

Fall 2015

ENGL 1158

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University of New Orleans

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English 1158-007
Kim C. McDonald

Freshman Composition
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Office Hours: Mon and Wed: 11:00 – 11:30 AM; 2:00 – 4:00 PM
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Other times by appointment

You DO NOT need to call or e-mail before coming to see me during office hours. You only need to contact me first if you aren't able to come during these hours and need to set up an alternate time.

Prerequisites: Completion of English 1157 at UNO (or the equivalent course at another university) with a grade of C or higher or placement into 1158 through scores on ACT/SAT/AP or the UNO Placement test is required. If you earned a D in 1157, see me after class for more information regarding your eligibility for the course.

Required Texts: Required reading will be posted on Moodle. If you do not have reliable internet at home or don't have easy access to a computer, please come to see me—there are some easy solutions to at least some of the issues this might cause.

Description of Course: We will focus on writing as a process of inquiry and work to develop the “habits of mind” that will lead to stronger critical thinking skills to apply not only to writing but also to reading. We will explore how writing functions as a process of learning as well as a medium for communicating what is learned to others. My goal is to help you develop a toolbox of strategies to apply to a variety of writing situations and to provide you with practice in assessing writing tasks and developing workable plans for accomplishing those tasks. While it is the work produced during the semester that will determine your grade, the true measure of our success (yours and mine) will be whether you are effectively armed with the knowledge and tools you will need to read critically, use writing as a method of thinking and learning, and produce effective writing in your future as a student, professional, and member of your community.

Objectives: By the end of the course, students who have engaged in the work should be able to do the following:

- Determine purpose and audience in a piece of writing and how these affect writers' choices
- Summarize, analyze, evaluate, and respond to the ideas of others
- Understand writing as a process that involves invention, drafting, collaboration, and revision
- Write informative, analytical, and persuasive pieces using the conventions and media appropriate to the genre and context
- Use library and non-library research methods
- Evaluate sources
- Document sources in MLA style
- Produce writing appropriate for college (use of varied sentence structures, appropriate vocabulary, effective syntax, and standard grammar, spelling, and punctuation)

Attendance: Don't miss class. Absences negatively affect your performance, which in turn affects your grade. I understand that **emergencies or unavoidable circumstances** sometimes make it impossible for you to attend class; UNO's attendance policy allows for **five absences over the course of the semester** (in MWF courses) before the absences count against the final grade. This should be more than ample allowance to cover unavoidable absences for illness, emergencies, deaths in the family, etc. However, these five absences are ALL that is allowed without penalty—after those five, any additional absences will cause your final grade to be lowered by ½ a letter grade (so two additional absences lower the final grade you earn by a **full letter**). **Doctor's notes or other excuses are not an exception to this policy—illness and emergencies are what the five allowed absences are to be used for.**

Three instances of arriving late or leaving early (or leaving class even for a few minutes, if you do this more than once or twice in the semester) will also count as an absence. Missing more than 20 minutes of class counts as an absence, but you should always come to class even if you will arrive more than 20 minutes late—you will at least be aware of some of what is covered, as well as assignments or changes to work or due dates. Also, using your cell phone or computer in class for something other than what we are working on at the time or leaving class when you are given time for writing, working in groups, or other activities will count as an absence—any repetition of such behaviors will count double, as this time is provided because the activity is important and appropriate attention to the assignment should usually require the time allotted—finishing quickly is usually NOT a good indication you are putting effort into the work. All of these “absences” count the same as missing class, so don't use up the days you have for illness and/or emergency in these ways.

Also, any work that is missed or submitted late due to absence **does** affect your grade, regardless of the reason for your absence, so while the first five absences don't affect your final grade, they most likely will have a negative effect on your performance in the class. While you do not need to contact me if you are going to miss a class, please **DO** contact me if you must miss consecutive classes—first, and most importantly, I want to know you are okay, and second, missing more than one class in a row is much more likely to cause you to fall irreparably behind.

When you are absent, you are responsible for finding out what you missed and for having the work assigned for the next class completed on time. You should make arrangements with one or two of your classmates, asking them to let you know what was covered, what work was completed in class, and what is assigned and/or due for the next class. Do not rely on being able to get in touch with or receive the information from me by e-mail in time for the next class, and do not assume all assignments, updates, or changes to the syllabus or due dates will be posted on Moodle. While I sometimes make updates, the information is usually provided orally in class, and you are responsible for being there and keeping track of what work has been completed and what is coming due. Late submission of work due to absence (when late work is accepted) will be at partial credit.

If you arrive after I have taken attendance, you **MUST** speak to me immediately after class **THAT** day (whether you arrived two minutes or twenty minutes late) and be sure I have marked you present, or it will count as an absence.

Don't skip class because you don't have an assignment completed, because you not only lose the credit for late submission, you also miss any work we are doing that day, and probably information and assignments for the next class. If you cannot avoid being absent, I will *usually* accept electronic submission of any work that is due as on-time submission (on Moodle, or if that isn't possible, by e-mail), but to avoid the late penalty, it must arrive in my inbox at least ½ hour before class begins, and I must be able to open the document (so be sure it is sent as a Word document). Remember, however, that this acceptance is at my discretion. If you submit work electronically that was supposed to be submitted in hardcopy, you **must bring the hardcopy to the next class** or the work will be counted as late.

Writing: You will complete three projects during the semester. The projects involve completing a series of assignments (homework and in-class work) designed to help you develop ideas, research, draft, and revise the culminating essay for the project, or to help you hone the reading, writing, researching, and thinking skills you need not only for this course or these particular projects, but for all kinds of writing and thinking tasks. Each project will culminate in a formal essay that incorporates multiple outside resources correctly cited in 2009 MLA citation style. Essays that do not include research and/or that do not use MLA citation will not be accepted. **Plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity under the university policy on ANY assignment is grounds for failing the project, and failing any project is grounds for failing the entire course.**

Each of the three completed projects must be submitted in a two-pocket folder that includes the culminating essay as well as all other assigned work (in and out of class) that you have produced since we started the project: process exercises and informal writing, short compositions and/or presentations, rough/first drafts of the long composition, etc. You are responsible for keeping (and keeping track of) all the materials you produce for each project to submit in your project folder; each must have a heading that clearly indicates what the assignment is and the date it was due/submitted. You must also include copies of the sources used, with the passages you have summarized, paraphrased, or quoted highlighted and numbered (you will highlight and number the corresponding passages in the submission draft in the margins of the hardcopy version).

Additional revisions of the submission draft (the essay that is the culmination of each project) is sometimes required and always encouraged (you will be allowed to submit revisions you have been working on with me and/or the writing center when you submit the final portfolio at the end of the course).

All essays must be submitted both in hardcopy and electronically on Moodle. The essay will not be assessed if you do not submit in both forms. The return (with my comments or a grade) of work submitted late will be delayed, which may mean substantial reduction in the amount of time you will have to complete and submit the next assignment on time if it is contingent upon your having this feedback.

If at any time you submit out-of-class writing that shows too much linguistic variation from in-class, proctored writing you have produced, the work will not be accepted without additional inquiry. You may be asked to produce writing similar to that submitted, but under proctored conditions; if you are unable to do so, you will fail the course. Please note that this only

occurs if you have had too much outside help in writing your essay, you have relied on sources without indicating them, or you are submitting someone else's work as your own.

You will receive a grade for each project folder which is separate from the grade for the final essay for that project. Each project folder and essay must earn a grade of at least a D in order to earn a final grade of D or higher.

Final Portfolio: Toward the end of the course (probably last class meeting), you will submit your writing portfolio, which will consist of the two of the three projects you have chosen because you feel it best represent you as a writer. You will have had the opportunity to work on revising, proofreading, and editing the culminating essays for these two projects from the time they were returned with my comments (although it will have been up to you to do this revising and to meet with me for feedback after receiving my comments). The third piece of writing in the portfolio will be a cover letter to accompany these essays—you will write this in-class during the final exam period. These three pieces weigh heavily in the determination of your final grade, so **DO NOT** wait until the end of the semester to begin revising the culminating essays from the projects (note that you will have very limited time for revision for the Project Three essay, if this is one you choose—however, by the end of the semester, you should be writing stronger initial/early drafts). While I will continue to work with you on the revision of essays through the last week of class, by this point in the semester, time is limited, and I hold no office hours during finals week.

I will collect and keep these portfolios at the end of the semester. You will be able to come by to pick them up (come to my office) at the end of the next regular semester, so you have the work you produced for the course (this would be end of spring semester for a fall course, or the end of the next fall semester for a spring or summer course).

Peer Review Workshops: Failure to have an assigned draft (in hardcopy and/or electronic format—I will specify this before the review) for a peer review workshop will result in loss of a half letter grade off the final grade for the project, as will being absent on a day we have peer review (so not having the draft and not showing up equals a full letter grade deducted). It may be possible to reduce the effect by completing the review online, but **ONLY** if you offer helpful feedback **AND** the review is completed and provided to the writer in time for the feedback to be considered in revising the draft before the submission deadline.

Deadlines: Work assigned for completion out of class must be submitted **at the beginning** of class on the day it is due or it is late. Work completed in class must be submitted (or posted) before the end of class on that day. Work submitted late will receive no credit or reduced credit. Working on any late assignment (or any work we are not doing as a class) during class time, when you are expected to be listening and participating in class, or when you are supposed to be doing other work, will result in a full letter grade being deducted from your final project grade.

Revision: You are expected to begin working on your project as soon as it is assigned, and to begin prewriting early in the process, so that you have time to find your focus and write at least a couple of drafts of the essay portion of the project by the time it is due. While you are working on these drafts, you should be meeting with me, with tutors in the writing center, and with classmates to get response from readers to help write a draft that clearly conveys your ideas to readers. This is the initial process of revising, and to take advantage of it, you need to have completed multiple drafts of the work before submission to me for comment. The feedback from peer reviews must be included in the folders; if you miss a peer review, you will need to find readers from among your classmates on your own, and you need to review their work (and you **MUST** get your feedback to them, and it must be before the draft or revision is due). Failure to do so will lower your grade. The drafts you submit should reflect your consideration of (and when appropriate, changes prompted by) the comments you have received.

If revision of a submitted essay is required, I will set a due date. In some cases I may require that you meet with me in individual conferences as you revise. Otherwise, it is up to you to get help from me or tutors in the writing center in order to effectively make the necessary changes to strengthen the writing. Do not wait until the last few days before the revision is due or you may not have an opportunity to get the help you need. If you have someone other than me or tutors in the Writing Center help you revise, be **SURE** the help is appropriate—no one should revise sentences or edit and proofread **FOR** you; they should only help you to do so yourself.

Multi-media Work: For at least one of the projects you will likely be required to create a presentation or incorporate alternate media (something in addition to writing) in your work. I may assign specific work or allow you to determine what best fits your projects. If you are allowed to choose, the form this part of the assignment takes will be limited only by the constraints of imagination, time, space, and resources available. A simple method is to create a oral presentation with an

accompanying PowerPoint presentation, but you may also have the choice of more diverse options, such as creating a podcast or a video, writing and reading a poem about the subject, or translating it into hip hop.

Final Grades:

To earn an A you must meet all of the following minimum requirements:

Earn an A on the final portfolio (based on quality of writing in two final revised essays and cover letter)
 Earn at least a B average on each of the project folders (excludes the grade on the cumulative essay submitted with project)
 Earn at least a D on the cumulative essay NOT being submitted in the portfolio
 Have accrued no more than the equivalent of seven absences (equivalent is having lost no more than 20 points)

To earn a B you must meet all of the following minimum requirements:

Earn at least a B on the portfolio (final revised essays and cover letter)
 Earn at least a C average on each of the project folders (excludes the grade on the cumulative essay submitted with project)
 Earn at least a D on the cumulative essay NOT being submitted in the portfolio
 Have accrued no more than the equivalent of seven absences (equivalent is having lost no more than 20 points)

To earn a C you must meet all of the following minimum requirements:

Earn at least a C on the portfolio (final revised essays and cover letter)
 Earn at least a D average on each of the project folders (excludes the grade on the cumulative essay submitted with project)
 Earn at least a D on the essay NOT being submitted in the portfolio
 Have accrued no more than the equivalent of seven absences (equivalent is having lost no more than 20 points)

To earn a D you must meet all of the following minimum requirements:

Earn at least a D on the portfolio (final revised essays and cover letter)
 Earn at least a D average on each of the project folders (excludes the grade on the cumulative essay submitted with project)
 Earn at least a D on the essay NOT being submitted in the portfolio
 Have accrued no more than the equivalent of seven absences (equivalent is having lost no more than 20 points)

Any ONE of the following (by itself) will earn an F:

Earn less than a D on the portfolio (final revised essays and cover letter)
 Earn less than a D average on any of the project folders (excludes the grade on the cumulative essay submitted with project)
 Earn less than a D on the essay NOT being submitted in the portfolio
 Have accrued more than the equivalent of thirteen absences (equivalent is having lost no more than 20 points)
 Have committed any act of plagiarism or academic dishonesty (particularly if it is a clear violation of stated policies, or is a second instance of behavior already pointed out on earlier assignments)

Again, all out-of-class work submitted must show clear linguistic connection to work produced in in-class, proctored writing, and you must not commit any act of academic dishonesty, or you will fail the course.

Conferences: I will have at least one (required) individual conference with each of you (usually toward the end of or just after completion of Project 1), but PLEASE come to my office to see me any time you want to discuss your ideas, your writing, the assigned work, or anything else you are working on for the course. If you can't come during office hours, let me know you want to meet and we will find a time that works for both of us. At times during the semester I will require that you meet with me in my office for conferences on your projects, essays, or other work; not meeting me for required conferences will lower your final grade.

Moodle: Every UNO student has a computer account, a UNO email account, and access to Moodle. Any out-of-class information or correspondence I send to you will either come to your UNO email account or be posted on Moodle, and you are responsible for checking both frequently. We will use the computers and Moodle in class almost every day. If you need help with using Moodle, please come to see me and I will help you.

Writing Center: Be sure to take advantage of the Writing Center, which is located in LA 334. There is free tutoring by appointment, and the center also offers workshops on specific writing issues (a schedule should be available after the first week of classes).

Standard University Statement on Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the UNO Judicial Code for further information. The Code is available online through the UNO Webpage.

MY Statement on Academic Integrity: I take academic dishonesty VERY seriously. It is your responsibility to let me know if you don't understand MLA citation/documentation and to let me know BEFORE you submit an essay if you aren't sure whether or not you have cited all sources as required. Except in instances where students don't know a source must be cited (and I'm going to cover this in the beginning of the semester, so be sure you pay attention), I believe that most plagiarism results from students becoming stressed or panicked about an assignment. If you find yourself short on time or for any other reason contemplating any form of academic dishonesty—paraphrasing sources without documenting them, getting someone else to help write your essay, buying an essay, or resorting to any other form of academic dishonesty, DON'T DO IT. Come to see me—we can discuss the options, and suffering the penalties of a late paper or even receiving an F or a zero for not completing a project will be less severe than the result of submitting work that is plagiarized, no matter how little of it is someone else's work. Committing plagiarism can not only earn you an F in a course—it can get you expelled from the university.

Also, all writing you submit should be completed specifically for this course unless you get written permission from me. Otherwise, **submitting writing, even your own, that was completed for another purpose or that you are writing for use in two different courses is considered academic dishonesty.** This doesn't mean you won't be able to begin from earlier work to extend what you have done, but you must discuss this with me IN ADVANCE so we can agree on how you will proceed (you will still need to do as much new research and produce as much new writing as you would with an original topic). So in ALL cases, if you are incorporating writing produced for any other course as any part of your project, or working on a topic you addressed in an earlier course or are working on for a course this semester, you must inform me in advance and get approval from me in writing (and you must inform your other instructor as well, if the work is in progress for that class).

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Students who qualify for services will receive the academic modifications for which they are legally entitled. It is the responsibility of the student to register with the Office of Disability Services (UC 260) each semester and follow their procedures for obtaining assistance.

Considerate Behavior: Texting, reading e-mail, talking to classmates, or leaving the room during class is disruptive and rude, whether I am speaking, classmates are speaking, or you are supposed to be working on assigned work or in groups. Don't be inconsiderate.

Tentative Due Dates for Projects:

These are the tentative dates for the culminating submission draft and the accompanying folder for each of the projects. The informal assignments, short compositions, presentations, etc., that will make up the project folders are NOT listed here; due dates for that work will be included on the project assignment or announced in class. You will have work due on most class days—sometimes only reading, but often with a written component as well.

Please note that the dates are tentative and may change if I determine we need additional time to complete the project.

Project One September 18

Project Two October 23

Project Three November 23

Final Portfolio Last day of class (except for the cover letter, which will be written during the final exam period)

Cover Letter Friday, December 11, 10:00-Noon (final exam period)