Writing 121: College Composition I

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Office Location: PLC 239
Office Hours: MWF 11:15am-12:45pm

Dr. Stephen Rust
Winter 2015 – CRN 25838
MWF 1:00-1:50pm in VOL 101

Course Description
As a study of academic writing, this course covers processes and fundamentals of writing argument-based academic essays, including structure, organization and development, diction and style, revision and editing, mechanics and standard usage required for college-level writing. Through critical readings, class discussion, short lectures, several well-reasoned essays, and other in-class and homework assignments we will explore a variety of viewpoints within complex issues and you will gain skills in researching, drafting, composing and editing essays in preparation for college-level coursework and professional writing.

Required Texts and Materials
- They Say, I Say (2nd Edition), Publisher: W.W. Norton
- The Little Duck Handbook, Publisher: W.W. Norton
- Sustainability: A Casebook for Writers, Publisher: UO Composition Program
- Two Green Books and a folder to save ALL of your assignments, notes, handouts, etc.
- Type and format all work in Microsoft Word and save on a secure USB or web drive

Composition Program Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of this course, students should be able to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Write essays that develop and respond to a significant question that is relevant to the context in which it is written and appropriate for the audience to which it is addressed.

2. Provide logical answers to questions at issue and develop lines of reasoning in support of those answers, while taking into account and responding to objections or competing answers and lines of reasoning.

3. Write an essay that is unified around a main claim, proceeds in a logical way, and consists of cohesive paragraphs that separate and connect ideas effectively.

4. Produce written work that displays adherence to the conventions of academic writing, including control of grammar, spelling, word usage, syntax, and punctuation; appropriate tone, style, diction, and register; proper formatting, use, and documentation of sources.

5. Improve the content and organization of an essay draft in a revision process, both by reevaluating the reasoning and context of the essay and by responding to critiques from peers and instructors.
What You Can Expect From Me
I will do my very best to respond to your questions and concerns as clearly and sincerely as possible and am always happy to talk about any aspect of the class. I will start class on time, attend office hours and respond to emails in a timely manner. I will grade fairly and provide detailed feedback on your course assignments. I will treat you with the utmost respect.

What I Expect From You
I expect you to succeed in this class. To do that you will need to complete all reading assignments, homework, and essays on time and to the very best of your ability. I expect you to come to class prepared, awake, sober, rested, fed, and fully-engaged. Bring your books to class. Turn off your phone before class or sit by the door if you are waiting for an emergency call/text and need to step outside to answer. Ask questions, engage in discussion, and be prepared to work in groups with any and all class members. Bring an open-mind, a positive attitude, and act at all times as a professional.

Attendance and Late Work
Attendance will be taken daily. Frequent absence will impact your ability to complete in-class assignments and earn participation points and thus will impact your overall course grade. Frequent tardiness equals absence. If you miss class, check with a classmate to see what you missed and send me an email, preferably before the class. Reading Responses and other homework assignments accepted up to 1 week late for ½ credit. I do not typically accept late essays unless you contact me prior to a missed deadline to explain the situation and make arrangements for catching up in a timely manner, typically at a 30% penalty.

Sustainability
To reduce paper consumption, please feel free to print all documents double-sided and to use recycled paper whenever possible. Expand page margins to reduce white space and avoid waste.

Grades (98% = A+; 93% = A; 90% = A-; 88% = B+; etc.):

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1</td>
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<td>Essay 2</td>
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<td>Essay 3</td>
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<td>Reading Responses</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Portfolio</td>
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Participation (10%): Your active participation in class discussions and other activities is essential to your success in this class. It is impossible to discuss the assigned texts critically if you do not read them, respond to them, and bring them to class. Silence cell phones before class.

Writing Lab: One-third of your participation grade will be earned by visiting a writing tutor at least once during the term. Take any version of any paper (including outlines or proposals) to your visit, just be sure to get the tutor to sign & date your work. The lab is **FREE** and open 9:00am – 4:00pm, Monday–Thursday at the Center for Teaching and Learning in 72 PLC. You must turn in a signed visitation form from your writing tutor with one of your three portfolios.
Reading Responses & Quizzes (10%): Complete your reading assignments before class on the days indicated on the schedule and type a one-page, single-spaced response and bring it to class (two-pagers, single-spaced for handwritten responses). Unless I give you alternative instructions in class, do the following: Each response will be three paragraphs and practice three key skills. In the first paragraph provide a summary of the entire article (or articles). In the second paragraph, paraphrase or directly quote one specific passage from the article (or articles) and analyze the meaning and significance of that one passage. In the third paragraph, respond to the article (or articles) with your own ideas. Finally, write a discussion question to engage your classmates in conversation about the text. I do not generally quiz you over readings but maintain the option of using quizzes if necessary to stimulate discussion.

Essays: (75%): Your final draft of each essay for this touchstone course in the UO composition series should be a piece of writing that you will be proud of well into the future. Writing and thinking, like reading and speaking, are at the core of every department on this campus and therefore this course. You will compose three essays, or “attempts” which along with your outlines and drafts will strive to meet the university benchmark of 14,000-16,000 words. Detailed guidelines for each essay cycle will be provided in class and posted to Blackboard.

For Essay 1 you will work with a group of peers to explore the ideas presented in They Say/I Say in order to develop a response to a shared question at issue on the topic of current events on campus or the local community. Rather than simply identify a problem, you will also develop a clear plan of action that can reasonably implemented to address this issue. This essay cycle will consist of a) a 300-500 word presentation that will be delivered in class in the setting of a professional forum; b) a 1200 word draft for peer-review; and c) a 1000 word final draft with three to four references for grading and feedback.

For Essay 2 you will work from the Sustainability casebook to identify a question at issue in the world today related to the topic of sustainability. Your research question should build off of one of the questions provided in the casebook introduction and the readings in the text to think globally and write locally. This essay cycle will consist of a) leading a class discussion over one of the assigned casebook readings, b) a 1000 word rough draft for peer review and a formal conference with me; and c) a 1200 word final draft for grading and feedback.

For Essay 3 you will develop an original thesis in response to a question that is currently at issue in your major, minor, or intended profession. This essay cycle will consist of a) a library research assignment; b) a 500 word formal proposal; c) an 800 word annotated bibliography of six sources appropriate for scholarly investigation; an 500 word formal outline (including thesis, topic sentences, evidence, etc); d) a 1500 word draft for peer review and e) an 1800 word final draft for grading and feedback.

Self-Assessments and Final Portfolio (5%): You will complete in-class self-assessment essays with the completion of each essay cycle. The final assignment for the course will be a three-question take-home self-assessment essay on your work as a writer throughout the term. Specific instructions for the final self-assessment essay will be provided later in the term. Be sure to keep all work related to the formal essays for inclusion in a final portfolio. Further instructions for portfolios will also be provided later in the term.
Policies & Procedures

Incomplete: The Director of Composition must approve requests for the grade "Incomplete" in advance of the end of the quarter. Such approval will be granted only in cases when some minor but essential aspect of the course cannot be completed by students through unforeseen circumstances beyond their control.

Essay Cycles: Essays in this course are written in cycles. This means that they are submitted first in an early version, commented on, revised, and submitted again in a second version. Because the quality of teacher and peer feedback is a function of the quality of the first version of an essay, first versions are to be complete and written in formal, academic prose.

Prerequisites:
For WR 121:
A satisfactory SAT-verbal score is required for placement in WR 121. Students who enroll in a course for which they have not met the prerequisites will be notified and dropped by the English Department. It is recommended that international students who have been placed into the AEIS writing courses complete those courses in their entirety before enrolling in WR 121. Academic advisors can assist students who have questions about WR 121 placement. See also the University of Oregon General Bulletin.

Academic Honesty: All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course, which means you may not submit papers or portions of papers you have written for any other course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. Please consult The Little Duck for a definition of plagiarism and information on documentation, and refer to the Student Conduct Code on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website. In cases where academic misconduct has been clearly established, the award of an F for the final course grade is the standard practice of the Composition Program. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

Access: The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me in week one if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Registration Statement: The only way to add this class is through DuckWeb. The last day to add this or any writing class is the Friday of week one.

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, and Assault:
I support Title IX and have a duty to report relevant information. The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. Any UO employee who becomes aware that such behavior is occurring has a duty to report that information to their supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity.

The University Health Center and University Counseling and Testing Center can provide assistance and have a greater ability to work confidentially with students.
Essay Grading Guidelines

Outstanding Essay (A-, A, A+) The essay makes a fluid, reasoned, well-supported argument. It jolts the readers, wakes them up, persuades, pleases, or delights them. It presents a clear thesis (enthymeme) and develops it logically and coherently, using vivid and concrete detail and appropriate evidence to back up the argument. In this essay, each paragraph will be coherent, beginning with a topic sentence that presents a point of your argument, that relates to your thesis, and that operates as a smooth transition from the previous paragraph. This essay goes beyond the obvious and has a clear sense of purpose and audience. This writing interests readers in what the author has to say. It invites reading. It is well-organized and features smooth transitions, varied sentence structure, fresh diction, strong voice, appropriate tone, and something memorable. The writing itself is strong; there are only insignificant grammatical and mechanical errors, if any. Meets word count, font size, MLA guidelines, and other formatting requirements.

Proficient Essay (B-, B, B+) The writing shows the author’s independent thought and gives evidence of the author’s engagement with the topic. It demonstrates a sense of audience and is shaped to the needs and objections of that audience. Proficient writing is fluent, clear, and logical; it supports a thesis with consistently pertinent detail; the structure is suitable and sufficient—i.e. each paragraph presents a coherent argument, beginning with a topic sentence that presents a point of your argument, that relates to the thesis, and that operates as a smooth transition from the previous paragraph. This essay contains no serious grammatical or mechanical problems. Meets word count and all formatting requirements.

Satisfactory Essay (C-, C, C+) The writing conveys the author’s meaning to his or her audience without distraction. The thesis is clear, and its development follows logically. Supporting details are adequate to the thesis and leave no major objections or challenges to the reasoning. There are no serious grammatical or mechanical problems. Meets word count and formatting requirements.

Unsatisfactory Essay (D-, D, D+) The writing detracts from the essay’s thesis and may make reading difficult. The essay will have a thesis that is insufficiently supported with specific detail. The thesis itself may not be suitable to the audience or the scope of the assignment, or the thesis and argument of the essay may not be in agreement. Organization may be sketchy or inadequate. There are such errors in grammar, mechanics, logic, sentence structure, or organization that the controlling idea of the essay is obscured rather than clarified, or the ideas themselves lack careful thought. The essay may not be the assigned length. May not meet word count or requirements.

Unacceptable Essay (F) This essay has no discernable thesis and thus no structure stemming from it. Serious grammatical and mechanical errors abound. There is no attempt to identify or reach an audience with the writing. Unacceptable writing also includes writing that is plagiarized in part or as a whole. May not meet word count or formatting requirements.

Borderline Essay (A-/B+; B-/C+; C-/D+) While this essay displays some important strengths of the higher grade level, it may also display too many weaknesses of the lower grade level.
COURSE SCHEDULE

All readings and responses must be completed **before class** on the dates listed below.

**Week 1: The Purpose of College Writing**
- **M, 1/5** Course Introductions, Syllabus review, discuss assessment essay
- **W, 1/7** Read: *Little Duck Handbook* p. 1-29, Bring two Green Books and *They Say/I Say*
- **F, 1/9** Finish Assessment Essay in class

**Week 2: They Say/I Say: Engaging the Conversation**
- **M, 1/12** Read: *They Say* p. 1-28, Discuss Essay 1 guidelines in class
  Due: Response 1 (complete exercise #1 and #2 on p. 14-15)
- **W, 1/14** Read: *They Say* p. 30-50, Bring three articles on UO or local issues to class
  Due: Response 2 (complete exercises #1 and #2 on p. 40-41)
- **F, 1/16** Read: *They Say* p. 55-89, Bring two more articles related to your group’s topic
  Due: Response 3 (complete exercises #1 and #2 on p. 67)

**Week 3: Presenting Ethical Arguments in a Discourse Community**
- **M, 1/19** MLK Holiday: No Class Meeting
  & **F, 1/23** Due: Presentations delivered in-class Wednesday & Friday

**Week 4: Identifying Your Audience and Establishing Your Style & Voice**
- **M, 1/26** Read: *They Say* p. 92-155
  Due: One copy of Essay 1.1 Draft for Peer Review, Post 1.1 to Blackboard
- **W, 1/28** Due: Post Essay 1.2 Final Draft to Blackboard; in-class reflective writing
- **F, 1/30** Read: *Sustainability* p. 25-32; Discuss Essay 2 Guidelines

**Week 5: Focusing Attention: Thesis Statements and Introductions**
- **M, 2/2** Read: *Sustainability* Foundations Unit, Group 1 Leads Discussion
  Due: Response 4 (See Essay 2 Guidelines for list of assigned readings)
- **W, 2/4** Read: *Sustainability* Place and Community Unit, Group 2 Leads Discussion
  Due: Response 5
- **F, 2/6** Read: *Sustainability* Social Justice Unit, Group 3 Leads Discussion
  Response 6 Due
**Week 6: Navigating Quotations, Paraphrases, & Summaries**

M, 2/9  
Read: *Sustainability*: Transportation Unit, Group 4 Leads Discussion  
Response 7 Due

W, 2/11  
Read: *Sustainability*: Green Consumerism Unit, Group 5 Leads Discussion  
Response 8 Due

F, 2/13  
Bring a copy of Essay 2.1 Draft for Peer Review, Post 2.1 to Blackboard

**Week 7: Rebuilding, Revising, Reflecting**

M, 2/16  
Class cancelled for group writing conferences. You will meet with me outside of  
& W, 2/18  
class with a group of two classmates to discuss your Essay 2.1 drafts.

F, 2/20  
Post Essay 2 Final Draft to Blackboard, in-class reflective writing, Assign Essay 3

**Week 8: Strategies for Success: Incorporating Scholarly Evidence into an Argument**

M, 2/23  
Climate Stories Project: In-class guest presentation

W, 2/25  
Read: *Little Duck Handbook* p. 80-92  
Meet in Library Edmiston Classroom (Rm 144) for librarian-led instruction

F, 2/27  
Read: *Little Duck Handbook* p. 92-97, Meet in Library for Independent Research  
Due: Response 9 - over one scholarly article you will use for Essay 3

**Week 9: Strategies for Success II: Organizing Your Ideas**

M, 3/2  
Read: *Little Duck Handbook* p. 97-108  
Due: Response 10 - over scholarly article you will use for essay 3

W, 3/4  
Due: Essay 3 Research Proposal

F, 3/6  
Due: Essay 3 Annotated Bibliography

**Week 10: Conclusions, Formatting and Citations**

M, 3/8  
Due: Essay 3 Outline

W, 3/10  
Due: Essay 3 Rough Draft for in-class peer review

F, 3/12  
Due: Essay 3 Final Draft and Final Portfolio and Self-Assessment

**Finals Week:**

There are no final exams scheduled for WR 121 courses. Friday of Week 10 is our last class  
meeting. All work for Essay 3 and your Final Portfolio must be turned in on that date.