

Course: Advanced Composition

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I assume you understand and acknowledge this as an honor point class and as such, I assume a level of preparedness for the rigor. My goal during our five months together is to do what I can to make college English Composition the easiest course on your schedule. You will leave with a personal portfolio containing examples of five different modes of discourse. You will also leave with knowledge and respect for the work/time necessary to develop polished writing. Here are the expectations:

1. Demonstrate proper MLA and APA style

As 11th and 12th graders, I operate under the premise that you all have a working knowledge of MLA format. I will cover the basics in class and offer examples of proper format. Students may utilize outside resources. The best resource for sample papers, sample works cited, and format questions can be found at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Additionally, I recommend using www.citationmachine.net for assistance with works cited entries and parenthetical citations. Make sure you are using the proper style (MLA, APA) and always use the "Manual Entry" option instead of copying and pasting the URL.

2. Demonstrate a working knowledge of Blackboard

All of your essays must be uploaded to Blackboard. This serves several important purposes. First, Blackboard scans for plagiarism and we will both get a report that shows the percentage of potential plagiarism. Secondly, most colleges expect students to know how to use Blackboard. Finally, Blackboard provides an electronic storage for the end of the year portfolio.

3. Fully understand and practice the steps in the writing process

Yes, I do allow students the privilege of resubmitted revised essays **once and within a specified time-period** for a higher grade. This privilege is only extended to students who submit their essays on or before the due date. While regrading is not a phenomena you'll experience in college, allowing revisions serves to achieve the goal of teaching writing as a process. Writing takes time, energy, and critical thinking and an essay is always a work in progress.

4. Understand plagiarism and ways to avoid plagiarism

Colleges expect students to know what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. The consequences for committing this error (unknowingly or knowingly) are expensive and possibly life-altering beyond the comfortable walls of Cousino High School. Former students and my own daughter have been accused of plagiarism in college. Trust me.....you need to know what it is, how to avoid it, and how to defend yourself if you're accused.

5. Evaluate the credibility of a source

Three of your essays require the use of outside sources/research. Your information must come from reputable sources and it can be very tricky to determine the credibility of a source. We will work together to discern fake news from real news and blogs/opinions from actual research. We will also explore bias and propaganda and its effect on credibility.

6. Adhere to deadlines

Absences will set you back in this course. If you're a student who regularly misses 10-20 days in a semester and you need this credit to graduate, you should run – not walk – to your counselor and find a different 5th hour. I'm always willing to work with students who experience a hardship or illness, but the deadlines and workload for this class require regular attendance.

7. Respect time

Sure, you might have time after school to complete your work and you might feel the need to slack off and socialize in the lab, but what about your classmates? I value individual instruction and one-on-one discussions, but those can't happen if other students are off task and disruptive. Check yourself. You're a college bound student. Respect your time and the time of others. Familiarize yourself with the due date list and stay current.

8. Computers

We will use computers most days for both research and writing. Because I feel it's unfair to other teachers/classes to reserve and thus monopolize a cart or lab when I only need it for one hour, I usually look to see what's open each morning. Expect to be all over the building so we can accommodate others.

9. Supplies

Each student should purchase five pocket folders- one for each essay. Essays will be accompanied by relevant research, outlines, and rough drafts inside these folders.

10. Modes of Discourse

During this semester you will write the following essays in the following order: Compare/Contrast, Cause/Effect, Descriptive, Argumentative, and Process.

#1. Compare/contrast - This 2-3 page research paper compares professions and colleges and it will set the standard for MLA style expectations.

#2 - Cause/effect - This 3-4 page essay will introduce you to current news/research and teach you how to wade through bias and fake news.

#3 – Descriptive - This 2-3 page essay is a creative piece that requires the use of figurative language.

#4. Argumentative - This 4-6 page paper is your biggest challenge. It requires the use of multiple outside sources and an understanding of persuasive techniques and logical fallacies.

#5 Process Essay. This 2-3 page essay will outline all the steps in a complicated process.

Important Dates

Compare/Contrast Essay – September 5 – September 24

Annotated Research and Outline: September 12

Rough Draft Peer Edit: September 18

Final Draft Due: Monday, September 24

Cause/Effect – September 25 – October 15

Topic Selection: September 26

Annotated Research: October 1

Outline: October 2

Rough Draft (turned in for a grade): Friday, October 5

Rough Drafts returned Monday, October 8

Final Drafts due Monday, October 15

Descriptive – October 16 – October 26

Rough Drafts: October 19

Peer Edit: October 23

Final Draft: Friday, October 26

Argumentative – October 29 – December 3

Topic Selection: October 31

Annotated Research: November 7

Outline: November 12

Rough Draft: November 16

Rough Drafts Returned by November 26

Final Draft: Monday, December 3

Process – December 4– December 17

Topic Selection: December 5

Outline: December 10

Peer Edit: December 12

Final Draft Due: Monday, December 17

Portfolio Preparation and Create Presentations – December 18 – January 8

Students will update each essay and fix any errors. Students will prepare a multi-media presentation that explains each essay topic and their writing process.

Presentations: January 9 – 15

Students will present their portfolio to the class in a 6-8 minute presentation. Students will not read their essays, but explain the topic and their writing process.