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MW 9:00-11:30\* mornings  
and by appointment

*\*Please Note: I am in Arizona, which does not observe Daylight Savings Time. At the moment, we are 1 hour apart. In November when New Mexico goes off of DST, we will be the same time.*

## English 110: Composition I: Exposition Fall 2015 Online

### **Course Description:**

In this course, you will write three essays, which may include summary analysis, exemplification, process, cause and effect, comparison /contrast, classification/division, definition, argumentation, or combined pattern essays (see *Practical Argument*). These essays require your developing good writing habits, including prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing, which will help create a strong sense of focus, strong development, and clear organization. To develop, you will also be required to integrate quotations from primary readings and web sources, avoid plagiarism, and evaluate web sources. Finally, 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 five 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.

### **Course Objectives:**

By the end of the semester, you should be able to,

1. **Create essays using the appropriate genres required for writing tasks.** Genres are types of rhetorical strategies, or ways you present information. Your teacher will ask you to respond to questions that require a specific genre. These may include summary analysis, exemplification, process, cause and effect, comparison /contrast, classification/division, definition, argumentation, or combined pattern essays (see *Practical Argument for College Writing*). You need to address the requirements of the questions asked.
2. **Organize your essay.** Organization includes employing a number of skills, such as writing strong thesis statements and topic sentences, using transitions, organizing sentences within focused paragraphs, and ordering paragraphs in logical way.
3. **Develop your paragraphs.** Development includes using examples and support to help illustrate your points. You may use some personal examples; however, quotations from readings and/or web sources are also required in two essays. You will be required to produce essays of 3-4 pages in length.

4. **Read texts accurately.** To be successful writers and thinkers, you should read critically, summarize accurately, and/or analyze insightfully. You will also be required to analyze and evaluate web sources that you use to support your points.
5. **Revise and edit papers.** Using good writing strategies, including prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing, will help you create strong essays. You will be required to demonstrate an ability to revise and edit in the final portfolio and in papers submitted during the semester.
6. **Write good, well-crafted sentences and use correct grammar.** Awkward sentences and grammatical errors make writing hard to read and result in bad communication. Because this is a college course, the inability to use correct grammar is one reason for failing papers or the course. Therefore, in English 110, you must demonstrate **competency** in these areas: **1) fragments, 2) comma splices/run-ons, 3) pronoun reference and point of view (second person), 4) punctuation, focusing on commas, apostrophes and quotation marks, and subject verb agreement.** You need to demonstrate this competency by passing an assessment with a 72% or higher and by writing correctly edited papers.
7. **Use MLA for formatting papers and citing sources.** This learning outcome includes using MLA formatting for presenting papers citing sources to avoid plagiarism. You will focus on learning to cite and find web sources.

### **Library Literacy Objectives**

In addition to the Course Objectives, stated above, this course also has the following objectives:

1. Students will access Libros and find a book relevant to the writing project. Students will learn how to skim that book and find quotations that are both relevant and appropriate for the paper.
2. Students will be able to identify what type of database source they have found, e.g. magazine, journal, newspaper, website.
3. Students will write a correctly formatted Works Cited page.

### **Instructor Information:**

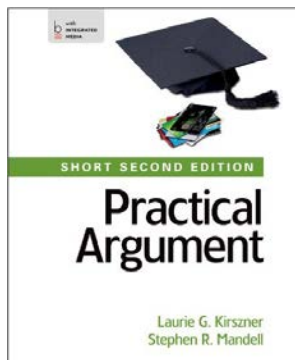
I will be available MW 9:00-11:30 a.m., **online only**. What this means is that you can call me using Skype (more on this, below), or email me through the Blackboard/Learn or UNM Outlook sites to contact me during these times. This means that I am actually sitting at my desk, working on the computer, and will see your attempt to contact me immediately. This also means that I can respond immediately as well.

You can also make appointments for Skype or IM-chat (Skype has an IM feature) visits for times that are more convenient for you. However, be aware that if you make an appointment with me and do not keep it (you don't call or email during the time we set up), I will not be happy because you will have wasted my time. This is very rude. If for any reason you cannot make the appointment, then, you should send me an email or leave me a Skype message, immediately re-scheduling (or just outright canceling) as soon as you realize that you cannot make the appointment.

You should also be aware that I am teaching this class **remotely from Arizona**. This means that **I am not physically located in New Mexico**. If you need in-person help, free tutoring is available at the Learning Center or at onTRAC. However, I have had really good success chatting with my

online students on Skype. It's amazing how just hearing me explain things verbally makes such a big difference. Please try it. I promise, you won't regret it!

### **Required Texts and Materials:**



Kirsznér, Laurie G., and Stephen R. Mandell. *Practical Argument*. Short 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Boston: Bedford-St. Martin's, 2015.

Also required:

UNM e-mail address and regular, reliable broadband access to Internet and Microsoft Office (available on UNM-VC computers, but it would be best if you had this at home).

### **Grades:**

Students will be expected to post to the Discussion Board on a weekly basis (more on this, below). They will write three formal essays. They will revise two out of three essays for inclusion in the end-of-semester portfolio, which will be evaluated by a panel of English 110 instructors at UNM-Valencia. Students must pass the portfolio to pass the class for the semester (more on this, below).

The assignments are weighted as follows:

👤 7 Grammar Quizzes	5%
👤 Grammar Final	5%
👤 Weekly Discussion Board Averages	10%
👤 3 essays	30%
👤 Final Portfolio (2 essays)	<u>50%</u>
Total	100%

### **Attendance Policy and Overall Participation:**

It is vital that you understand that just because this is an online course, it is **NOT** one that can be completed on your own time, at your own pace. You will be expected to participate a **MINIMUM** of 2 days per week, to turn assignments in according to the dates set on the syllabus, and to communicate with me and with your classmates regularly. You may **NOT** simply complete the assignments whenever you want, turn them all in at the end of the semester, and expect to receive an "A." This is not a correspondence course, and it is not self-paced. It is just like taking a class in person, on campus, except that we communicate via Blackboard/Learn.

Therefore: Because this class is a performance course that depends upon student attendance for both the class and the student's success, this policy is non-negotiable. **All absences count equally, irrespective of the cause. In other words, there is no such thing as an "excused" absence. An absence is an absence.** Students who exceed the allowed number of absences cannot pass the course and will fail with a grade of "F."

**Fall Online classes:** More than **four (4)** absences will result in failure.

*Please Note: **Taking an online class is not "easier."** It actually requires **more** self-discipline than a face-to-face course. It also requires that you have a certain level of skill with your computer. You have to know how to navigate the Blackboard course shell, the Practical Argument companion website, and other Internet skills. Taking an online class **only** because you think it will be easier than a face-to-face is often a recipe for disaster. **You have be willing and able to log-in, participate, and read and follow directions exactly, with no supervision. If you are not good at those things, then this is not the class for you.***

**Definition of attendance in online classes:**

A student who fails to post an acceptable assignment to the class website during the assigned "window" of time, which for the spring semester is one week (a "week" is defined as Monday 9:00 a.m. to Sunday, 12:00 midnight [when Sunday turns into Monday]), will be charged with **TWO** absences. The reason for this is that if you are absent from a regular classroom for one week, you would receive two absences for a class that meets twice a week. Therefore, attendance takes the form of posting, on a weekly basis, on the Discussion Board. These will all act as your attendance online.

**IMPORTANT:** You must post your **answers to my questions** and/or **replies to your classmates' posts** by **midnight Sunday**, every week of the semester. So, to get an A for the week, you would post about 5-6 times by Sunday, which can be either all on Sunday, or spread out through the week. You don't have to post all at once, and you don't have to post all in one forum. Spread it out. There's more on this, below.

*Please note: In addition to serving as your attendance for this online class, the Discussion Board will also be graded on the quality of your posts and how much you contribute to the discussion. This will count for 5% of your final semester average. Please note that you are required to participate on the Discussion Board EVERY WEEK, a minimum of two days per week.*

*Please note, part two: Note that the above does not mean "minimum to get an A." This minimum is the "minimum to avoid failing based on non-attendance and non-participation."*

**PLEASE NOTE:** When it gets late in the semester, I am not required to drop a student and may assign the student a failing grade instead. Therefore, students who decide to drop the course after the drop deadline are responsible for dropping the course themselves.

The grade you receive for posting on the Discussion Board is a mixture of the number of times you post and how good I judge your posts to be. Yes, this is a subjective judgment on my part.

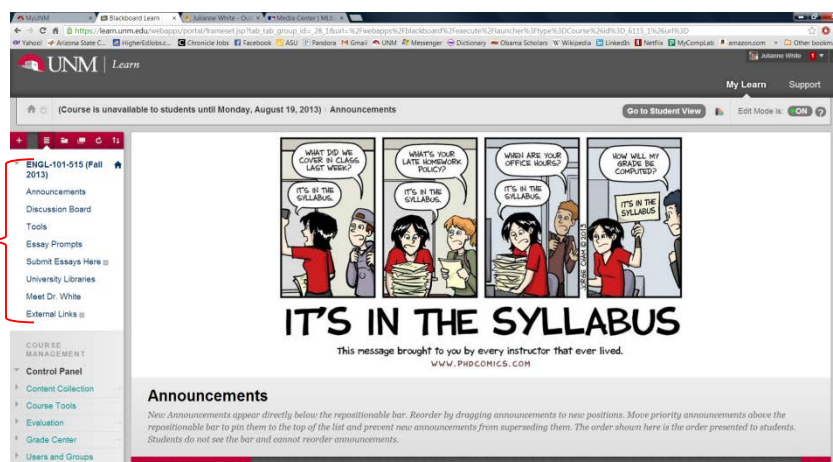
However, this “subjective” judgment is based upon 30+ years of teaching experience (over 25 courses being in online teaching environments). This experience forms the basis of my opinion. You are expected to provide substantive, quality responses to the original questions, as well as reply to your classmates’ posts. Single-word posts, such as “Yes” and “No” are not counted in your total. Neither are empty responses such as “I agree” or “Well said,” no matter how heart-felt they may be. You are expected to take each response seriously, asking for clarification in some cases, taking the discussion in a new direction in some cases, or making important observations that no one else has in others. The following chart is intended to give you an idea of the kind of grades you might receive. The grades are given in ranges because the actual grade I give will depend on my judgment of each post you make:

# Posts per Week:	Grade:
0	0 (PLUS being charged with 2 absences)
1	65 (PLUS being charged with one absence)
2	75 (this is the minimum to avoid being counted absent)
3	80
4	88
5	95
Over 5	98

Your posts can be spread out over all the forums (topics of conversation) for that week. There will be one forum for each reading assigned, and one forum on particular writing topics, such as “citing sources,” “topic sentences,” and the like. While you are not required to answer every single question in every forum, it would be a good idea to post at least once in each forum. Don’t bunch up all of your responses in one forum, on one topic. This will become clearer as we move along in the semester.

When you enter the Blackboard/Learn site, it will look like this:

This is the  
Main  
Menu



The course shell “homepage” is the Announcements page. Always read the announcements. I try to make at least one announcement per week, but sometimes, there will be others, if something important comes up. Once you are on the homepage, look at the Main Menu, on the left side of the screen. The individual pages are listed in this order:

Announcements

## Discussion Board

Tools

Essay Prompts

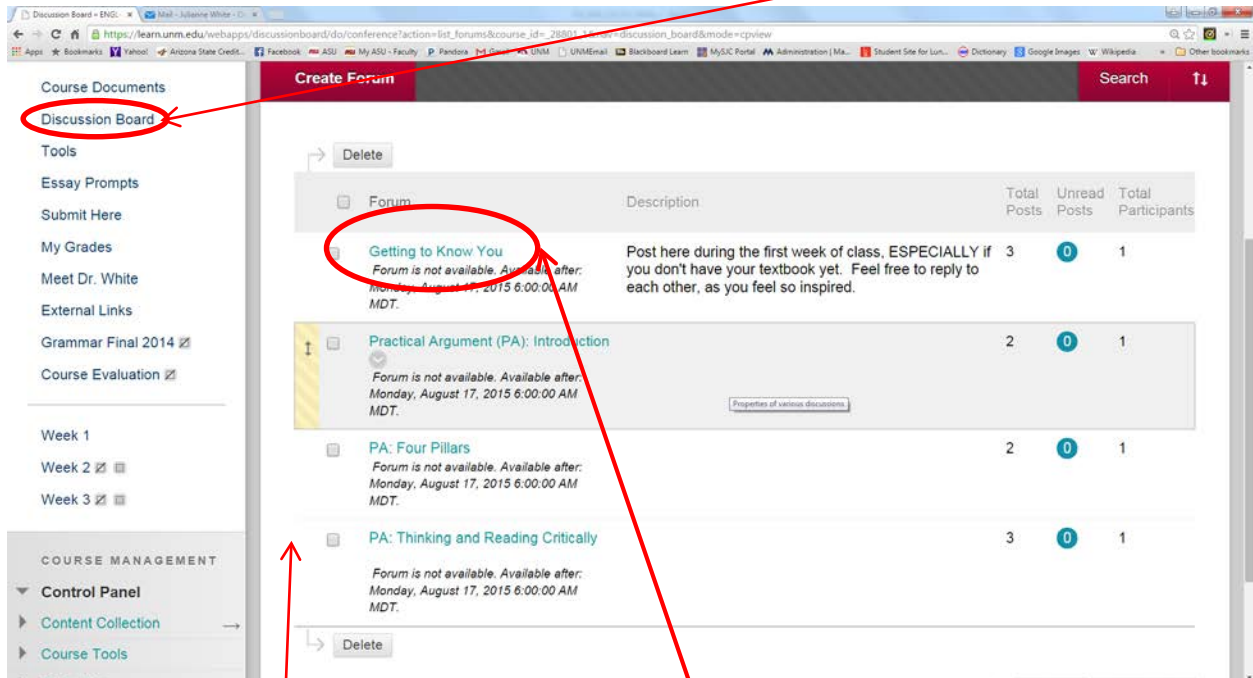
Submit Here

University Libraries

Meet Dr. White

External Links

To get to the Discussion Board, you simply click on the second button on the Main Menu, Discussion Board. When you do, you'll see this:



See those titles in blue? Each one of those is a Topic, also called a “Forum” by the Blackboard/Learn developers. The first one, “Getting to Know You,” is a general discussion about who we are, why we are in this class, and what we hope to achieve this semester. The next three are on the readings for the first week. I will add more as we move along, so you have to keep up, posting answers in these before I add more. **Each Monday, new forums will appear, and you will no longer be able to post in the forums for the previous week.**

To participate on the Discussion Board (DB), follow this procedure:

- 1) To enter a Topic/Forum, you simply click on the Forum title.
- 2) Once you are in a particular Forum, then you'll see the questions.
  - a) To answer a question, click on the question.
  - b) then click on the Reply button.
  - c) Type your answer in the large box.
  - d) Click on “Submit.”
- 3) To reply to your classmates' posts:



- a) you simply click on their post title.
- b) and again, click on Reply.
- c) Type your answer in the box.
- d) Click on "Submit."

It's actually really easy. You will get the hang of it very quickly, I am sure. You get credit for posting either answers to my questions, OR replies to your classmates. Since it is a **discussion** board, **you should reply as much as you answer.**

Be aware also that there is a subtle psychological effect on me, no matter how much I try to remain objective. If I see more than 5 excellent posts time and again from some of your classmates, and you are posting a piddling 2 times per week, I have a tendency to give the stragglers lower grades. I do not do this consciously, but it happens, nonetheless. To avoid this fate, you should make a strong presence on the Discussion Board by posting insightful, thoughtful responses every single week.

*And one or two final thoughts about the Discussion Board, and this is intended as friendly advice: Please do not feel like you simply MUST post 20-30 times every single week. This is really not necessary. It is not necessary to make a perfect score on everything you do in this class in order to make an A. You'll make an A whether your final average is a 90 or a 100. If you have a particularly demanding week, it's OK to post only a handful of times on the DB. Life will not come to an end if you do not make a perfect grade once or twice.*

How make substantive posts:

- 👤 *Your first duty as a poster is to READ all existing posts.*
- 👤 *You must also, after posting, read subsequent posts made in reply to your post. Too many people post and then never look back. Do not make the mistake of thinking that posting is the last step in the process. It's really closer to the beginning.*
- 👤 *You can ask a question about a particular passage that resonated with you from the reading.*
- 👤 *You can disagree with or clarify the information provided for you in the Sheehan-Paine textbook chapter, especially by citing a particular passage from that chapter that you need clarified or explained.*
- 👤 *You can agree with your classmate's interpretation of the reading, citing an example from the chapter or the literary piece to support why you agree.*
- 👤 *You can ask questions about the reading; or you can expand further on the reading with your own knowledge that you have gotten from your experience in other classes.*
- 👤 *You can respond to what someone else posts, asking them to clarify or provide an example to support their position.*
- 👤 *You can re-word what someone else posted, asking if this is what they meant.*

### **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism means using language and/or ideas without acknowledging their source. Plagiarism includes such activities as copying another student's papers or ideas, downloading and turning in

papers from the Internet, or copying passages from sources without proper documentation, or rephrasing an author's ideas and presenting them as the student's new, original thoughts.

Plagiarism in this course may result in one or more of the following consequences: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, or disciplinary action by the University. To learn how to avoid plagiarism, students can speak to me, consult a tutor, or refer to <http://library.acadiau.ca/tutorials/plagiarism/>.

However, all that being said, it is also my job to teach you how to cite/document your sources correctly, and the difference between when you have to cite and when you don't. So, much of what seems like plagiarism in an English 110 class is really just a mistake, and should be viewed as an opportunity for learning. So it is entirely possible that I will be asking you to re-do a portion of your essay, correcting your errors, rather than turning you in for plagiarizing.

Charges of plagiarism usually come into play, in an English 110 class, when a desperate person tries to avoid failing the semester by purchasing an already-written essay from some Internet site and turns in the whole thing as part of his/her portfolio. Keep in mind that if you are writing your own papers all semester long, paying attention to my remarks/suggestions, and making corrections on your essays, this desperate act should not be necessary.

You will be submitting your essays to a dropbox online. Once your essay is marked by me (using the Track Changes feature in Microsoft Word), I will return it to you in the same dropbox, only it will be saved as "Graded." You should download and your graded essay to your computer's hard drive; then open it and review all the comments and markings I made on your paper. You should always go over the graded essay carefully, and strive to not make the same errors on the next essay.

### **Online Classroom Behavior:**

Online environments are different from being face-to-face with people. We as a society are still working out ways to understand people's online behaviors and how and why those are different from their "real" behaviors. We are discovering that people will often say things online that they would never say to a person if they were standing right in front of them (or sitting next to them in a classroom). Something about being online makes people feel safe behind a wall of cyberspace, and they say things they shouldn't.

While I do not expect problems when working with adult learners, these policies ensure a safe and productive online 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 make any posts on the Discussion Board in a forum that are not directly related to the forum topic.
- 3) Students may discuss complaints about the course with their instructor; however, the students must do so in the proper environment, such as during the instructor's office hours. Constant complaining on the Discussion Board about the class is considered off-



topic; continued complaining after the first warning may result in the student being dropped from the course.

- 4) Students should not “yell” (using all capital letters when you type) or curse (using bad language) at other students or at the teacher, either on Skype or on the Discussion Board. Class time is a professional learning environment. Obscene language will not be tolerated.
- 5) Sexual harassment will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- 6) Behavior that threatens the safety of any class member, including the instructor, will not be tolerated. The offending student will be asked to discontinue Discussion Board participation, and may be dropped from the course. Campus Security will be informed of the problem. Participating or posting while intoxicated, verbal threats of physical assault and/or battery, violence, stalking, or threats of any kind fall into this category. In an online environment, it’s called “cyberbullying,” and it is just as inappropriate online as it is in person.
- 7) Students must not threaten the instructor concerning their grades. This type of behavior is considered harassment and/or verbal assault. Campus Security will be informed. Be aware, also, that anything you type into a Blackboard/Learn shell remains there as evidence of inappropriate behavior, so you can’t very well claim that you didn’t “do it” when the evidence that you did exists forever on the UNM Blackboard/Learn servers—even well after the course is over.

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 discontinue participation in the class 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.

### **Computer and Technology Policies:**

Because the class meets in the online environment, students must adhere to the following policies so that a professional learning environment is maintained: 1) Students must save work to the hard drives of their personal computers, or their own personal jump/flash/thumb drives if using a campus computer lab; 2) students should always have a backup, saved copy of any essay completed for this class; and 3) lost work is your responsibility and not an excuse for turning in an essay late. Any assignment turned in late, even those turned in late due to some computer malfunction, will be graded using the late work/essay policy.

Blackboard/Learn is sometimes subject to outages and regular maintenance. If an outage causes you to be unable to post to the Discussion Board by the deadline, depending on the circumstances, I can either extend the deadline or make some alternative arrangement for you to submit your posts. Please do not panic if Blackboard/Learn goes out; we can work it out. You do, however, have to remain in contact with me via email when these things happen. We cannot make arrangements if you are unreachable. Just be aware: Just because Blackboard/Learn is out does not mean that the entire Internet is gone. You should have a non-UNM-related email to use in the event of an Internet-related emergency. We can always contact each other using Lobo Mail/Outlook.

### **Equal Access:**

Accessibility Services located in Student Services provides academic support to students who have disabilities. If students think they need alternative formats for completing course work, 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.

### **Assignment Policy:**

All formal writing assignments must follow MLA format and be typewritten, double-spaced in a 12 point, Times New Roman font. This font size and style are being demonstrated in this syllabus, which is written in Times New Roman, 12-point font.

### **Essays:**

- ☛ You are required to turn in 3 formal essays assigned by me and written specifically for this class: an argument of definition, a causal argument, and a rhetorical analysis/argumentative essay.
- ☛ Each essay requires at least one outside source to be incorporated in text and in the Works Cited page.
- ☛ Students may be dropped from the class, or will fail 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 essay.
- ☛ Only students who receive a “D” or below on an essay have the option to revise. I will not accept revisions after two weeks (from the date the graded essay has been returned to the student). I cannot guarantee that this will improve the grade unless there are both major organizational, content, and surface revisions. The highest grade that a revised essay can receive is a “B.”
- ☛ Two out of the three essays will be revised and turned in for the Final Portfolio that is panel graded.
- ☛ Final Portfolios cannot be revised.

### **Late Policy:**

I will not accept essays more than two days after the assigned 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.

### **Grammar Quizzes:**

Grammar quizzes will be given on an online site that is separate from Blackboard/Learn. There will be a link for this site under External Links on our Blackboard/Learn course shell. You will have to log in to this site and complete your work there, which is separate from the Blackboard/Learn shell. It is the Student Companion website for the *Practical Argument* textbook, provided free of charge by the publisher (Bedford-St. Martin’s) to classes that adopt the *Practical Argument* book for the course, which we have.

Our textbook, which we will refer to simply as *Practical* or *PA*, has grammar exercises on its Student Companion Site. You will complete the exercises on that site, and the grades are reported to me on that site. I will have access to your grades as well as your completed exercises. You will have to register on this site, but it is free for current-semester students. There is a separate handout with instructions for how to access the site, how to find the grammar exercises, and the deadlines for completing them. You can find this handout under the Course Documents button.

These exercises will be scheduled throughout the semester, but they do not have to be completed until the end of the semester. Although I have students who procrastinate and don't complete the exercises until the end of the semester every year, that's never a good idea. The exercises will be more useful to you if you do a few at a time, and then apply those skills to the writing of your essays.

### **Writing Workshops and 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 exercises.

These workshops and peer reviews will take place in the Discussion Board space. You will receive more specific instructions for the Workshops and Peer Reviews during the actual week on the schedule for these two activities.

To receive credit for a workshop, students must be present, actively participating, and producing work. This is all part of participating in class (see below).

### **Participation:**

Participation is mandatory in this course. Participation means actively participating in your education; just sitting in front of your computer screen and allowing everything to sink in (the "osmosis method") is not actively participating. Ignoring your online course for weeks at a time is also not actively participating in your education. You can't be participating in class if you are at home watching TV, playing video games, or hanging out with your friends. You also can't be participating in class when you are at work, or taking care of young children, sick spouses or elderly parents, or other things that call you away from your computer with Internet access and your Blackboard/Learn course shell. If you are juggling all these things, then I admire your courage and your commitment to your family; however, you also must be self-disciplined enough to carve out some time for your online course.

Because this is an online class, you have to make *more* of an effort to participate (not less), because no one is there, calling your attention to what the class is doing and requesting your participation. You have to be self-disciplined enough to log in to the Blackboard/Learn course shell on a regular basis (the actual "schedule" you use is up to you, but I strongly recommend that you decide on a schedule and stick to it for the entire semester). You should also read the course schedule carefully, marking due dates on a calendar, and setting up reminders for yourself for when you have to complete assignments and participate on the Discussion Board.

I recommend that you have a space in your home or dorm room that is strictly for school, homework, and logging on the Blackboard/Learn site. On the wall in front of you, have a calendar posted, on which you write down all your due dates and deadlines. Have a system or a method for keeping track of what to read and when, when to start brainstorming ideas for your next essay, when to take a grammar quiz, and things like that. The semester will go much easier this way.

### **Final In-class Reflection Essay Examination:**

The Final Reflective Essay Examination will be written during the last week of class. It will be a personal-reflection essay included in the final portfolio and will count as 10% of the final portfolio grade. All students will respond to the same essay prompts, which will be submitted by 110 instructors.

## **Portfolio**

### **What is the Portfolio?**

- ☛ The portfolio is a collection of your work.
- ☛ **STUDENTS MUST KEEP THE FIRST DRAFTS THAT THEY PRODUCE THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER OF ESSAYS, WHICH CONTAIN INSTRUCTOR'S COMMENTS.** If they do not, their final portfolio grade will be adversely affected; part of the grade is based on revision abilities; panel graders look to see whether students have responded to instructor's internal and end comments and whether students have made substantial changes that improve the essay.
- ☛ Portfolios receive a pass/fail and a letter grade. A panel of 110 instructors will determine the effectiveness of students' overall expository writing ability and readiness for English 102. Portfolios will be evaluated using the learning outcomes.

### **Online Presentation of Portfolios**

- ☛ Online portfolios are slightly different from those produced by face-to-face classes. Don't be alarmed if your friends who are in face-to-face classes are doing something different from what I am asking you to do.
- ☛ For the final portfolio, students must copy and paste graded drafts and revised drafts into a SINGLE DOCUMENT. This document (which will end up being about 15-20 pages) will be saved as [LastName]Portfolio, and will be submitted to the dropbox designated under the Assignments button. Basically, all you are doing is putting everything you've done this semester into a single document, and submitting it to the dropbox. That's all there is to it.
- ☛ You will receive a prompt with specific, clearly stated step-by-step instructions for assembling your portfolio.

### **Final Portfolio**

- ☛ The final portfolio contains the following:
  - A self-evaluation of the student's work

- A table of contents
- A self-evaluation, including the final grammar exam score and the grades on all four papers written during the semester
- A copy of the questions asked with the question selected circled
- A second revised essay written
- The first draft containing instructor's comments
- A copy of the questions asked with the question selected circled
- All final drafts must be word-processed. No handwritten essays will be accepted.

### **Final Essay and Evaluation Returns:**

Because you are turning in your portfolios electronically, and because there is so little time at the end of a semester in between the time you submit your portfolio and I have to turn in grades, there are no "Track Changes" markings on your portfolios. The grading panel will read them and make sure they either pass or fail, according to the established criteria. I then assign a grade to the portfolio, based on how well you attempted the changes requested in the graded draft. I will return to you, instead of a graded draft of the portfolio, a breakdown of all your grades for the semester (added together), a notation of your portfolio grade, and an indication of your final semester letter grade. You will receive this from me via email, as an attachment, sometime during the week of finals.

### **Some reasons students may fail the course:**

**Most people who fail this course fail for one reason: they do not attend class regularly (which means posting to the Discussion Board). The second most-common reason for failing is not reading and not following directions.** Posting to the Discussion Board, trying hard but not reading the instructions, and submitting your work does not ensure a passing grade.

Students must write at an acceptable level of competency, and if they do not, they fail. If you follow all the instructions *exactly*, you will have a better chance of writing at the acceptable level. You must turn in all three writing assignments, take the grammar competency, and submit a Final Essay and Evaluation to pass the course. The panel of 110 evaluators will determine if you have met this level of competency. If a student's Final Essays and Evaluations do not pass the panel evaluation, the student fails the course.

To avoid failing, you must be able to, 1) identify purpose, 2) address audience, 3) choose the best genre for writing assignment, 4) read and analyze critically, 5) write good sentences, 6) use Standard English, and 7) follow directions. (See Course Objectives, pgs. 1-2 of this syllabus, for full descriptions.)

Because a panel of 110 instructors reads, evaluates, and passes or fails students' final essays and evaluations, it is rare that students' writing has been misevaluated. However, if a student wants to challenge his/her final grades, he/she must follow a set procedure for doing so. The student should start by reading about how to dispute a grade, which is in The University of New Mexico Student Handbook. Below is a BRIEF outline of some of the policies:

1. Discuss the grade concerns with your instructor of record first.
2. If you discuss the problem with your instructor and if the problem has not been solved, then you must discuss the problem with the English Program Coordinator.

3. A full outline of grade disputes can be found in the Student handbook.

Instructors and administrators do not handle final grade disputes until AFTER finals week and until AFTER grades have been posted in Banner.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The Student Privacy Act, a federal statute called FERPA, strictly prohibits the instructor or administrators from talking to anyone but the student about his/her grades, progress, or work. If a student has questions about a grade on an assignment or about the final grade for the course, FERPA dictates that the student is the **ONLY ONE** who may speak to the instructor regarding grades, work, or progress. In other words, a UNM VC instructor or administrator cannot speak to parents, relatives, or friends of the student about student grades,

Students can expect that a UNM-VC instructor or administrator will follow guidelines set forth by FERPA. Students should know that the instructor and administrators,

- 1) **MUST** and **WILL** protect student privacy.
- 2) **CANNOT** and **WILL NOT** discuss a grade with or hand back assignments to a Student's parents, friends, or relatives.
- 3) **WILL NOT** make any exceptions to this policy.

#### **Incompletes (I grade):**

Students may earn an "I," or incomplete, which is neither a passing nor a failing grade. An "I" is assigned if students have completed all of the coursework, but due to some unforeseen emergency (the instructor may ask for documentation concerning the emergency), are unable to complete the Final Essay and Evaluation.

Students must complete the work by the end of the following semester, or the University automatically converts the "I" to an "F." Be aware, however, that Incompletes are very rarely granted.

#### **Using Skype**

Skype is simply the coolest thing ever. Don't worry if you don't have a webcam. They are actually fairly inexpensive (I bought mine at Walmart for about \$20), but if you don't have an extra \$20, Skype works like a regular telephone, too. We can just call and talk, without the video element. It also has an IM function, so we can chat in "real time" that way as well. But I really like hearing my students' voices—and I especially like seeing your smiling faces, too—so let's give it a shot! Most newer laptops have built-in webcams and microphones.

If you do not have Skype on your computer, it's really easy to get. Follow this procedure:

- 1) Go to [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com), and download and install the software (it's free).
- 2) Then, you set up your account, using your User name and password. For our class, it would be nice if your User name were the same as your UNM account, but





- you can make it anything you want. You can also use any email address you want, too.
- ☛ Once you have your account set up, then you'll have to search for me. Click on the Search box, and enter "**Dr. White @ ASU,**" and then click on "Add Contact." Skype will send me a message with your request, which I will accept.
  - ☛ Then, when you need to call me, you simply click on me in your Contact list, click on "Video Call," and I will answer (unless I'm away from my computer or something). Try to call during my office hours, if at all possible, but if you see me online when you are online, and you need to talk to me about something, feel free to call me.

### **The Writing Stuff Folder**

Under the Essay Prompts button, there is a folder called "Writing Stuff." These are the handouts that are in that folder:

1. Signal Phrases
2. Directly Engaging the Quoted Passage
3. Punctuating Quotations
4. Steps for Analysis
5. Transitions
6. Writing Templates
7. Paper Specs
8. Sample Works Cited
9. How to Write an Academic Essay
10. Comma Rules

You should download and save all of these handouts to your English 110 folder on your hard drive. Once they are in your English 110 folder, you should open and read them all carefully, and, if you prefer to hold things in your hand, print out hard copies for yourself.

Numbers 1, 3, 7, and 8 are simply shorter versions of what you will find in the *MLA Handbook*, the guide for All Things English. If you do not have a copy of the *MLA Handbook*, though, you can use these. Number 6 comes from a book called *They Say/I Say*, which I think is particularly helpful to less-experienced writers.

The others are handouts I have written myself over the years to help my students. My students tell me that these handouts are "life-savers," and that when they follow the instructions on these handouts *exactly*, they always get better grades on their essays. They also tell me that when they continue to use these for classes other than English, they consistently get better grades in their other classes.

### **Final thoughts**




1) Feel free to print out the schedule (in a separate document) and tape it to your calendar. Also, feel free to enter these due dates into your Smart Phones, as they are unlikely to change (however: stuff sometimes happens, which means we'd have to change it. But you'll get plenty of notice if that happens).



2) Please create a folder on your hard drive that is specifically for this class. Call it "English 110" and keep it in "My Documents," or, if you are using Windows 7 or 8, in your "Library." (Mac users, you'll have to figure out for yourself where to keep your folder for this class.) If you

are using a school computer in a campus computer lab, keep a folder called “English 110” on your jump drive, and save everything in that folder.

Any document in any folder in our Blackboard/Learn shell should be downloaded to that folder. You don’t necessarily have to print them out (unless you like hard copies and you have plenty of paper and fresh ink cartridges), but you should keep them in a folder on your hard drive or on your jump drive. Once this class is over, you will no longer have any access to these documents.

### **Support for Student Success: Getting Help**

<p><b><i>Begin with</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Dr. White</i></b></p> 	<p>My office hours for this course are held online, or you can Skype me. You may contact me anytime with “Send Email” in Blackboard/Learn. My online office hours for all classes are <b>Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:00-11:30 am by e-mail or Skype</b> (by appointment only). I cannot hold face-to-face office hours because <b><u>I am not located in New Mexico.</u></b> In Course Tools, click on “<b>Send Email</b>” to send me a message. I will respond within 24 hours. Please do not wait for responses on Sunday – I do need time to rest. ☺</p>
<p><b><i>Blackboard/Learn Support Services</i></b></p> 	<p><b>Computer Technicians:</b> Password problems? Trouble with files opening? Can’t figure out why your browser doesn’t work? What is a browser, anyway? If you have questions about computer problems, call 277-5757, M-F, 8:00 am-12:00 noon and M-F, 1:00 pm-5:00 pm MST. Computer technicians are available and happy to help you solve those difficult problems.</p> <p><b>Tutorials:</b> Having problem with one of the Course Tools in Blackboard/Learn? If you do not know how to use one of the tools, try one of the tutorials available on the Blackboard/Learn information page. <a href="http://Blackboard/LEARNinfo.unm.edu/student/">http://Blackboard/LEARNinfo.unm.edu/student/</a>.</p> <p><b>Tutors:</b> At The Learning Center at UNM Valencia Campus, tutors are available, both face-to-face and online, to help you navigate Blackboard/Learn. Call for an appointment: 925-8900.</p>
<p><b><i>Library Resources</i></b></p> 	<p>The UNM Valencia Campus library is a resource for articles and books. Go to <a href="http://www.unm.edu/~unmvclib/">http://www.unm.edu/~unmvclib/</a> to search remotely (from home). You will need passwords. Call (505)-925-8990 to ask for passwords available to UNM students. These passwords are also posted in my Blackboard/Learn class. Our class will have a library link where LeAnn Weller, our contact librarian, will provide helpful resources. Our class</p>

	<p>link is listed under my name on the UNM Valencia Library page → <a href="http://www.unm.edu/~unmvclib/">http://www.unm.edu/~unmvclib/</a>.</p>
<p><i>Equal Access Services/ADA</i></p> 	<p>Equal Access Services, phone (505) 925-8560 and website <a href="http://www.unm.edu/~vcadvise/equalaccess.htm">http://www.unm.edu/~vcadvise/equalaccess.htm</a>, provides academic support to students with disabilities. If you need alternative formats for completing coursework, you should contact this service immediately to ensure your success.</p> <p>Once you have been with Equal Access, you must send all documented forms to me ASAP. I cannot accommodate any special needs without the proper authorization from UNM Valencia Campus Accessibility Services, who tell me how to help you best. Once I receive your paperwork, pursuant to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), I accommodate all documented special needs. I encourage students to discuss their concerns with me.</p>
<p><i>The Learning Resource Center's Tutoring</i></p> 	<p>Face-to-face and online tutoring is available at The Learning Resources Center. You may call 925-8900 for information, or you may visit <a href="http://www.unm.edu/~tutor/">http://www.unm.edu/~tutor/</a>. Either Lucille Farrington, Director of the Learning Center, or any of the tutors will be happy to arrange tutoring sessions.</p>