English 100
Expository Writing
Three credits

Course Reference Number (64153): T/TH 2:30-3:45 p.m.
Course Reference Number (64392): T/Th 5:30-6:45 p.m.

INSTRUCTOR: Jenny Webster
OFFICE: Hale Palanakila #119
OFFICE HOURS: T/TH 2 – 2:30 p.m. & 4 – 5:30 p.m. and by appointment
TELEPHONE: ext. 291
EMAIL: jennyrw@hawaii.edu (This is the best way to contact me!)
EFFECTIVE DATE: Spring 2011

WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

Windward Community College offers innovative programs in the arts and sciences and opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of Hawai‘i and its unique heritage. With a special commitment to support the access and educational needs of Native Hawaiians, we provide O‘ahu’s Ko‘olau region and beyond with liberal arts, career and lifelong learning in a supportive and challenging environment — inspiring students to excellence.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

A composition course on the writing process including description, narration, exposition, and argument. Course stresses unity, development, organization, coherence, and other basic writing skills necessary for college writing. (3 hours lecture)

Prerequisite: Grade of “C” or better in ENG 22 or placement into ENG 100 or approval of designated Language Arts representative.

Activities Required at Scheduled Times Other than Class Times

1. You must complete all of the WCC LRUs (Library Research Units).
2. Make two conferences with your instructor to discuss your writing.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Write complex and well-reasoned compositions in language, style, and structure appropriate to particular purposes and audiences.
2. Engage in a writing process that includes exploring ideas, considering multiple points of view, developing and supporting a thesis, revising with the help of peer and instructor feedback, editing, and proofreading.
3. Find, evaluate, integrate, and properly document information from libraries, the internet, and other sources, with an eye for reliability, bias, and relevance.
4. Read for main points, perspective, and purpose, and analyze the effectiveness of a variety of rhetorical strategies in order to integrate that knowledge into their writing.

COURSE CONTENT
“The normal and conventional goal is writing to demonstrate learning: for this goal the writing should be good—it should be clear and, well . . . right. It is high stakes writing. But there is another important kind of writing that is less commonly used and valued, and so I want to stress it here: writing for learning. This is low stakes writing. The goal isn't so much good writing as coming to learn, understand, remember and figure out what you don't yet know.” (Peter Elbow)

Peter Elbow points out that there are multiple kinds of writing one can practice. There is the performance-based writing, what Elbow calls “high stakes writing”; it is the kind of writing that you will use in school to prove that you understand certain material. Likewise, it is the kind of writing which books, articles, stories, websites, advertisements, reports, public addresses, and many other finished texts are composed of. Though you may argue that they are not all “right,” or even good, they are finished prose produced for a purpose.

In school, I (like you) most often used this performance-based writing to prove to my teachers that, yes, I did in fact pay attention and/or read the book (or part of it). I used it to prove that something, indeed, lodged somewhere in the recesses of my brain (or my notes) and that I, at said time of reckoning, could prove that I did have access to that knowledge. High-stakes writing is how English teachers and writing-intensive course instructors determine your grade and so it is our job, and always in our best interest, to help you get better at it.

In English 100, though we have much high-stakes writing by which you will be graded, we have no specific content which you must prove that you have come to understand by the end of the course. In fact, in English class, we are utterly free to choose the content which we will study.

If there is no knowledge to gain, you may ask, then why are we here? In essence, we are studying a process, a practice, an art. This is no clock-in and clock-out kind of class. If you show up thinking I’m going to do the work, you are wasting your hours. Writing is a sport, and like sports, in order to be good, you need to practice. Your grade will not be determined by how much knowledge you have gained throughout the course but, rather, how skilled you have become in the art of crafting an argument. Henceforth, the high-stakes writing that you will be graded on will depend very much on a large amount of what Elbow calls “low stakes writing”.

Low-stakes writing is the kind of writing that we do to work stuff out. It is practice. It’s the thing that first drafts are made of. Low-stakes writing can be quite poetic, but more often than not it is relatively lousy (and that’s just fine). People who write in journals are engaged in the practice of low-stakes writing. Journal writing is, in fact, an invaluable form of low-stakes writing because it allows the writer to have a chance to organize, evaluate, and reexamine the content of his or her life. We will do a large amount of low-stakes writing in this class. Low-stakes writing is the equivalent of bouncing your ideas off a trusted friend, except the friend is not there to nod in agreement or tell you when you’ve completely lost the plot; neither are they there to judge you (and that’s freeing, isn’t it?). Low-stakes writing is the place where you may quietly (or vehemently) say your piece, go off on a tangent, commit your blasphemes, or weave together ideas, philosophies, and insights that may prove to be the basis of an argument later. They may also prove to be nothing at all (but, at least, then you know). Best of all, low-stakes writing is never graded for its quality (or lack thereof). It is awarded points merely for existing. In essence, the student is awarded points for flexing his or her literary muscles.

If you have ever been to Costa Rica, you may have witnessed tourists throwing chickens (dead ones, from the grocery store) over the edges of certain bridges to alligators below. You may think to yourself, “How inhumane!” or otherwise, “What a waste of good chicken!” or “Aren’t we harassing the gators?” However wasteful or inhumane it is, the tourists continue to do it and the alligators continue to jump. Clearly, the tourists do it to witness the gators’ terrible
form and to see, from a safe distance, their hungry, gaping jaws. The gators, though they may indeed be tired of the parade, are getting fed, and they are getting stronger, and with each wasted chicken, they jump higher. Yes, you are the gator in this analogy. In a way, however, you are also the tourists. You write to see what happens; you write to prove that you are a witness to the terrible struggle in the world; you write to strengthen your arm and to get fed. In essence, you write to get stronger.

The most important thing I learned in grad school was from my professor, Tim Caron. He told me that, with all writing, “the first thing you have to do is make it. The second thing you have to do is make it good.” Notice the order of things. Don’t worry about trying to make things good in the beginning; in the beginning it is low-stakes writing; you’re throwing chickens off a bridge. Your first tries can be horrible. The process can get messy. Let it be a crying shame. What is important in writing, as with throwing chickens to gators, is that you throw far enough.

I will give you ample opportunity to do much low stakes writing in this class, to practice your throw and to feed your gators. I cannot, however, do it for you. Ultimately, it is up to you to choose to practice the imperfect, messy, often miserable (sometimes elating) art/sport of writing. I look forward, very much, to hearing and reading what you think about the world and yourselves and whatever else we discuss this semester in class. If you hate writing, or you think you’re a miserable writer, don’t worry, everyone does. If you think it sounds like this is going to take a lot of time, you’re right, it is. Nevertheless, we’re at the bridge; our gators are hungry; the chickens are on ice; why not have a go at it?

**COURSE TASKS**

1. Write a series of essays using the stages of the writing process for each one. This includes using prewriting techniques, shaping the material, rewriting/revising, and final editing. Each paper will have both a rough and final draft. (Remember: first, you make it. Then, you make it good.)

2. All assignments and drafts are to be completed before class if they are due that day. Do not wait until class time to print out your homework. It will be counted as late. Rather, go to the library, print it at the hallway computer station, or go to TRIO and make it happen.

3. Complete all of the sections of the WCC Library Research Unit.

4. Write one in-class essay.

5. Do a presentation of your Research paper to the class.

6. Read, write, and discuss a variety of texts.

7. Respond to the writing of fellow students. In small groups and on our Laulima Web site students will respond verbally and in writing to each other’s work. You will be able to discuss your own writing in these groups and during conferences with the instructor.

7. Submit a portfolio of revised work at the end of the course (including reflection).

**ASSESSMENT TASKS AND GRADING** (KEEP A RECORD OF YOUR GRADES HERE)
Annotate Bibliography  
Argument paper (3-4 pages)  
Research paper (8-10 pages)  
Literary Analysis (4-5 pages)  
Low-stakes Laulima Logs & in-class writing assignments  
Midterm in-class essay  
Attendance & Participation  
In-class grammar quizzes  
Library Instruction Unit (completed by Jan.30th)  
Portfolio with Reflection Essay (1-2 pages)  

Total  

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**Guidelines for Grading Assignments**

A — This paper has a clear, original thesis, is well-organized, has very few grammar/ spelling/ punctuation errors, has varied sentence structure, and — very important — is interesting to read.

B — This paper also has a clear thesis and is fairly well-organized but is not as original as an A paper, has a few grammar/ spelling/ punctuation errors, and is fairly interesting to read.

C — Although this paper has a thesis, its use of supporting evidence and organization makes it difficult to understand. It includes unrelated ideas and has significant grammar/ spelling/ punctuation errors, although it still holds a reader’s attention.

D — This paper has a weak or unclear thesis and lacks supporting evidence and organization. It has many errors in grammar/ spelling/ punctuation, and word usage, and doesn’t hold the reader’s attention.

F — An F paper is often a very rough draft which needs to be reworked into a more final form.

**Grading Scale**

A — 90%+, B — 80% - 89%, C — 70% - 79%, D — 60% - 69% (You must earn at least a C to enroll in English 100.) F — 59% and below, W — Official Withdrawal.

**LEARNING RESOURCES**

**Required text:**


**Course Web:**

laulima.hawaii.edu (log in using your UH username and password)

**Additional Information**
1. Class attendance is required. Please be prompt. You are responsible for making up any work and finding out what the assignments are and must be prepared for the next class. Missing five classes will seriously affect your grade and you may be counseled to drop or repeat the course.

2. Assignments must be typed, using a standard 12-point, Times New Roman font, double-spaced and with 1-inch margins on each side. Turn in work that is due during class. Late work, except in the case of compelling reasons, will receive no credit or lower grades.

3. Keep all writing that is done for this class, including notes and drafts. This material may be used for practice in revision, for conferences, and for the learning log. It will be turned in with your Portfolio at the end of the course. Please, as a backup, save all work on your computer hard-drive or flash drive.

4. Turn off cell phones and other sound-making devices. Do not eat in class.

5. Take advantage of my office hours and timely email messages to discuss concerns or problems in understanding the assignments.

DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT

If you have a physical, sensory, health, cognitive, or mental health disability that could limit your ability to fully participate in this class, you are encouraged to contact the Disability Specialist Counselor to discuss reasonable accommodations that will help you succeed in this class. Ann Lemke can be reached at 235-7448, lemke@hawaii.edu, or you may stop by Hale ‘Akoakoa 213 for more information.

Revised January 6th, 2012