--English Composition I (1013) Syllabus—SPRING 2015--

Instructor: Timothy F. McGinn
Office: Burns Hall #1014 Phone: #986-6905
(voice mail—please leave a message)

Contact Hours: (Also available by appointment.)

Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Mon.-Thurs.: 3:00-4:00 p.m.
Friday: 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

In Writing Center (Burns Hall #1003) Mon. 9-11:30 a.m., Wed. 9-11:30 a.m. & Friday, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
E-MAIL address: tmcginn@nwacc.edu Faculty web page at: http://faculty.nwacc.edu/tmcginn/ (see back page for directions)

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--Students compose focused, coherent, and developed writing in multiple genres.
--Students use writing strategies to invent, draft, revise, and edit major writing projects.
--Students adopt voice, style, and tone appropriate to the rhetorical situation.
--Students control surface features such as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
--Students read, analyze, and interpret print and non-print texts.
--Students locate, evaluate, use, and credit reliable resources.
--Students collaborate with peers to plan, develop, and revise projects.
--Students demonstrate cultural awareness through knowledge of diverse ideas, values, and perspectives.

Course Description: This course prepares students for college-level writing through the creation of three different papers—a Reflective essay, an Observation Essay, a Researched Essay (I-Search Paper)—a Research Journal, which you will keep all semester long, and a PowerPoint on your I-search paper project. (This PowerPoint is a written & oral presentation to the rest of the class.) (Each of the first THREE assignments can also be revised to change the letter grade for the assignment, but must be re-submitted within two weeks of its return to you. See revision policy for more.) This class will use large and small group discussions of assigned homework. The majority of the class will consist of these discussions and peer-critiquing of each other’s work and other in-class writing activities. Outside class work will consist of reading assigned homework, taking notes on assigned reading to prepare for discussions/quizzes, and creating and revising papers generated from discussions and readings. At NO time will you ever be asked to keep a personal diary for this class; however, anything you write for homework in your research journal should be something you are willing to share in class. **ALL assignments are all linked to a personal research project—an I-search paper—on your future occupation.

My main method of teaching is as a writing workshop facilitator/discussion leader rather than as a lecturer. I will walk around and talk, even while you are trying to write, to coach you, to help you to succeed. I plan to stick my nose gently into your business, ONLY while you are in class, to involve you in the course and make you want to succeed. I never intend for this nosiness on my part to offend you in any way. If it does, please tell me during office hours, and I will do my best to accommodate your learning style.

*******Please note that you MUST turn in all the essays and give the presentation in order to pass this class.*******

Course Goals:

Required Texts and Supplies:

Recommended Texts and Supplies:

Attendance: As described in the NWACC College Catalog, attendance is very important in this course. Since we meet only twice a week and life often gets in the way of education, you have SIX allowed absences in this class. After SIX, however, your grade will go down one grade per absence. After TEN, you will not be able to pass the class. Please keep track of your absences and check with me during office hours if you have lost track of the total. This attendance policy is for this class and should not be compared to any other. Regular Attendance is the ONLY way to do
well in this class. Excessive absences will cause you to fail. **Excessive lateness is also a factor in attendance.** Please come to every class on time. If work or something else interferes with regular on-time arrival, lateness will ALSO affect grade. Folders with sign-in sheets will be used for attendance. It is your job to sign in every day, even if you are late to class. I will keep the folders and bring them to every class.

**FP Grade (Failure to Participate) (From the Academic Standards Committee)**
Grades of FP will be issued to those students failing to participate in class activities and failing to officially withdraw from their course(s). Students will be assigned a grade of “FP” if they do not complete at least 50% of the assigned coursework. Students must demonstrate participation by submitting assignments, completing quizzes and assignments, and accessing course functions. Failure to participate in all courses attempted by a student is considered an unofficial withdrawal and the student may be required to repay all or a portion of the financial aid received for the semester. Federal regulations mandate that the Financial Aid Office determine the percentage of the semester the student completed. This calculation will establish the amount of financial aid funds that must be returned to the Department of Education.

**Administrative Drop Policy (From the Academic Standards Committee)**
Students are expected to attend all classes. Instructors are permitted to use attendance as part of grading for a particular course and have the authority to lower a grade or fail a student based on attendance. If an instructor chooses to use attendance as part of grading, the specific attendance policy will be distributed with other course information at the beginning of the semester. In order to maintain College compliance with federal and state regulations and to report correct data to the state, instructors will complete an electronic form to initiate an administrative drop from a course if a student has not participated in at least one session of a class by the census reporting date, e.g. the end of the eleventh day of classes in a regular term and the end of the fifth day during each summer term. Instructors teaching online courses will complete the same electronic form to initiate an administrative drop if the student has not fulfilled the initial participation requirements established in the course syllabus.

**Class Continuation Plan: (from Dr. Gates, Chief Academic Officer and Provost)**
NWACC reserves the right to enact a class continuation plan in the event of class cancellations due to weather or other emergency events. The instructor will maintain continuity using the Blackboard online system or other alternate means as determined by the instructor. You will be contacted via your established communications channels with instructions. Students will be expected to continue with assignments. Online classes will continue to operate according to schedule. Consideration may be given for exceptional circumstances.

***Blackboard will be used as a backup in case we cannot physically meet in the classroom due to weather or some other event and for the Journal. I will post the syllabus and course calendar in Blackboard, but my web page will have all the other documents required for the class. (The e-mail feature within blackboard will allow you to communicate with other students in the class and me.)***

**Accommodations: (from Amy Robertson-Gann)**
If you have a disability or medical concern which you feel may impact your access to or progress in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC works with students and faculty collaboratively to coordinate reasonable academic accommodations for students. Once your registration with the DRC is complete, you should contact me privately to discuss your Accommodation Letter. The DRC is located in Room 114 on the first floor of the Student Center. For more information, please email (preferred) disability@nwacc.edu or call the main office at (479) 986-4076.

**Late Work:*** Late Papers are best accepted by prior arrangement via e-mail, over the phone or in person. **For every day, NOT class day, that a paper is late, the grade will go down one letter grade. Please note that you MUST turn in all the essays in order to pass this class.** This means that even if a paper is so late it receives an "F," you must still turn in that paper to pass the course.

**Process-Oriented Approach to Writing:** It is very important to learn an effective, consistent approach to any writing task, so the emphasis in this course will be on working through stages of a process rather than on just the end product—the completed essay. This means that for every essay you turn in, you must turn in evidence of a process: notes, journal entries, outlines or other organizational steps, several drafts, peer-critiques, revisions and the final draft. (Since most of you will work on a computer, print out each significant draft on scratch paper and save the versions as separate files. You should also save your essay electronically in several forms such as 1st essay—draft 1, 1st essay—draft 2, etc. If something were to happen to one draft, then you would be able to go back to the previous version rather than have to start all over. **Remember that turning in your process is not an optional part of the class.**)

**Plagiarism:** Any work turned in that is not clearly your own will result in a failing grade for that assignment and quite possibly a failing grade in the course. If you are caught, I will make you re-write the paper even though you will still receive an “F” for the assignment. You may also have to present your case before a review board, which consists of teachers, students and administrators. Keep all your notes and process, even if you compose everything on the computer, to be able to prove a paper is your own work. See your student handbook for more details on Plagiarism. **PROCESS = PROOF.**
Writing Center: Located in Burns Hall 1003, this computer lab has networked computers with Internet access and a laser printer. The lab is open and staffed by teachers for tutorial help—not proofreading help—on Monday through Friday. You can also call for help during those hours at #986-6929 or send e-mail with your paper attached as a Word Document to write-in@nwacc.edu. (Allow 48 business hours for a response to any e-mail.) The Writing Center is a place for all students to get better at writing; it is not a place just for weak writers. Everyone can benefit from a tutor’s help. You can get help for any writing assignment for any class here. (A pilot video-conferencing program is being implemented this term as well.) The Writing Center also has an amazing web site at the following link: http://www.nwacc.edu/web/writingcenter/. It is open 8-6 Monday-Thursday and 8-12:30 on Friday.

Revision Policy: You will have the opportunity to revise and return any of the first three essays within two weeks of its return to you. (Only your Journal grade and PowerPoint cannot be revised.) The grades of the original final draft and the revision will be averaged to obtain the grade for that assignment. For example, a “C” on an original document and an “A” on the revision would average out to a “B” for the assignment. This way, both the original effort and the revision receive equal weight.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: See this section in your College Catalog. Cell phones interfere with learning. Turn them off or put them in silent/vibrate mode. Texting in class is NOT permitted. This is not negotiable. If you need to talk to someone, leave the class and talk to him or her in the hallway. If someone needs you, take an absence and be with that person.

Evaluation: Each assignment will receive a number grade between 0-100 and a letter grade. (See the next section for how I break down grades.) In order to derive this grade, I will use a rubric which will assess the important areas of writing: Content and Execution. I will also, however, grade your effort in completing the required process for each paper: pre-writing, drafting and revising/editing/proofreading. This method rewards the effort you have made in the process of writing the paper and de-emphasizes the emphasis on the final product.

Self-Assessments: Around the 8th or 9th week of the semester, we will complete a Midterm Self-Assessment. It will be similar to the Final Self-Assessment but will cover only the first half of the semester. It is my way of helping you approximate your overall grade in the class since I don’t post grades online or in Blackboard. This Midterm Self-Assessment will allow you to give input on and help determine your midterm grade. I will respond to these assessments and let you know if I agree with your assessment of your progress in the class or not. Be sure to hang on to this Midterm version of the Final Self-Assessment since it will help you write the larger version at the end of the term.

At the end of the term, you will write a comprehensive Final Self-Assessment, which will take place during the two-hour final exam time, since there will be no formal test in this class. This Self-Assessment will tell me not only how to view your progress in essays written during the semester but also how to view your performance in every aspect of the course-class participation, small group work, peer-critiquing, large group discussions, etc. Further directions for the Final Self-Assessment will be given the day of the final exam. This is not a graded assignment; however, it provides necessary input for determining your course grade and should not be rushed through. It usually takes two full hours to write; however, if you bring a laptop, it is much easier than writing by hand.

Assignment Evaluating Criteria: The following grade breakdown should allow you to understand your grade for each paper assignment for this course. You may also come to my office during office hours or even during my shift in the Writing Center or call me on the phone to better understand why you received the grade you received for any assignment. E-mail discussions are not effective for explaining grades.

A = 90-100 An "A" paper should be virtually error-free in Execution--Grammar, Mechanics, Punctuation and Usage. The Content (Seeing, Voice & Movement) of the essay should make excellent use of detailed, illustrative examples and have a clear voice--all your own--which reflects style, tone and language suitable to your audience--the class and me. The content should also show a good command of structure with smooth transitions from one paragraph to another and a good flow from introduction to body to conclusion; it should also develop a thesis throughout the entire piece with a good command of focus, unity and coherence.

B = 80-89 A "B" paper is above average work in both content and execution. Only a minimal number of errors (such as typos) is present, causing minimal interference in the readability of the essay. The content should also be above average with many of the characteristics of an "A" essay, but with only minor glitches in ONE of the three main areas--Seeing, Voice, or Movement.

C = 70-79 A "C" paper is average in both content and execution. In other words, many improvements could be made in all the areas listed above, but the minimal effort required to write a good paper is clearly illustrated by the quantity and quality of the final draft.

D = 60-69 A "D" paper is missing important elements in both content and execution. The number of errors in Grammar, Mechanics, Punctuation and Usage is overwhelming, and the content is so unpolished as to be almost unreadable. A "D" paper is a shoddy effort which could have been saved by more process and hard work.

F = Below 60 This is probably self-explanatory, but an "F" paper would be slapped together without any real consideration for content or execution. The process for writing the paper was probably sloppy as well: no pre-writing, no drafts, no critiques or any responses to critiques, et
A paper may also fail, however, if the student completely misunderstands the assignment. Please be sure to follow the guidelines on each assignment sheet or PowerPoint and ask me if you have any questions. Staying within the normal bounds of creativity will help you learn how to handle future writing situations where even less freedom will be allowed.

Percentages for the Course Grade:

Papers/Assignments (70%)

--Reflection (2 pages minimum) = 10% of grade
--Observation (3 pages minimum) = 15% of grade
--Research Journal (ONE entry for each class minimum) = 35% of grade
--I-Search Paper (5 pages minimum) = 30% of grade
--PowerPoint Presentation (10 minutes minimum) = 10% of grade

TOTAL = 100% of grade

**The diagram below shows the importance of doing your homework. All class activities require you to do your homework before every class period. Plan your homework with work and other activities in mind. Sitting and reading and taking notes as well as writing require a quiet environment. Even if you only get part of your homework finished, however, you should come to class to share what you have read or written and learn more by sharing with the rest of the class.

**This syllabus is the contract for the class. Along with a separate calendar of due dates, it constitutes all that is required of you to receive a grade in this course. Be sure to get another copy from me or my web site if you lose it. —Mr. M.

***How to get to my web page***  (You can type in my name and NWACC, and it should come up in a search engine.) OR
--Go to the school’s home page, NOT Blackboard or My NWACC connection, (www.nwacc.edu)
--Find where it says “Current Students” on the top right side of the page.
--Look for “Academics” in the middle of the new page.
--Click on the phrase “Faculty Websites.”
--Scroll down and find my name—“McGinn, Tim”—in the alphabetical listing of faculty names.
--Click on my name. This should be my home page. If you don’t see my smiling face, you are on the wrong page.
--Look for the “Classes Taught” link and click on it.
--Click on the “Comp. I” link.
--All the handouts for which I have electronic versions, including this syllabus, will be here all semester. If I have photocopied something from a text, I cannot place it on my web site. You will have to get a hard copy from me if you were absent when it was handed out to the class. Some PowerPoints will also be on this web site but not all of them since class attendance would then become optional and students without Internet access would be at a disadvantage.

NOTE: All the files on my web site will be in PDF format which requires Adobe Reader to open and read. If you don’t have this free program, go to adobe.com and download it. You may also have an older version of this program on your computer so be sure it is up-to-date. If you have ANY problems opening one of the PDF files, send an e-mail to me right away.

—Mr. M.