

Course Syllabus

Salt Lake Community College

English 1010—Introduction to Writing

Fall 2014

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Office: 3-186K **Hours:** Tuesday, 10-11 and by appointment

Book: You do not have to buy a text for this class, but you will need to download (and sometimes print) readings, papers, and handouts from the course Canvas website.

Course Schedule: You can find due dates for assignments on the [Semester Schedule and Homework](#) page.

General Education Statement

This course is part of the General Education Program at Salt Lake Community College. It is designed not only to teach the information and skills required by the discipline, but also to develop vital workplace skills and to teach strategies and skills that can be used for life-long learning. This course fulfills one part of the EN Composition requirement for General Education.

Course Description

As the first part of “Connected English 1010/2010,” English 1010 introduces students to the study of writing. (Note: In this sequence of courses, “writing” means both print and digital/on-line writing.) In this course, students will engage with three inter-related fundamental concepts that make effective writing possible: rhetoric, genre, and process. In doing so, students will learn that all writing is situational (which means that situation—or context—affects how to go about writing within it). Because of this, effective writers analyze and respond to the particular situations in which they are writing. Students will work with rhetoric, genre, and process through a series of informal and formal reading and writing assignments that move from familiar writing situations to those frequently found in college settings.

What is “Connected English 1010/2010”?

The goal of “Connected English 1010/2010” is to improve student writing success. Writing effectively is a complex and difficult task that requires extended study and practice. Many students postpone taking English 1010 and 2010 until late in their college study, or they take English 1010, then put off English 2010 until much later. Both of these decisions can negatively impact how well students can handle writing assignments in other courses.

We believe that taking English 1010 and English 2010 early in college, and taking them back-to-back, will improve students’ abilities to succeed as effective writers. **To make this possible, students enrolled in this section of English 1010 will have priority to register for English 2010 in the next semester at the same day/time with the same instructor.** Enrollment in this course does not require enrollment in the connected section of English 2010, but it is recommended that students take advantage of this opportunity.

Course Outcomes

By the end of English 1010, students who satisfactorily complete its requirements should be able to:

- Understand and apply the concept that all writing is situation-based.
- Recognize and apply the concept that reading and writing are rhetorical acts.
- Appreciate that the acts of reading and writing include a variety of processes
- Select from these processes to respond effectively to a writing task.
- Comprehend and analyze reading tasks in order to respond effectively in writing.
- Collaborate with others to produce more effective writing than possible on one's own.
- Use research methods and citation strategies at a basic level to reach one's writing goals.

Students will further develop these writing practices in the connected English 2010 course by engaging with in-depth and rigorous tasks that center on taking positions in academic and public writing situations. In English 2010 students deepen their ability to research the complexities of a writing situation and respond in sophisticated ways.

Course Philosophies

Reading and Writing

Reading and writing are incredibly complex acts that are intimately connected with each other. However, in school systems, reading and writing tend to be “separated” into distinct educational areas—often with the assumption that we have to learn “how to read” before we learn “how to write.” Beyond the very beginning stages of learning to read (that young children experience^[1]), this way of organizing education does not reflect the reality of how our brains deal with these acts. Reading and writing cannot be separated from each other. When we write, we also read. When we read, we are also, in a sense, “writing” in our minds.

Therefore, even though this course is called “Intro to Writing,” it cannot (and should not) be done without reading. We will use writing to improve your reading abilities, and we will use reading to improve your writing abilities.

Writing Requires Consistent Analysis

I've heard it stated that the act of writing activates more areas of your brain than any other cognitive act you can engage in (luckily, your brain is pretty awesome). To work towards becoming a better writer (which, in my world means a confident and flexible writer, not necessarily someone with perfect grammar), you need to first understand a key concept about writing that may be new to you: there is no such thing as "universally good" writing.

This means that the perceived value of writing is subject to the situation in which it takes place. What might be "good" writing in one situation would be terrible writing in another. You could write a terrific essay for your history class, but then use the same strategies for a finance class and find yourself with a failing evaluation. If this doesn't quite make sense, think of submitting a resume for a job through the 140-character limit of Twitter. You probably won't get the job.

In other words, writing is not an objective clump of grammatically-correct words on a page or a computer screen; it is an act that takes place amongst real people. That, in a nutshell, is why it is so hard. Writing well requires continual thinking, continual analysis, continual reflection, continual revision. Some people who have long researched how to teach writing say, "**the study of writing involves consistent analysis of relationships between contexts, purposes, audiences, genres, and conventions**" (Adler-Kassner, Majewski, and Koshnick).

Writing is Hard—But Fun

Writing is tough. Writing is tiring. Even for people who find writing enjoyable, writing is terribly exhausting. [Look at this image for just how exhausting it is. And, then look at what else you have to do!](#) No wonder it is hard.

At the same time, writing can also be terribly exciting and engaging...that is, once you get past the idea that objectively "good" writing exists. When you do, writing becomes a puzzle or a problem to be solved, to be explored, to be uncovered. It can even develop into playing a type of game. It really can become fun!

So, what's our purpose? I'm not going to teach you how "to write well." That's not possible over the course of one (or, hopefully two) semesters. There are an infinite number of writing situations, and I can't teach you "how to write" for each one of them. **But, I can teach you how to think about writing; I can teach you how to analyze writing; I can teach you that you already know a lot more than you think you do.**

And, you can use what you already know, and what you will learn here, as you become a confident and flexible writer. You really can.

[1] There is a significant difference in how young children learn to read/write and how adults learn to read/write. If someone begins to learn to read as an adult, it is often useful to include writing in the learning process from the very beginning. Our brains just don't separate reading and writing like educational systems do.

Course Requirements

Grade-based success in this course is broken into two distinct categories: participation and performance. **This course places a huge importance on your participation; in fact, fully 1/3 of your final grade is based on it.** Participation consists of being in class, being ready to work, willingness to try, and a series of informal reading and writing assignments. (You will find a list of these under the "Assignments" page on our Canvas website.) If you do well in participation, you will likely do well in this course.

The other portion of evaluation is performance, which is worth 2/3 of your final grade. This consists of the evaluations of a series of more formal assignments (listed below). However, before you worry, be aware that you may revise each of these assignments (as well as the informal participation assignments) after they are evaluated. **Assignments can be revised as many times as you would like for up to a month after the original due date.** (The only exception to this is the final assignment: "A Study of Genre," which is due at the end of the semester, but you have a draft that I will respond to prior to its deadline.)

"Performance" Assignments These are worth 2/3 of your final grade. You can find their relative value on the Assignments page of the Canvas website.

- Syllabus Summary
- Brief and Detailed Summary
- Academic Summary
- Rhetorical Guide to Breaking Up in Writing (Group Assignment)
- Formal Rhetorical Analysis
- A Study of Genre
- A Study of Genre Annotated References

Course Policies and Procedures (in alphabetical order):

In addition to the policies outlined in the [SLCC Student Code of Conduct, \(Links to an external site.\)](#) the following apply to everyone in this class:

- **Accommodation for Disabilities:** If you need accommodation, please talk with me and/or someone at the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you are aware that accommodation is necessary. The DRC is in 1-061 E-A or you can call them at 957-3258 (voice/TTY).
- **Communication:** The #1 irritation I have as a teacher is students who don't talk to me. If you have to miss class, if you are struggling with an assignment, if you are frustrated, if you just can't get something done...talk to me! Send me an email, leave a message for me, slide a note under my door, or even talk to me in class! **You will find that I will treat you and your situation with respect, and I will work with you to address whatever needs you have. On the other hand, if you think that avoiding me will make your problems go away, I assure you that it won't.** Just talk to me.

In terms of me communicating with you, I will use the course Canvas website to communicate with the entire class and with you individually. If you don't check your BruinMail regularly (every couple of days), please set it up to forward messages to your personal email address. (Note: If you email me from your personal address, that address may become the "default" address for you if I send you an individual message.)

- **Completion of Assignments:** To pass this course, you must complete all "Performance" assignments.
- **Late Work:** I don't like late work, but would rather receive something late than something that you rushed through to a semblance of completion. **However, I need to know before the due date that you are going to be turning in something late. If you don't let me know prior to the due date, your evaluation will be reduced.** (This opportunity only applies to work you are turning in to me, not work that you are sharing with other students. Also, there are some assignments that are time-dependent and cannot be made up. If you are unsure, check with me.)
- **Incompletes:** Students must be passing and have completed 80% of the course work in order to be granted an incomplete.
- **Participation:** The collaborative nature of this class necessitates that everyone be here (on time), be ready to participate with your assignments done, be willing to fully engage with the task at hand, and treat your group members with respect and share your intelligence with them. We will work on strategies that help individuals work well in groups, and how to resolve the inevitable problems that will arise.
 - The English Department believes that **attendance** and active participation in class contribute to success. Therefore, department policy stipulates that at least 10% of your final grade will be based on your involvement in class, as the framework of the course demands that you participate. **Therefore, more than 10% of unexcused absences will result in a reduction of one full letter grade.** (We meet 30 times, so no more than 3 absences.)

If you know that you will miss a class, contact me that morning and I will record the class for you. [I will post the Mp3 recording onto our Wordpress site \(Links to an external site.\)](#). You will still have the absence, but you will not get behind in class.

- **Plagiarism:** Students intentionally or unintentionally commit plagiarism when they submit another author's work as their own. Plagiarism also includes the failure to attribute unique phrases, passages, or ideas to their original source. Plagiarism is a violation of the SLCC student code of conduct.
- **Revision:** Revision is a central part of the process of successful writing. This class is built around sharing your writing with other students and with me. You will have plenty of opportunities to revise your work throughout the semester.

[Student Writing Center \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

SLCC's Student Writing Center offers an advising program where you have the opportunity to discuss your work with a peer tutor or faculty writing advisor. The Student Writing Center advisor can help you think about your writing process by sharing impressions of your materials, offering revision strategies, discussing different ways to approach an assignment, as well as to provide an experienced reader for your work. The Writing Center is not simply a place to go to get a paper "fixed" or "corrected." Be prepared with questions for your advisor. Ask yourself what you want to work on before you go. You may sign up for an appointment in 3-180. You may also send a draft to an advisor through the SWC's website: <http://www.slcc.edu/swc/submitwriting.asp> ([Links to an external site.](#)). Be sure to include questions and concerns you may have and a copy of the writing assignment.

General Education ePortfolio

Each student in General Education courses at SLCC maintains a General Education ePortfolio. Instructors in every Gen Ed course will ask you to put at least one assignment from the course into your ePortfolio, and accompany it with reflective writing. It is a requirement in this class for you to add to your ePortfolio, and this syllabus details the assignments and reflections you are to include.* Your ePortfolio will allow you to include your educational goals, describe your extracurricular activities, and post your resume. When you finish your time at SLCC, your ePortfolio will then be a multi-media showcase of your educational experience. For detailed information visit <http://www.slcc.edu/gened/eportfolio> ([Links to an external site.](#)). After you have picked an ePortfolio platform, go to the corresponding help site to watch the tutorials and look at the examples so you can get started on your own: <http://slcceportfolio.yolasite.com> ([Links to an external site.](#)) <http://slcceportfolio.wordpress.com> ([Links to an external site.](#)) <http://slcceportfolio.weebly.com> ([Links to an external site.](#))

If you would like to start your ePortfolio in a computer lab with a person there to help you, sign up online for one of the **free workshops** at the Taylorsville-Redwood, South, and Jordan libraries: <http://libweb.slcc.edu/refilt/forms/eportfolio> ([Links to an external site.](#)). You may also visit the **ePortfolio Lab** in the basement of the Taylorsville-Redwood Library during business hours, and staff will help you without an appointment. Finally, questions regarding the ePortfolio can be directed to eportfolio@slcc.edu.

*In this class, you will receive extra credit if you submit a document produced in this class to your ePortfolio (along with a reflection statement about it). In order to receive this credit, you must send me a link to your ePortfolio, or provide me with an off-line version of it. (An off-line version is available to students who do not wish to put their materials on-line, contact David Hubert for this "waiver" at david.hubert@slcc.edu.) The extra credit will be the equivalent of a 1/3 increase in your final grade (i.e. a "B-" will become a "B," a "C" will become a "C+").