two that’ll be read by someone who has something you really, really want. Whether it’s a job, a degree, a loan to start your first business, admission to your top-choice college, or even love, your task as a writer is to convince readers you deserve their attention.

This course can help.

OFFICIAL COURSE OUTCOMES

After completing this class, students should be able to:

* Demonstrate various invention practices: brainstorming, free writing; outlining, journaling.
* Demonstrate ability to write in various modes: personal narrative, expository, analytical, descriptive, argument.
* Demonstrate the phases of writing: draft, revision, final copy.
* Explore sources of writing: reading, thinking, analyzing, discussion.
* Create a thesis statement that suggests the focus of the paper; does not point out the obvious, and is written as a sentence.
* Develop and include enough details and examples to support the identified thesis and reinforce focus.
* Demonstrate various patterns of organization and use the organization pattern that suits your identified purpose &amp; audience.
* Illustrate the concept of Audience in your writing.
* Artfully combine Audience, Purpose, and Tone in compositions written in and outside of class.
* Write in a vocabulary appropriate to your subject and identified audience.
* Begin and conclude a paper effectively.
* Show effective control of mechanics: paragraphing, punctuation, and spelling.
* Differentiate between key ideas and supporting details in reading.
* Locate the thesis statement in reading assignments.
* Practice good group skills: how to give useful feedback, and how to make use of feedback you receive.
* Develop self-assessment skills.

MY PERSONAL COURSE OUTCOMES

There are five things – let’s call them *tools* – I hope you walk away with 7 weeks from now.

CONFIDENCE – this is the biggest one. If nothing else, I want you to be able it sit down and put the pen to the page without having an anxiety attack.

CREATIVITY – too often this gets labeled as childish, unserious, or even hedonistic, when in fact it is all-important. Writing has a lot to do with nuts and bolts, sure, and we’ll cover our fair share of those this quarter, but if you don’t have something original to say, why ask anyone to listen? Creativity is not a skill you learn, it’s a trait you’re born with, one you have to use or lose.

VOICE – specifically your own. We’re going to deconstruct the silly idea that you have to sound a certain way in order to write well, whether “formal” or “scholarly” or “academic.” This is analogous to telling everyone they need speak all the time in a Sean Connery accent. Which would be funny, but it would get old quick.

TONE – sometimes called “diction” or “register” or “code,” this is not all that different from your everyday “tone of voice.” By any name, you automatically adjust your tone according to the topic and audience at hand. Notice how you (most likely) don’t use the exact same vocabulary and volume and cadence in front of your grandma as you do in front of your friends? That’s you demonstrating a command of tone. We’re going to practice doing the same thing on paper.

AN ENJOYMENT OF READING – At the end of the day, whether you go on to earn a PhD or become a hermit on Mount Rainier, this is the single biggest thing that makes a writer thrive: a fondness for books. Imagine trying to be a better musician without listening to music. Imagine trying to be a chef but never going to restaurants. How well you write is precisely contingent to how well you read. Enjoying what you read makes reading effortless. At the end of this course, I hope you like reading literature at least a tiny bit more than you did before.

HOW WE PLAN TO MEET THESE OUTCOMES

How do you become a better writer is simple, so simple it feels silly writing it down, but then that’s what syllabi are for, so here we go…

To become better writers in the next 7 weeks, we will:

1.) read a lot

2.) write a lot

3.) and talk a lot about what we’ve read and written.

READING A LOT

We’ll be reading two novels: *Winter’s Bone* by Daniel Woodrell and *How To Set a Fire and Why* by Jesse Ball. Both are on the shorter side but pack a mean punch. In some ways they are quite different, in other ways weirdly similar.

Expect to read on average about 75 pages every week.

On the first day of every week there will be a quiz on the reading. These quizzes are short and multiple choice and are graded on a Pass/Fail basis: 3 correct answers out of 5 or better gets you a PASS. Cumulatively, they constitute about 20% of your final grade.

Are quizzes make-up-able if you miss class? Yes they are. See below under ATTENDANCE & LATE POLICY for details.

In addition to out-of-class reading assignments, we’ll also read a bunch of shorter stuff in class which I will give you on handouts. Some of the authors we’ll engage with include David Foster Wallace, Chimamanda Adiche, Plato, Aristotle, Claudia Rankine, George Saunders, Tobias Wolfe, Sherman Alexie, Derek Wolcott, Joseph Millar, Jennifer Egan, Michael Ondaatje and more.

WRITING A LOT

About twice a week there will be a “writing prompt.” These prompts can last anywhere from 2 minutes to 50 and cover a range of topics. Sometimes they will test your comprehension of that week’s reading*.* Other times they’ll invite you to sketch out part of your next essay. Still other times they’ll be fun/funny/wacky/weird and meant to expand your imagination.

About twice a week I will collect and “grade” one of your in-class writing prompts, which are worth approximately one (1) point each. Cumulatively, they constitute 16% of your final grade.

Are prompts make-up-able if you miss class? Yes they are. See below under ATTENDANCE & LATE POLICY for details.

The biggest chunk of your final grade, though, comes from your four (4) papers. These papers are not very long by typical academic standards because I want you to focus on quality over quantity. That being said, they will be graded much more scrupulously than the in-class prompts. A quick overview:

Paper #1 is a personal essay

Paper #2 is a biography

Paper #3 is a short story

Paper #4 is a literary analysis.

For each paper, you’ll hand in a rough draft and a final draft. Both drafts must be submitted online though Canvas. You must also print three (3) copies of your rough draft which will be peer reviewed in class on “peer review days.” These are always the last day of class before the final draft’s is due. Final drafts are usually due on a Sunday night by 11:59 PM.

Rough drafts must be submitted online before class begins and ARE NOT ACCEPTED LATE.

Final drafts ARE ACCEPTED LATE BUT LOSE ONE A LETTER GRADE EVERY 24 HOURS until they drop to 60%. I will never give you lower than a D for any *completed* paper no matter how late you hand it in.

TALKING A LOT

This course will be conducted in-the-round, seminar style. I teach all my courses this way because it maximizes conversation. I believe CONVERSATION is the real teacher in any classroom, not the guy stalking around the front. I believe the real teacher floats in the airspace in the middle of this circle. The real teacher is a question from one person and an answer from another and all the unanswered questions too. The real teacher is disagreement and laughter and sarcasm and personal stories and lies and cuss words and songs and silence.

Now, mysticism aside, in order for the real teacher (aka, good conversation) to actually show up, everyone needs to contribute. This means EVERYBODY IS REQUIRED TO SPEAK AT LEAST ONCE EVERY SINGLE CLASS. Participation actually counts. But don’t panic. You don’t need to pontificate or soliloquize to get full credit. Contributions can be brief, so long as they are considerate and thoughtful. I make it my personal mission to make it as easy as possible for everyone to get involved.

We will spend the first class every week discussing whichever every novel we’re working through. I’ll always refer to this as “seminar.” These conversations are meant to be both vigorous and casual, analytical but fun. They work best when they are organic, so I don’t want to strangle the real-life-ness out of them by imposing too many rules. That being said, there are two rules I must insist on.

The first rule is: ONE CONVERSATION AT A TIME. If three conversations are going on simultaneously, even if all three are pure genius, most of the class is going to miss out.

The second rule is: RESPECT. Respect each other. Respect each other’s time. Respect each other’s experiences. Respect each other’s opinions. For seminar to work, it needs to be in a safe respectful place.

~~Also part of the TALKING A LOT scheme is Conference Week, which will take place during Week 6. Instead of regular class, I will be sitting down with each of you individually to discuss your experience with the course at its halfway point. For about 15 minutes we’ll talk about your first two papers, writing prompts, quizzes, participation, reading comprehension, attendance, future courses, college transfers, Game of Thrones, or any thoughts or concerns you want to touch on. It’s meant to be both a casual oral examination and an opportunity for you to reflect on your involvement so far.~~

STUFF YOU’LL NEED

You will definitely need the novels *Winter’s Bone* by Daniel Woodrell, and *How to Set a Fire and Why* by Jesse Ball. Bring these to every single SEMINAR DAY.

Are ebooks acceptable? Yes, but a fair warning, they can be pretty annoying, since most ebooks number the lines or paragraphs instead of the pages. This can make assignments tricky. If you want to deal with it, be my guest. My only request is that you figure out the reading assignments for yourself in advance. This is a polite way of saying, *Please don’t email me at midnight the night before reading is due and ask what paragraph number you’re supposed to read to.*

You will also need paper and a pen/pencil. Bring these to every single class.

I also highly recommend a folder. This will be handy for storing old quizzes, writing prompts, and handouts.

ATTENDANCE & LATE POLICY

Summer quarters are not even 7 full weeks long. That’s crazy brief. Attendance is therefore compulsory. I allow three (3) absences without any affect on your final grade. After that, each absence will cost two (2) points off your participation grade.

(NOTE: this is much more lenient than the official Arts & Humanities Division Attendance Policy which recommends an automatic F if a students miss 20% of a course, or about 5 classes in this case)

I’m a meticulous taker of attendance. I do it at the beginning of every single class without exception. It’s easy to tell when I’m taking attendance: I’ll be leaning over the roster, looking up, making marks, looking up, making marks. If you come in late and do not see me doing this, that means I did not mark you present and it becomes your responsibility to approach me during the break or after class and say, “Hey, sorry, I came in late, please mark me present.” Your attendance/late record is not negotiable at the end of the quarter, so stay on top of it. You get four (4) lates without penalty. After that, you lose one point off your participation grade for any class you are late to.

If you miss a quiz and want to make it up, you must take it THE VERY NEXT TIME YOU ARE IN CLASS. This goes for writing prompts too. Approach and ask me what the prompt was THE VERY NEXT TIME YOU ARE IN CLASS.

Please never approach me and say something like, “Hey Dan, I was sick, like, five or six weeks ago. Can I make up the quiz?”

My reply has to be, “Sorry.”

The main point here is STAY ON TOP OF IT! I can’t accept a huge pile of prompts on the last day of the quarter.

GRADING

Simply put, your final grade rests upon three pillars: reading the novels*,* showing up to class, and writing the papers. Here’s a more thorough breakdown:

Attendance & Participation = 20%

Quizzes (6 x 3 pts. each) = 18%

Prompts (14 x 1 pt. each) = 14%

Rough Drafts of Papers (4 x 2 pts. each) = 8%

Final Drafts of Papers (4 x 10 pts. each) = 40%

Papers are graded on a ten-point scale, broken down to the quarter point. Here’s what each grade means to me:

A (10) Fantastic work. Not only does this paper do everything we talked about in class, it does something unexpected, something extra unique and creative. A perfect 10/10 is rare. Usually I only give three or four of these per class per quarter.

A (9.75) Very very impressive work. This paper has obviously been worked on a lot and is polished and almost completely free of errors and just about ready to submit for ‘publication.’

A (9.5) A totally solid ‘A’ paper. The work has a fine overall shape, only minimal glitches, and is one draft away from being called ‘done’ and ready to submit for ‘publication.’

A- (9.25) This is a high ‘A-.’ Usually a paper with this grade is in good shape except for one problem area.

A (9) A low ‘A-.’ Papers with this score usually have a few little problems, such grammar or organization, but are otherwise promising.

B+ (8.75) Pretty good. This is fun, inspired work in middle- to late-stages of development.

B (8.5) Good. A respectable start.

B- (8 – 8.25) Almost good. Has some problematic stretches, but effective parts too.

C+ (7.75) Just OK. You probably could have done better.

C (7.5) Meh. You definitely could’ve done better.

C- (7 – 7.25) A rush job.

D (6 – 6.75) The gentleman’s F. You just handed in a pile of whatever to avoid getting a zero.

F (0) You didn’t hand anything in.

As far as final grades go, here’s the break down. Note there is no such thing as an A+. Anything 93% or above gets recorded as an ‘A’.

A = 93 – 100%

A- = 90 – 92.9%

B+ = 87 – 89.9%

B = 83 – 86.9%

B- = 80 – 82.9%

C+ = 77 – 79.9%

C = 73 – 76.9%

C- = 70 – 72.9%

D = 60 – 69.9%

F = 0 – 59.9%

**▪ Affirmation of Inclusion**

Bellevue College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination.

We value our different backgrounds at Bellevue College, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.

**Religious Holidays**

Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or any other assignments as a consequence of their religious observance should be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete such academic responsibilities. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent, preferably at the beginning of the term. Students who are absent on days of examinations or class assignments should be offered an opportunity to make up the work without penalty (if they have previously arranged to be absent), unless it can be demonstrated that a makeup opportunity would constitute an unreasonable burden on a member of the faculty. Should disagreement arise over what constitutes an unreasonable burden or any element of this policy, parties involved should consult the department chair, or Dean.

**College Anti-Discrimination Statement**

Bellevue College does not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity; color; creed; national origin; sex; marital status; sexual orientation; age; religion; genetic information; the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability; gender identity or veteran status in educational programs and activities which it operates.

**Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting**

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share with the Title IX Coordinator any and all information regarding sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct (e.g. dating violence, domestic violence, stalking) that may have occurred on campus or that impacts someone on campus. Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting the BC Counseling Center at (425) 564-2212. The Title IX Office can be contacted at 425-564-2441 and more information can be found at [www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix/](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix/).

For further information and contacts, please consult [College Anti-Discrimination Statements](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix).

**▪ Student Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity**

Any act of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism (using the ideas or words of another as one’s own without crediting the source), and fabrication and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College.  Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to, talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates.  The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Dean of Student Success for investigation.  Specific student rights, responsibilities, and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct at: [Student Code](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-2050/)

Information about Bellevue College's copyright guidelines can be found at: [College Copyright Policy](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-3600/)

This link provides a good, short summary of how to avoid plagiarism: [Avoiding Plagiarism](http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml)

This 22-minute video also provides a good overview of how to avoid trouble when using sources: From the college home page select SERVICES, then LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER, then DATABASES, then FILMS ON DEMAND. At their site, search by title for **PLAGIARISM 2.0: ETHICS IN THE DIGITAL AGE.**

## Important Links ▪ Bellevue College E-mail and access to MyBC

All students registered for classes at Bellevue College are entitled to a network and e-mail account. Your student network account can be used to access your student e-mail, log in to computers in labs and classrooms, connect to the BC wireless network and log in to *My*BC. To create your account, go to: [Create Email](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/netid/)

BC offers a wide variety of computer and learning labs to enhance learning and student success. Find current campus locations for all student labs by visiting the [Technology Help Desk](http://depts.bellevuecollege.edu/helpdesk/students/)

**▪ Disability Resource Center (DRC)**

The Disability Resource Center serves students with disabilities. A disability includes any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Common disabilities include physical, neurological (e.g. Autism, ADD), and mental health (e.g. depression, anxiety). If you are a student who has a disability or if you think you may need accommodations in order to have equal access to programs, activities, and services, please contact the DRC.

If you require assistance in an emergency, please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan for while in class and contact the DRC to develop a safety plan for while you are elsewhere on campus.

If you are a student with a documented autism spectrum disorder, there is an additional access program available to you. [Contact Autism Spectrum Navigators](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/autismspectrumnavigators/) (ASN). Email and phone number is on the web page. ASN is located in the Library Media Center in D125.

The DRC office is located in building B Room 132. You can contact the DRC by stopping by B132, calling our desk at 425-564-2498, emailing [drc@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:drc@bellevuecollege.edu), and Deaf students can reach us by Skype (account name **DRCatBC**). For more information about the services we offer, including our Initial Access Application, visit our website at [www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc).

**Accessibility**

The online elements of this course are designed to be welcoming to, accessible to, and usable by everyone, including students who are English-language learners, have a variety of learning styles, have disabilities, or are new to online learning. Be sure to let me know immediately if you encounter a required element or resource in the course that is not accessible to you. Also, let me know of changes I can make to the course so that it is more welcoming to, accessible to, or usable by students who take this course in the future.

**▪ Public Safety**

**Public Safety and Emergencies**

Public Safety is located in the D building (D171) and can be reached at **425-564-2400** (easy to remember because it’s the only office on campus open 24 hours a day—2400).  Among other things, Public Safety serves as our Parking Permits, Lost and Found, and Emergency Notification center.  Please ensure you are signed up to receive alerts through our campus alerting system by registering at [RAVE Alert Registration](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/alerts/?ref=footer)

If you work late and are uneasy about going to your car, Public Safety will escort you to your vehicle. To coordinate this, please phone ahead and let Public Safety know when and where you will need an escort.

Please familiarize yourself with the emergency postings by the door of every classroom and know where to go in the event of an evacuation.  Your instructor will be asked if anyone might still be in the building, so check in before you do anything else.  Emergency responders will search for anyone unaccounted for.

**If a major emergency occurs, please follow these three rules:**

**1) Take directions from those in charge of the response** -We all need to be working together.

**2) Do not get in your car and leave campus (unless directed to)** - Doing so will clog streets and prevent emergency vehicles from entering the scene.  Instead, follow directions from those in charge.

**3) In an emergency, call 911 first, then Public Safety.**

Please do not hesitate to call Public Safety if you have safety questions or concerns at any time. You may also visit the [Public Safety](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/publicsafety/) web page for answers to your questions.

**▪ Academic Calendar**

The Bellevue College Academic Calendar is separated into two calendars. They provide information about holidays, closures and important enrollment dates such as the finals schedule.

* [Enrollment Calendar](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/enrollment/deadlines/) On this calendar you will find admissions and registration dates and important dates for withdrawing and receiving tuition refunds.
* [College Calendar](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/enrollment/holidays/)This calendar gives you the year at a glance and includes college holidays, scheduled closures, quarter end and start dates, and final exam dates.

**▪ Additional Information**

All students should be aware of the many tutorial services provided by the [Academic Success Center](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/asc/). If you need free tutorial help, please visit them in D204.

If you feel threatened or see something that may indicate trouble, please report it right away at [Report Concerns.](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/reportconcerns/) We all need to help keep our campus safe for everyone.