

South Plains College
Syllabus: ENGL_1301_436_FA2025

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Course Description: English 1301, Composition I, is a writing course designed to help the student learn to produce effective, academic essays and projects based on literary academic discourse, inquiry, and evaluation of published materials which support the student's proposed thesis. English 1301 is designed to help students to think, read, and write well with the principles and standards of correctness in formal written language. The course is an intensive study and practice of the composition process, from invention and researching, to drafting, revising, and editing. The curriculum includes the teaching of effective rhetorical modes as well as audience, purpose, arrangement, style, and collateral readings.

Course Objectives:

Communication skills—to include effective written, oral, and visual communication;

Critical thinking skills—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information;

Teamwork—to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal;

Personal responsibility—to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

Plagiarism and Cheating: Academic dishonesty is a serious matter. All submitted work is expected to be the result of the student's own *thought, research, and self-expression*. Plagiarism involves claiming work of others as your own or borrowing words or ideas from others without acknowledging the source or giving credit. *The use of AI writing is also a form of cheating that will not be tolerated.* Submitted work that is plagiarized or found to be AI generated will be given a grade of *F*, which may result in failure of the course.

Students with Disabilities: Any student with physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities who needs special accommodations should notify the Lazbuddie principal so that the appropriate arrangements can be made.

Statement of Nondiscrimination: This instructor will not discriminate on the basis of color, age, gender, ethnicity, national origin, race, religion; nor will the instructor allow any form of discrimination from class members toward another student or students in the class.

For a complete list and explanation of SPC-required syllabus statements, visit <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>

Grading Policy: All assignments are due on posted dates. Late papers will be penalized a letter grade for each late day. Letter grades on written work will be evaluated as *A*-superior; *B*-above average; *C*-average; *D*-poor; *F*-unacceptable. Please note: In college writing, *C* is considered an average paper. The essay may not have major errors in form or style; it simply does not go beyond average in content. All letter grades will be converted to numerical grades at the end of the course.

Grades in this course will **not** be submitted in the school's three-week progress and six weeks reports to parents since the dual-credit assignments will not coincide with the high school grading periods. However, parents are welcome to communicate with me directly throughout the semester about their student's progress. In addition, students should keep all returned, graded work for self-monitoring of progress and estimation of final grade outcome.

- discussions questions, journals, in-class writing responses	15%
- grammar, usage, generative sentence exercises and quizzes	20%
- mid-term/final exam	15%
- three 500-word essays: 10% each	30%
- final 1500-word research-based argument paper	20%

Revision Policy: Students may be allowed to revise the course essays. Revision on these essays should be completed after peer reviews and instructor writing workshop sessions. Assigned essays during the course will not be revised after they are submitted for grading. There will be no revision of the final research paper.

Paper Format Policy: All papers must conform to APA format. All major writing assignments must be typed, double spaced, in Calibri or Times New Roman, 12-point format.

Research Requirements: The final paper will be an argumentation paper of 1500 words, with three to five sources, in-text citations, and references. Arguments may involve current social issues. All argumentation topics must be pre-approved. Sources must be academic in nature. The instructor will post specific guidelines about approved sources for research.

SPC English Department essay assessment guidelines:

Essays may earn grades ranging from *A* to *F*, based on the instructor's grading scale. Depending on the assignment, certain criteria may be weighted more than others, and the instructor's assignment may establish additional, more specific criteria. The quality of each of the criteria determines the letter grade. Not every essay will fit a single grade's description completely. Instructors may also include process assignments and drafts in their assessment of the final grade.

"A" Essay (Superior)

To earn an "A," a paper meets all of the criteria below:

1. The paper fulfills all the basic requirements of the assignment (for example, topic, purpose, length, format).
2. **Unity:** The paper states a clear thesis, all topic sentences strongly support the thesis, and body paragraphs are unified around their topic sentences. The essay conveys a clear purpose and is tailored to a distinctive audience.

3. **Support:** Body paragraphs contain abundant, fresh details and examples that provide specific, concrete, logical evidence. If sources are required, the paper accurately integrates and correctly documents credible source material to add insight, sophistication, and complexity to the paper's ideas.
4. **Coherence:** The organization of the paper is excellent and logical (emphatic order, chronological order, etc.), transitions are sophisticated, and the paper exhibits mastery of basic components (introduction, conclusion, and body paragraph structure).
5. **Sentence Skills:** The paper contains no major errors (fragment, fused sentence, comma splice, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference or agreement, verb form) and is virtually free of other grammar, spelling, wrong word, punctuation, mechanical, or point of view errors. Word choice and sentence variety (simple, compound, complex) are effective and powerful.

"B" Essay (Strong)

To earn a "B," a paper meets all of the criteria below:

1. The paper fulfills all the basic requirements of the assignment (for example, topic, purpose, length, format).
2. **Unity:** The paper states a clear thesis, all topic sentences directly support the thesis, and body paragraphs display unity. The essay conveys good awareness of purpose and audience.
3. **Support:** Body paragraphs are well-developed with specific details, examples, and sound logic. If sources are required, the paper accurately uses and correctly documents credible source material to supplement its ideas.
4. **Coherence:** The organization of the paper is clear and helpful, transitions are helpful, and the paper exhibits strong basic components (introduction, conclusion, and body paragraph structure).
5. **Sentence Skills:** The paper contains no more than two major error types (fragment, fused sentence, comma splice, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference or agreement, verb form) and very few other grammar, spelling, wrong word, punctuation, mechanical, or point of view errors. Word choice and sentence variety are strong.

"C" Paper (Acceptable)

To earn a "C," a paper meets all of the criteria below:

1. The paper fulfills all the basic requirements of the assignment (for example, topic, purpose, length, format).
2. **Unity:** A thesis is stated but may lack a strong claim or be obvious or predictable; topic sentences adequately support the thesis. One error in paragraph unity may occur. The essay's purpose and audience are adequately conveyed.
3. **Support:** Body paragraphs contain relevant details or logical reasons but need more specific examples/evidence. If sources are required, credible outside sources are usually integrated and cited correctly.
4. **Coherence:** Organization of ideas is satisfactory, transitions are logical, and the paper indicates competence in basic components (introduction, conclusion, and body paragraph structure).
5. **Sentence Skills:** The paper contains no more than four major error types (fragment, fused sentence, comma splice, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference or agreement, verb form). Some other grammar, spelling, wrong word, punctuation, mechanical, or point of view errors are present but not distracting. Word choice and sentence variety are strong.

“D” Paper (Developing)

To earn a “D,” a paper will exhibit *one or more* of the weaknesses below:

1. The paper only partially fulfills one or more of the basic requirements of the assignment (for example, topic, purpose, length, format).
2. **Unity:** The thesis may announce the topic but no claim, contain more than one idea, or be too vague, too broad, or too narrow. Topic sentences are not tied to the thesis. Two errors in paragraph unity may occur. Essay conveys little awareness of audience or purpose.
3. **Support:** Details are sparse or vague and consist of generalizations, clichés, or repetition. If applicable, sources are insufficient and/or not always integrated or cited correctly.
4. **Coherence:** Organization is attempted but disjointed or confusing; transitions are sparse. The paper indicates awareness of but not competence in basic components (introduction, conclusion, and body paragraph structure).
5. **Sentence Skills:** The paper contains no more than six major error types (fragment, fused sentence, comma splice, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference or agreement, verb form). Several other grammar, spelling, wrong word, punctuation, mechanical, or point of view errors distract from the content. Informal word choices occur with little or no variety in sentence type and length.

“F” Paper (Unacceptable)

To earn an “F,” a paper will exhibit *one or more* of the weaknesses below:

1. The paper fails to fulfill one or more of the basic requirements of the assignment (for example, topic, purpose, length, format).
2. **Unity:** The thesis is illogical, incomplete, or missing, so the essay lacks focus on one central idea. Topic sentences are missing, so body paragraphs lack unity. The essay ignores the purpose and audience.
3. **Support:** Details are illogical, irrelevant, or missing from body paragraphs. If sources are required, the paper fails to use sources, does not meet the minimum source requirements, uses source material inaccurately, uses sources that are not credible, fails to document fully or correctly, and/or includes plagiarism.
4. **Coherence:** Organization is incoherent, transitions are missing or illogical, or the paper indicates lack of competence in basic paper components (for example, lack of introduction and/or conclusion, lack of paragraphing).
5. **Sentence Skills:** Seven major error types (fragment, fused sentence, comma splice, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference or agreement, verb form) occur with numerous other grammar, spelling, wrong word, punctuation, mechanical, or point of view errors. Word choice is often inaccurate, immature, or inappropriate. Multiple sentence structure/syntax errors make the paper difficult or almost impossible to read. If one type or a combination of types of errors, regardless of whether they are major or minor, seriously affects the readability of a paper, it will receive an “F.”

English 1301, Fall 2025 Calendar

This is a tentative calendar for the course. Specific dates may need to be adjusted and are subject to change. Each week, there will be extensive in-class reading of professional writing examples, sentence style, and study of research and documentation methods.

Week 1: Review of basic sentence structure, subject/verb agreement, consistent verb usage, etc. in-class practice and corrections.

- Week 2:** Thesis, transitions, parallelism, active verbs, point-of-view. Reading: narrative essay.
- Week 3:** Coordinating and subordinating ideas; sentence fragments and run-ons.
- Week 4:** Combining sentences by inserting words or phrases; varying sentence structures; reducing wordiness.
- Week 5:** Phrases and verbals—appositives, participles, gerunds, infinitives; dangling and misplaced modifiers; in-class writing workshop. Reading: Descriptive essay.
- Week 6:** Review of grammar and sentence structures in academic writing. In-class writing; peer
- Week 7:** Final submission of the first essay, narrative or descriptive.
- Week 8:** Mid-term exam.
- Week 9:** In-class writing workshop; two essays in the style of your choice: definition, comparison/contrast, exemplification, classification/division, or pattern combination; peer-editing/revision.
- Week 10:** Final submission of two elective essays. In-class writing; instructor guidance; peer editing; revision.
- Week 11:** Argumentation—A look at several examples of professional argumentation papers.
- Week 12:** Research—Working with sources. Brainstorming, clustering, outlining, research proposal; journal writing about argumentation topics and sources.
- Week 13:** In-class writing workshop; “Silent Socratic Dialogue” exercise.
- Week 14:** Research journal. Peer evaluation.
- Week 15:** In-class research writing. Instructor guidance.
- Week 16:** Final research argumentation paper due; final exam.

Note to parents: This course is a college writing preparatory class. I view it as a writing workshop, and students are expected to revise and edit their work before final submission for grading. I will use a college essay rubric to evaluate all writing. I expect students to improve their writing skills and to produce advanced papers that will exceed previous high school expectations.

Although dual-credit English will meet most students’ college English requirements, and they may not have to take another college English, the skills learned in this course will prepare students for all other college writing in their major coursework. This will be a significant year of writing, and my goal is to challenge students to stretch their abilities to communicate well in writing. I will encourage your son or daughter to share their essays with you, along with the rubrics, my comments, and the grades that I give to each paper.

Please feel free to communicate with me anytime, either through email or direct contact through the high school office. Thank you for your support and encouragement to your student.