**Dr. Christopher Carney**

**FALL, 2014** (8/25-12/14)

Houston Community College, Northwest (Katy Campus); **Office #229**

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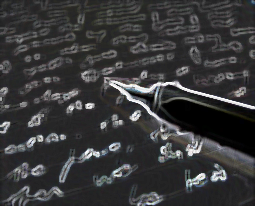
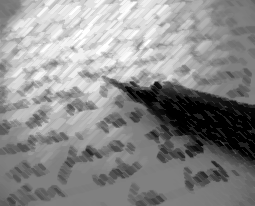
**Office Hours:****11:00 – 12:00 MON / 11:00 – 12:30 TU and TH** (*and by appointment*)

***Class Times and Location:***

**M/W** 8:00 – 9:30 RM 115A (course # 29146)

**M/W** 9:30 – 11:00 RM 115A (course # 28424)

English 1301: Composition I

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My **Learning Web** Page:

<http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/christopher.carney>

**I. Communication and Contact:**

ecause I firmly believe that **communication is vital**, both to your success and mine, please bring any concerns, questions, criticisms, suggestions, or comments in general to my attention as soon as they arise—regardless of how small or seemingly insignificant you might *think* they are. While I prefer that you talk to me in person about such concerns, please feel free to write an email or a handwritten note if you prefer. In short, when it comes to communication**, *never* feel as though you cannot talk to me! I’m here for you.** Beyond official office hours and/or appointments, the best time to raise your question or discuss a concern with me is actually during class—either in our open forum setting for everyone to hear, or through a question directed at me individually when the class is engaged in a collaborative, group exercises. Before and after class might also be possible to address quick questions.

ecause I know the vast majority of you have busy schedules and busy lives, **I generally assume you are far more likely to either address your questions in class or via** **email (it is the 21st Century after all)** before you’ll align your schedule to meet me in my limited office hours. Because of this**, I check my** **email** **frequently**, and I usually try to reply to messages immediately after I read them unless I plan to write a lengthy response (in which case I will let you know of my plan in a quick reply). I check my email **multiple times every day between Monday and Thursday** (mornings, afternoons, and nights); **Fridays are lighter**, but I do check email even though I’m not teaching on this day; **as for weekends, I make no assurances regarding email checks nor replies**, since my focus on these days is on my family, not my classes. On some occasions, especially if I receive an email within a short period of time before our class starts, I might determine that I can meet your needs more effectively if I address your email when I see you as opposed to writing a long written response.

**NOTE:** I will **not** reply to messages requesting a repeat of all the information a student misses in the event of an absence, as doing so uses time and energy that is better spent addressing concerns or questions students (possibly you) have with their actual assignments or other particular issues. Therefore**, it is *your* responsibility to find out what *you* miss in the event of an absence by contacting one of your classmates and/or referring to the schedule.** With that said, being part of a reliable group of peers (i.e. a “study group”) goes a long way to ensure your success—and theirs! Again, I will not reply to messages requesting information about what you miss in the event of an absence, so please don’t ask. Finally, **be sure to have your HCC email account activated and check it often. Whenever I have announcements for the class, I send them to everyone in group message format via HCC email**. If you prefer ***not*** to use your HCC email address (the one that aligns with *Rosters Plus* by default) to receive my messages, you need to contact Admissions and Records with the alternate email address you DO wish to use and officially change it (either way, **YOU** are responsible for all information I send to the class through group messaging, regardless of whether or not you personally receive it due to a non-aligned email address).

I regard my **Learning Web** page as a vital means of communication in this class! It is here that you will find ALL RESOURCES pertaining to this class—either in document form or as active links. My reliance on the Learning Web, as an extension of my courses, is partly because I do not use the other HCC electronic platform—Eagle Online—you are likely required to use in other courses. Furthermore, I distribute very little paper, as all of the documents pertaining to our class are posted on my Learning Web page. When I send out group messages to the class (using ***Rosters +***, which requires you to have an active HCC email account), I am often just informing the class of new documents I’ve posted on the Learning Web. If you are frequently visiting the LW, you’ll see those additions added before you need the message!!

**One more thing regarding email addresses for 1301 students:** because you will lose 50 points for not registering correctly with either Composition Connect or Turnitin.com (100 points if you fail to register for both), I STRONGLY encourage you to use your assigned HCC address for everything!

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**II. Required Books/Supplies/Registrations:**

1. ***Norton Reader*** (13th Edition)

2. Establish accounts at ***Connect Composition*** (online/McGrawhill) and ***Turnitin.com***

(directions for both are on my Learning Web page)

3. A bound **writing notebook and 2 Full Size “Blue Books”**

4. Access to a **computer (and printer) all semester**; possession of **an active email account at H.C.C.**



**III. Course Description, Objectives, Outcomes, and Value:**

1. **HCC Catalog Description of the Course:**

“A course devoted to improving the student’s writing and critical thinking. Writing essays for a variety of purposes from personal to academic, including the introduction to argumentation, critical analysis, and the use of sources. A “Core Curriculum” course.” (*H.C.C. Catalog*)

**B*.* My Description and Objectives:**

This composition course is designed to provide you with guided opportunities to practice various elements and modes of writing, and writing strategies, commonly used in collegiate and/or professional settings. In essence, this course prepares and equips you for the expectations of college writers throughout all of your present and future coursework. While the development of your **writing** is our primary objective in the course, it cannot develop as it should without likewise developing and sharpening two other vital points in a triad of skills: **writing**, **reading** and **thinking.** Therefore, responding analytically and critically to a vast range of texts, along with **verbalizing** your thought-processes, will characterize most of the assignments and activities we do throughout the semester. In order to become a more proficient writer, you will need to fully understand *and practice* all of the dimensions of the **Writing Process**. In this course, you will learn and/or refine your current understanding of this invaluable process because you will be required to write both formal and informal papers of varying lengths, utilizing all of the various stages in this process. Along with the Writing Process, we will closely examine various rhetorical modes of writing, commonly used in both academic and professional/career writing situations. I am a strong believer in writing across the curriculum, which basically translates into developing sharp audience awareness and, with flexibility, applying writing skills to a wide variety of situations: personal, academic, and professional. Learning about the various distinctions in these modes will help you better understand and refine a number of general composition skills required in all essays. These skills include: building healthy paragraphs, varying sentence lengths, applying/citing outside sources, sharpening cohesion, using transitions, and perfecting coherency.

**C. Practical Value of This Course**

**English 1301 is possibly one the most valuable classes you will take in your entire college career, and certainly in your undergraduate years if you plan to transfer to a university. For that matter, the same applies to English 1302.** Wow. Big statement. Am I biased towards my discipline over other, equally worthy disciplines? The answer: somewhat. The reason, however, does not emerge from arrogance, but rather from the simple, practical reality all college students encounter in their academic careers: the **frequency, grade weight, and sheer quantity of WRITING** required of them (not to mention reading and thinking critically)—regardless of their major. Students’ brilliant insights in their science classes or their fantastic theories and ideas about business, engineering, or nursing will likely mean very little to them, nor their professors, if they are unable to effectively communicate their ideas in writing. Corporate CEO’s complain that so many of their new recruits (bright recruits in terms of the specifics of their respective fields) have unclear writing because they unclear thinking, and these areas of deficiency express themselves in unclear speaking. Without an ability to communicate effectively, students are hindered in their ability to demonstrate what they know! I’ll admit that I have my own deficiencies in mathematics; however, I haven’t found a day of my life, especially in the 21st Century, hindered in the least by my inability to do algebra effectively (or calculus at all)! Despite the big push for S.T.E.M. programs and all the money being poured into schools that aim to produce more mathematicians and scientists, I believe—and I’m prepared to prove—that what society desperately needs are more people who can think critically and communicate effectively. For you, the student, effective communication translates into attaining positions, receiving promotions, and generally functioning on the job more effectively. Convinced? I hope so! It is my hope that by the end of this course, you’ll see how valuable this class will be for YOU, regardless of your specific academic or career goals.

**IV: Outcomes and TEXAS CORE CURRICULUM Requirements**

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| --- |
| Given the rapid evolution of necessary knowledge and skills and the need to take into account global, national, state, and local cultures, the core curriculum must ensure that students will develop the essential knowledge and skills they need to be successful in college, in a career, in their communities, and in life. Through the Texas Core Curriculum, students will gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world, and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning.  Students enrolled in this core curriculum course will complete a research project or case study designed to cultivate the following core objectives:   * **Critical Thinking Skills**—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information * **Communication Skills**—to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication * **Personal Responsibility**—to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making * **Teamwork** (Comp I, Comp II, and TW)—to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal * **Social Responsibility** (Lit Only)—to include intercultural competency, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities   Student proficiency in Communication Skills will be assessed as a formal written out-of-class essay, which is at least 3 pages long and which includes an oral presentation component as well as a visual component. Student proficiency in Critical Thinking will be assessed by a formal out-of-class essay assignment. Personal, Social Responsibility, and Teamwork will be assessed as part of long unit or major essay assignment, which will include assigned reading responses, pre-writing activities, multiple drafts, and group activities (such as peer review or group presentations). Student project grades will account for at least 5% of the final course grade. |

***All of the above rhetoric in section #4 comes directly from the state of Texas, as it names and describes the C.O.R.E. objectives and/or competencies that our course must adhere to at the most fundamental level. Once you’ve reviewed the syllabus, assignments, and activities we plan to cover, hopefully you’ll see how everything addresses specific aspects of the C.O.R.E. (FYI: I’ve already done so meticulously, so it is not your responsibility to find them—just be sure to do them!)***

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#### V. Behavior

** eneral Premise:** *Because you are all* ***adults*** *who are taking this* ***college course*** *by* ***choice****, it should go without saying that everyone will demonstrate* ***maturity, responsibility,*** *and an* ***eagerness to learn.*** *The following policies ensure that everyone experiences a rewarding learning environment.* ***NOTE: Disruptive behavior/activities which interfere with teaching and/or learning will not be tolerated, and may result in an administrative withdrawal without refund***

**a. Attendance and Withdrawal Policies –** Missing class means missing opportunities to learn; therefore, in keeping with the HCC policy on attendance, “students may be dropped after missing more than 6 hours of class time.” Attendance will be taken every day at the beginning of class.

**Regarding absences for English 1301 students specifically:** it is very important to have a typed **r**ough **d**raft of assigned essays (meeting minimum length requirements) on **RD due dates (3 of them)** in order to be considered present on such days. Failure to come to class with a legitimate rough draft constitutes an absence, since our time will be spent responding to peer essays and a student with a missing essay has nothing to contribute to the exercise as a whole; in fact, students without papers to exchange rob the people whose essays they read from being able to give feedback (both giving and receiving feedback are required); this is why those who do not have papers will not be permitted to stay..

**In accordance with HCCS policy, students with more than 6 hours of absences (3 classes) may be dropped for excessive absences, and a daily record of attendance will be maintained throughout the semester.** Remember: it is your responsibility to keep updated on course information if you miss class, so please make arrangements to contact other students on such occasions, should they occur.

**NOTICE: The State of Texas has begun to impose penalties on students who drop courses excessively . For example, if you take the same course more than two times, you have to pay extra tuition.** (Students who enroll for most credit CEU classes for a third or more times will be charged an additional $50.00 per semester credit hour and $3.00 per contact hours.) **In 2007, the Texas Legislature passed a law limiting new students (those starting college in Fall 2007) to no more than six total course withdrawals throughout their academic career in obtaining a baccalaureate degree. There may be future penalties imposed**.

Please ask me or your counselor about opportunities for tutoring or other assistance prior to considering course withdrawl, or if you are not receiving passing grades. In consideration of the above law, I will not give “W” as a grade option unless you have submitted the withdrawal form yourself before the deadline for withdrawal. I will only give whatever grades you earn (A, B, C, D, F, or FX). **If you stop attending the class, you need to officially withdraw yourself prior to the withdrawal deadline**. **If you do not do so and simply disappear from class, you will receive an “FX” in the course.**

***INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS:*** Receiving a **W** in a course may affect the status of your student Visa. Once a W is given for the course (after you have submitted a withdrawal form officially), it will not be changed to an F because of the visa consideration. Please contact the International Student Office at 713-718-8520 if you have any questions about your visa status and other transfer issues.

**b.** **Class Arrival/Departure** – **A pattern of arriving late to class is not only disruptive, it is disrespectful**–both to me and to the rest of the class. I understand that “life happens,” but odd circumstances should be the exception, not the rule, and should thusly occur on a rare occasions. I have no tolerance for **patterns** of late arrival, as it displays highly irresponsible behavior at best, and an outward display of arrogance at worst. However, if you are legitimately late, it is your responsibility to see me **after class** in order to change the recorded absence into a “late” in my record. **Be advised that a late arrival of more than 20 minutes will not be changed from an absence to a late; it will simply remain as an absence for the day**. I will also begin combining late arrivals into pairs of two *after* your second or third late arrival, regardless of the reason; each pair of late arrivals will then transfer into an absence. For those who acquire absences this way, the same policy regarding absences applies—namely, the potential of being dropped.

***I consider premature, sneaky departures from class as a behavioral issue****. This behavior conflicts with the “general premise” of section V (see above). Anyone who departs from class this way will not only be counted absent, but will not be allowed to earn extra credit, and will lose all possible points that may have been earned in class for that day; students who do this will lose “participation” points at the end of the semester as well.* ***If a student is not trying to be covert, yet still leaves before class is dismissed*** *(without discussing it with me in advance), he or she will be counted absent for the day.*

**c.** **Disruptive Talking** – Because I am a strong supporter of team learning in interactive groups, I provide ample opportunity throughout the semester to verbally engage in the learning process; I balance lectures with “workshops.” **Therefore,** **disruptive chatting when we are assembled as an entire class is completely unacceptable**, regardless of what you may be chatting about. Such behavior is both **disrespectful and immature**; if necessary, I will resort to separating pairs/groups of talkers and assigning them seats on opposite sides of the room…*just like they do in elementary school!* I reserve the right to ask distractors, who have been warned at least once, to leave class for the day (which means receiving an absence for that day). Also, **it is unacceptable at the end of workshops to talk as a group when other groups are presenting their ideas**, as each group should demonstrate the same courtesy they expect from others when presenting their findings to the class. Individuals, or entire groups for that matter, who talk and/or distract the class may nonetheless still lose credit on an assignment.

**d.** **Classroom** **Attitude –** How subtle it is, but ever so revealing of a student’s views towards his or her role in society, adulthood, higher education, future career goals, and general self-respect. A healthy outlook in these areas is characterized by a classroom behavior that reflects those qualities stated in the general premise above. A few examples of actions which reveal a negative attitude include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors: *chatting, ignoring deadlines without communicating with me, sleeping, working on unrelated material, being confrontational, excessively exiting class, or refusing to participate in group activities.* If you find yourself engaged in any of these behaviors, let me just ask you to honestly consider why you are in college at all. Really—ask yourself that question honestly. I’m not being judgmental, nor am I being sarcastic; I’m simply saying you need to ask that question because these behaviors are indicative of an attitude that is not conducive to success in college. For what it’s worth, I know that attitude all too well because I had it myself when I was in high school….*but not in college!* The difference between these settings is huge, namely because college students are not *required* to attend—they do so by choice! That is just the beginning of what makes college different from high school!

**e.** Academic Honesty, **Plagiarism, Collusion –** To plagiarize is to submit the words/ideas of another as one’s own

without giving them due credit. **It is a form of theft, in addition to being academically dishonest and unethical**. Like all other forms of cheating, plagiarism carries serious penalties that are not only enforced by me, but also by HCC administrators. Be advised that **all three of your formal papers must be submitted to turnitin.com** **for review before they are submitted to me.** HCC Policy: *“Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating on a test includes copying from another student’s paper; using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test; collaborating with another student during a test without authority; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or in part the contents of an un-administered test; or bribing another person to obtain a test that is to be administered. ‘Plagiarism’ means the appropriation of another’s work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one’s own written work for credit. ‘Collusion’ means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit.”* If you consult any sources, whether oral or written, you must clearly distinguish between your words/ideas and theirs at all times. Students who plagiarize, collude, or cheat may face disciplinary action including a zero for the assignment, an F for the course, and/or dismissal from the college (see on-line student handbook).

**Be prepared to submit final drafts of all essays to turnitin.com:** I strongly suggest not underestimating the ability I have to find evidence of plagiarism through such a powerful resource! **Be Advised:** **if I encounter a plagiarized paper on turnitin.com, that paper receives an F and the student receives a zero in participation; he or she is also not allowed to do extra credit, either.** **A second offense will result in failing the course and being referred to administration for further disciplinary action—not the least of which will include my request for the student’s immediate removal from the class.** For more on plagiarism, refer tothe HCC Library site (on the Northwest Writing Center site), or the HCC Student Handbook.

**f**. **Arrival / Exiting Class –** Because we are all adults, there is no need to ask “permission” to use a restroom or exit the class to make an important phone call on a rare occasion; however, I will address students individually who appear to exit the room “**excessively**,” ***habitually* using the restroom (or anywhere else for that matter) as an excuse for frequent interruptions.** Generally speaking, it is inappropriate to consistently designate class time on a regular basis to use such facilities. Also, it is poor etiquette to walk in front of the class or let doors slam behind you when you exit or enter a room—especially when we are in the middle of writing, reading, discussion, or viewing a film. Furthermore, late entrances and/or class departures/returns for the restroom are distracting enough as they are; doing so without trying to be as inconspicuous as possible (i.e. making an obvious visual display of oneself or noisily opening/closing doors) makes it even worse. Needless to say, being distracting like this forfeits (positive) participation points!!

**g.** **Recording Devices –** Official HCCS policy **concerning recording devices:**  camera phones, cameras,

audio/tape recorders, video recorders and any other electronic device that is capable of recording the human

voice or image declares that the **“[u]se of recording devices, including camera phones and tape recorders, is**

**prohibited in classrooms, laboratories, faculty offices, and other locations where instruction, tutoring, or**

**testing occurs. Students with disabilities who need to use a recording device as a reasonable**

**accommodation should contact the Office for Students with Disabilities for information regarding [such]**

**accommodations.”** I will refer any student caught doing this to further administrative discipline, which will also

include my recommendation for the student’s removal from the class.

**h. Emerging Technologies:** As a student who is active in our learning community, **it is your responsibility to**

**be respectful of our learning atmosphere in every way in** **which you have control over your own behaviors. This absolutely applies to any or all of the electronic** **devices you bring into the classroom!** So, in

order to show respect to your fellow students and myself, you are expected to **treat all electronic devices you**

**bring with you to class as extensions of yourself—no different** **than the control you need to have over your**

**tongue or your hands. Just as you are responsible for what you do with body parts, and you know the**

**difference between constructive and non-constructive uses of them**, the same applies to your tech. For

example, a ringing phone that you fail to set onsilent mode isno different in my estimation than blurting out an

inappropriatecomment at an inappropriate time. Staring at a screen of any size during a lecture or a presentation

is no different to me than physically turning yourself around and staring at the opposite wall. If I saw a student

doing the latter behavior, I’d conclude there was something seriously wrong with him or her and naturally

address such outrageous, non-colleagiate behavior. Be advised that I’ll addressstudents who are glued to their

screens at inappropriate times in the same way because I view the behavior asequally outrageous! Assume also

that such behavior will adversely affect participation grades as well!! On that note, it should go without saying

that **there is absolutely no place for ear buds in a college classroom**, as students who think they can audibly

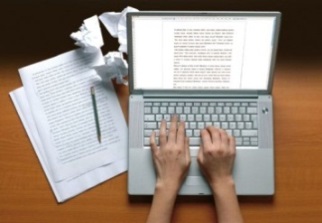
tune-out (pun intended) and listen to their music during class (thus distracting others as in the process) ought to

seriously ask why they are even in college at all! Such a behavioral issue naturally meanslosing participation

points! **BTW:** I love using my ear buds and listening to my tunes as much as you do—***at the* *appropriate time!***I

am also a strong advocate for the use of technology in the classroom—***in the appropriate contexts!***

**VI. Writing Assignments: Formal and Informal Modes**



1. **Formal Papers:** Throughout thecourse, you will write **3** formal papers: Essay # 1 (Article Analysis); Essay # 2 (Song or Poem Analysis); and Essay #3 (Position Paper and Intro to Research). You will find a detailed assignment prompt for these assignments on Learning Web, which includes specific requirements, due dates for the rough/final drafts, and grading criteria (NOTE: I sometimes have assignments on LW that apply to previous courses, as I may have forgotten to change them from “visible” to “private” mode, so be sure the prompt is either dated within our current semester, or you know from my comments in class that you have the right prompt .

**These papers are all expected to meet minimum page length requirements, must be formatted according to MLA guidelines, and absolutely need to be submitted to turnitin.com to even be considered for a grade.** I will direct you to resources that provide detailed MLA guidelines on my HCC Learning Web page, and we will also be going over MLA at length in class. **Also, a typed rough draft of each of the 3 papers will be required at least one class session prior to the day before the final draft is due (see schedule)! It is important to remember the fact that failure to have a rough draft on a due date not only means a deduction on the paper, but it ALSO constitutes an absence for the day**! These rough drafts will receive a stamp to verify that they meet page-length requirements, and that they are completed by the required due dates. The stamp provides evidence that you participated in the peer-response exercise, so do not lose it!! Be advised that there may be other materials associated with the three essays that will likewise require a stamp. Following the electronic submission of these papers (the first class session following the turnitin due date), you are required to submit one complete rough draft, along with the top pages only of other stamped drafts (and only if they have stamps). These drafts and/or draft top pages need to be accompanied by **clear evidence of the writing process (especially revision),** along with peer responses and verification that you have sent your paper **to turnitin.com** for review! In addition, you may be required to submit printouts from various websites along with the paper. Again, **assignments that are missing any of the above accompaniments will receive deductions, as will papers that use first or second person voice.**

**As indicated in the plagiarism policy, final drafts of all essays will be submitted to turnitin.com.** This

website is not only designed to deflect and identify plagiarism (as that was originally its sole purpose), it is

has now become a very practical and useful place for electronic essay submission, grading, viewing, and

record-keeping as well. **Be advised: I will not accept papers submitted through any other means than**

**turnitin.com. Do NOT email essays to me, as I will not even open them.**

1. ** nformal Journal: (see journal guidelines handout):** You will be asked to write **10** journal entries, each approximately **1 page** in length and **VERY informal** in terms of form. **All of the journal entries you write will be direct responses to selections you make from the various video playlists on my YouTube playlist page.** **You are required to utilize a variety of playlists**, but the choices you make are yours. Many of these videos involve discussions that you may or may not entirely understand; that is perfectly okay!! The point of viewing them is not to gain a complete mastery of their contents or to write as an “expert,” but rather to engage in authentic learning. Thus, one of my goals with these journals is to help you abandon the mindset you likely had drilled into your head throughout high school (K-12 education overall), which is to perceive all learning in direct correlation with some sort of standardized test—a mindset that only accepts ‘correct” answers and merely asks of all learning endeavors: “will this be on the test?” Such a mindset is disastrous to the curious, creative, and critically-thinking mind! The point of viewing and engaging in these discussions and visual material, via YouTube, is for you to exercise critical thinking skills without worrying about the final product. By doing so, you are building your collegiate identity and confidence, in addition to your writing skills! So, the first component to each of these journal entries is to watch something that interests you, and to watch it in its entirety. NOTE: journal entries, if they respond to discussions from “Uncommon Knowledge,” “Critical Discussions,” or “TED Talks” will not be counted if there is no indication that you did not watch the whole discussion. Regarding all of the playlists with shorter clips: generally speaking, each journal response should reflect about 30 minutes of viewing a combination of these videos that you believe share a common theme (Red Bull, RSA Shorts, Big Think, Portlandia).

In general, journaling is a fantastic way to keep the “writing gears” moving in your mind through informal free-writing, as journal entries allow you to practice written expression without the pressure and demands that accompany all of the stages involved with formal essays. Keep in mind that journal-writing is equally as valuable to you, **in your development as a writer**, as the final drafts of your formal essays! The big difference, of course, is the difference in the final product (from a reader’s standpoint). In contrast to formal writing, these entries should all be **highly informal explorations of ideas and/or exercises of** **discovery**! They may simply be “gut reactions.” What I do **NOT** want to see in these entries is a mere retelling of what you see or hear, as every journal response should be loaded with your **interpretations, insights, and OPINIONS!**

Writers

*Interpretive Analysis*

*Series*

*Go There!*

**You**

**Write!**

**V**irtual **T**ravel for **A**ctual **J**ournals **!**

**C. In-Class Essays:**  Otherwise known as the **midterm and final exams**, these are essays written in class, and in a very limited amount of time. Unlike out-of-class papers, in which case you have all time you need to exercise the valuable stages of the “writing process,” these essays are written once, by hand, and in one class session (all characteristics that oppose the “Writing Process” I value so much). Because of these facts associated with in-class writing, I personally give little value to them—neither intrinsically, in your development as a writer, nor practically, in terms of the points I ascribe to them (frankly, I assign this kind of writing because I am required to do so). With that said . . .while journals and these exams both share the handwritten common ground, the content of the in-class essay IS evaluated for correctness and quality of content—namely, the correctness you demonstrate regarding your response to the specific prompt question and following directions (perhaps the most valuable aspect of them). You will be informed as to the general content of these essays a week or so in advance, along with other preparation tips, which then leaves only the specific prompt questions a mystery until exam day. I should also add that these essays serve as a filtering tool insomuch as they help assure me that the person who submits formal out-of-class papers is the same person who sits in my class; thus, even though the expectations are lower for these papers as a category, there are still obvious qualities that confirm consistency between papers written both in and out of class.



**VII. Group Reading Projects and Presentations**

**For all of the details on this aspect of our course, please go to my 1301 Learning Web page and click on the Word document entitled “1301 Group Reading Modules and Guidelines”**

Simply stated, our class will be divided into **four modules** with **four groups in each module** (A,B,C,D). On day two or three of our class, you will be placed in four groups. In order to see every group rearranged with new people, I’ve made threefold rule that you ***cannot*** do the following when you sign-up: **1)** use the same letter twice; **2)** sign-up for each letter sequentially (A,B,C,D or vice-versa); **3)** be in the same group with the same person more than twice. Groups are expected to **apply all of the required elements to their group projects**—of which you’ll find listed and described in detail on a handout I’ve posted on my 1301 Learning Web page. These guidelines clearly identify all that I expect from each group, including details about the required “**Prezi**” for the actual classroom presentation. It will be up to each group to determine how exactly the various objectives and tasks are distributed and executed among group members. The guidelines also discuss how these projects are assessed and how to address participation issues that may arise.

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**VIII. Q. – “Will There be ‘Pop Quizzes’ in this class?” A. – Hmmm…*Maybe!***

You can expect **5 of these** to occur--or fewer (including none at all), depending upon the amount of evidence I see that you’ve actively engaged with readings. Generally speaking, the 4 or 5 questions in these small quizzes will be focused on the assigned “everyone” readings and reasonably simple…*if you’ve done the required reading that is!* Any or all points designated for these quizzes that are not used for quizzes will simply transfer into “**participation**” points, of which I will determine for each individual.

 http://thesurrianlife.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/exclamation-point.jpg

**IX. Late and/or Missing Assignments:**

All of these assignments will be discussed at length. Although I will provide handouts that clearly state the requirements and grading criteria, I expect students to keep up with assigned readings and to take notes while paying attention in class. Work that is off-topic, or fails to follow instructions, will not be accepted; extra time will not be granted to resubmit these initially-rejected assignments, so consider them as they are: yet to be submitted and subject to all applicable policies/requirements, such as late penalties. *One letter grade will be deducted for each class period an out-of-class, formal assignment is late*. Peer responses may not be made up and journal entries will only be stamped on the due dates; upon collection of journals, only those entries/assignments with stamps will be counted for full credit. The midterm and/or final exam *may* be made up if they are missed, provided that arrangements with me are made in advance and I approve them.

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[](http://www.mhhe.com/domore/LearnSmartDemo.html)[](http://successinhighered.com/itt/connect-with-learnsmart-achieve/)

**For access: Go to my 1301 Learning Web page for the necessary URL you will need to cut and paste into**

**the McGrawhill website in order to establish your account with the registration ID already established for**

**you through your enrollment in this course. In the 1301 folder, click on the document entitled “Connect**

**Composition Access”**

**X. McGrawhill “Learn Smart Achieve” (LSA) Online Requirement:**

It is vital that you register with McGrawhill “Connect” immediately and take the “**pre-test,” which is a**

**beginning assessment tool; you have until September 5 to take/complete the pre-test.** Then, once this first

important step is finished, **you will have the majority of the semester to complete the actual LSA**. On average,

**McGrawhill reports that students will spend approximately 7 hours to complete the LSA**; however, times will vary due to the number of questions students get incorrect. Be advised that going into this assignment half-

hearted or unprepared to think through your answers will only result in significantly extending, not shortening,

your time. Why? Because this program is powerful and actively responds to correct and incorrect answers! Thus,

it will only interpret incorrect answers as indicative that a student needs more help in a particular area. **Thirdly,**

**in the last couple of weeks in the course, you’ll have a post-test**, which finishes the process and it is very

similar to the pre-test.

**Your percentage of completion on the LSA then transfers into my 0-100 point scale**, which is directly applied

to your grade (i.e. 83% percent completion becomes 83 points, which is a B); there is no good reason anyone

should get less than 100%, since grades do not reflect performance—only evaluation. The other great thing about

***Connect*** is that your one-time fee, which was part of your enrollment fee for this class, gives you access to

personalized, online instruction for 4 years! This resource will be a valuable tool as you develop your writing

skills and advance through your college career. **NOTE:** **you must have at least 40% of your LSA completed**

**in order to take the midterm exam**!! The pre-test and post-test are worth 25 points each, and they are graded as

“all or nothing”

I**n order** **to avoid huge frustrations** with Composition Connect, **DO NOT** simply go to the McGrawhill website and attempt to sign up from their homepage! As an HCC student, your course fees have already paid for your access to Connect/LSA, and McGrawhill coordinates with HCC using our roster system. All this to say that you do not want to sign up for any sort of “trial offer” you may see posted at their site if you visit them; the specific URL I will provide to you needs to get pasted right into your browser address bar so that you are directed to a very specific place on the McGrawhill site for our class and/or you LSA.

Got McGrawhill/Connect **Questions?** Go to: [www.mhhe.com](http://www.mhhe.com) or call technical support at 800.331.5094

NOTE: You must write down the specific case number any or all of the times you need to call this helpful number, as they always provide a case number. If you bring any problems to me about your inability to connect to “Connect,” I will always ask you for the case number you received when you called technical support first.



**XI. Grading Distribution:**

#### 3 Formal Essays 400 = 100 + 150 + 150

**Journal 100** = 10 entries @ *up to* 10 points each

#### Midterm (in-class essay 1) 50

#### Final Exam (in-class essay 2) 50

#### Presentations/ Group Projects 200 = FOUR @ 50 points each

**LSA (Composition Connect) 100 …** The amount you complete determines the score you receive!

**Pre-Test / Post-Test 50 =** 2 @ 25 points each

**Pop Quizzes / Participation 50**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**1,000 points possible**

Overall: 900-1,000 points=A; 800-899=B; 700-799=C; **600-699=**D**; Below 600=**F **NOTE: Missing one of the 3 formal essays will eliminate the extra credit eligibility AND eliminate the possibility of earning an A or B in the class.**

**XII. General Guidelines on Grades:**

**Please note the following points:**

1. **Grades will NOT be discussed in class.**

2. Before you and I discuss any questions or comments you have regarding a grade on an assignment, you must read all

of the comments and then schedule an appointment.

3. **I look primarily at content, organization and development. Style, grammar and mechanics are secondary.**

However, if style and grammar are such that the point is unintelligible, your grade will be affected.

4. Please don’t ask me what your grade at the end of the semester. Wait for grade posting at semester’s end.

5. **The following page contains a general description of grading criteria, which applies to written assignments and**

**overall class performance:**

**A** – Student demonstrates superior ability, skill and originality. Marks of a scholar emerge in this student’s work. Possesses thorough knowledge of material and consistently submits high quality work that is adapted to audience and the rhetorical context. There is a high degree of intuition and intellectual capacity evident regularly. Worked is marked with a spark of exceptional quality. Student demonstrates exceptional ability to think/learn independently and think critically. Work demonstrates successful risk-taking, which is likely “outside the box” to some extent. In short, the work is downright impressive on multiple levels!

**B** – Student shows above average ability, but nothing is too distinguished. Usually goes well beyond what is required, but nothing stands out as terribly exceptional. This reflects the very best work one can produce by not standing out. Work is largely free of rhetorical and stylistic errors, and clearly adheres to all instructions. The work is “safe,” which can be interpreted as a positive or a negative feature depending upon a student’s academic goals. Generally good work by a good student.

**C** – Average work which adequately treats assignments with enough care so as to not have “serious” problems, but is obviously concerned with merely “getting by.” Contains some errors (i.e., mechanical, stylistic, rhetorical, proofreading). Work adheres to instructions generally, but is a disappointment because it is just so blah (lackluster) and/or lacks development and engagement. There is either a lack of care/involvement with the assignments OR a desperate struggle to stay afloat in the course if this work reflects giving assignments their very best (only they know).

**D** – Below average work, but not necessarily failing but quite close. There is inadequate development of the assignments on several counts, poorly focused writing indicating writer’s uncertainty of tasks and content. Shows little originality and skill, in addition to significant deficiency in one or more vital areas of the assignments. Student rarely adheres to specified guidelines. Work frequently contains significant errors.

**F** – Student consistently turns in unacceptable work which is sloppy, poorly organized, fails to meet requirements and contains excessive errors in style and logic. Student never meets deadlines and demonstrates no interest and little effort in work.

** **

**XIII. Extra Credit Option:**

***If you****…have not missed class more than two times, have not been addressed for a behavioral issue, and have submitted all three formal essays* ***on time****, then you will be eligible for the optional extra credit assignment, which is* ***worth up to 50 points****! I’ll provide the details for this assignment on a handout I will post on my Learning Web page. Generally speaking, this assignment will involve a visit to either the* ***Museum of Fine Arts*** *or the* ***Holocaust Museum*** *in downtown Houston, and will require a tw0-page essay that responds to a very specific question pertaining to your visit. You will be required to provide a* ***dated receipt/verification from the museum, in addition to other possible forms of evidence you were there (after the 3rd essay is collected).***

**XIV. ADA Statement:**

Any student with a documented disability (such as physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, and so on) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disability Services Office for Northwest College at the beginning of the semester. Faculty members are authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Service Office. For Northwest College, the Accommodations Center is located at Spring Branch in RC 12. Only those accommodations specified by the Center, in accordance with Texas law, may be provided. For questions, contact 713.718.5165 or the Disability Counselor at Northwest College at 713.718.5422. To visit the ADA Web site, log on to www.hccs.edu, click Future Students, scroll down the page and click on the words Disability Information.

**XV. Tutoring and On-line Help:**

You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the free tutoring available to you in the Writing Center at Katy, Spring Branch, and Alief campuses. Tutors can help you organize and develop ideas for your writing assignments and to work on problems in grammar and sentence structure. ***Tutors do not write, rewrite, edit, or correct papers for you,*** *but they can help you to do the tasks better yourself.* (However, neither the tutor nor any person—your mother, your high school teacher, your friend, and so on—other than your instructor is the final judge of your work). You will receive a flyer with the hours for our Katy Writing Center when we visit within the first two weeks. Hours for all three centers are posted on the Writing Center page, located on main HCC website.On-line tutoring is available through askonline.net; however, online tutoring can never equally duplicate one-on-one instruction from tutors with graduate degrees in English! **NOTE: I am glad to offer 5 extra credit points for each paper/assignment that you take to an actual Writing Center on one of the campuses (a 15-point possible total if you take all three)!** If you go, be sure to have the tutor print his or her name on the top page of the rough draft, along with a signature (I believe some of them use a Writing Center stamp, which is also acceptable).

**XVI. HCC Student Services Information**

Student Services provides counseling for the Northwest College student body. Counselors are available at each campus to assist students in creating class schedules, evaluating college transcripts, and completing degree/certificate plans. Student Services regular business hours are the same at both campuses: M-Th 8am-7pm, F-Sat 8am-1pm. Phone numbers: Spring Branch Campus, 713-718-5669; Katy Campus, 713-718-5751.

Additional Information:

**http://northwest.hccs.edu/northwest/campus-servies**

**Early Alert: HCC has instituted an Early Alert process by which your professor will “alert” you through counselors of concerns that you might fail a class because of excessive absences and/or poor academic performance.**

**XVII. ENGLS3 - Online Evaluation**

Students will be expected to participate in the **EGLS3 – Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System.**

At Houston Community College, professors believe that thoughtful student feedback is necessary to improve teaching and learning. During a designated time, you will be asked to answer a short online survey of research-based questions related to instruction. The anonymous results of the survey will be made available to your professors and division chairs for continual improvement of instruction. Look for the survey as part of the Houston Community College Student System online near the end of the term. **NOTE: verification of a completed survey will automatically result in 5 extra-credit points (everyone is eligible for this extra credit)!**

**XVIII. Turnitin.com**

**Please visit my 1301 Learning Web page for instructions to register with turnitin.com (absolutely required for this course) and Composition Connect.**

***Reminder:*** You must have an **active HCC email account** you plan to use or **check regularly**. This is the means by which I send announcements to the class! **You are responsible** for such information. If you have a personal email address you prefer over an HCC address, simply contact Admissions in order to have them change the email address I have on my mass-email list (roster) for you.

**Let’s Have A Great Semester!**

*Your Success is My Success!*

**XIX. Addendum (Regarding Papers)**

1. All 5 writing assignments must be completed in order to earn an A or a B in the course, regardless of point totals (3 out-of-class formal essays and 2 in-class essays); missing one or more of these assignments eliminates the possibility of earning an “A” in this class.

2. All three formal, out-of-class essays must be written in correct MLA format, and must be submitted to turnitin.com; all citations of outside sources in papers must likewise adhere to correct MLA guidelines

3. All 5 essay assignments (3 out-of-class and 2 in-class), and at least 8 stamped journal entries, must be completed in order to be eligible for extra credit

4. All accompanying documentation must be submitted with each major assignment. Make sure you get everything you

will need to submit documentation and a Works Cited page.

5. Plagiarism will earn a “0” (F) for the essay **assignment**, which may not be made up. A second violation of plagiarism earns an F-grade for the **course**, in addition to my strong recommendation for further disciplinary action by HCC Administration.

6. Essays will be returned (and/or visible for viewing at turnitin.com) two weeks after the submission date. Please do not ask me when papers will be returned, as you are being informed here.

8. Keep a hard copy, or an electronic backup copy, of all assignments you submit online! While there are absolutely no alternatives for submission, having the essay means you can resubmit at turnitin.com (even if doing so means creating another account)

**This syllabus is tentative and may be adjusted at the discretion of the instructor**

**For particular dates associated with all of the assignments named in the syllabus, see the course schedule**

**For all things pertaining to this class and many other learning resources, be sure to familiarize yourself with my Learning Web Page**

**@**

<http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/christopher.carney>

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