

College Writing I

ENGL 121

Walla Walla Valley Academy and Walla Walla University

Instructor: Cliff Dolph

dolpcl@wwva.org

509-525-1050, ext. 219

Course Description:

This is a dual-credit class. Students completing it will receive 5 credits at Walla Walla Valley Academy. Students earning a grade of C- or higher will receive credit at Walla Walla University for the first quarter of the College Writing sequence. They will also be eligible for College Writing II (the second quarter of that sequence).

The central purpose of the course is to prepare students for the type of writing necessary for college. Although our study will begin with more personal writing, designed to help students hone their voices and gain confidence in the writing process, the ultimate goal is the ability to produce written arguments that are coherently structured, carefully reasoned, solidly supported, and effectively expressed.

In particular, the course focuses on arguments that respond to and analyze other texts. An inseparable connection exists in this course (and in the reality of our mental landscapes) between writing skills and reading skills. Accordingly, students can expect to engage in attentive reading of essays and books, to which the class will respond through engaged discussion and writing assignments both informal and formal.

Students will sharpen their writing skills through short exercises in class and through more extended writing assignments, moving toward expository and persuasive essays. They will learn to take advantage of the revision process as they strengthen these essays, and they will receive thoughtful and specific feedback from each other and from the instructor. Some class time and written work, especially early in the course, will concentrate on matters of style and grammar/mechanics.

Textbooks and Materials:

Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference*, 9th ed. (Bedford-St. Martin's)

Available at the Walla Walla University bookstore—recommended.

Diane Ackerman, *A Slender Thread*

Required—I will have these available for purchase soon. The cost is \$4 (cash). There will be another book for second quarter, which I am still in the process of selecting. I will make it available for purchase by early second quarter.

In addition, you are responsible for bringing your iPad to class (charged) each day, as you will frequently use it for viewing assignments, reading, researching, or writing. Because we will sometimes take a more “low-tech” or artistic approach to writing, you also need to routinely bring paper and some kind of writing implement.

Core Themes:

Any course taught at or for Walla Walla University is expected to fulfill the university’s core themes.

Excellence in Thought: A major focus of this course is critical analysis of text. In response to the close reading required for such analysis, students will develop well-reasoned, substantively supported, clearly articulated arguments of their own.

Generosity in Service: Students will use their skills to serve each other by providing meaningful, constructive feedback to each other’s writing. We will also together seek opportunities to use our language skills for the enrichment of others.

Beauty in Expression: Students will have ample opportunity to practice expressing themselves in writing (and speech) with clarity, power, and grace. They will also reflect on multiple models of excellent writing.

Faith in God: Readings and writing assignments will sometimes revolve around issues that have a connection to or grounding in faith. Our discussions will help with processing these issues from a faith-based perspective.

Grading:

This course uses the standard WWVA grading scale.

		A	93-100	A-	90-92
B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
D+	67-69	D	63-66	D-	60-62

Keep in mind that a grade of C- or higher is required at WWU before moving on to the next quarter of College Writing. Also be aware that, while this course is being taught at a high school, it is a college-level course, and grading of essays will reflect college-level expectations.

Different types of assignments carry different weights in determining grades for this course. Specifically...

Essays and Projects 60%

Beginning with a personal essay, assignments in this category will progress to analytical and persuasive essays. You will complete a rough draft of each project, so you will have the benefit of ample feedback as you revise. Each assignment will specify the grading criteria to be used, but the final product will almost always be graded holistically on a 20-point scale.

19-20 Outstanding

17-18 Good

15-16 Solid but somewhat flawed

13-14 Significant flaws

11-12 Inadequate

10 or less Plagiarized, non-responsive to prompt, or extremely brief

In-Class Assignments 20%

This category includes rough drafts of projects and responses to peers. Other examples of in-class assignments: informal responses to readings, experiments with different writing techniques, editing exercises, rewriting with a specific goal (such as different point of view or different tone)... For these assignments, you will mostly receive credit for doing them, though there are certain expectations for each one.

Quizzes 20%

There will be a few quizzes each quarter. You can expect quizzes over readings and over concepts covered in class. The usual format for quizzes is short-answer. Quizzes will be announced in advance.

Policies:

Academic Honesty—Work you submit for this course must be your work, original and (unless I've given an exception for some reason) created for this course. It is vital that you carefully document your use of sources, whether you are indebted to them for exact wording or ideas that you paraphrase or summarize. If I determine that you have plagiarized, expect a heavy penalty. Because this is a college-level course, a flagrant instance of plagiarism will likely result in your being asked to withdraw from the class.

Submitting Work—Unless otherwise noted, assignments should be submitted electronically. We will use Google Classroom. Please use MLA format; these same requirements are followed in WWU's College Writing courses and in most university settings: Use a standard font, such as Times New Roman, 12-point. Double-space and maintain one-inch margins on all sides. For details about headings and title, see *A Writer's Reference*.

Late Work—If you believe you have a legitimate reason for turning an assignment in late, please communicate with me prior to the time/day the assignment is due. Otherwise, late assignments will not be accepted. Similarly, if you miss a quiz because of an excused absence, make sure your excuse is documented. If you have an unexcused absence on the day of a quiz, you will not be able to make up that quiz.

Accommodations—If you have a physical disability (temporary or permanent) or a learning disability that affects your ability to do the work of this class, please communicate with Stephanie Anderson. She and I will work with you to make appropriate adjustments to the amount of work you do or the expectations placed on that work.

Behavior—You are on the verge of adulthood, and I intend to treat you as adults. That means I will not police your use of electronic devices in this class or compel you to work on your assignments for this class during work time. You are responsible for your own learning. However, I will not tolerate behavior that interferes with the learning of other students, such as carrying on private conversations during a lecture or class discussion. And I definitely will not tolerate disrespect toward any individual in this class or toward any group of people. If I hear it, expect a response. Let's be good to each other.