

English Composition 50: Summer Writing Workshop (2 Units)

Instructor:	Donald Vincent Email: donaldivincent18@ucla.edu
Meeting dates/times:	July 6, 2021 - Tuesday 10:00am - 12:30pm; 1:00pm - 2:00pm Thursday 10:00am - 12:30pm
Course location:	Zoom (Link TBA) https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/211V-ENGCOMP50-1

Course Description

This writing workshop serves as a basic introduction to critical reading and academic writing on the collegiate level. More broadly, English Composition 50 will help orient you to specific matters of language and communication at the university. It is a bigger task than you might imagine. If you think of it, you'll realize that every comment you make in class and every e-mail you write to an instructor or counselor occurs in a social context that is new to you as a first-term college student. We will use writing to explore ourselves as individuals, learners, and members of our common educational home, UCLA.

But first a few questions: What does writing at the university mean to you? Why does it matter? How do you identify as a writer? In this writing course, we will use writing as our subject of inquiry as well as the vehicle for discussion and examination of our academic and linguistic identities. Through studying scholarly articles, popular essays, and videos, we'll investigate how writing both reflects and informs intellectual work at the university. In addition to the Core Learning Objectives stated below, my intention is for you to leave this class with a firm sense of (1) your own academic identity, (2) how writing at the university is constructed, (3) what you need to succeed within those constructs, and (4) how your contributions to understanding writing at the university can enhance the ways students learn to communicate in disciplines across campus. By the end of the course, you should find that this workshop has prepared you to speak, write, and learn more effectively as you move towards the full college experience.

At the heart of our course is *Booksmart* (2019), a wonderful film spotlighting the “coming of age theme”. The film explores how their young protagonists move out of the familiar *smartypants* roles and rhythms of childhood/adolescence toward a new sense of independence, purpose, and adventure. The film puts high school—the actual campus, not just the abstract notion of education—at center stage, a stage where the theatrical Amy (*Kaitlyn Dever*) and Molly (*Beanie Feinstein*) embrace various roles with great aplomb, if not always clear success, as they strive to discover who they really are and where they truly belong, on and off the school grounds.

At the conclusion of the course, the student should be able to:

- use writing processes to generate, develop, share, revise, proofread, and edit major writing projects.
- produce essays that show structure, purpose, significant content, and audience awareness.
- understand and integrate others' texts into their own writing.
- reflect on their own writing process and rhetorical effectiveness.

Required Texts

1. Bryan A. Garner and David Foster Wallace, *Quack This Way*
2. Richard Bullock, et al, *The Little Seagull Handbook (3rd edition)*
3. Additional readings will be available online and distributed as PDFs on CCLE.

Course Requirements

In addition to completing the assigned readings, and attending PLF workshops the first three Tuesdays of the term, you will need to complete the following:

- daily in-class exercises plus three out-of-class short-writing entries
- one in-class essay/presentation on reading visual texts/media.
- one brief (3 pages) formal paper/critical analysis (draft and revision)
- one college application personal letter (draft only)

In a class like this where you learn actively (that is, by doing), it is essential that you:

- Attend regularly. Please be sure to attend all classes. Attendance needs to be thought of as more than just showing up. Attendance involves being in class on time and ready to learn. We will conduct our classes through ZOOM which can be located on UCLA's CCLE course platform. To attend is to arrive prepared and to participate thoughtfully in discussions and activities. If you already know that you must miss one class meeting for something urgent, please email me right away. Missing more than one class constitutes a serious problem.
- Keep up with the assigned reading. While the reading list in this course will be fairly brief, you must allow time not only to "get through" a certain number of pages but to understand and engage what you read. Be sure to allow time to read, re-read, annotate and reflect.
- Finish all written work on time. Written work is not only the final drafts of the major assignment, but in-class exercises and preliminary drafts of assignments. Remember that this course focuses on the writing *process*. Late work undercuts that process.

Learning Outcomes

1. **Writing:** You'll complete a variety of writing projects intended for different audiences, purposes, or formats.
2. **Reading:** You'll read college level readings as support for experimenting with form, discussing ideas, shaping responses, developing writing projects, and revising. The course includes preliminary work with the ways writers introduce and internally cite their reading.
3. **Substantive Revising:** You'll learn ways to revise their writing in both early and late stages of composing. Projects have clearly defined stages of preparation and regular progress reviews.
4. **Speaking and Listening:** You'll be introduced to effective classroom language use, speaking and listening in one-on-one, small-group, and large-group contexts. I'll must provide some individual attention to student writers in the form of group feedback. We'll draw upon student conferences with students in order to provide feedback as well.
5. **Reflecting:** You'll experience opportunities to reflect on your writing process and on the rhetorical effectiveness of a completed project.

Learning Objectives:

- effective oral and written communication abilities.
- ease with textual, visual, and electronically-mediated literacies.
- problem-solving skills using a variety of methods and tools.
- critical thinking skills, including analysis, application, and evaluation.
- reflective thinking and the ability to synthesize information and ideas.

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Journals

Journals are informal, though thoughtful and specific, responses to the texts—written, visual, or cinematic—that we'll be encountering this summer. This exercise is not a test or quiz—just an opportunity to express your ideas freely, without pressure, and to (re)discover the pleasure of writing. I'll give you specific prompts at the beginning of most class sessions, and you'll have about 10-15 minutes to respond.

At-home prompts will be uploaded to CCLE.

Grading

English Composition 50 carries 2 units of college credit. To earn that credit, you must complete the required work according to the guidelines listed above. Because this workshop aims to help you prepare for work that comes later, final grades will largely be determined by the quality and consistency of your engagement with the course. In other words, attendance, participation, and the timely submission of all assignments will count heavily toward your final grade. The quality of your writing will carry some weight, but not so much as it would in a regular university course.

Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change)

Week 1: Introductions and Understanding Texts

Week 2: The Rhetorical Analysis

Week 3: Critical Response, Peer Review, and Feedback

Week 4: College Application Letters and Revisions

Below is a list of themes/issues we hope to cover over the course of the workshop:

The College Experience

- What do you want from college?
- What will college want from you?

The Importance of Writing in College

- What is the academic community?
- What place does writing hold in that community?

The College Campus

- What can we learn about college life by observing the campus environment?

High School and College

- What's different about studying for college classes?
- What's different about college reading?
- What's different about college writing?

Writing to Learn

- How can writing be a study tool?
- How can writing lead to discovery?

Approaching the Task

- How is writing a "process"?
- How can I make the process work for me?

Understanding Revision

- What is the difference between revising and editing?
- What is the difference between editing and proofreading?

Academic Genres

- Why do even good writers sometimes produce weak papers?
- What is the difference between a convention and a formula?

Feedback and Grades

- What do college instructors really expect?
- What do grades really mean?

Special Resources in College

- What if I need help with writing?

Research and Writing

- Why aren't *Google* and *Wikipedia* enough?

Writing in a Digital Age

- Audience issues 4 U 2 consider

The Why, What, and How of Citing Work

- What is plagiarism and how can I avoid it?
- Do citation forms have to be so complicated?

Style and Correctness

- Why is grammatical correctness important?
- Why isn't grammatical correctness enough?

Writing the Personal Essay/Admissions Essay

- What kinds of approaches work (or don't work)?
- How do goals and values shape approaches?
- How does a person reveal themselves in a letter?

Writing In-Class Essays/Exams

- How does a process approach work in a timed exam? How can one prepare for an essay exam?

Little Things and the Big Thing

- What are the most common editorial slips?
- Why are some small mistakes important?

Reflecting on Revised and In-Class Writing

- What did you accomplish through changes you made?
- How can you improve further?
- What do you carry away from the class that you can bring to your next class?
- How does close reading relate to compelling writing?