ENG 140: Writing about...

Contact Information:
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Office Hours: MW 12-12:50pm and by appt.

Meeting Times/Locations (SPR 2016):
Section 4: 10-10:50am MWF, 115 Orlando
Section 5: 11-11:50am MWF, 115 Orlando
Section 6: 6:45-9:15pm, M 115 Orlando

Course Description:
All sections of ENG 140 develop students' ability to write college-level essays by practicing strategies of argumentation and by refining skills of invention, completeness, clarity, and mechanical correctness. In order to satisfy the College's general education requirement for 'W'riting, students must receive a grade of 'C' or better in the course. Students may take ENG 140 a second time for credit, so long as a different topic is selected. Section topics are designated by individual instructors.

This particular section of ENG 140 prepares students to write effective academic arguments by focusing on topics relevant to life at Rollins College. Some topics we may consider include: Academic Life, Co-Curricular Life, Winter Park/Orlando Life, Alumni Life, Home vs. College Life or life in transition, Work Life

Course Goal:
Though our course topic is “Writing about Rollins,” this theme is only a lens through which to focus on and achieve our true course goal, which is to prepare you to write well in ALL academic contexts, regardless of the subject. Often, students tell me that writing in college is a guessing game. Many students say that each of their professors wants something different, and that each of their classes requires something unique. These students are correct—there is no single formula for “good” writing. Expectations about writing in most of your classes will vary, reflecting the goals of that specific course/professor and the values of that particular discipline.

Navigating these complex demands might feel frustrating—even frightening—but it’s actually great preparation for your post-college life. Throughout your professional, civic, and personal lives, you will be expected to figure out what different audiences (employers, clients, colleagues, partners, peers, etc.) want from you and how to meet their varying demands most effectively.

This course is designed to help you understand that you don’t have to write from a place of anxiety, confusion, and frustration. If you continually think about why you’re writing, for whom, and in what context, you will likely find yourself writing from a place of power—whatever the subject (see fig. 1).

Learning Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to...
1. Demonstrate an awareness of context, audience, and purpose for an assigned writing task.
2. Use appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas.
3. Follow expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task for basic organization, content, and presentation.
4. Demonstrate an ability to find and use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and the genre of writing.
5. Use language that conveys meaning to readers with clarity.

**Required Texts/Materials:**
- Print-outs of PDFs available online (reading from your laptop or mobile device will not be allowed in class)
- Print-outs of your drafts-in-progress (when specified in the tentative schedule, by email, or verbally)
- Access to a laptop (allowed in class only when specified in the tentative schedule, by email, or verbally)
- An electronic storage device (and a back-up electronic storage device)
- Access to Blackboard, a Rollins email account, and the online style manual *The Owl at Purdue*: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/)

**Course Requirements:**

- **WordPress Group Research Project**
  Over the course of this semester, you and your fellow group members will create a WordPress site developing one of the topics listed above in our course description. This site will document and showcase your research process over the course of the semester. It will house the sources (with citations and analysis) that you collect and use for your major papers (listed below), and it will detail your research and writing process.

  I will provide a separate, more detailed assignment sheet for this project which will serve as my grading rubric.

- **Three Major Papers:**
  Using the sources you collect via your WordPress Group Research Project, you will write three major papers over the course of this semester. You will complete each of these three papers through a series of invention, drafting, and revision. There will be at least one Peer Review (in and/or out-of-class) and one student/teacher conference for each formal paper assignment.

  I will provide more detailed assignment sheets for each paper throughout the course of the semester. Individual assignment sheets for these three papers will serve as my grading rubrics.

  1. Rhetorical Analysis
  2. Critical Discussion of an Issue
  3. Research-Based Argument

In addition to these course requirements, students should expect regular (in and/or out-of-class) reading, researching, and informal writing assignments.

All work produced for this class must be original.

**Drafting, Peer Review, and Reflection:**
Writing is an on-going process that includes stages of invention, drafting, revision, and editing. These stages do not always happen in a set order, nor do they necessarily happen only once during any given writing task. To encourage this process-approach to writing, each formal paper in this section of ENG 140 will consist of several drafts (see fig. 2).

![The Essence of Writing is Rewriting](http://www.thegraphicrecorder.com/2012/05/02/visual-concepts-from-the-introduction-and-first-chapter-of-william-zinssers-on-writing-well/)

You will post your 1st and 2nd drafts for each of the formal papers in the appropriately labeled Discussion Board forum on Blackboard by the due date listed in the Tentative Schedule. This record allows your classmates to access your work for Peer Review, it allows me to access your work for conferences, and it allows you (and me) to keep track of the developments in your work over time. You will submit your final drafts through Turnitin, also found on our course Blackboard site.

On Peer Review days, you and your partner(s) will review each other’s drafts and post your feedback in the appropriately labeled Discussion Board forum. This record allows you (and me) to access
these suggestions throughout your writing process.

On days listed as TBA in our Tentative Schedule, we will address writing concerns/issues that develop over the course of a given formal paper assignment. We may also use these days to accommodate any necessary changes in our schedule. I will notify you of any changes via Rollins email and Blackboard. Please check these resources daily.

You will submit Writing Reflections to the appropriately-labeled Discussion Board forum on final draft due dates. In these 250-350 word posts, you will reflect on your writing process throughout the course of that specific paper assignment, considering the following: what helped you write, what got in your way, what you learned about yourself as a writer or writing in general, and what will you do differently or keep the same for your next assignment. Taking the time to reflect on these issues will help you transfer what you have learned to future writing assignments in our course and beyond.

Please see the Attendance and Grading Policies sections in this syllabus for the penalties associated with not participating in the drafting process, Peer Review, and/or Writing Reflections.

**Student-led Conferences:**
You will meet with me individually three times this semester—once for each formal paper you write. A draft may be due before or during a conference meeting, but bear in mind that this is also your time to ask and answer questions, to test out ideas, and to discuss issues/concerns. These required conferences will allow you to experience first-hand how beneficial one-on-one conversations with your professors (and by extension your peers, friends, colleagues) can be during the writing and revising process.

Please see the Attendance and Grading Policies sections in this syllabus for the penalties associated with missing or being unprepared for a scheduled conference.

**Attendance:**
You likely already know that if you want to reap the full benefits of this (or any) class, you need to be present every day in both mind and body. Sometimes, however, we all need a system of accountability in place to help us stay on track:

Your final grade in this course will be lowered by one full letter for each day you miss after your first four absences in a day course or your first 2 absences in an evening course. Please note: if you exceed the allowed number of absences for your course, you cannot earn an “A” in the course, no matter what your grades on individual assignments have been, and excessive absences will lead to a failing grade in the course. There are no “excused” absences—all absences count toward the total number.

You could interpret this policy as giving you a certain number of absences to do with what you like, but after that, no matter what your excuse, your final grade will reflect those absences. My advice to you is to save your absences for when you will need to miss class due to illness or schedule conflict.

Students who plan to miss class on official Rollins business, including athletics, should plan to use their four allowed absences for that purpose (documentation required). Students who have more official Rollins business to attend to than these allowed absences will cover should speak to me individually. These situations will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

If you miss class on the day when a final draft is due, you must still turn the assignment in by class time or it will be counted late, and late work will not be graded.

I will cancel several class meetings to accommodate our conference schedule, so missing or attending a conference unprepared will result in: three absences for a day class and two absences for an evening class.

Behavior that detracts from the progress of the class is grounds for dismissal, in which case you will be counted absent.

If you must be absent from class, please contact a classmate to find out what you missed.

**Class Participation:**
Again, if you want to reap the full benefits of this (or any) class, you need to be present in both mind and body. Please note: there is no busy work in this class. All activities and readings have been carefully planned to help you gain the skills you need to write effectively in this class and beyond.
Class time is valuable and limited. It is imperative that for each class meeting you arrive on time and remain an engaged member of our community until class is dismissed. Regular tardiness, leaving early, or stepping out in the middle of class may result in an absence. If you are tardy, it is your responsibility to approach me after class to make sure I have counted you present.

Please turn off your phone for the duration of each class meeting. Occasionally, laptops will be allowed for in-class activities. Unless otherwise specified, please keep your laptop turned off and put away.

Course Requirements with Final Grade Breakdown:

- Paper 1: Rhetorical Analysis (20%)
- Paper 2: Critical Discussion of an Issue (20%)
- Paper 3: Research-Based Argument (40%)
- WordPress Group Research Project (20%)

Grading Policies:
Rough drafts of the three formal papers will be graded on completeness and potential—not on editing, coherence, or other mechanical issues.

If you are absent from or do not fully participate in a scheduled Conference or Peer Review, or if you do not participate in the drafting process, your final paper grade will be lowered by one full letter. This includes resubmitting the same (or very nearly the same) draft more than once or not following the directions outlined in an assignment sheet or peer review guide.

Final drafts of the three major papers and the WordPress Group Research Projects will be held to the standards outlined on individual assignment sheets and the general rubric provided on our Blackboard homepage in the "Syllabus and Tentative Schedule" folder.

If you do not complete a Writing Reflection for each of the three major papers as outlined in the assignment description found on individual paper assignment sheets, your final paper grade will be lowered by one full letter.

Tech issues are not a valid excuse for missing a deadline. Plan ahead. Make sure you can submit papers, peer reviews, pins, etc. from your home computer or laptop ahead of time or plan to use one of the many on-campus computers to submit your work. Remember: Late work will not be graded.

Some tips for successful e-submission:

1. Do not wait until the last minute to submit.
2. Submit drafts, final papers, peer reviews, etc. as .doc, .docx, or .rtf files.
3. If you are a MAC user, do not log on to Blackboard using Safari. Use Internet Explorer or Firefox instead.
4. Do not hesitate to ask me or tech services for help. IT services: http://rnet.rollins.edu/it/, 407-628-6363.

When determining grades, I use the 4.00 GPA scale as defined in the Rollins College Academic Regulations (see fig. 4):

<table>
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<th>Grade</th>
<th>4.00</th>
<th>Grade A-</th>
<th>3.67</th>
<th>Grade B+</th>
<th>3.33</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>Grade B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>Grade C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>Grade C-</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>Grade D+</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade D</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Grade D-</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>Grade F</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade WF</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

When I calculate final grades for the semester, I will convert letter grades on individual assignments to the corresponding GPA numbers as displayed in the table above. I will calculate final grades according to the percentages for individual assignments, also listed above. The cutoffs are at the .5 "fault line" and the .15 "fault lines" (.15, .50, and .85). For example, a final average of 3.49 is a B+, and a 3.51 is an A- (If the student has been an engaged member of class, I usually count a 3.5, too). Similarly, a 3.84 is an A- rather than an A, and a 3.14 is a B rather than a B+.

Grades are defined as follows in The Rollins College Catalogue:
A—reserved for work that is exceptional in quality and shows keen insight, understanding, and initiative.
B—given for work that is consistently superior and shows interest, effort, or originality.
C—a respectable grade. A C average (2.00) is required for graduation. It reflects consistent daily preparation and satisfactory completion of all work required.

D—the lowest passing grade. It is below the average necessary to meet graduation requirements and ordinarily is not accepted for transfer by other institutions.

F—failing.

Students at this college earn their grades, and that’s one of the many things that make us exceptional. That’s one of the reasons US News and World Report continually ranks Rollins #1 in the South. A degree from Rollins means something; we don’t just “give away” good grades for mediocre work (see fig. 4).

The Honor Pledge and Reaffirmation

Membership in the student body of Rollins College carries with it an obligation, and requires a commitment, to act with honor in all things. The student commitment to uphold the values of honor - honesty, trust, respect, fairness, and responsibility - particularly manifests itself in two public aspects of student life. First, as part of the admission process to the College, students agree to commit themselves to the Honor Code. Then, as part of the matriculation process during Orientation, students sign a more detailed pledge to uphold the Honor Code and to conduct themselves honorably in all their activities, both academic and social, as a Rollins student. A student signature on the following pledge is a binding commitment by the student that lasts for his or her entire tenure at Rollins College:

The development of the virtues of Honor and Integrity are integral to a Rollins College education and to membership in the Rollins College community. Therefore, I, a student of Rollins College, pledge to show my commitment to these virtues by abstaining from any lying, cheating, or plagiarism in my academic endeavors and by behaving responsibly, respectfully and honorably in my social life and in my relationships with others. This pledge is reinforced every time a student submits work for academic credit as his/her own. Students shall add to the paper, quiz, test, lab report, etc., the handwritten signed statement:

“On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance on this work.”

Material submitted electronically should contain the pledge; submission implies signing the pledge.

All work produced for this course must be original, produced by the student who turns it in, and not previously submitted for a grade in any other course at any other educational institution (including a high school). Collaboration between students and/or other individuals (beyond Peer Review and/or feedback from the Writing Center and/or a comparable organization/individual) is not allowed.

Disability Statement:

Rollins College is committed to equal access and does not discriminate unlawfully against persons with disabilities in its policies, procedures, programs or employment processes. The College recognizes its obligations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to provide an environment that does not discriminate against persons with disabilities. If you are a person with a disability on this campus and anticipate needing any type of academic accommodations in order to participate in your classes, please make timely arrangements by disclosing this disability in writing to the Disability Services Office at (box 2764) 1000 Holt Ave., Winter Park, FL, 37289 or email or call the Director of Disability Services, Grace Moskola at 407-975-6463, gmoskola@rollins.edu.
Credit Hour Statement: This course is a four-credit-hour course that meets three hours per week. The value of four credit hours results from work expected of enrolled students both inside and outside the classroom. Rollins faculty require that students average at least three hours of outside work for every hour of scheduled class time. In this course, the additional outside-of-class expectations are: reading, writing (including revision of multiple drafts for each major paper), research.

Course and Instructor Evaluation Statement (Holt Evening Courses Only) At the end of each semester, students are asked to evaluate the course and instructor. These evaluations are extremely valuable in the teaching and learning process on our campus. Student evaluations help assess student perceptions of classroom learning and often lead to improved teaching. Your feedback is important and Rollins students are encouraged to be honest, fair, and reflective in the evaluation process. The online evaluative survey is anonymous. Students are never identified as the respondent. Instead, each student’s comments are assigned a random number. You will be asked to rate your course and instructor on a numerical scale and through narrative comments.

The online Course and Instructor Evaluation (CIE) process opens at 8:00 a.m. on the first scheduled date. It remains open for a period of 14 days (2 weeks) until 12:00 a.m. (midnight) on the final scheduled date. The evaluation period ends prior to the start of final examinations and faculty cannot access completed evaluations until 10 days after the end of final exams. Students will receive one email at the start of the CIE period, one after the 15th day, and a final reminder the day before the CIE period ends. Students who complete evaluations for all classes will be able to view grades ten-days before students who do not complete an evaluation form.

Writing Center: An honest, educated, outside perspective is an invaluable resource for a writer. Please take advantage of the Writing Center, a place where trained tutors can help you re-see your work in productive ways.

Go early and go often (make an appointment before you think you need one and keep it! The tutors’ schedules fill up fast, especially around midterm and finals). Always take your assignment sheet with you so the tutor knows what it is you’re trying to accomplish. For more info: http://www.rollins.edu/tutoring-writing-center/

Tentative Schedule: See Blackboard. Check Rollins email and Blackboard daily for changes/updates.