

English 1A: Critical Thinking
(Reading and Writing Expository Prose)
Nathan Jones

Email: mansabu@gmail.com

Phone: (510) 981-2800

Blog: www.lotusnoirexperience.com

Days/Times: TBA

Office Hours: None

Course Information

Course Code: 42459

Session: Fall 2010

Units: (4)

Credit/ No Credit (As Stated in BCC Catalog)

Transferable: Yes

Online Course Websites

www.eperalta.org/fall2010

- We will use this site for all of our regular discussions, homework, blogging, assignments, etc..

www.turnitin.com

- We will use this site for all peer reviews and final drafts.

Course ID #: 340898

Password: berkeley

Required Texts:

- Can't Stop Won't Stop, Chang, Jeff
- Nickel and Dimed, Ehrenreich, Barbara
- Rereading America, Colombo, Gary
- Rules for Writers - Sixth Edition, Hacke, Diane

Class Requirements:

- Regular internet access to view the internet, listen to podcasts, and watch videos;
- Access to a printer to print articles;
- A back-up device for all of your course work;
- A calendar or agenda to keep track of important dates;
- An in-person test. If you cannot make it to Berkeley City College, you must use the proctor form on eperalta.org to arrange for a testing center near you (there may be a fee).

Purpose: This class provides an introduction to the college level skills of reading, writing, and critical thinking necessary for students to succeed at Berkeley City College and beyond. Students will read strong expository writing from a variety of contexts and will develop their ability to make, support, examine, and defend informed judgments through writing

soundly structured and carefully reasoned essays. In this course, we will challenge your assumptions, opinions, beliefs, and claims. Scrutiny may be strenuous at times, please do not become frustrated or offended. You will gain valuable reading, writing, and thinking skills that will aid you in achieving your future endeavors. Reading selections and assignments are designed to make students aware of, and proficient in, the conventions of formal scholarly writing. Toward this end, grammar and editing skills are integrated into the daily goals of the class. The class encourages students to draw connections between their writing and reasoning skills, their individual professional training, and their informed participation in society.

Expectations: I expect you to attend every class. You are permitted two absences without consequence. Should you choose to take advantage of these, I expect all work due on those days to reach me by the beginning of the class period; all assignments and notes given in class will be your responsibility as well. More than two absences will negatively affect your grade, and five absences or more may result in a failing grade. The grading for this class works on a point system and tardiness will have a negative effect on your daily attendance points. I expect you to be on time, prepared for class, and ready to participate. Class participation is crucial and important to your success and grade. Every voice in class is important and expected to be heard. And finally, I expect you to be an active, aware, and respectful member of our classroom community.

Assignments: There will be four essay assignments in this class, two 4 page essays and one major research paper, a final portfolio assignment, and various in-class writing assignments and quizzes. In addition, you will be asked to provide short essay responses to the readings and participate in a forum on Moodle. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date; late papers will not be accepted. I do not accept late responses or provide make-up quizzes. Our classroom community is a public space and will involve peer-editing, so be aware that your writing will be read by me and your fellow students. I have the utmost respect for the challenges and triumphs of the writing process, and every member of our class will give that respect to your written assignments. Likewise, you should respect your own work: any work containing plagiarism will receive a zero and may result in failing the class and further disciplinary action. You must complete all assignments in order to pass the class.

Quick Success Tips: Talk to me, talk to each other, talk to the folks at the Learning Resource Center. Email is good too. Read ahead; re-read, ask questions, offer opinions—engagement makes everything more interesting.

Grading Policy: Grades will be based on a point system, but the percentage weight breakdown is roughly as follows:

- Four essays: 60%
- Blogging, quizzes, and short written responses: 30%
- Participation (including peer review, peer-editing, responses): 10%

Grading Scale: 100-91 points= A; 90-81=B; 80-71=C; 70-61=D, below 61=F

Note: In order to pass this class, you must turn in all essays. It is the student's responsibility to keep all class work for the length of the semester. Failure to write and to submit any one of the essay assignments may result in a non-passing grade for the course. However, the writing and submission of all essays assignments do not guarantee a passing grade.

General Paper Requirements: All papers should be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, and have one-inch margins. On rough draft days, you need to bring three copies of your paper to class, and on final draft days, one clean copy accompanied by all drafting materials. ROUGH DRAFTS ARE MANDATORY and must be at least 3/4 the required length of the final paper. Fewer pages than that will result in point loss. All papers should be page-numbered and the first page should contain: Your name, date, essay#, and my name in the upper right or left-hand corner. You should always title your papers. Late papers will not be accepted.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional illegal appropriation of "ideas or writings of another as one's own" (Webster's II New Riverside University Dictionary). "As a rule, you should document word-for-word quotations from a source, idea from a source that you put in your own words, and tables, charts, graphs, or statistics from a source" (Patterns for College Writing). Any student caught plagiarizing any assignment will face appropriate disciplinary action (in accordance with District Policy). Students can be asked at any given time to give an account of any aspect of their work.

Programs and Services for Students with Disabilities (PSSD):

If for any reason you think that you need accommodations to help you succeed at BCC, in this class or any other, I highly recommend you contact the PSSD office to talk with a counselor. PSSD will provide many kinds of assistance, including helping teachers provide quality teaching for you. If you have not met with PSSD, I cannot issue accommodations on my own. The PSSD office, Room 261, is open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm; Monday through Friday. Students interested in PSSD services should come to the office or call (510) 981-2812 or (510) 981-2813 to make an appointment with a counselor. The TTY number for deaf and hard of hearing students is (510) 981-2814. The California Relay Service should be used for leaving messages during evening or weekend hours.

***Moodle:** This class has a Moodle site on which are listed course policies, my grading rubric, and which will contain a discussion forum specifically for this class. As part of your participation grade, you will be required to post a minimum of six times in this discussion forum. We'll talk more about what qualifies as participation on the first day of class.

Pedagogical methods:

- Discussion
- Textual analysis (of primary and secondary sources)
- Research (individual and group)
- Interpretation of relevant audio-visual materials

Students should be able to:

- Write well organized, well developed, effective, well edited, logically sound, and clear essays.
- Write effective, well edited, well organized research papers of 3,000-5,000 words which apply appropriate and clear organizational strategies.
- Demonstrate how to use processes in writing exposition: brainstorming, restricting topics, creating thesis statements, developing supporting information, formulating conclusions, revising, and editing.
- Apply active reading strategies in order to identify main ideas and critically analyze and explain ideas in texts (written summaries, exercises, and reading responses)
Summarize course readings in order to demonstrate comprehension of college-level texts
- Analyze, evaluate and synthesize college-level essays and apply to writing.

Essay Grade Descriptions:

An “A” essay:

- Follows exactly the assignment instructions
- Presents an argument with an analytical thesis
- Shows superb, profound, and sophisticated original thought/analysis
- Demonstrates clear and excellent organization and development of ideas according to the purpose of the assignment
- Is coherent
- Does not contain major and excessive grammatical errors

A “B” essay:

- Follows exactly the assignment instructions
- Presents an argument with an analytical thesis
- Shows good, profound, and sophisticated original thought/analysis
- Demonstrates clear and good organization and development of ideas according to the purpose of the assignment
- Is coherent
- Does not contain major and excessive grammatical errors

A “C” essay:

- Follows exactly the assignment instructions
- Presents an argument with an analytical thesis
- Addresses the subject in a general manner and is somewhat vague
- Shows original thought/analysis that needs more depth and sophistication
- Is coherent
- Has a number of grammatical errors

A “D” or “F” essay (view any one of reasons listed below):

- Failure to follow the instructions of the assignment
- Lack of an argument
- Lack of originality/analysis
- Lack of organization and development of ideas
- Excessive grammatical errors
- Incoherency
- Failure to hand-in essay on the assigned due dates
- Plagiarism

| Week Dates | Topic/Reading Due | Writing Due |
|-------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1. 8/24 - 8/29 | Introduction | Online/Essay |
| 2. 8/30 - 9/5 | CSWS: Loop 1 - Babylon is Burning (pp. 1 - 67) | |
| 3. 9/6 - 9/12 | CSWS: Loop 2 - Planet Rock (pp. 89 - 189) | |
| 4. 9/13 - 9.19 | CSWS: Loop 3 - The Message (pp. 215 - 331) | |
| 5. 9/20 - 9/26 | CSWS: Loop 4 - Stakes Is High (pp. 357 - 381) | |
| 6. 9/27 - 10/3 | "On Lit Hop" - Adam Mansbach | Essay #1 |
| 7. 10/4 - 10/10 | Nickel and Dimed - Getting Ready (pp. 1 - 10) | |
| 8. 10/11 - 10/17 | Nickel and Dimed - Serving in Florida (pp. 11 - 50) | |
| 9. 10/18 - 10/24 | Nickel and Dimed - Scrubbing in Maine (pp. 51 - 120) | |
| 10. 10/25 - 10/31 | Nickel and Dimed - Three Selling in Minnesota (pp. 121 - 192) | |
| 11. 11/1 - 11/7 | Nickel and Dimed - Evaluation (pp. 193 - 222) | Essay #2 |
| 12. 11/8 - 11/14 | Rereading America - Intro: Cultural Myths | |
| 13. 11/15 - 11/21 | Rereading America - Learning Power (pp.153 - 289) | |
| 14. 11/22 - 11/28 | Rereading America - Created Equal (pp. 528 - 678) | |
| 15. 11/29 - 12/5 | Rereading America - True Women (pp. 409 - 520) | Essay #3 |
| 16. 12/6 - 12/12 | Rereading America - Money and Success (pp. 303 - 401) | |
| 17. 12/13 - 12/19 | Final Exam | |
| 18. 12/20 - 12/26 | Final Thoughts | Essay #4 |