INTRODUCTION

Each semester, hundreds of students enroll in Composition courses at Tulsa Community College’s Southeast Campus. If you are like most of these students, you are probably wondering just what you can expect from these courses. The Tulsa Community College catalog provides a general description of the courses, but, you may ask, what does each course involve?

In both Composition I and II, you will be given the opportunity to confront successfully a variety of writing situations. Using various teaching methods, your professor will help you gain an in-depth understanding of and appreciation for how language works. Composition I and II form a two-semester sequence designed to help you develop university-level competence in written communication. Advanced Composition provides further instruction in the skills presented in Composition I and II.

In an effort to prepare students for these rigorous writing courses, the English faculty compiled this manual, which outlines the general practices, goals and objectives common among the TCC English faculty. Reading this manual, we hope, will help you know what to expect from Composition I and II and Advanced Composition.

Because one of the strengths of TCC is academic freedom among its professors, you should be prepared for differences among the faculty. The material included in this manual does not require professors to use certain teaching techniques, nor does it dictate what materials professors should present. Just as each student has his or her unique approach to writing, composition professors strive to meet an agreed upon set of objectives with a variety of teaching practices and philosophies.

Therefore, to help ensure your success in Composition courses, read both this manual and your professor’s syllabus, which provides detailed and specific goals, practices, policies, and objectives. Usually, your professor will distribute his or her syllabus the first day of class. In it, the professor will outline the policies on late work, attendance, and grading, along with other information that you need to know to succeed in the class. Most professors include their office number and telephone extension on the syllabus and a tentative schedule of readings and assignments.

One of the first steps toward successfully completing any college course is to learn what the class involves and what the professor expects. If you do not understand certain policies or practices outlined here or in your professor’s syllabus, ask questions. Remember, too, that whatever their methods may be, the primary objective of all English professors is to help you achieve university-level competence in written communication. We hope that this manual is another indication of TCC’s commitment to your success.
WHY LEARN TO WRITE?

Like many students, you may be wondering why you are required to take Composition I and II. “After all,” you may be thinking, “I have been writing all my life!” Or perhaps you think that the ability to write well is not a requirement for the career you plan to enter. You may even feel that Composition I and II prevent you from taking other courses that seem more closely related to your degree.

Although the above concerns may have some validity, Tulsa Community College, like most institutions of higher learning, requires six hours of composition for its degree programs because good writing can be an asset to your academic and intellectual endeavors. In addition, most employers expect employees to be able to write letters, memos, reports, evaluations, and other types of documents.

Writing As Thinking

E.M. Forster, a famous novelist, once asked, “How do I know what I think until I see what I say?” His question implies that there is a strong connection between writing and thinking. At the very least, writing can help us remember information, which is why we write grocery lists, keep diaries, and, in college, take lecture and book notes.

But writing can also help us figure things out. Writing forces us to become more engaged in a topic: when we are forced to write about something, we are also forced to think about that subject. As Henry Miller once said, “Writing, like life itself, is a voyage of discovery.”

Understanding the subtle ways in which language works can help us become more intelligent listeners as well as readers and writers. Language can help us carry out many of our goals and ambitions; it can help us share important experiences, interact meaningfully with other people, explore new ideas, form new concepts, and create and perceive order in the world. “We will understand the world, and preserve ourselves and our values in it,” stated writer Wendall Berry, “only insofar as we have a language that is alert and responsive to it, and careful of it.”

Academic Success

Throughout your college career, you will be asked to write. Whether you are asked to write an essay exam or a research paper, your professor will expect you to be able to communicate, in writing, what you have learned. Therefore, you should expect to apply the information you learn in Composition I and II to other classes.

In addition to expecting you to use proper grammar and spelling, all professors will expect your writing to be organized, coherent, unified, and interesting to read. Most will assume that you understand how to document and how to use the Learning Resource Center (Library). Many will require you to use a word processor when you write essays. The skills you learn in Composition I and II, then, will prepare you for the kind of writing you will do as a college student--writing that differs greatly from high school writing--and writing that will prepare you for whatever career you decide to pursue.
Career Success

Writers and college professors are not the only ones who know that the ability to read and write effectively is extremely valuable. “Businesses understand that unclear writing is very expensive,” says Lee Clark Johns, president of Professional Writing Consultants, Inc., a business that conducts professional writing seminars for corporations such as Mapco, Amoco, Williams Company, and Occidental. According to Johns, poor writing is a “productivity issue” since ineffective writing can result in mistakes and delays. Corporations that have hired Johns to conduct seminars report that improved writing equals overall improvements in the work place.

If you are thinking that your particular profession will not require a great deal of writing, think again. Johns has conducted seminars for marketing and sales people, scientists, police officers, accountants, managers, and many others. “Thirty to forty percent of an employee’s time is spent writing,” says Johns, “even in technical fields such as computer programming.” Furthermore, the more you advance in certain fields, the more time you will spend writing. The ability to write effectively may even help during the interview process, since many applicants are required to respond in writing to a hypothetical situation related to the job.

Whatever profession you choose to enter, you will need to know how to turn what you know into what Johns calls “useable information for other people.” Although your chosen career probably will not require that you write essays like the ones you write in Composition I and II, the skills and strategies taught in composition courses may enhance your professional writing and make you a valuable employee. “Part of the reason I began consulting,” says Johns, “is because I heard so many friends and acquaintances saying how they wish they’d learned to write more effectively in college.” By taking Composition I and II, you are giving yourself the opportunity to learn to write more effectively now and to become a more valuable employee in the future.
Writing I and Writing II

Before enrolling in Composition I, many students decide to take either Writing I (ENG 0923) or Writing II (ENG 0933). In some cases, students enroll in these courses because they have not met the prerequisites for Composition I (see page 10 of this manual). Many times, though, students enroll in one or both of these courses to prepare themselves for the demands of Composition I and II.

Writing I is designed to help students understand and develop proper and effective use of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, punctuation, vocabulary, and spelling. Additionally, Writing I provides instruction in the basic principles of paragraph structure, editing and revision, sentence structure, and the writing process. Students who made low scores on the sentence skills portion of the Computer Program Test, students who have been out of school for several years, and students who had difficulties in high school English classes are advised to take this course.

Writing II builds upon skills learned in Writing I and focuses on writing at the paragraph and essay level. Students write paragraphs using different patterns for development, such as description, narration, comparison/contrast, and definition. This course is especially useful for students who did not write often in high school or who have been out of school for some time. Students who made low or borderline scores on the sentence skills portion of the Computer Program Test or who would like to review basic skills to prepare for Composition I are advised to enroll in Writing II.

Reading I and II

Most college courses, including Composition I and II, include a great deal of complex reading material. Unaccustomed to the quantity and complexity of the reading material, many students experience difficulties keeping up with reading assignments, understanding difficult material, or retaining information. If you are concerned about your ability to read college-level texts or if your scores on the Computer Program Test were low or borderline, you may want to take Reading I (ENG 0903) or Reading II (ENG 0913).

Reading I helps students understand the basic structure of paragraphed reading materials. Students learn to identify topic sentences; develop comprehension skills using structural analysis, context clues and critical thinking; and devise a personal study strategy for college success.

Reading II builds upon Reading I skills by focusing on more complex readings, vocabulary, and critical analysis. Students who do not read often, students who have been out of school for several years, and students who want to sharpen their critical reading skills should consider this course.

Other Options: One-Hour Laboratory Courses
Other options are the series of one-hour laboratory courses in writing, reading and study skills offered through the Writing Center. Under the supervision of a developmental English professor, students work independently in the Writing Center and, at their own pace, follow an individualized course of study.

Sometimes a student’s ACT, SAT, or CPT scores are borderline, indicating that he or she might have trouble with college reading or writing. If your scores are borderline, you should consider enrolling in one or more of the one-hour courses. For instance, many students enroll in College Composition Lab, ENG 1121, which can be taken while enrolled in Composition I or II. Your composition professor may suggest that you sign up for this course if you appear to have writing problems that are not addressed in Composition I.

The reading courses are an important option for students whose entrance test scores indicate a reading level below that of college textbooks and for students who are experiencing difficulty with the heavy reading requirements of college classes.

The one-hour courses are explained in detail on the following pages. Many of them may be taken during Composition I or II, but in most cases, you need not be enrolled in Composition I or II to enroll in these courses. For more information, contact the course professor.
Room SE1105, 595-7672

**College Reading Laboratory: ENG 1131**
Designed for students with college-level reading skills who need help reading textbooks efficiently and effectively, this course helps students develop successful techniques for reading college texts. It emphasizes effective reading strategies and analytical and critical reading, and includes interactive computer programs. Material is adapted to suit each student’s reading level. Students who made a “C” or below in high school English should consider this course.

**Reading Comprehension: ENG 0681**
This course is designed for students who have not attained college-level reading skills. It offers instruction in different types of reading: factual, inferential, and evaluative. Material is adapted to each student’s reading level and includes interactive computer programs.

**Speed Reading: ENG 1691**
Students with college-level reading skills who wish to read more rapidly without sacrificing comprehension may want to enroll in this course. Through the use of computerized programs enhanced with video and audio/cassette programs, the course helps students improve reading rates.

**Study Skills: ENG 0651**
Students who have difficulty managing their time, students new to college work, students disappointed in their academic performances, and returning students who need to review skills will find this course useful. The course offers specific instruction in skills the student will need to perform successfully in college work: reading comprehension and retention, reading speed, note taking, memorization, and test taking.

**Basic Vocabulary: ENG 0641**
This course is designed for students who are seeking to enrich vocabulary and to learn to use words properly. The course also offers instruction in the meaning of prefixes, roots, and suffixes, and in using context clues.

**Spelling and Phonics: ENG 0595**
Students who have experienced problems with spelling should enroll in this course. It offers instruction in basic spelling patterns and word families.

Self-Paced Laboratory Courses In Writing
Professor Diane Polcha
Basic Grammar: ENG 0601
This course is designed for students who have a weak background in basic grammar and who want to review usage guidelines. It offers instruction in the principles of agreement, parallelism, parts of speech, clauses, phrases, and sentenced patterns.

Sentence Improvement: ENG 0611
Students who need to improve their English usage before taking Freshman Composition or who need writing practice to prepare for college-level writing may want to enroll in this course. The course improves sentence construction, helps eliminate major usage errors, and presents writing and revision experiences.

Punctuation: ENG 0621
Offering instruction in the rules of punctuation and their application to paragraph construction, this course is designed for students who have problems using punctuation or who seek to review the rules of punctuation usage.

Writing Skills: ENG 0661
Students who are confident about usage skills but who need instructions in writing paragraphs may enroll in this course if they have not already completed Composition I. The course offers instruction and practice in the writing process. It includes journal writing, writing exercises, paragraphs, short essays, and instructions in the revision process.

Essay Writing: ENG 0711
Students who have completed Composition I but need additional instruction in writing essays may find this course helpful. The course offers instruction and practice in the writing process, and presents a computerized program, augmented by video and audio/cassette programs. Students compose and revise a 500-word essay.

Research Paper: ENG 0731
This course guides students through the process of writing a research paper, from narrowing a topic to using MLA documentation. Students who enroll in this course should have completed Composition I. It is designed to help those who are confident about English usage but who seek to refresh or improve basic research writing skills.

College Composition Lab: ENG 1121
By providing individualized instruction in standard usage and essential college writing skills, this course supplements both Composition courses. Students whose CPT scores are low but who are unwilling or unable to enroll in Writing I or II should enroll in this course along with Composition I. In addition, students who experience problems with usage in sentence construction while enrolled in Composition I or II should consider this course.

Why Take A Developmental Course?
Since some of the 0-level courses are not college-level courses, and therefore are not transferable, some students are reluctant to enroll in them, even when test scores indicate that the students are not adequately prepared for Composition I.

Regrettably, those who enroll in Composition I, ignoring their test results or the advice of counselors and professors, soon discover that they cannot keep up with the workload. Students who have chosen to enroll in developmental courses, on the other hand, seldom regret their choice.

Research indicates that students who enroll in developmental courses experience success throughout their college career. Professors Hunter R. Boylan and Barbara S. Bonham of Appalachian State University, for instance, discovered that students who enroll in developmental courses “are much more likely to pass their initial courses in the regular curriculum and are far more likely to graduate than might be expected given their entry characteristics.” Furthermore, their study indicates that enrollment in developmental courses “appears to increase the likelihood that under-prepared students will persist and graduate” (from Review of Research in Developmental Education, Volume 9, Issue 5, 1992).

The comments below, taken from students who completed one or more developmental courses, further emphasize that students benefit from and appreciate the knowledge and skills they gain from developmental courses.

“After so many years away from formal writing, one tends to forget the basic grammar rules needed in college-level courses; however, TCC has the answer with review courses like Writing I. I found it to be of great benefit in preparing me for Composition I.”

--Christine McCauley

“I don’t think I could have gone into Composition I without first learning the skills taught in Writing II. I had been out of school for a while and had either forgotten or had never learned skills like paragraph writing or sentence structure. More importantly, the tremendous support and encouragement offered by the professor helped me develop confidence. I really believe that students will not be sorry if they take the course.”

--D. J. Green, Composition II Honors student

“I encourage upcoming freshmen or students who will be enrolled in Composition I to take Writing II before taking Composition I because it will really prepare you for Composition I and II. Both of these classes require a lot of work and writing, and Writing II will prepare students for the work they will have to do.”

--Bruce Ngo, Oklahoma State University student

“I was placed in a Writing II course and was ‘mad’ about it because it was a non-credit course . . . My writing II class prepared me for Composition I and I didn’t even realize it until an [essay] in Composition I was assigned; I knew right where to start because I had learned so much in Writing II. Many students think that Writing II is so basic and easy, and it is pretty
basic; however, it helps tremendously for Composition I. In Writing II, you learn and work on paragraphs and by the time you get to Composition I, you can apply all you learned.”

---Jennifer Pope

“The College Composition Lab course (ENG 1121) helped me update my skills. If I had not taken the course, I wouldn’t have made it through Composition I. That’s the truth!”

---Donna Reatz

“The College Composition Lab course helped me quite a bit in terms of refreshing my memory after being out of school for so long. It seemed to go along with what was being taught in Composition I.”

---Terryann McKinzie

“I strongly suggest enrolling in the College Composition Lab course because it emphasizes the high school writing skills that we either missed or forgot. Be sure to start the course as soon as possible so that it will coincide with the skills taught in Composition I. The course really prepares students for Composition I.”

---Jerry Spradley

“My grammar, vocabulary, and creative thinking were below average [before enrolling in Writing I]. I was weak in the writing process yet after taking Writing I and II, I feel more secure in the writing process.

---Susan Tryon
COMPOSITION I

Prerequisites

If you are enrolled in Composition I, you should have made appropriate scores on either the ACT of SAT exam. If you have never taken either of these exams, or if your scores were low, you were required to take the Computer Program Test (CPT) before enrolling in Composition I. This test provides a fairly accurate assessment of your ability to succeed in Composition; therefore, if your scores indicate that you may not be ready for Composition I, you should not be enrolled in the course.

Additionally, if you made below a “C” in Writing II, you may not be prepared for Composition I. Consult your Writing II professor and/or your Composition I professor for advice on whether or not you have mastered the skills needed for Composition I.

Even when test scores are adequate, and even after taking Writing I and II, some students may wonder if they are ready for college-level essay writing. Before entering Composition I, examine the statements below. If the majority of these statements apply to you, you are probably prepared for Composition I. If they do not, you should seek advice from your professor or from the counseling office as to whether or not you should sign up for a developmental course instead of Composition I.

1. I can read and comprehend several pages from a college-level text in a reasonable amount of time.
2. I know how to identify and select nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs.
3. I know how to identify and write simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences.
4. I know how to use commas, semicolons, colons and dashes.
5. I can identify and write declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative sentences.
6. I know how to write a thesis statement and a topic sentence.
7. I know how to plan and write a complex paragraph and am ready to learn to plan, draft, and revise a 500-word (or longer) essay in a reasonable amount of time.
8. I am ready to read and hear critical comments about how my ideas are developed and stated in writing.
9. I understand that college students must spend a minimum of two hours a week studying for every one hour they are in class, and I have arranged my work and class schedule accordingly.
10. I am willing and have the time to do whatever it takes to improve my writing.
As the statements above indicate, students enrolled in Composition I should have mastered the writing skills taught in high school English Classes, skills such as paragraph writing, punctuation, reading comprehension, grammar, spelling, and sentence structure. Although composition professors may occasionally provide some instruction in grammar and spelling, **COMPOSITION I IS NOT A GRAMMAR AND SPELLING COURSE.** If you feel you have trouble with any of the skills mentioned above, you should consider taking Writing I or II or Reading I or II. For more information on these courses, see the TCC catalog and pages 4-6 of this manual.

**Course Goals and Objectives**

“If Composition I doesn’t teach grammar and spelling,” many students ask, “what does it teach?” In Composition I, you will be given the opportunity to learn to

- engage in the writing process by pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing/proofreading
- identify an audience and adapt a composition to it
- restrict a subject and define a clear purpose for writing
- choose the best possible words to communicate clearly and effectively
- construct sentences that emphasize your meaning and make your writing interesting
- unify an essay around a compelling, clearly defined message or thesis
- create a coherent essay with an orderly progression of ideas
- write focused, detailed, coherent paragraphs that help develop your ideas
- incorporate other sources into your writing by quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, and documenting correctly
- use the TCC Learning Resource Center (also known as the library) for college-level research
- employ various methods of development, such as description, narration, illustration, comparison/contrast, classification/division, and definition

Because these objectives cannot be learned all at once, many professors have incorporated options for revising into their writing courses. If your professor allows you to revise essays, he or she will write suggestions for improvement on the essays you submit throughout the semester, then return them to you. Usually, the professor will indicate the grade you have earned on the essay, but this grade can be improved by studying and by revising effectively. To revise
effectively, you should consider your professor’s comments, review appropriate concepts and skills explained in the course texts, apply your growing understanding of the course objectives, and seek assistance from peers and/or tutors in the Writing Center.

Revision options vary from professor to professor. Some professors require students to revise all of their essays while others do not allow for any revision at all. Some professors expect students to revise extensively and will penalize essays that are not substantially revised. In some classes, professors may make revision an option for only one essay. Although all composition courses strive to meet the same objectives, each professor has his or her own means of accomplishing the objectives. Assignments and class activities will vary among professors. Make sure that you read the course syllabus so that you understand your professor’s approach to teaching.

Whatever approach your professor uses, the first few weeks of Composition I will be devoted to readings and discussions of basic writing strategies, such as paragraphing, sentence patterns, and diction. Your professor may have you write several paragraphs and perhaps a short essay (500 words).

As the semester progresses, you should begin studying the elements of essay writing: invention, organization, drafting, revising, and editing/proofreading. Often, you will study published essays to see how other writers communicate their ideas, and your professor will begin assigning essays on a regular basis. Typically, the essays you write will be short--500 and 750 words, although some may be longer. You will also learn to integrate quotations, paraphrases, and summaries into your writing, and to cite sources for these secondary references. In addition, you will be exposed to the Learning Resource Center. Although you will not write a lengthy research essay in Composition I, your professor will usually assign a research project to familiarize you with the Learning Resource Center and with the Modern Language Association (MLA) style of documentation.

The essays you write in the final weeks of the semester may be more complex and, in some cases, longer. Toward the end of the semester, you will be introduced to the concept of critical reading and may be asked to write a formal response to one or more of the readings in your course textbook. Like all classes, Composition I becomes more challenging as the semester progresses.

At some point during the semester, you will be asked to write an in-class essay of approximately 500 words. Your professor may require you to type the in-class essay in the Computer Equipped Classroom or to write it in pen in the classroom. In either case, the purpose of the in-class writing assignment is to determine how well you are learning the essay writing skills and objectives being discussed.

If you do not have an in-class writing assignment prior to the final exam, your final exam will include an in-class writing assignment of approximately 500 words. Your professor will determine the topic for your final exam essay and may include multiple-choice, true/false, and short answer questions on the exam. Although professors design their own final exams, all Composition I final exams will attempt to measure how well you have mastered the skills taught in Composition I.
After successfully completing Composition I, you should be able to demonstrate, in writing, a strong understanding of the following terms and concepts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Essays</strong></th>
<th><strong>Paragraphs</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing Process (invention, drafting, revision, editing, proofreading)</td>
<td>Coherence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis</td>
<td>Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Topic sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience awareness and analysis</td>
<td>Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First, second, third person</td>
<td>Arrangement of ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Emphatic order</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Sentences</strong></th>
<th><strong>Diction</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conciseness</td>
<td>Clichés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination/Subordination</td>
<td>Euphemisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parallel structure</td>
<td>Jargon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active/Passive voice</td>
<td>Connotation/Denotation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Abstract/Concrete language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodic/Cumulative structure</td>
<td>General/Specific language</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Level of formality</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sexist language</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Research</strong></th>
<th><strong>Methods of Development</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working Bibliography</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works Cited</td>
<td>Narration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLA format</td>
<td>Classification/Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary, paraphrase, quotation</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenthetical reference</td>
<td>Comparison/Contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>Illustration or Exemplification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common knowledge</td>
<td>Process Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance of plagiarism</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
COMPOSITION II

Prerequisites

If you are enrolled in Composition II, you should have made at least a “C” in Composition I. Because Composition II builds upon the skills you learned in Composition I, it is important that you are able to meet the objectives of Composition I as described in this manual. If you took Composition I at another college or university, or if you have not been enrolled in an English class for several semesters, you will want to review the course goals and objectives for Composition I on pages 10-12 of this manual.

If you did not make a solid “C” in Composition I, consider enrolling in an appropriate developmental course, such as Essay Writing (ENG 0711). You may also need to take the College Composition Lab Course (ENG 1121) while enrolled in Composition II. In some cases, a student may benefit from re-enrolling in Composition I to try to improve his or her grade.

If you made a D or an F in Composition I, it is highly probable that you will not be able to succeed in Composition II; therefore, you should consider taking Composition I again, along with the College Composition Lab Course (ENG 1112). Instead of re-taking Composition I, some students need to consider taking Writing I or II. Ask your professor or a counselor for advice.

Course Goals and Objectives

In Composition II, you will be given the opportunity to build upon the skills emphasized in Composition I and also to learn to

- analyze more complex readings, showing how content, organization, style, and tone are related to the author’s purpose, audience, and subject matter

- evaluate texts for technical weaknesses and strengths

- employ various strategies for developing ideas, such as cause and effect analysis, analogy, argumentation, proposals, literary analysis, and research

- survey, evaluate, distill, and synthesize a number of sources to construct a 5-8 page documented essay using MLA style of documentation

- define and support a position on a controversial topic, using logical, emotional, and ethical appeals

- become an able, independent writer
Composition II is designed to heighten your critical sensitivity to language and to help you understand how language defines our ideas and feelings, shapes our conception of ourselves, places certain demands upon us in our professional lives, and, sometimes, makes us more aware of the world in which we live.

To help you meet these objectives to the best of your ability, many professors have incorporated revision options into their writing courses. If your professor allows you to revise essays, he or she will write suggestions for improvement on the essays you submit throughout the semester, then return them to you. Sometimes the professor will indicate what grade you have learned on the essay, but this grade is usually temporary and can be improved by studying and by revising effectively. The revised essays you submit should reflect your understanding of your professor’s comments, the course objectives, and the specific requirements of the assignment; in some cases, therefore, grades will not improve with revision. To help you revise effectively, you should seek assistance from peers and/or tutors in the Writing Center.

Revision options vary from professor to professor. Some professors require students to revise all of their essays while others do not allow for any revision. Some professors expect students to revise extensively and will penalize essays that are not substantially revised. Like Composition I professors, Composition II professors devise their own means of accomplishing the above objectives. Make sure that you read the course syllabus so that you understand your professor’s teaching approach.

Although each professor has planned a different sequence of projects, papers, and assignments, most courses will begin with a focus on critical reading. You will learn to summarize a text accurately and to make inferences and evaluations. The early essays you write will usually be short--approximately 750 words. You may write a summary, a cause and effect essay, an analysis or evaluation of another writer’s essay, or a literary analysis.

At some point, usually around the fourth or fifth week of the semester, you will focus on argumentation and research writing. You will learn to understand and apply the techniques of argument and persuasion, such as ethical, emotional, and logical appeals, and to conduct research for evidence, testimony, statistics, and facts. In addition, you will learn to support your own ideas by extracting and synthesizing principles, theories, and information from source material.

Finally, you will immerse yourself in a 1250-2000 word research essay. First, you will distill information on a particular topic; then you will construct an original essay focusing on some aspect of that subject and using outside evidence as support or illustration. You may also work to enhance your writing style by using computer writing programs.

At some point during the semester, you will be asked to write an in-class essay of approximately 500 words. Your professor may require you to type the in-class essay in the Computer Equipped Classroom or to write it in pen in the classroom. In either case, the purpose of the in-class writing assignment is to determine how well you are learning the essay writing skills and objectives being discussed.
If you do not have an in-class writing assignment prior to the final exam, your final exam will include an in-class writing assignment of approximately 500 words. Your professor will determine the topic for your final exam essay and may include multiple-choice, true/false, and short answer questions on the exam. Although professors design their own final exams, all Composition II final exams will attempt to measure how well you have mastered the skills taught in Composition II.

After successfully completing Composition II, you should be able to demonstrate, in writing, your understanding of the following concepts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allusion</th>
<th>Analogy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Appeals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>Working bibliography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause/effect analysis</td>
<td>Critical reading/thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figures of speech</td>
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GRADING PRACTICES

While each professor has his or her own breakdown of how your final grade for the course will be determined (see your syllabus), the essays you write will constitute the largest portion of your grade (45%-65%) in both Composition I and II. Typically, class activities, such as short writing exercises, quizzes, responses to readings, and Writing Center work, will count for approximately 20% of your overall grade. Some professors incorporate points for participating in the writing process into their grade system, and Composition I professors will assign a research project worth 5-15% of your grade. In both Composition I and II, the final exam will be worth 10-15%. The 4-6 essays you write will be evaluated in terms of purpose and audience, content, organization, style, and mechanics.

Purpose and Audience

Although your primary objective or purpose for writing an essay may be to fulfill a required assignment, effective writing must reveal a clear and worthwhile purpose. To write effectively, then, you must understand your attitude toward your subject, the audience to whom you are writing, and the message or ideas you want to communicate to that audience. An essay can be grammatically correct, well-organized, unified, and neatly typed, but if the writer is simply stating ideas or translating experiences without a clear purpose in mind, then the essay will not be effective. Topics that do not lend themselves to deep and thoughtful analysis, therefore, should be avoided.

Determining your purpose and audience will help you make decisions about content, organization, and style, which are also important in the overall effectiveness of your essay.

Content

Your essay is composed of the descriptive details, figures, statistics, observations, quotations, summaries, paraphrases, and other information you include to support your thesis and topic sentences. When your professor evaluates your essay in terms of content, he or she will look to see that the information you provide is adequate, appropriate, and when necessary, documented.

The content is adequate when you have included enough--but not too much--information to develop the idea meaningfully or, in persuasive writing, to convince readers that your point is reasonable. Specific details, concrete language, reliable sources, thorough explanations, and sensory images may enhance the content of your essay. The information you include, though, must be appropriate or relevant to your purpose and audience. Simply adding more words will not necessarily enhance your content and may distract readers from your thesis.

When you use information that is not your own, you must document. See pages 25-26 of this manual and the course handbook for more information. An essay containing plagiarism, whether accidental or intentional, will receive a “0” or an “F”.
Organization

Although you can ramble as incoherently as you want when you write for yourself or for a good friend, you must make sure that when you write for a broader audience, your essay is carefully planned so that the audience fully understands your message. Make certain that each essay divides effectively into a beginning, middle, and end, and that your paragraphs are effectively divided and arranged throughout.

Your essay should also have a logical development of a central idea, which (in most cases) can be stated in a thesis statement. All the material in the essay should be unified around the thesis statement and should flow coherently with transitions and reminders of the thesis. The length, structure, and arrangement of material in well-organized essays will effectively emphasize your ideas. In other words, as the essay progresses, its ideas should build toward complexity or emphasis rather than slide into simplicity or run out of fuel.

Style

The words you choose, the sentences you construct, and the details you include in an essay create your style or “voice.” Although students may develop many personal and academic styles, good writing is always clear, concise and related to the writer’s overall purpose, which will vary according to the assignment.

When grading your essay, your professor will look to see that you used varied sentence structures, eliminated wordiness, and avoided choppy, awkward, or grammatically incorrect sentences. Usually, strong essays use concrete, specific nouns, active verbs, and the active voice, and they repeat key words or certain sentence structures for emphasis and coherence. Feel free to explore new and different styles (humor, sarcasm, irony, etc.) and to employ figures of speech, but always keep your purpose and audience in mind, and make sure that your language is appropriate and effective.

Mechanics

Essays that contain more than five major errors often receive a D or F, even if the other four criteria are met effectively. You are expected to have mastered the basic “rules” of English; therefore, college compositions are almost always less than satisfactory if they contain an excessive number of grammatical errors.

Fortunately, recognizing and learning to correct mechanical mistakes is not as difficult as some other aspects of learning to write. If you have trouble with mechanics, you may want to enroll in a developmental course (see pages 4-9 of this manual). If you wish to remain in your composition course despite your grammar difficulties, you should familiarize yourself with the appropriate chapters in the course handbook.

Following is a list of major errors. Your professor may add to or delete from this list, but in most cases, five or more of these errors in a 500-word essay will distract or confuse your readers; therefore, your grade may be less than satisfactory.
Minor errors, such as misused commas and apostrophes, typos and sexist language, may also affect your grade, though most professors do not consider these “major” mechanical problems and, usually, will not fail an essay that contains only a few such errors.

Grades Defined

Many students misunderstand the college grading system, which is quite different from that of high school. Below is an explanation of what each grade represents. TCC professors may use numerical (points or percentages) or an alphabetical system of grading.

A  (90-100%)

The “A” essay is logically organized, controlled by a clearly stated central idea, developed with interesting and relevant supportive details, and free from grammatical errors. The essay divides gracefully into a beginning, middle, and end, and responds to the specific requirements of the assignment with insight and originality. Careful, appropriate, successful diction; internal cohesion; paragraph unity; and varied, forceful sentences contribute to an interesting and vigorous style. Although the “A” essay does not necessarily merit publication, it contains some of the qualities we find in many highly acclaimed, published works. “A” stands for superior.

B  (80-89%)

The “B” essay goes beyond a satisfactory response to the assignment but does not qualify as “superior.” In the “B” essay, the central purpose is clearly stated and developed logically and adequately, with few--if any--mechanical errors. Its ideas are clear enough because it contains some of the positive qualities of an “A” essay, yet it lacks the distinctive originality of thought and style that characterize the “A” essay. Often, some but not all of the writing in the “B” essay is outstanding. “B” represents good work.

C  (70-79%)

The “C” essays fulfills the assignment sufficiently by presenting a clear thesis, an adequate organizational structure, some support for the central idea, fairly appropriate diction, and sentences that do not confuse or distort the writer’s meaning. Sometimes, an essay will receive a “C” when a few careless punctuation or grammatical and spelling errors distract the reader from the writing. Typically, the “C” essay does not have the originality or the vigor and interest of thought and expression that characterize the “A” and “B” essay. Nonetheless, a “C” indicates that the essay is an adequate, satisfactory response to the assignment.
D  (60-69%)

The “D” essay addresses the assignment, but without adequate development of the central ideas, clear organization, or appropriate language. Unity is often lacking in the “D” essay, and the essay’s style is typically monotonous, with few transitions, lack of sentence variety, imprecise or inappropriate diction, and undeveloped paragraphs. The “D” essay may contain mechanical errors, indicating that the essay is less than satisfactory.

F  (0-59%)

The “F” essay has no discernible organization, lacks a dominant idea, and/or shows inadequate development. The diction is inappropriate for the subject and audience. Details, examples, specific and concrete language, sensory images, and support are lacking. The essay may fall short of meeting the word-length requirement, may not fulfill the assignment, or may be partially or completely plagiarized. The essay may contain more than five major mechanical errors that obstruct meaning. The “F” signifies that the writing is below college level.

Fairness

Few students will question a poor grade on a math exam, yet with writing, many people believe that grades are “completely subjective.” While it is true that professors may react to or empathize with a paper’s subject matter, TCC professors evaluate student writing based on the effectiveness of the writing. The criteria are provided here so that you too can evaluate your writing.

To help you learn to evaluate your writing, professors will usually provide written comments on your essays. Many students are surprised to see their carefully typed essays covered with scribbles, arrows, circles, and comments, but professors know that a thorough critique can help students improve their writing. Be prepared to receive this feedback, to view the comments as instruction as well as evaluation, and to use the criticism as a guide for improving your writing.

If you do not understand a grade or the comments you receive, you should make an appointment with your professor immediately so that he or she can clarify why you received the grade. TCC professors are happy to discuss grades so that you will understand how to become a better writer, but they do not change grades because students disagree with their evaluation. For more information about grades, see The TCC Student Code of Conduct and Policy Handbook.

Final Grades

When asked to define letter grades, many students will tell you that an “A” means that the student “tried his or her hardest.” These students believe that grades reflect effort and that, by trying their hardest, students can earn high grades. While it is true that effort does make a difference in most cases, letter grades are not an indication of how hard a student has worked in a class. We all know students who work very hard in an algebra or history or science
class but are unable to raise their grades above a “C.” On the other hand, we also know students who seem to put forth little effort in their classes but always seem to earn A’s and B’s.

Letter grades indicate how successfully a student has achieved the course objectives. In composition classes, the majority of the final grade (usually about 75%) is based on the quality of writing submitted throughout the semester. Students who have mastered the course objectives, and who can demonstrate that mastery in their own writing, will receive high grades. Students whose writing does not demonstrate a clear understanding of the course objectives will receive less than satisfactory grades, even if the students have “tried their hardest.” Professors will acknowledge and appreciate the hard work a student puts forth throughout the semester, but the criteria described in this manual and discussed in class must be the sole basis for the grades assigned.

Even though the majority of a student’s grade is based on the quality of the writing, you can take steps to ensure that you do your best in your composition course. Students are far more likely to succeed in any class when they

- attend class regularly and contact a classmate for notes if they are forced to miss a class
- complete all reading assignments and take notes over the assigned readings
- take notes during class discussions and lectures
- review lecture and book notes periodically
- turn in all required work on time
- pay attention to the professor’s verbal or written comments regarding their work
- make use of academic support services, such as the Writing Center
- study a minimum of 6-9 hours a week studying for each 3 hour course they are enrolled in (this equals approximately 45 hours a week study time for students enrolled in 15 hours)
- ask questions and/or arrange to meet with the professor when they are having trouble understanding material

Although you will not be guaranteed the grade you want if you follow the guidelines above, you are far more likely to succeed in Composition I and II if you do follow these guidelines. Sometimes, when students do not meet the course prerequisites for Composition I and II (see pages 10 and 14), no amount of effort will help them pass the courses; therefore, it is important you make sure you meet the prerequisites explained in this manual.

Remember that the final grade you earn in a class is determined by the professor. Unless the professor has miscalculated your grade or graded in an “arbitrary or capricious manner” (see Student Code of Conduct Policy Handbook, p. 26), you should be prepared to accept your professor’s honest and professional assessment of your work.
**Administrative Withdrawal/Incomplete Grades**

An “Administrative Withdrawal” or “AW” allows a professor to remove a student from his or her class without that student’s permission. Sometimes, in the first few weeks of the semester, professors will withdraw students who have missed numerous classes. Students who receive an “AW” will not receive a grade or credit for the class. In other instances, a professor can remove a student from the class when the student is unable to drop the class him or her self. The “AW” appears on the student’s transcript but has no effect on the student’s GPA.

An “Incomplete” or “I” grade is reserved for emergency situations. Sometimes, a student is forced to miss several classes due to illness, injury, or some other unforeseen circumstance. When this happens, a professor may assign an “I” grade to the student so that he or she is not forced to withdraw from the class. The “I” grade allows the student either to re-take the course or to complete the assignments he or she missed while absent, but only if the student is passing the class; the “I” grade is not an option for students who were earning below a “C” prior to whatever situation forced them to miss class.

When an “I” grade is warranted, the professor fills out an incomplete form stipulating what the student needs to do in order to receive a grade for the course; the professor will also indicate the date by which the student must complete the work. If the student completes the work, the “I” grade will be replaced with an A, B, C, D, or F. If the student does not complete the work by the due date, the “I” grade will remain on the transcript but will not affect the student’s GPA.

Sometimes, students request an “AW” or an “I” grade in lieu of a “D” or “F”, and in some disciplines, professors may assign “AW” or “I” grades to protect a student’s GPA. **Composition professors, however, do not assign “AW” or “I” grades at the end of the semester unless a genuine emergency prevents a student from completing the assigned work.** Students who miss class frequently, who have earned poor grades on essays, and/or who have failed to turn in homework or miscellaneous assignments are not eligible for an “AW” or “I.”

If you are concerned about your grade, talk to your professor before the last day to withdraw from classes. Don’t assume a professor will give you an “AW” or an “I” if you are earning a “D” or “F” in the class. In addition, if you quit attending class and do not withdraw officially, through the registrar’s office, your professor is not required to assign an “AW” grade at the end of the semester; most likely, therefore, you will receive an “F” for the class, and that F will affect your GPA.
TEACHING METHODS

Writing As A Process

Although no two professors teach writing alike, the professors at TCC believe in using similar teaching methods to help students learn to write. To help you produce an effective essay, professors will encourage you to engage in pre-writing assignments, planning strategies, drafting activities, and “workshopping” or “peer reviewing,” which involves critiquing your classmates’ rough drafts. They may also require that you submit these items with the final draft of your essay. Because they believe that good writing results from a series of activities that lead to a final essay, professors will sometimes consider pre-writing, planning, drafting, and revising activities as a minor part of the essay’s grade.

To help you understand what is involved in the writing process, professors use many teaching strategies. Some of these strategies include

- assigned readings and activities from your textbook and/or the Writing Center
- group activities or projects
- lectures over important writing strategies
- individual or group conferences
- discussions of essays written by professional writers
- written feedback on rough drafts and/or final drafts of essays
- projects in the Learning Resource Center
- revision options (see pages 12 & 15 of the manual)

On-Line Teaching

Several sections of Composition I and II, as well as other English courses, are offered as on-line courses. If you are enrolled in an on-line course, you need to be aware that these courses require the same amount of work and emphasize the same course objectives as a traditional, on-campus class. Furthermore, the general policies and practices outlined in this manual apply to on-line courses. To succeed in an on-line course, therefore, you must read your professor's course syllabus carefully and adhere to the policies he or she has outlined, particularly policies related to late work. Remember that on-line courses require a great deal of self-discipline and independent learning. Do not expect your professor to be available 24-hours a day to answer questions or offer help. On-line professors establish virtual office hours and will be available to answer questions related to the course during these times only. Finally, a student in an on-line
course should possess a better-than-average level of computer literacy. *English professors do not teach computer skills.*

Some Composition professors who teach traditional, on-campus courses use the internet for practice writing assignments, peer workshops, discussions, and other activities. If your professor has established a web site for the classroom, he or she will provide basic instructions for visiting the site and completing assigned activities. Students who do not have internet access may need to seek assistance in the General Users Lab (room 4231). Be sure to ask your professor if you have questions regarding on-line activities.

**The Writing Center**

The Writing Center (room 1102) provides free tutoring to all TCC students. The Center is staffed by professionals who can help you develop your reading skills. Tutors assist students in a variety of areas, including grammar/mechanics, sentence structure, essay format, methods of development, the research process, and MLA documentation techniques. In addition to free tutoring, the center also provides informal seminars/workshops. These seminars are offered to reinforce and expand upon material covered in the classroom while providing students “hands on” writing assistance. The Center tutors are writers who understand the anxieties, frustrations, and rewards of college writing.

The Writing Center offers students a variety of educational materials, which range from computer, video, and audio-cassette programs. Word processing software (Windows 2002) computerized government/history tutorials, internet and an on-line LRC connection are also available for student use.

You are more likely to receive the most prompt and effective tutoring if you schedule a tutoring appointment at least two days before your essay is due. To schedule an appointment, simply stop by the Center or call 595-7749. Walk-ins are welcome on a time available basis, so if you forget to make an appointment, stop by the Center to see if the tutor is available.

**The Computer-Equipped Classroom**

The **Computer-Equipped Classroom (CEC)**, located in rooms 1203 and 1221, can assist students in all phases of the writing process. The CEC allows professors to work with students as they engage in the writing process. The classroom is designed to facilitate student writing by allowing professors and classmates to offer suggestions, answer questions, and provide immediate feedback as the class plans, drafts, and revises assigned essays. Many professors will reserve the CEC to use during several class periods, so you should be prepared to use a word processor for Composition I and II.

If you have never used a word processor, do not despair. The computers in the CEC use the Windows operating system and are equipped with easy-to-use word processing software. Even students who have never used a computer find the CEC extremely “user friendly,” and soon learn that the writing process is much easier on a computer. Often, a student’s writing will
improve once he or she learns to use a word processing program, since word processing makes revising, editing, and proofreading easier.

If you would like to word process your essays outside of class, you may use the Microcomputer Lab (room 4231) or the Writing Center (room 1102). The Microcomputer Lab and the Writing Center have the same word processing program that you will be using during class so that you can continue working on your essay after working in the CEC.

**Disabled Student Services/ADA Policy**

If you feel you have a learning disability or other condition that may interfere with your work in any class at Tulsa Community College, you should make an appointment to see a counselor at the **Diagnostic and Prescriptive Learning Center (DPLC)**. Students with documented disabilities are provided academic accommodations through the disABLED Student Resource Center or Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (595-7428/TDD-TTY 595-7434). If any student is in need of academic accommodations from either office, it is the student's responsibility to advise the instructor so an appropriate referral can be made no later than the first week of class. Students may also contact the disABLED Student Services Offices directly at the telephone numbers indicated. **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS WILL NOT BE PROVIDED UNLESS APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION IS PROVIDED TO THE DISABLED STUDENT SERVICES OFFICES TO SUPPORT THE NEED.** The counselors and specialists at the DPLC can assist any student who requires specialized services and referrals to successfully complete his or her education program at TCC.

For more information, contact the DPLC coordinator at the Metro Campus, 595-7116.
ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

University Parallel

It is important that you understand the concept of “University Parallel.” When a course is university parallel, it can be transferred to most colleges and universities throughout the country. Because students strive to meet the same basic goals and objectives, university parallel courses, such as Composition I and II, are equal to those at other institutions.

Occasionally, students enter Tulsa Community College’s Composition I or II thinking that it will be much easier than composition courses offered at four-year colleges. These students quickly discover, though, that the courses here are every bit as demanding as ones taught at four-year colleges. The workload is similar, as are the stringent demands and expectations for the course.

TCC helps you succeed in Composition I and II by providing courses and tutoring that you may not find at other colleges and universities, but the professors here will not lower their standards. TCC is a real college, and just like professors at any college or university, the professors here are preparing you to meet the challenges you will face as a student, whether you remain here at TCC or continue your education elsewhere.

Plagiarism

When asked to define plagiarism, many students respond by saying that it involves copying another person’s writing “word for word.” While this is an example of plagiarism, it is not a complete definition. Whenever you mislead your readers to believe that another person’s ideas, words or sentence structures are your own, you have committed plagiarism. If you copy a passage that someone else wrote--published or not--and do not properly credit the author, you have committed plagiarism. If you use another writer’s text and replace certain words with synonym, you have committed plagiarism. If you include another writer’s ideas in your essay without giving that writer credit, even if you state those ideas in your own words, you have committed plagiarism. Simply using another author’s writing as a guide to your own writing may also be considered plagiarism.

Plagiarism is not only dishonest; it is also a form of theft and, in some institutions, and can result in expulsion. At TCC, if you are guilty of plagiarism, whether intentional or accidental, your professor will give the plagiarized assignment either an F or a “0” and may allow you to rewrite it according to specifications. Additionally, your name may be reported to the Associate Dean. A second offense will result in more severe penalties.

To avoid plagiarism, you should first understand what needs to be documented. Your own ideas, interpretations, observations, and expressions do not need to be documented.

Factual information that most people know, or that can be found in several sources (such as when Mozart lived, or who won the first Super Bowl) is called “common knowledge,” and does not need to be documented, even if you have to look up the information. Any other information you present in an essay, however, needs documentation. This includes another person’s writing
or ideas, statistics, little-known facts, information based on someone’s primary research, and information found via the internet. You may present information such as this by quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing.

To **quote** directly, you enclose in quotation marks the **exact** words of the original, then in parentheses, provide information to refer your readers to an explanation of the source, located on the Works Cited page. For longer quotations (more than four typed lines), you should indent ten spaces and include parenthetical documentation at the end of the quotation. You do not need to put quotation marks around the indented material since the indentation tells readers you are presenting a direct quote.

Sometimes, the information in the parentheses consists of the author’s last name and the page number(s) on which the words appeared. If you give the author’s name as an attributive phrase (According to Smith...) then you need include only the page numbers in the parentheses. With quotations, an attributive phrase is not necessary, since the quotation marks tell the reader where the quotation begins. However, you should strive to incorporate the quoted material smoothly into your own writing rather than simply “dumping” it into your essay.

When you **paraphrase**, you set forth an author’s meaning in your own words. You **CANNOT** use words, phrases, or clauses that resemble those of the author. In other words, paraphrasing involves more than simply “plugging in” synonyms or rearranging phrases and clauses; it involves changing the original substantially, so that the author’s ideas are conveyed in your own voice. With a paraphrase, an attributive phrase is necessary so that readers will know when the paraphrase begins. After the paraphrase, you should include information in parentheses that refers the readers to the Works Cited page, which contains an explanation of the source.

To **summarize**, you must extract the author’s main ideas and present those ideas in your own words. A summary condenses longer passages to give readers the author’s basic message. As with a paraphrase, a summary requires that you substantially change the words, phrases, and clauses to convey the author’s ideas in your own words. You must also use an attributive phrase to introduce a summary, and provide parenthetical documentation that will lead the readers to an explanation of the source on the Works Cited page.

Unless your professor instructs you to use quotations, paraphrases, and summaries in your essay, you should not consult secondary sources when writing essays. For several of the essays you write in Composition I and II, you will be using your own experiences, ideas, and observations instead of research to develop your ideas.

**Attendance**

Success in your composition classes depends upon regular attendance. While you can (and should!) get notes from someone if you miss class, many of the activities conducted in composition courses cannot be effectively duplicated outside the classroom. Your professor designs in-class assignments to help you improve your writing and develop your critical reading skills. If you miss these assignments, you may not earn the grade you are capable of earning.
Excessive absence, as defined by most TCC professors, occurs when a student misses three hours of class. Even if they are “excused”, absences can affect your final grade. Professors are not required to meet with you to discuss what you missed if you have to be absent, nor are they required to “check up” on their students who quit attending class. Attendance is the responsibility of the student.

It is also your responsibility to initiate a withdrawal if you are no longer able to attend class. Failure to drop a course through the registrar’s office will result in an “F” for the course. Don’t assume that your professor will initiate a withdrawal or give you a passing grade if you quit attending class.

**Late Work**

Policies for late work differ. Since essays constitute a major portion of your final grade, professors may accept late essays. However, some professors do not accept late essays under any circumstances, and most will not accept them after a certain period of time. Essays that are accepted late usually receive late penalties, such as a substantially lowered grade. Most professors expect you to turn essays in at the beginning of the class period, not later that same day, and they may penalize essays that are submitted once class has started. Talk to your professor if you are unable to submit an essay on time. Usually, it is impossible to pass a composition class if you do not turn in all of the required essays.

Most professors will not accept other late work--homework, Communications Center assignments, journals, etc.—under any circumstances, nor will they allow you to make-up daily assignments or quizzes, even if you have a valid reason for being absent. In some cases, however, late work other than essays is permissible by pre-arrangement. To avoid problems, make sure you understand your professor’s policies on make-up work, attend class regularly, and manage your time effectively so that you can turn in all assignments.

**Academic Dishonesty or Misconduct**

Academic dishonesty or misconduct is not condoned nor tolerated at campuses within the Tulsa Community College system. Academic dishonesty is behavior in which a deliberately fraudulent misrepresentation is employed in an attempt to gain undeserved intellectual credit, either for oneself or for another. Academic misconduct is behavior that results in intellectual advantage obtained by violating specific standard, but without deliberate intent or use of fraudulent means. Please review the relevant sections of the *TCC Student Code of Conduct Policy Handbook*.

**Classroom Etiquette**

Students should show respect and courtesy to fellow classmates and participate earnestly in class activities. Entering class late, talking during lectures, sleeping during class, making fun of or attacking another's viewpoint, and/or behaving in a disruptive or combative manner are all considered inappropriate and may be grounds for dismissal from class. Cell phones or pagers must be turned off during class; if an emergency arises, the campus police can phone our classroom. Finally, school policy does not permit students to bring children to class.
Computer Services Acceptable Use

Access to computing resources is a privilege granted to all TCC faculty, staff, and students. Use of TCC computing resources is limited to purposes related to the College’s mission of education, research, and community service. Student use of technology is governed by the Computer Services Acceptable Use Statements/Standards found in the *TCC Student Code of Conduct Policy Handbook*. These handbooks may be obtained by contacting any Student Activities or Dean of Student Services office.
COMMON QUESTIONS

Over the years, the English professors at Tulsa Community College have heard numerous questions regarding Composition I and II. The following is a list of some of the most frequently asked questions along with the answers typically provided by the English faculty and the Communications Division Office.

*When should my professor distribute a course syllabus?*

In most cases, your professor should distribute a course syllabus on the first day of class. The syllabus is like a contract between you and the professor, so you should read it carefully to determine whether or not the class suits you.

If your professor has not distributed the class syllabus by the end of the first week of classes, you need to notify the Division Office, room 1202A.

*I’ve read the course syllabus and I’m not sure I’m going to like the way my Composition professor teaches. Can I still change sections?*

If you are not happy with your Composition class—for whatever reason—you should change sections during the first two weeks of class. Unfortunately, many classes are already full, so a section change may be complicated or impossible, depending upon your schedule. If you are unable to switch sections, you need to either accept the professor’s policies and teaching style or drop the class. Before you decide to drop the class, however, you should read this manual carefully and realize that the policies and practices among the English faculty on the Southeast Campus are fairly similar.

*Is it true that I can’t make up the assignments I missed when I was absent, even though my absences were excused?*

Most professors state in their syllabi that miscellaneous assignments, such as homework assignments or in-class work, cannot be submitted late, even if the student has a legitimate reason for being absent. Professors are free to create their own policies regarding late work, so read your professor’s syllabus to make sure you understand how he or she handles late work.

*If I come to class late and turn in my assignment, is it still be counted late?*

In some cases, professors penalize or do not accept work that is submitted after class has started. If this is your professor’s policy, he or she will make that clear on the course syllabus.

*Where should I submit my late essay?*

If your composition professor is an adjunct or part-time instructor, you should turn essays into the Academic and Campus Support Office, room 2202. If your professor is full-time, leave your
essay in the Communications Division Office, room 1202A. Either office will require you to record your name, the date and time on a sign-in form so that your professor knows exactly when you submitted the late essay.

Some professors allow students to send assignments as email attachments or to post their assignments on the course web site. If your professor allows you to submit work on-line, you are responsible for making sure that your professor receives the work. Professors will not make allowances for any technical problems that caused you to submit work late.

Unless your professor instructs you to do so, it is not wise to leave your late essay on his or her office door or to ask a friend to turn in your essay. When you leave your essay in either the Evening Programs or Communications Division offices, it is less likely to get lost.

**My professor writes a lot of comments on my essays but no grade. Why can’t I know my grade?**

Professors who allow students to revise (see pages 12 & 15 of this manual) often provide comments but no grades on essays. When you resubmit the revised essay or essays, the professor will grade it. Although this approach helps students improve their writing, many students want to know their grades on each essay. Usually, if asked, professors will give an approximate grade.

**Why doesn’t my professor explain the reading assignments she gives?**

Most college professors do not spend a lot of time explaining reading assignments; instead, they expect you to read and learn the material on your own. Lectures and class activities are designed to *supplement* what you have read. Your responses to quiz and exam questions and to essay assignments should reflect how well you understand information from assigned readings, handouts, and class activities. Your professor expects you to ask questions if you do not understand the readings, but he or she may not spend any time lecturing over what you can learn by reading.

**I made A’s in my high school English classes, and my teachers said I was a great writer. Now I’m struggling to make C’s on my essays. Are my professor’s grading standards fair?**

Most students—even those who always made A’s on their high school English assignments—find that college professors expect a great deal more than high school English teachers. Unless your professor is grading in an “arbitrary or capricious” manner (see *Student Code of Conduct and Policy Handbook for TCC*) or is using standards other than those outlined in this manual (see pages 17-23), then it is unlikely that your professor is being “too hard.” Instead, the professor is probably upholding the high standards required for college-level writing.

**Why doesn’t my professor correct all of my grammar errors?**

Chances are that if your professor corrected your errors for you, you would not feel inclined to learn to recognize and correct these errors on your own. A good writing professor will inform students that they are having problems with mechanical errors, and he or she may even correct
some of the errors, but the professor will not correct all of the problems for the student. Seek help in the Writing Center and/or refer to the course handbook to sharpen your editing skills.

**Why does my professor always give us a handout to read for every essay we’re supposed to write?**

For each major essay assignment, your professor is required to provide a handout explaining the basic requirements for the assignment, such as word length. Usually, professors spend a great deal of time creating these handouts so that students clearly understand the assignment. When you receive your essay assignment sheet, read it carefully and keep it with you as you begin working on your essay.

**Why isn’t my professor more specific when he critiques my essay?**

Students sometimes feel as if their English professors are being intentionally vague when they comment on an essay. Questions such as “What is your organizational strategy in this paragraph?” or “How can you increase reader interest in your opening paragraph?” may frustrate students who want simply a set of specific instructions that they can follow for each essay they write.

Although professors can provide plenty of models and guidelines for writing an effective essay, no such set of instructions exists. Each time you begin the process of writing a college-level essay, you must communicate a meaningful idea to a group of intelligent readers. This process entails a great deal of thought as well as a thorough understanding of the rhetorical skills being discussed in class.

Your professor’s comments, therefore, should help you think about what you are writing as well as how you are writing it. Assigned readings, class activities, and miscellaneous assignments should help you explore various writing techniques and strategies. Ultimately, however, your task is to discover a unique and effective way to employ these techniques and strategies.

Remember that writing an essay is not the same as taking a multiple-choice exam; there are many ways to write a good essay. Your professor’s job, therefore, is not to “correct” your essay but to provide you with questions and comments that will inspire careful and thorough revisions.

**Why won’t my professor schedule more conference time so that we can discuss each of my revised essays?**

Most composition professors would like to spend more time working individually with students. Unfortunately, most professors teach at least two sections (some teach six) of composition, which means that they are grading fifty or more essays every two or three weeks. Even if they spend only fifteen minutes grading each essay, that adds up to fifty hours of grading for each essay assigned. Add those fifty hours to the several hours professors spend planning classes, attending classes, and grading miscellaneous assignments, and you can see why it is difficult, if not impossible, for a professor to meet individually with each student for each essay assigned.
Fortunately, however, most professors write extensive comments on essays and make themselves available for students who have specific questions about their essays. In addition, the Writing Center provides free tutoring to help you revise your essays.

My best friend’s mother used to teach high school English. Can I ask her to help me with my essays?

Although students are often more comfortable asking a friend, a parent, or a former teacher to critique their essays, these people may not be aware of your professor’s specific expectations and grading criteria and so may not be able to offer you the best, most informed criticism. In addition, your friends and even your parents may be tempted to write or revise some of your essay for you rather than teaching you to do the work yourself. Having someone else revise your essay for you will create problems in the long run, so do not allow anyone to do your work for you.

Instead of a friend or family member, rely on the Writing Center and your classmates to help you work on essays.

Why didn’t my essay grades improve after I worked with the tutors in the Writing Center?

Based on their knowledge and expertise, the tutors in the Communications Center will identify weaknesses and discuss options for improving your essay drafts, but they are not responsible for the grades you earn (good or bad) on the final essay. A thirty-minute tutoring session will not be very helpful to students who have failed to grasp the specific expectations presented in class and in assigned readings. Similarly, tutoring alone cannot cure all of the problems a student might face in writing a satisfactory essay. Tutoring can help you become a better critic of your own work, which is the first and most significant step you can take toward becoming a better writer.

My professor is always announcing her opinion on every controversial issue we discuss, and some of her opinions are pretty outlandish. Can she do this?

Like most institutions of higher learning, Tulsa Community College values the kind of academic freedom that allows for a free exchange of ideas and opinions among students and faculty. Sometimes, such as in Composition II classes, professors may express an opinion that causes someone to feel outraged or even offended. However, your professor has the right to express his or her opinion on controversial issues, even if everyone in the class disagrees with the opinion.

Your professor does not have the right to use a great deal of class time to discuss issues unrelated to the course, nor does he or she have the right to penalize you for disagreeing with an opinion. If you feel that your professor has penalized you for an opinion you expressed in an essay, you need to talk to the professor.

My friend is taking Composition I from another professor and the requirements for his class are completely different from the requirements for my class. Why?

The course objectives for Composition I and II are outlined clearly in this manual (see pages 10 & 14) and are the same objectives that all TCC Southeast Campus professors strive to teach.
Professors do not, however, use the same methods to teach the course objectives, nor do they always require the same amount or type of work. Differences among faculty, therefore, are to be expected.

*Where can I go to complain about my composition professor? A lot of my friends and I feel like he isn’t a very good teacher.*

Given that Composition I and II are very difficult courses, you will want to take a class from a professor whose teaching style suits you. At least once during your college career, however, you are bound to have a professor whose teaching style you do not appreciate. The professor may be boring, disorganized, or too difficult, or you may simply dislike the professor.

If you and your classmates are unhappy with your composition professor, you should first determine whether the professor is following the common practices outlined in this manual. If the professor is following these practices, then you will need to do your best to accept the situation and to adapt to the professor’s teaching style. When you complete the instructor/course evaluation, you can express your dissatisfaction with the instructor.

If you feel your professor is not following the common practices outlined in this manual or the policies presented in the Student Code of Conduct and Policy Handbook, then you should first discuss your concerns with the professor. Find a good time to meet with him or her and present your concerns diplomatically. If the professor does not address your concerns, then you should fill out a “Student Concern” form in the Communications Division, room 1202A.

*I'm making an A or B in my composition class, but the professor has missed six classes and doesn’t seem well-prepared when she does show up. I think I should complain, but will it affect my grade?*

If your professor has missed several classes and/or frequently does not begin and end class on time, you should notify the Communications Division, room 1202A, immediately. Your professor is required to teach a certain number of hours or, if an emergency develops, the professor needs to arrange for a substitute. Even if you are happy about your grade, you may not be learning what you have paid to learn if the professor is missing class too frequently.

When handling student complaints, the Division Office ensures that the student(s) who complain remain anonymous; therefore, if you do complain, the Division Office will deal with the situation without mentioning your name.

*What do I do if I think I’ve been graded unfairly?*

Having very high standards is not the same as being unfair. Unfairness occurs when the professor applies different criteria to different students and/or penalizes or rewards an essay using an arbitrary and capricious set of criteria. As long as your professor is following the general guidelines presented in this manual, it is unlikely that he or she is being unfair.

If you feel you have been graded unfairly, you need to talk to your professor first to allow him or her to explain why you made the grade you made. Schedule a convenient time to meet and listen
carefully to the professor’s reasons for the grade, then explain why you feel you were graded unfairly. Many times, after meeting with the professor, students understand why they received the grade they received.

If you remain convinced that you were graded unfairly, you should fill out a “Student Concern” form in the Communications Division, room 1202A. A representative from the Division Office will contact you to discuss your situation. Be sure to save your graded essays along with any other material that you think might be relevant to a review of your grade.

**Other**

If you have additional questions that have not been addressed in this *Student Manual* or in the *Student Code of Conduct and Policy Handbook*, please talk to your professor and/or contact the Communications Division Office, room 1202A, extension 7694.
THE HONORS PROGRAM

While taking required courses for their major, such as Composition I and II, many students discover that they have the qualifications for and an interest in the TCC Honors Program. If you are interested in taking an honors course or in participating in the Honors Program, the questions and answers below may be of interest. Check the semester schedule to see which Honors courses are being offered.

What is the TCC Honors Program?

The TCC Honors Program offers Honors courses to curious and self-motivated students, with approximately a 3.0 GPA, who wish to grow personally and academically. The goal of the Program is to provide students with an enriched academic environment through more direct involvement in learning. Classes are smaller, interaction with peers and professors is livelier, and opportunities for independent study are more abundant.

Will I have to be accepted into the Honors Program to take an Honors class?

No. To take an Honors class, you will need approximately a 3.0 GPA. Talking to the professors who teach the Honors classes would be a good idea.

How can I participate in the Honors Program?

You may participate in the Honors Program two different ways: First, you may enroll in individual Honors courses, which require a GPA of approximately 3.0. Second, you may apply to become an Honors Scholar. This part of the program has specific admissions criteria two of which you should meet: a 3.5 GPA on a minimum of 12 college hours; combined score of 1100 on the SAT or composite ACT score of 25; completion of two TCC Honors courses with minimum grade of B; high school GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale or upper 10 percent rank in high school class; or demonstration of special abilities or awards in writing or other significant projects. As a Scholar, you would proceed through a planned curriculum of 24 hours of required and elective Honors classes. Full-time and part-time students, regardless of age or previous academic background, are welcome to apply.

How are Honors courses different from equivalent, “regular” classes?

TCC Honors classes are smaller, affording more concentrated, vigorous classroom discussion and more interaction among peers and with the professor. Also, textbooks are selected with a specific course focus in mind. Most often the emphasis in the course is on critical thinking, writing, and reading. Often independent study and research are encouraged. In this atmosphere, students take an active role in their education.

Do Honors courses involve extra work?

Honors courses typically encourage independent critical thinking and rely on student participation. Such courses may indeed be more demanding than equivalent large-lecture courses, but they are also rewarding. In many circumstances, the amount of reading, writing,
and testing required by an Honors course will not be substantially different from that required by an equivalent “regular” course. The Program makes a qualitative, not necessarily a quantitative, difference. In other words, you will probably not be doing more work; instead, you will be taking a different approach to the course work.

**Will my GPA suffer if I enroll in Honors courses?**

As with any course work, if you prepare conscientiously for each class, if you participate, and if you take an active role in claiming your education, you should excel. Research indicates that students who are appropriately enrolled in Honors classes earn the same grades they would have received in equivalent “regular” classes. Some students feel they do even better in these smaller, supportive classes.

**How many Honors courses should I take each semester?**

Generally, about one-third of your courses could be taken for Honors credit. As a freshman, you will probably take four or five courses each semester, so probably two of these should be Honors courses.

**How will my Honors work be recognized?**

As a student taking Honors classes, your courses will show an Honors designation (HON) on your transcript. If you are an in-good-standing active member of the Honors Program as a Scholar at the time of graduation, and if you have fulfilled the requirements of the Honors program as an Honors Scholar, you will receive recognition as an Honors student at graduation; during your academic work at TCC, if you maintain a 3.5 GPA, you will be eligible for membership in Phi Theta Kappa, a national scholastic organization.*

Moreover, transfer universities and colleges are impressed by Honors work in community college Honors Programs, and the Honors student, because of academic excellence, often becomes eligible for transfer scholarships.

**What about financial aid?**

Most Honors Scholars are eligible for a fee-waiver scholarship. For further information, contact the Financial Aid Office or the Honors Coordinator.

**How can I obtain further information?**

Students should contact the Honors Coordinator at 595-7077.

*A student need not be an Honors Scholar to become eligible for Phi Theta Kappa

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**OTHER ENGLISH COURSES TO CONSIDER**
Although some students leave Composition I and II thinking they will never take another English course, others discover that they have a talent for and an interest in reading and writing. For these students, the list below has been provided.

In most cases, TCC English courses are transferable to other colleges and universities, although you will need to check with counseling to make certain that the course you take will transfer to the school you hope to attend. If you would like to know more about courses listed, talk to your composition professor, or to the professor who will be teaching the course you wish to take. A description of each course is provided in the Tulsa Community College Catalogue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENG 2333</td>
<td>Technical/Professional Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENG 2342</td>
<td>Business Communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENG 2382</td>
<td>Advanced Composition</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENG 2413</td>
<td>Introduction to Literature*</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENG 2493</td>
<td>Creative Writing: Introduction</td>
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<td>ENG 2433</td>
<td>Creative Writing: Poetry</td>
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<td>Creative Writing: Non-Fiction Prose</td>
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<td>Creative Writing: The Short Story I</td>
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<td>Creative Writing: Short Story II</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENG 2883</td>
<td>Survey of American Literature from 1865</td>
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*Recommended for students who do not have a strong background in literature