# English 115.1 | Topics in Writing | Fall 2020

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| **Instructor** | Rachael Benavidez | [rachael.benavidez@qc.cuny.edu](mailto:rachael.benavidez@qc.cuny.edu) |
| **Office Hours** | Monday–Thursday 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. on Slack (link) Or email to schedule an appointment for a Google Meet videoconference. |
| **Location** | Google Classroom: <https://classroom.google.com> | **Classroom Code:** ####### |
| **Class Hours** | Wednesday 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. on Google Meet (link on Google Classroom) |
| **Required Technology** | Class sign-up requires your Queens College account. To claim your account, go to: <https://www.qc.cuny.edu/computing/pages/google-apps.aspx>.  Y**ou will need to use your QC CAMs account to login.** If you forgot your user name or password, go to <https://cams.qc.cuny.edu/>. |
| **Required Course Texts** | All course materials, including the syllabus, assignments, and readings are posted to our Google Classroom drive. |

# COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, you will continue to work on assignments given in your accompanying English 110 course to discover useful strategies to express your thoughts clearly and effectively. Your writing practice will include various exercises, essay drafts, and revisions, with an emphasis on a set of skills that will both strengthen your writing and increase your awareness of the choices you make when you write. Along with helping you produce clear and effective writing, these practices will give you the opportunity to pay close attention to what you read, develop your ideas, analyze the ideas of others, and evaluate your own potential as an academic writer.

Altogether, in this course you will develop the critical thinking and writing skills that you will need in college and beyond, and gain confidence as a writer and reader who will be able to:

* Use writing techniques to respond to readings and to discover your own ideas on assigned topics.
* Practice some conventional forms of essay writing that support a thesis and reflect the logical organization of paragraphs.
* Develop revision and organization skills.
* Develop editing skills that focus on correct grammar and punctuation.
* Receive individualized instruction and practice to improve your writing, such as grammar, word choice, structure, and punctuation.

# COURSE POLICIES

## Student Expectations

To receive a passing grade (D or above) in this course, students must at minimum:

* Submit reflective writing that examines the writing you want to develop before each class.
* Be prepared with writing to develop for each class.
* Come to class every day (barring rare emergencies) and participate in class discussion. **Missing more than two classes will affect your grade and ability to complete the assignments required for this course.**
* Take notes and complete in-class writing assignments.
* Check your email and Google Classroom / course website for updates.
* Complete the Final Reflective Essay assignment.

## Online Discussion and In-Class Writing

Since English 115.1 is first and foremost a writing course, your participation will be measured via the **writing** completed and in your participation in class. Only through thoughtfully producing and revising a significant quantity of writing will you improve the quality of your writing. Your completion of such work not only advances your own learning but also contributes to a productive learning environment in the classroom.

## Preparation for Class with Reflective Writing

Because this course is designed to help you to address your unique challenges to develop as a writer, you must come to class prepared with not only writing to work on but with a reflective description that examines the specific help you need. These brief writing assignments (approximately 200-250 words) will allow you to reflect on your writing and empower you to address your unique challenges.

## Final Reflective Essay

Re-read all of your previous reflection submissions, along with your essays and the in-class writing you did for the class. In a 500-word essay, reflect on the writing practice you gained through the work you did in class and how the class informed and shaped your writing. You’ll discuss address additional expectations you have of yourself as a writer and how the class made you think differently about your writing.

## Attendance and Lateness

The discussion and workshop elements that are at the center of this course cannot be made up, so attendance is vital. Additionally, lateness is disruptive to the entire class and interferes with your ability to participate, which affects your grade. **If you must miss class, please write me a brief, formal email to notify me;** you do not need to explain the reason for your absence. It is your responsibility to catch up with the learning you missed; I suggest contacting peers and reviewing posted materials as a first step.

If you want to further discuss class materials or topics covered, you are welcome to visit me during office hours. Please do not write me requesting that I summarize a missed class for you over email. If you miss more than 2 classes by the middle of the semester, I’ll ask you to meet with me to discuss your capacity to successfully complete the course. If you will miss classes due to religious observance or QC sport activity, or if you have a chronic condition that you believe will cause you to miss more than two classes, please inform me of the dates during the first week of classes.

## Respectful Interaction

You are encouraged to question, critique, and challenge ideas—not people. Your communication with your classmates and your instructor must be thoughtful and respectful. We will discuss and formalize principles for classroom and online interactions during our first few classes.

# GRADING AND EVALUATION

In English 115.1, you will learn and practice a reflective, recursive, and collaborative writing process as you develop final drafts of your writing for a public audience. Therefore, your final course grade will be a combination of your final draft grades and your writing process grade:

In-class writing 25%

Reflective statements 25%

Participation 25%

Final Reflection Essay 25%

## Late and Missed Assignments, Drafts, and Final Essays

All work must be submitted by the deadline on the course calendar to be considered “on time.” Submitting work late and failing to submit work at all make it much harder for you to do well on your essays since you miss the opportunity to receive timely feedback that can guide your revisions.

I do not typically give extensions for problems such as computer crashes, conflicts with other course assignments or extracurricular activities, oversleeping, or other personal difficulties. I strongly advise you to keep backups of your works-in-progress.

**NB: The Final Reflective Essay must be submitted to pass the class.**

## Special Accommodation

If you have or develop any condition that might require accommodation in this class—for example, a medical condition—you should immediately contact the Office of Special Services (OSS) in 171 Kiely Hall at 718-997-5870. OSS will ensure you receive any additional support needed to fully participate in and succeed at this course (and QC). You are welcome to inform me if you are comfortable doing so. We all have different ways of learning. Please communicate with me as soon as you can about your individual learning needs and how this course can best accommodate them.

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

College Writing will provide you with strategies for working ethically and accurately with the texts you engage. We will discuss source use practices that prevent plagiarism, a serious academic offense that runs counter to our academic community’s core values of honesty and respect for others. According to the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity (<http://web.cuny.edu/academics/info-central/policies/academic-integrity.pdf>), plagiarism is the act of presenting another person’s ideas, research, or writing as your own. The following are some examples of plagiarism, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:

* Copying another person’s actual words without the use of quotation marks and footnotes attributing the words to their source.
* Presenting another person’s ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging the source.
* Using information that is not common knowledge without acknowledging the source.
* Failing to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignments.

Internet plagiarism includes submitting downloaded term papers or parts of term papers, paraphrasing or copying information from the internet without citing the source, and “cutting and pasting” from various sources without proper attribution.

Web sites and businesses set up to sell papers to students often claim they are merely offering “information” or “research” to students and that this service is acceptable and allowed throughout academia. **This is absolutely untrue.** If you buy and submit “research,” drafts, summaries, abstracts, or final versions of a paper, you are committing plagiarism and are subject to stringent disciplinary action.

Final drafts that contain plagiarism will receive a zero grade, may result in failure of the course, and the case will be reported to Queens College.

## Title IX/Clery Act Notification

Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any other nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sex discrimination violate University policies. Know your rights, please refer to the link below for more information, and/or seek assistance: <http://www1.cuny.edu/sites/title-ix/?post_type=campus_profile&p=154>

Also, please know that disclosure to University faculty or instructors of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on campus, in a University-sponsored program, or involving a campus visitor or University student or employee (whether current or former) is not confidential under Title IX. Faculty and instructors must forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the University’s Title IX officer.

## Writing Resources

If you need additional help (beyond my office hours) with your writing, you are welcome and encouraged to utilize any of the following on-campus writing resources:

* **The Writing Center** in Kiely Hall 229 (phone: 718-997-5676) provides free writing support services to all enrolled Queens College students and is a helpful resource for writers at any level. Visit the web site to make an appointment: <http://writingcenter.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/>.
* **The Tutoring Center** in Kiely Hall 127 (phone: 718-997-5677) provides free tutoring to students enrolled in many courses offered at QC.
* **The Language Lab** provides one-on-one tutoring for multilingual/ESL/ELL students enrolled in English 110 and 130. Email: [FYW@qc.cuny.edu](mailto:FYW@qc.cuny.edu).
* **The Purdue OWL Writing Lab** is an invaluable reference for citation formatting and style:  
  <https://owl.purdue.edu/>.

# COURSE CALENDAR

*Dates for reading and writing assignments are subject to change. Please pay attention to all announcements made in class, on the course website, or via email.*

| **Date** | **Reading Due** | **Writing Due** |
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| **Succeeding in this Course** | | |
| W 8/26 | in-class reading: The Syllabus | None |
| **Reading and Annotating for Conversation** | | |
| W 9/2 | reading: How to Read an Assignment reading: Reading (and Writing) for Conversation | Reflection 1 |
| **Analysis and Argumentation** | | |
| W 9/9 | reading: Identifying Intellectual or Interpretive Problems reading: Argumentation | Reflection 2 |
| **Summarizing, Paraphrasing, Quoting, and MLA Citation** | | |
| W 9/16 | reading: Citing Sources | Reflection 3 |
| **Writing Process Workshop** | | |
| W 9/23 | reading: From Messy Ideas to a Polished Draft | Reflection 4 |
| **Developing Strong Claims and Theses** | | |
| W 9/30 | reading: Developing Strong Claims reading: Strong Theses | Reflection 5 |
| **Editing Versus Revision** | | |
| W 10/7 | reading: \*\* | Reflection 6 |
| W 10/14 | \*\*\*\* Not a Class Day \*\*\*\* (Monday Schedule) | None |
| **Lens and Visual Analysis** | | |
| W 10/21 | reading: Lens Analysis | Reflection 7 |
| **Evidence and Secondary Sources** | | |
| W 10/28 | reading: Strong Research Questions reading: Functions of Sources | Reflection 8 |
| **Workshop** | | |
| W 11/4 | reading: \*\* | Reflection 9 |
| **Essay Organization** | | |
| W 11/11 | reading: Effective Paragraphing | Reflection 10 |
| **Workshop** | | |
| W 11/18 | reading: Your Essay | Reflection 11 |
| W 11/25 | \*\*\*\* Not a Class Day \*\*\*\* (Friday Schedule) | None |
| **Developing and Structuring Paragraphs** | | |
| W 12/2 | reading: Effective Conclusions | Reflection 12 |
| **Final Class—Developmental Workshop** | | |
| Th 8/6 | reading: Your Essay | None |
| **Final Submission Due** | | |
| W 12/16 | \*\*\* Not a class day \*\*\* | **Final Reflection** |

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