

*University of New Mexico—Valencia*  
*English 110.503*

**Spring 2016**  
**English 110.503**  
**Accelerated Composition**  
**MW 1:30-2:45**  
**CRN: 52756**  
**Location: VAAS (Academics) 124**

**Richard Sylvestre, MA**  
**Office Location: C 110C**  
**Phone: 925-8922**  
**E-mail: risylves@unm.edu**  
**Office Hours: M/W 12:30—1:00 or**  
**by Appointment**

**OVERVIEW**

In English 110, Accelerated Composition, you will write three essays, each grounded in a thematic unit (the specific styles and themes are given in the Course Outline). These essays require you to develop good writing habits (learning about and applying the writing process), integrate quotations from primary sources, evaluate the validity of source material, and of course avoid plagiarism. Additionally, you will need to use correct grammar and to write strong sentences to produce polished essays. To help you create well-edited essays, you can expect to learn grammar competencies (comma splices/run-ons, fragments, pronoun agreement and reference, punctuation, and subject/verb agreement). If you learn these writing skills, you will become a more successful communicator in college courses and a more thoughtful professional in your careers.

***Translation:** We will discuss and explore several topics through the semester. You will choose a specific area within each overall topic to write about and produce an essay. We will play around with structure, grammar, and mechanics that apply to all genres, but do not worry too much about this at the beginning.*

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Students Will:

- I. in order to write effectively in various genres...
  - use texts (not necessarily written) to generate ideas on a given topic for an essay
  - discuss ideas in order to explore a topic
  - write to explore and question a topic
  - write three separate essays, two of which will be submitted for the final portfolio
- II. in order to improve reading skills...
  - read difficult texts and attempt to both understand and comprehend ideas from them to foster critical thinking skills
- III. in order to develop writing style and use their experience as valid resources...
  - use their own voice to express their own ideas
  - bring in outside material that will fit into the topic being explored
  - improve upon grammar and mechanics skills
- IV. in order to foster an understanding of different styles of English and audience...
  - differentiate an academic style of English from others and use this style to present ideas
  - learn and use MLA citation and formatting
- V. in order to foster effective skills as a student...
  - keep an organized notebook for the class
  - submit a portfolio at the end of the semester
- VI. in order to improve writing and understand the process involved...
  - revise
  - edit

### **REQUIRED MATERIALS**

- Notebook Binder (3-ring binder)
- Portfolio Folder (not needed until the end of the semester)
- *Practical Argument, Short—2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, by Laurie G Kirszner. ISBN-13: 978-1-4576-8388-6
- *The Pocket Style Manual, Sixth Edition*, Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers. ISBN-13: 978-1-4576-0293-9; ISBN-10: 1-4576-0239-3
- UNM e-mail address and access to UNM Blackboard Learn
- Access to Internet and Microsoft Office (available on UNMVC computers)

*If you have any confusion or concerns about these requirements, please come and see me as soon as you can (not to be confused with as late as you can) so I can clarify any items for you.*

### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

- **Tutoring**

The Learning Resource Center has CRLA certified tutors that are available to help you with areas you may be having problems with. They cannot edit papers, but they can help with particular areas that you bring to them (for example, if you know that you have trouble with keeping one topic in your paragraphs, they can help you with this; however, you cannot just drop the paper on them and say “fix it fix it fix it!”) *It is highly suggested you take advantage of this service.*

- **Office Hours**

Office Hours will be offered officially from 12:30—1:00 and by appointment. This is time for students to discuss any issues relating to the class with their instructor. You can usually find your instructor in his office before and after class, but an appointment will guarantee availability.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

- Attendance is more than simply sitting in the classroom. Students who are not attending to the class and their work may be counted absent.
- Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Missing class is not an excuse for being unprepared; if you are absent, it is your responsibility to keep up with reading, get class notes from a fellow student, and /or see me during office hours or by appointment if you have questions about the material.
- **Students who miss the first 2 classes (the first week) will be dropped.**
- **Students who miss 4 or more classes may be dropped.**
- **Two instances of arriving late (after I take attendance) or leaving early (before dismissal) counts as an absence.** If you are late, it is your responsibility to remind me to mark you as present; otherwise, you will be recorded as absent—something you want to avoid because this is what I refer to when I drop students.
- Excused absences include documented hospitalization or other documented, unexpected extreme emergencies; if excessive absenteeism that falls under the purview of “excused absences” continues, I reserve the right to drop students from the course. Please note: doctor’s appointments, child-care, court dates, and job scheduling conflicts do not count as excused absences.

**Translation:** *You have, at max, three days to blow off the class over the semester no questions asked. Make sure to keep in touch with the instructor and keep up on your work*

*when you miss, or it will come back to bite you on the @\$\$.* If you repeatedly arrive late or leave early, or if you screw around in class, it could be counted as one of those absences.

### **RESPECT AND CLASSROOM COMMUNITY**

While I do not expect problems when working with adult learners, these policies ensure a safe and productive classroom environment. The following policies are listed in the University of New Mexico Student Handbook.

- 1) Students must treat one another and the instructor with respect. Derogatory remarks or name-calling is prohibited.
- 2) Students should not interrupt classroom lectures or discussion with non-related comments.
- 3) Students may discuss complaints about the course with their instructor; however, the students must do so in the proper environment, such as the instructor's office during office hours. Constant complaining in class may result in the student being asked to leave for the day's lesson; continued complaining after the first warning may result in the student being dropped from the course.
- 4) Students should not yell or curse at other students or at the teacher. Class time is a professional learning environment. Obscene language will not be tolerated.
- 5) Sexual harassment will not be tolerated.
- 6) Behavior that threatens the safety of any class member, including the instructor, will not be tolerated. The offending student will be asked to leave for the day and may be dropped from the course. Campus Police will be called. Intoxication, physical assault and or battery, violence, stalking, or threats fall into this category.
- 7) Students must not threaten the instructor concerning their grades. This type of behavior is considered harassment and/or verbal assault. Campus Police will be called.
- 8) Food and beverages are not permitted in the classroom.

Students violating any of these rules will be reported to the Division Head of CHESS and to the Chair of the English Department. Students will be asked to leave the class for the day and will be asked to meet with the instructor and the Chair of the English Department or the Division Head of CHESS concerning the behavior.

**Translation:** *Be cool.*

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Devices are to be set to silent, or turned off before class starts. Unless otherwise stated, do not use them. If you have an emergency situation where you need to have access to your phone, let the instructor know before class. At various points when individual work is occurring, music may be allowed (ask your instructor beforehand) but otherwise, keep them put away.

Because the class occasionally meets in a computer lab, students must adhere to the campus computer usage policies.

**Translation:** *When you are in class, be in class and pay attention to the class.*

## DRUG POLICY

- UNM-Valencia is a drug-free campus. Controlled substances are not allowed on campus.
- If students attend class inebriated or intoxicated, they will be asked to leave the premises. Campus Police may be called to remove a student in this state.
- Use of tobacco products, as well as “vaping,” is limited to the designated “smoking” areas. This includes chewing tobacco and is a campus policy.

## PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any student that plagiarizes will be subject to disciplinary actions. If you are unsure what plagiarism is, ask your instructor. “I didn’t know” is not an acceptable excuse for a plagiarized work.

**Translation:** *You are here to learn. If you don’t know what this is, ask; we will go over it and you may be surprised what you find out, but malicious plagiarism will not be tolerated.*

## STUDENTS WITH CHILDREN

We are unable to allow children in class with their parents. This is a liability issue and cannot be waived.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS

Accessibility Services located in Student Services provides academic support to students who have disabilities. If students think they need alternative formats for completing coursework, they should contact this service right away to ensure their needs are met in a timely manner. Students are responsible for getting all documented forms to me as soon as possible. I cannot accommodate any special needs without the proper authorization from UNM Valencia Campus Accessibility Services. Pursuant to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), I accommodate documented special needs and encourage students to discuss their concerns with me.

## EMAIL

Email can be an official document in many settings, including professional and legal. When emailing anyone in an academic or professional setting, you should always use your most professional written English and, as it has been dubbed, Netiquette. We will discuss this in class, and I will provide a handout for those who need some guidelines when sending emails.

**Translation:** *Unless you are emailing your BFF, then keep it as professional as you can; this is a good rule to follow anywhere.*

## POINT LAYOUT

All *formal* writing assignments must follow MLA format and be typewritten, double-spaced in a 12pt, Times New Roman font.

• Three Essays—Rough Draft and Revision (50 points each draft)	300 Points
• 6 Workshops/Peer Evaluations (15 points each)	90 Points
• Reading Response Homeworks (10 points per thematic unit)	30 Points
• 1 grammar group presentation	35 Points
• 3 Grammar Quizzes (15 points each)	45 Points
• Grammar Exam	100 Points
• Portfolio	400 Points
Total Points	1000 Points

Grades will be determined on a traditional percentage system, with the appropriate plus or minus sign: 100-90% = A (1000-900 points); 89-80% = B (899-800 points); 79-73% = C (799-700 points); 69-60% = D (699-600); and below = F.

**You need a “C” (73% or 730 points) to pass this course.**

### **ESSAYS**

You are required to turn in 3 formal 3-5 page essays (not including the Works Cited page) essays assigned by me and written specifically for this class: an Exemplification essay, a cause and effect essay, and an argumentation essay. Each essay requires at least one **credible** source to be incorporated in text and in the Works Cited page (**Wikipedia does not count**). Students may be dropped from the class for failure to turn in one of the major essays. I will provide instructions and rubrics for each assignment at the beginning of each new unit.

### **WORKSHOPS/PEER REVIEWS**

Built into our schedule are writing workshops intended to give you a jumpstart on your essays, as well as help you get used to constructively evaluating your peers’ work through brainstorming, questioning, group discussions, and other class exercises. To receive credit for a workshop, students must be present, actively participating, and producing work.

### **LATE POLICY**

I will not accept essays more than two days (note—days not class periods) after the due date. For each day the essay is late, the assignment will be marked down half a letter grade, so make sure to turn in your essays in a timely manner. If you know that you will not be in class on a due date, make arrangements to turn in your essay early, or get it to me via other means.

Note: If you make arrangements to email an essay to me, and the attachment is blank or corrupted, this will count as failure to turn in a paper.

***Portfolios will not be accepted late.***

### **GRADING**

#### **To earn an “A,” (Excellent, Pass):**

This type of paper demonstrates a compelling, original, and thoughtful thesis that is supported by accurate details, examples, and explanations. The paper is easy to follow because it is clearly organized and has transitional markers. Paragraphs are unified and well supported. In addition, precise and lively word choices are combined into balanced, varied, and clear sentences. There are few, if any, deviations from standard usage, grammar, and mechanics, especially. The paper has very few sentence boundary errors, such as comma splices, run-ons, and fragments. This paper addresses the question asked clearly and imaginatively.

#### **To earn a “B,” (Good, Pass):**

This paper is also strong, but it is less polished than the “A” paper based on the quality of the thesis, diction, or the sentence variety. However, the essay is still focused and interesting. Its organization is correct, but transitions are sometimes strained. While developed, the paper needs some additional support to explain points more fully. Paragraphs are typically unified. The paper is generally correct mechanically, though there may be problems with complex grammar and punctuation, such as apostrophes or subject/verb agreement. There are few, if any, sentence boundary errors: comma splices, run-ons, and fragments. The paper addresses the question well.

**To earn a “C,” (Average, Pass):**

Although the paper contains good thought and interesting ideas, the essay’s focus, while there, is not well written or maintained. The organization is acceptable, though some parts may be awry. The essay needs further development, but it contains a few well-placed examples or details. Some paragraphs are unified, but some need the focus of a strong topic sentence. Sentences in paragraphs may need organization. Though the paper contains few major errors, there are some mistakes in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. The paper contains some sentence boundary errors, such as comma splices, run-ons, and fragments, but overall reflects a strong understanding of sentence structure. The paper addresses the question.

**To earn a “D,” (Inadequate, Failing):**

This type of essay too often seems an unfocused exercise, even though there may be good ideas throughout. Usually, there is no thesis, but if there is one, it is too general to be effective. Some principle of organization is apparent, but the principle is not successfully followed or lacks consistency and coherence. Development is weak, and paragraphs are not unified and sometimes not used. Errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation are frequent enough to distract and confuse the reader. Sentence level errors abound: too many comma splices, run-ons, or fragments exist. The paper often does not address the question asked.

**To earn an “F,” (Unacceptable, Failing):**

The essay seems a mechanical exercise without purpose or audience. There is no apparent principle or organization. Paragraphs do not exist. Development is weak, often indicated by a one-page essay. There are frequent sentence structure errors of the gravest sort. Sentences often do not make sense. Errors indicate failure to understand the basic grammar of the sentence. The paper does not address the question or is very hard to read.

**To earn a “0,” (Unacceptable, Failing):**

The "0" grade is distinguished from the “F” paper in that the student has not turned in any work to be graded.