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# Composition I

Scott Farrin  
*Collin College*

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# COLLIN COLLEGE

## COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Information
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**Course Number:** ENGL 1301

**Course Title:** Composition I

**Course Description:** Intensive study of and practice in writing processes, from invention and researching to drafting, revising, and editing, both individually and collaboratively. Emphasis on effective rhetorical choices, including audience, purpose, arrangement, and style. Focus on writing the academic essay as a vehicle for learning, communicating, and critical analysis. Lab required.

**Course Credit Hours:** 3  
Lecture Hours: 3  
Lab Hour: 1

**Prerequisite:** Meet TSI college-readiness standard for Reading and Writing; or equivalent

### Student Learning Outcomes:

- **State Mandated Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this course, students will:
  1. Demonstrate knowledge of individual and collaborative writing processes. (Teamwork, Communication Skills)
  2. Develop ideas with appropriate support and attribution. (Communication Skills)
  3. Write in a style appropriate to audience and purpose. (Communication Skills)
  4. Read, reflect, and respond critically to a variety of texts. (Critical Thinking)
  5. Use Edited American English in academic essays.
- **Additional Collin Outcome:** Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to do the following:
  1. Demonstrate personal responsibility through the ethical use of intellectual property. (Personal Responsibility)

**Withdrawal Policy:** See the current *Collin Registration Guide* for last day to withdraw.

**Collin College Academic Policies:** See the current *Collin Student Handbook*

**Americans with Disabilities Act Statement:** Collin College will adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the ACCESS office, SCC-D140 or 972.881.5898 (V/TTD: 972.881.5950) to arrange for appropriate accommodations. See the current *Collin Student Handbook* for additional information.

## Instructor Information

Instructor's Name: J. Scott Farrin  
Office Number: C-156  
Office Hours: MW 2-3:30pm, TR 11-11:30am, F 2-4pm  
Phone Number: 972.881.5158  
Email: [jfarrin@collin.edu](mailto:jfarrin@collin.edu)

### Course Resources

Required Textbook: *The Curious Writer, 5th edition*, by Bruce Ballenger.  
ISBN: 978-0-13-467940-2.

Students must have access to Canvas, and a Collin College email account.

**Attendance Policy:** Students are required to come to every class, to be awake and participating. Except in extraordinary circumstances, I do not excuse absences. After two weeks of absences, 6 in a MWF class, 4 in a TR class, you will incur a penalty: your grade will drop a letter grade, and then half a letter grade for every subsequent absence after that. Finally, you are still responsible for missed assignments and deadlines. If you miss a class, I suggest you contact a classmate, and ask what might have been missed. Note that failure to have an assigned draft for a workshop will be counted as an absence, since you will not be able to participate in class. *For every class meeting, students should bring the work they have done on their ongoing projects as well as their proofreading journals.*

**Tardiness:** Please arrive on time. Be mindful that I take roll at the start of class, so if you have arrived late, you have probably been marked absent. Provided you weren't too late, and you haven't made a habit of being late, I will mark you "late" if you remind me to at the end of class—*on that day*. After that day, it is too late to go back and change the roll. Two "lates" will be converted to an "absence."

**Course Evaluation:** The course is organized around 3 projects. Each includes two major writing assignments in addition to other assigned work, including labs. Most of this work will be submitted through Canvas, often using Turnitin. *Do not copy and paste links to files and "share" them with me. Don't email your assignments to me; I offer no guarantee that work that has been emailed to me will be read or graded.* As the semester progresses, students earn points by completing graded assignments. At the semester's end, point totals will determine grades: an A being 1000-900 points; a B, 899-800 points; a C, 799-700 points, etc. Students can earn 10 extra points by volunteering for a full-class workshop.

Project 1: Narrative Essay (Minimum 1000 words) = 200 possible points.

Project 2: Profile Essay (Minimum 1000 words) = 200 possible points.

Project 3: Ethnographic Essay (Minimum 1000 words) = 200 possible points.

Project 1 Scene, Project 2 Q&A, Project 3 Field Notes, Presentation = 50 points each.

Participation = 70 points.

Cumulative Lab Grades = 130 points at 10 points apiece.

**Grading Standards for Essays:** First, you *must* turn in all three essays to pass the class, and they should be turned in on their due dates. I will only accept one of the three late, and that one has to be turned in within 5 days of its due date. If you follow the links below, you will find two rubrics that describe the quality of work that meets Collin College's standards. A "4" would be "A" work or 180-200 points on a major essay, converting the scales of these rubrics. A "1" would be 100 to 120 points

on a major essay assignment. (A student earns no points if they do not turn in an assignment.) But I want to caution students about the utility of rubrics. While they can give you a sense of what constitutes excellent work and failing work, good writing is not just meeting the demands of a checklist. A close reading of the rubrics linked reveal that there is a qualitative dimension to the listed expectations. What does “in-depth” mean, in the context of your subject, audience and purpose? To achieve an understanding of that, writers need to listen to feedback from their readers, which includes their instructor.

Links:

[http://inside.collin.edu/tl/pdfs/COAT/Rubrics/Communication-Core\\_Objective\\_Rubric.pdf](http://inside.collin.edu/tl/pdfs/COAT/Rubrics/Communication-Core_Objective_Rubric.pdf). [Link](#)  
[http://inside.collin.edu/tl/pdfs/COAT/Rubrics/Critical\\_Thinking-Core\\_Objective\\_Rubric.pdf](http://inside.collin.edu/tl/pdfs/COAT/Rubrics/Critical_Thinking-Core_Objective_Rubric.pdf). [Link](#)

**Revisions of Essays:** You may revise either or both of *your first two major essay assignments*, the personal narrative and profile essay, provided that you originally turned in those assignments when they were due. You can't revise an assignment you did not previously complete. You will turn in your revisions at the end of the semester when the final exam is to be given. The revised essay may earn you a maximum of 20 points above that essay's original grade, but it may also, very unlikely but possibly lower your grade by 10 points. The new grade replaces the old. *So be warned*, a cursory effort at revising, one that fails to make significant changes but instead attempts only to fix errors or accommodate feedback with minimal effort may lower an essays grade.

**Presentation:** Each student is required to make one 5-minute multimedia presentation on one of his or her projects. Slideshow, video, audio recording, the exact nature of the media employed is flexible, but the presentation must be more than the student reading from his notes. If a slideshow, it should provide a *minimum* of 6 slides. Meeting the requirements, including format, length, and engagement will earn a student 45 points, while exceptional work will earn the whole 50 points. The presentation is intended to help the student get feedback from other points of view and is not intended to reflect the student's final, polished analysis of his or her subject. Students sign up for their presentation date at the beginning of the semester. To change their presentation date, they must trade dates with another student.

**Participation:** Students who participate in the course discussions and work together with their peers towards fulfilling class objectives are scored highly while students who derail the class's work or who are caught on their phones while they should be participating will do poorly.

**Grading Standards on your Scene, Q&A, Field Notes:** These three assignments require a *minimum* of 500 words and they will get graded according to the degree with which they are fully completed. Meeting the requirements, including format, length, and polish will earn a student 45 points. Exceptional work that goes beyond the requirements will earn a student the full 50 points. Work that fails to meet the requirements will earn a student less than 45 points in proportion the effort falls short.

**Labs:** The lab component is an integral part of this writing course. Over the course of the semester, you will need to complete a combination of assignments from the list below. This lab work is not the same as regular coursework that you must complete to stay on track in the class; these are, instead, designed to be additional writing-focused activities which will help improve your writing throughout the term. You will need to provide evidence of completing these lab requirements in order to receive credit for completing them.

Lab #1 – Diagnostic Essay

Lab #2 – Syllabus & Canvas Quiz

Lab #3 – Reading Response 1  
Lab #4 – Style Exercise 1  
Lab #5 – Revision Play 1  
Lab #6 – Reading Response 2  
Lab #7 – Style Exercise 2  
Lab #8 – Revision Play 2  
Lab #9 – Reading Response 3  
Lab #10 – Style Exercise 3  
Lab #11 – Revision Play 3  
Lab #12 – Proofreading Journal  
Lab #13 – Final Reflection

**Grading Standards for Labs:** Successful completion of a lab assignment by its due date earns a student a full credit, 10 points. Failure to complete it by its due date or failure to follow the assignment's instructions prevent the student from getting credit for the lab.

**Cellphones, laptops, computers, etc.:** It is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct (Chapter 2, Section 7-2.3 Other Offenses, Item T) to engage “in the disruptive use of electronic, telecommunication, digital media, and/or wearable devices during class, labs, or other Collin College learning environments.” This includes social networking activities such as texting, talking on the phone, and web browsing from laptops, smart phones, or any other relevant electronic devices during class time. We may use computers or cellphones in class for our coursework, but otherwise, students are expected to turn them off, turn them to vibrate, to otherwise put them away so that they are not a distraction.

**Scholastic Dishonesty:** Using papers from other classes, passing someone's ideas or writing off as your own, or failing to credit sources, these come with serious consequences. If I find solid evidence of any of these ethical violations, I will fail refuse to credit that assignment or any revision of that assignment, making it almost certain that you will fail the course. And there may be further consequences. Acquaint yourself with Collin College's policies on scholastic dishonesty. They can be found in the student handbook located at this web address:  
<https://www.collin.edu/studentresources/personal/studenthandbook.html>. Link

**Technology and Responsibility:** The online part of our course can occasionally misfire. Something doesn't work. Sometimes, I do make mistakes on my side of the technology that we are using. But if everything is working for the majority of students, and you find that it doesn't work for you, then you must find a solution. Maybe you are using the wrong browser or trying to upload a file in the wrong format. Perhaps you are trying to complete an online assignment using your phone, but you really need to use a computer. If you are having problem and need assistance, you should start here:  
<http://iws2.collin.edu/techsupport/stusupport.shtml>. Link

**Course Schedule:** What follows is our general schedule of assignments. A more detailed arrangement of assignments can be accessed through our project modules on Canvas. That arrangement includes detailed assignment sheets and Turnitin links that you will use to submit completed work. Be aware, there may be changes to the schedule, but any such changes will be announced ahead of time, also through Canvas. In the schedule, “CW” refers to our text, *The Curious Writer*.” When a reading in the text is assigned, students should skip the exercises unless otherwise directed.

## **Week One**

### *Course Policies and Introduction to the Writing Process*

- Class Activity: What we like and don't like about writing.
- Lesson: Begin discussion of the writing process.
- Read for Class: CW pgs 20-28
- Lesson: The Writing Process

## **Week Two**

### *Asking Questions, Beginning the Personal Narrative*

- Class Activity: The Diagnostic Essay
- Lab Due Diagnostic Essay
- Read for Class: CW pgs 53-55, "The Importance of Writing Badly"
- Activity: Literacy Collage
- Lab Due: Syllabus and Course Quiz.
- Read for Class: CW pgs 1-15, 62-68
- Mini-Lesson: Why Start with a Question
- Activity: A description of a room
- Homework: Read "The Beautiful Hunt." It is longish, so set time aside

## **Week Three**

### *Choosing your Subject and Getting Started*

- Activity: Brainstorming topics, Listing Prompts.
- Homework: Read "Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust, The Funeral of Mother Miles."
- Lab Due: Reading Response to our readings.
- Activity: Discussion of essays, formation of dynamic criteria for a Personal Narrative.
- In-Class Reading: Personal Narrative, Features of the Form.
- Homework: Decide on your topic.
- Activity: Writing the sketch, "the rough draft of the rough draft."

## **Week Four**

### *Student Presentations*

- Student Presentations
- Scene Due
- Lab Due: Style Exercise #1

## **Week Five**

### *Working on the Rough Draft*

- Due: Personal Narrative Essay Rough Draft, bring hard copy to class.
- Activity: Peer Workshops of Rough Draft
- Activity: Full-Class Workshops of Rough Drafts

## **Week Six**

### *Conducting an Interview, Beginning the Profile*

- Due: Personal Narrative Essay Final Draft
- Activity: Essay Reflection.
- Read for Class: CW pgs 99-102
- Lesson: How to Conduct an Interview
- Activity (Time Permitting): Classmate Interview
- Activity: Classmate Interview, Sharing Classmate Interview
- Lab Due: Revision Play on the Personal Narrative Essay
- Homework: Read "How Albert Woodfox Survived Solitary"

## **Week Seven**

### *Choosing your Subject and Getting Started*

- Activity: Brainstorming Topics, Listing Prompts
- Homework: Read "Quincy Jones Has a Story About That"
- Lab Due: Reading Response to our readings.
- Activity: Discussion of Essays, formation of dynamic criteria for a Profile.
- In-Class Reading: The Profile: Features of the form.
- Homework: Choose subject.
- Activity: Writing the sketch, "what is your relationship to the subject."

## **Week Eight**

### *Student Presentations*

- Student Presentations
- Q&A Due
- Lab Due: Style Exercise #2

## **Week Nine**

### *Working on the Rough Draft*

- Due: Profile Essay Rough Draft, bring hard copy to class.
- Activity: Peer Workshops of Rough Drafts
- Activity: Full-Class Workshops of Rough Drafts.

## **Week Ten**

### *Conducting Research, How to use Sources*

- Due: Profile Essay Final Draft.
- Activity: Essay Reflection.
- Read for Class: CW pgs. 298-302
- Lesson: Credible Sources
- Lesson: Quoting, Paraphrasing, Summarizing
- Activity: Exercises in integrating sources.

## **Week Eleven**

### *Looking Around, Beginning the Ethnographic Essay*

- Activity: Brainstorming Topics, Listing Prompts
- Homework: Read: "Anonymous – The Masked Avenger." Again, this is long. Get an early start on it.
- *Library Day.*
- Read for Class: CW pgs. 36-49
- Activity: Training in the use of the library
- Activity (Time Permitting): MLA Citation Exercise
- Homework: Read "The Rise of Live Action Role-Playing."
- Lab Due: Reading Response our Readings.
- Activity: Discussion of Essays, formation of dynamic criteria for Ethnographic Essay.
- In-Class Reading: The Ethnographic Essay, Features of the Form.

## **Week Twelve**

### *Student Presentations*

- Lab Due: Revision Play on the Profile Essay.
- Student Presentations
- Lab Due: Style Exercise #3
- Due: Field Notes



## **Week Thirteen**

### *Getting the Draft Done*

- Activity: Writing the sketch, “what you know, or think you know.”
- Handout: “Writer’s are Thieves” assignment.
- Group Exercise: “Writer are Thieves”
- Due: Ethnographic Essay Rough Draft, bring hard copy to class.
- Activity: Peer Workshops

## **Week Fourteen**

### *Finishing the Ethnographic Essay*

- Full-Class Workshops of Rough Drafts
- Due: Final Draft of the Ethnographic Essay

## **Week Fifteen**

### *Revising our Work*

- Revision Workshops
- Lab Due: Revision Play on the Ethnographic Essay

## **Final Exam**

- Due: Revisions(s)
- Lab Final Reflection Due