

English Composition 50 | Writing Summer Institute: Introduction to College Writing
Course Syllabus, Summer 2021



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Meeting dates: Tuesdays 10 AM – 12:30 PM; 1 PM – 2 PM
Thursdays 10 AM – 12:30 PM

Classroom location: Zoom classroom link
<https://ucla.zoom.us/j/91061195897?pwd=empaa3lsMzNKQk13QTcxSlZqeGVpdz09>

Office hours: By appointment

Course Description:

This workshop serves as a basic introduction to critical reading and academic writing. More broadly still, 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 will be new to you as a first-term college student. We'll attend, therefore, to those small bits of class-related communication in addition to in-

class exams and formal essay assignments. By the end of the term, 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 will be two wonderful films spotlighting what's called the "coming of age" theme. *Rushmore* (1998), directed and co-written by Wes Anderson, and *Lady Bird* (2017), written and directed by Greta Gerwig, both explore how their young protagonists move out of the familiar roles and rhythms of childhood/adolescence and toward a new sense of independence, purpose, and adventure. Both films put high school—the actual campus, not just the abstract notion of education—at center stage, a stage upon which the rather theatrical Max (*Rushmore*) and Christine (*Lady Bird*) 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.

These films have been digitized by the wonderful staff at UCLA Library. We will find links to screen the films via our course site (also referred to as CCLE). We'll be watching a few scenes in class, but I do want you to view each movie in its entirety by July 20.

We won't get to all the readings in class, but you should nonetheless read and annotate each text.

Course Requirements:

In addition to doing the assigned reading and viewing, and attending PLF workshops the first three Tuesdays of the term, you will need to complete:

- daily in-class exercises plus three out-of-class journal entries
- one in-class essay
- one brief (3 pages) formal paper/critical analysis (draft and revision required)
- one college application statement (draft only)

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

- Attend regularly. Attendance needs to be thought of as more than just showing up; it involves being in class on time ready to learn. 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, talk to your instructor right away. Missing more than one class constitutes a serious problem. Note the section on grading below.
- 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.

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 minutes to respond.

Take-home prompts will be submitted by email from the instructor and will be submitted via email. (Finish one by 7/15, the other by 7/22—you may complete these in any order you prefer).

Course Grading:

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

In order to pass the class, you must attend every meeting, unless illness or a family emergency causes the absence.

Our readings will focus on the following intersecting themes: Rites of Passage; Transitioning to College; Embracing Challenges; Living Online; and Acting Purposefully

Please bring to class each day: your journal, your syllabus, and all course readings.

Course Texts:

- Ken Bain, *What the Best College Students Do* (**finish reading by July 13**)
- Reading, which are posted to our course website (**also referred to as CCLE**)
- In addition, please buy one single-subject notebook

Course Schedule

Tuesday July 6 – Rites of Passage

Before class read and annotate:

- Olds, “Rite of passage”
- Church, “Rite of passage”
- Howe, “Fourteen”
- Gedye, “The talk to have before College”

In-class:

- Introductions! Course and Students
- Annotation and reading strategies
- Reading discussions
- Bain group project overview
- Lecture: TSIS Intro and Chs. 12 and 14
- Reading response assignment overview
- Brainstorm college questions
- PLF session (1-2 PM): Ask college questions and participate in virtual tour!

Thursday July 8 – Transitioning to college

Before class read and annotate:

- Watkins, “Keeping Close to Home”
- Sanders, “Staying Put”
- Wheelan, “Your Parents Don’t Want What’s Best for You”
- Bain, “What the Best College Students Do”

In-class:

- Analytical paper assignment overview
- Lecture: TSIS Summarizing and Quoting
- Developing Strong Paragraphs

Tuesday July 13 – Embracing Challenges

Before class read and annotate,

- Blanda, “The ‘Other Side’ is Not Dumb”
- Boyd, “Why America is Self-Segregating”
- Lopez, “First in the Family”
- Moro, “Minority Student Clubs: Segregation or Integration?”

In-class:

- Lecture: TSIS (Ch. 4-7) Thesis and Reported Speech
- Emailing tips
- PLF Session (1-2 PM): Bain group project Task A
- Screen Jamila Lyiscott’s “3 Ways to Speak English”

Thursday July 15 – Living Online

Before class read and annotate:

- Rosen, “The Importance of Societal Forgetting”
- Goldsmith, “Go Ahead, Waste Time on the Internet”
- Newman, “The Value of Silence

In-class:

- Lecture: TSIS (Ch. 8-11): Cohesion and Clarity
- Prepare for in-class essay
- Personal Statement Assignment overview

Tuesday July 20 – Reflecting and Moving Forward (commencement speeches)

Before class read and annotate:

- Baz Luhrman “Everybody’s Free to Wear Sunscreen”
- Smith, “Many Hands”
- Wallace, “Kenyon Commencement Speech”

In-class:

- Sign up for conferences
- In-class essay (1 hour, 15 minutes)
- Lecture: TSIS (Ch. 14): Templates to revise
- More revising tips
- PLF session (1-2 PM): Bain group project Task B

Thursday July 22 – Acting Purposefully

Before class read and annotate:

- Campbell, “The Imposter”
- Hughes, “Selfie”
- Detweiler, “Smiling for ‘Auschwitz Selfies’”
- Khadaroo, “Syllabus for Civility”

In-class:

- Peer review share
- Style Analysis
- Editing tips

Tuesday July 27

In-class:

- Bain Group Presentations
- Major course takeaways: Which reading did you connect with most strongly, and why? If you were to select a film for this class, what would you suggest, and why?
- Portfolio letter for the analytical paper