Department of English  
English 100

Standard Course Outline  
I. General Information

A. Course Number: 100  
B. Title: ENGL Composition  
C. Units: 3  
D. Prerequisites: A recorded total score of 147 or above on the English Placement Test, or credit in Composition 100A (or its equivalent), or consent of instructor.  
E. Responsible Faculty: Sarah Arroyo, Mark Williams, Carol Zitzer-Comfort  
F. Prepared by: Sarah Arroyo, Mark Williams, Carol Zitzer-Comfort

II. Catalog Description  
Composition 100 is an expository writing course designed for first-year students who score 147 or above on the English Placement Test (EPT), are exempt from the EPT, or have received credit in a qualifying pre-baccalaureate composition course. The course satisfies one of the writing requirements for general education at CSULB. It emphasizes academic writing, focusing primarily on analytical reading and thesis-driven writing. Not open for students with credit in: ENGL 100, ASAM 100, AFRS 100, CHLS 104.

III. Justification  
Composition 100 is neither a literature nor a creative writing course. Its main activity is expository writing generated through inquiry and writing in response to non-fiction readings. Inquiry is carried out through various modes: observation, interview, survey, reading and analyzing texts and various media, and through using other methods and mediums appropriate for gathering information. The CSULB Composition Program defines “academic” writing as texts composed to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information, ideas and opinions. To meet these ends, academic writing creates, extends, validates, and amplifies knowledge while it also tests, evaluates, and challenges all claims. This kind of intensive, academic work is carried out in the spirit of cooperation where all perspectives can be voiced freely, while ensuring that students understand that they are responsible for what they say and write, both on paper and online.

Students should leave our composition courses understanding the relationship among reading, writing, inquiry, research, and life-long learning. They should also want to continue to develop their writing skills because excellence in writing usually indicates that the individual is an organized, disciplined reader and thinker, an efficient evaluator of claims, and an effective communicator.

IV. Course Objectives and Measurable Outcomes  
For all writing courses satisfying the A.1 category, students will demonstrate that they have achieved competency in the following course outcomes through composing both informal writing and formal essays totaling no less than 8,000 words. Learning to write is...
a complex process that takes place over time with continued practice and informed guidance. Therefore, it is important that teachers, administrators, and a concerned public do not imagine that these outcomes can be taught in reduced or simple ways. Helping students demonstrate these outcomes requires expert understanding of how students actually learn to write. At the end of Composition 100, in their formal essays, students should be able to:

**A. Content**
- Articulate a clear topic and purpose
- Exhibit a specific focus
- Respond to all aspects of the assignment
- Support claims with appropriate reasons and evidence
- Provide relevant and necessary supporting details
- Paraphrase or quote information from sources accurately and consistently
- Use electronic environments for drafting, reviewing, revising, editing, and sharing texts

_Typically developed by invention exercises; in-class timed writing; out-of-class essay planning, writing, and revising; drafting workshops; analytical reading for ideas and models. Typically measured by informal writing assignments; in-class and out-of-class essays._

**B. Organization**
- Write coherently
  - Present ideas and support in a logical order appropriate for the writer’s purpose
  - Relate all parts of the essay to the overarching focus and purpose
  - Use transitional devices to guide readers through the text
  - Give appropriate emphasis to important ideas
  - Articulate an appropriate conclusion by summing up, restating, commenting, evaluating, or using some other relevant method

_Typically developed by drafting responses to texts, with careful attention to how writers arrange effective theses, examples, and supporting appeals at the sentence and paragraph level. Typically measured by informal and formal writing assignments; in-class and out-of-class essays._

**C. Reasoning**
- Relate a clear significance for the topic
- Recognize assumptions explicitly when appropriate
- Provide logical, consistent, and well-developed analysis
- Integrate visual or multimedia material with the analysis
- Provide a logical conclusion that follows from the claims and evidence presented

_Typically developed by instructor modeling and analysis of sample texts; students then discuss in small groups and respond in writing to specific questions related to reasoning, particularly the rhetorical appeals of logic, ethics, and emotion. Typically measured by_
informal and formal verbal responses, formal and informal writing assignments; in-class and out-of-class essays.

D. Rhetoric
- Choose a genre appropriate for the task and the writer’s purpose
- Use a form that is appropriate for the writer’s purpose
- Demonstrate awareness of readers’ expectations
- Acknowledge, respect, and represent other points of view accurately
- Contextualize claims within existing research
- Adopt appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality for the topic, task, and audience
- Write grammatically correct prose to enhance credibility
- Understand and exploit the differences in the rhetorical strategies and in the affordances available for both print and electronic composing processes and texts

Typically developed by instructor modeling and analysis of sample texts in multiple genres; students then discuss in small groups and respond in writing to specific questions related to genre, purpose, the needs of readers, and the tone of texts. Typically measured by informal and formal verbal responses, formal and informal writing assignments; in-class and out-of-class essays.

E. Conventions
- Demonstrate control of sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics
- Learn common formats for different kinds of texts
- Develop knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics
- Cite sources appropriately and understand the assumptions behind various citations systems such as MLA, APA, and the Chicago Manual of Style

Typically developed by instructor modeling and analysis of sample texts of varying length and complexity—from sentence-level, paragraph-level, and essay-level discourse. Typically measured by formal and informal writing assignments; in-class and out-of-class essays.

V. Sample Course Outline
Although there is variation from one instructor to another, here are some common criteria for designing effective assignments: Specify the purpose or objectives of the assignment. Explain how the assignment builds on previous assignments and what skills and course objectives will be targeted.

A Sample Progression of Assignments for Composition 100
Generally, writing should move from the less complex to the more complex. For instance, students who begin the semester by writing from personal experiences are perhaps better able to describe, analyze, and argue about those experiences as the semester progresses. In each writing assignment, students should incorporate published sources into their work
so they develop more informed perspectives about their experiences. Students might be able to identify with similar experiences published by others, and thereby have confidence to write more detailed, involved, and analytic essays. Conversely, students might have difficulty understanding personal experiences published by others. Such difficulty will likely develop critical thought, however, as students attempt to understand how different people encounter and engage experiences in various ways. Such contrasts can become an organizing principle for student work and a possible heuristic for writing. Optimally, faculty will use texts that thematize readings, so that students can develop essays on a related topic, such as through “education,” which is referenced in some examples below. In each assignment sequence, faculty will need to adjust their tasks based on student performance and reflection on the success of the assignment.

Assignment examples:

First two weeks
Summary or Reading Comprehension Paper
The aim of this assignment is to thoroughly comprehend a text and to translate its meaning to readers who have read your source text but need reminders of its meaning.

Next three weeks
Exploratory Essay
Students should consult with faculty to select appropriate topics from personal experience. Education can be a good topic, as students have 12 years of examples to potentially develop. Important aspects of the chosen topic should be represented in the class text or credible online sources, so that students can think critically about their experience, in part through the published sources. Students should learn about how to focus the topic in terms of a claim for significance, or thesis. (What is the significance of the exploration? Why would someone want to read the paper?) Readings can be used for students to imitate and/or adapt their content, organization, use of quotations, examples, etc. Students should in some way relate their experiences with those in the published essay; students should attempt to convince readers that their experience is valuable.

Next four weeks
Education Analysis
This assignment could be a close reading of a published text that addresses the topic identify by the student in earlier assignments. The student could, for example, analyze how a writer or writers appeal to specific readers with the use of logic, emotion, and ethics. The student could also compare two texts that address the same topic. Which article is more effective for readers? Why?

Last six weeks
Informed Argument
Students should develop further the claims identified at the end of essay four. Students will need to identify how particular readers might object to their claims, acknowledge some of the logic, emotion, and ethics that inform their objections, and attempt to address possible objections to their claims. Students should also incorporate published research findings by using and understanding an appropriate documentation system, explain
perspectives and results presented in the research, and evaluate claims offered by others as a means to build credibility to support their own argument.

Sample percentage breakdown
Formal essay project #1.......................................................... 10%
Formal essay project #2.......................................................... 15%
Formal essay project #3.......................................................... 20%
Informed argument/Research essay (mandatory)...................... 25%
(Grade for this research essay must include appropriate use of documentation systems.)
In-class essay #1 (mid-term).................................................... 5%
In-class essay #2 (final exam).................................................... 10%
Reading Journal or online reading posts............................... 15%

VI. Methods of Instruction
Course Design
The Composition Program encourages variability in how instructors design their writing courses, yet some standardization is required. The goal is to help students develop the competencies described above, and instructors should make sure their courses are organized and sequenced properly. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, including designing the course around a particular theme, organizing the course around community-based writing projects, linking the course with other First-Year Composition courses both on and off campus, linking the course with other courses across disciplines, finding appropriate sites online in which students can compose and participate, or requiring participation in an online site devoted to the course itself. Reading and writing assignments should be sequenced in such a way that they build upon one another, and materials used in class should be relevant and interesting.

Composing
Instructors should assign frequent writing tasks composed in several genres, and ideas for writing can be derived from a variety of sources. Students should develop the ability to make informed claims and to apply their personal experience when relevant. However, the emphasis in Composition 100 is for students to be exposed to claims, ideas, concepts, and theories beyond what they already know or think they know, and to consider these other views critically. Students develop their critical abilities through their formal and informal responses to what they learn through various forms of inquiry.

Making Writing Public
Student writing should be shared both in class and online. The participatory nature of the online world requires writing to be public and students to become accustomed to receiving both immediate and carefully considered responses. Instructors should use student writing whenever possible to illustrate effective strategies and rhetorical principles. In all cases, instructors must ensure that students know how and when their writing will be used, and instructors should secure permission from students when referring to their writing in class. In no instance should a student’s work be used as an example of what not to do.
VII. Nature and Extent of Use of Technology
Composition 100 instructors are encouraged to use the Desire2Learn platform. Instructors are also encouraged to use resources located on the main web portal for CSULB’s Composition Program, Composition at the Beach. Faculty may also wish to design their own sites using open source software, thereby facilitating multimodality in students’ compositions. Digital media and multimodal texts are important parts of communication practices in contemporary culture. The widespread use of participatory media has made the production of multimodal texts—using words, images, sound, and other methods of communication—ubiquitous. Multimodality has expanded notions of what it means to “write” and be literate by focusing on the use of multiple means of persuasion rather than solely on the printed word. Faculty must also teach students how to navigate both CSULB’s large repository of databases as well as the internet in general to find relevant materials to use in their composition.

VIII. Textbooks
Students must be required to read regularly in Composition 100. The writing of others serves as an integral part of students’ inquiry into the ideas, concepts, theories, and experiences of others. Readings model the ways other writers have represented their views and serve as sources for ideas, texts to be analyzed and responded to, and as examples of the ways other writers have adapted genre and style to achieve specific rhetorical purposes.

Below is a short list of possible textbooks to be used. Instructors may assign these or other texts in consultation with Department Chair and/or Composition Coordinators.


IX. Methods of Assessment
Assessment and Evaluation
An essential component of an effecting writing course is assessing and evaluating how well the students achieve the goals described generally in the SCO and specifically by the instructors. However, assessment is not necessarily the same as evaluation. Along with
more formal methods of assessment that should be presented to students when describing essay project assignments by way of a rubric or scoring guide, instructors can use various informal means of assessing what students have learned without having to evaluate and grade everything students write for a given course. Instructors can assign freewrites, summaries, blog entries, *BeachBoard* posts, etc. Students can also apply newly learned rhetorical strategies to brief pieces of writing.

Below is a sample rubric for Composition 100.

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<th></th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Not Proficient</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis and Purpose</strong></td>
<td>Paper has a clear, significant, unifying focus/thesis. Purpose significantly responds to assignment.</td>
<td>Paper establishes a clear and significant thesis/focus initially, but may be inconsistently developed. Purpose responds to assignment.</td>
<td>Thesis is too general or vague. Paper may drift substantially from initial purpose or controlling idea, or connections aren’t made clear. Purpose does not respond to the task.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Sophisticated arrangement. Paragraphs cohere. Anticipates reader’s expectations by providing transitions. New ideas arise clearly from previous ideas.</td>
<td>Functional arrangement. Paragraphs generally cohere with topic ideas and supporting details. Patterns of analysis/argument may not be adequately signaled with transitional language. New ideas may arise from nowhere.</td>
<td>Flawed arrangement. Reader loses track of writer’s intention. Some ideas are not related to each other. Few, if any, transitions between ideas. Each paragraph may seem to pick up the topic anew.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Development of Content</strong></td>
<td>Relevant and substantial content. Claims are followed by logical and compelling support. Ideas are elaborated with significant depth. Anticipates reader’s questions and/or objections.</td>
<td>Adequate and generally relevant content. Some significant claims are not supported or have weak support. Ideas have sufficient elaboration and achieve some depth of discussion. Some awareness of reader’s needs.</td>
<td>Content lacks specific or substantial content. Moves from one idea to the next with insufficient elaboration. Many claims are not supported, little depth. May not show an awareness of reader’s needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Texts</strong></td>
<td>A thorough understanding of the text(s). Presents source text ideas accurately and succinctly, while achieving significant depth. Extends and/or complicates text’s ideas logically and meaningfully. Smooth, coherent integration of quotes and multiple texts. Source materials cited appropriately.</td>
<td>Evidence that writer comprehends essential text ideas. Presents source text accurately. Applies source text ideas adequately. Sources cited appropriately.</td>
<td>Some evidence that the author understands the text’s essential meaning. Accuracy is inconsistent, interpretation unfocused. Minimal application of source text. Sources may not be cited appropriately.</td>
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Responding to Student Writing
Instructors enact the role of a powerful kind of reader/evaluator when they write in response to student papers; thus, how instructors respond helps to share student perceptions of what academic writing is and what it is not. Since expository writing is more than an extended exercise in avoiding “errors,” instructor response should focus on rhetorical intentions, content, readability, degrees and depth of analyses and use of documentation systems. Students should be held accountable for addressing the given assignment, whether that assignment was to inform, analyze, persuade or a combination thereof. All assignments must provide a meaningful writing context and clearly stated objectives, along with concrete requirements on which students’ grades will be based. The instructor should inform students to what extent they have met these objectives by composing a short response that includes the following:

1) describes what the instructor understood the essay to say,
2) explains in what ways the essay did/did not achieve its purpose(s),
3) describes elements of the essay that meet audience expectations,
4) suggests what the student might do to enhance the essay’s overall effectiveness,
5) suggests areas the student might pay particular attention to in the next assignment.

Frequently, students find it helpful to be exposed to arguments they have not previously considered. Instructors should make every effort to pose meaningful questions and comments about students’ writing during and after the writing process for each formal assignment. Additionally, by having fellow students play reader roles in a draft workshop in class or online and requiring descriptive/evaluative feedback from these workshops, the instructor can create an environment that will lead students to further inquiry and more effective writing.

Grading
The grade becomes the mark of finality that fixes the writer’s work for each particular assignment in failure, mediocrity, or excellence--none of which tend to be accurate assessments of work in progress. One of the advantages of the writing class is the opportunity to grade an assignment after multiple drafts have been completed, which allows for increased rhetorical development. Regardless of the method used, students must be informed of their progress in the class early and often throughout the semester.

All final grades for formal writing assignments must follow an approved rubric or criteria for assessment. No single assignment can count for more than 30% of the final grade.

X. Instructional Requirements
Instructors may determine their own policies with regard to plagiarism, withdrawal, absences, and adding the course, as long as instructor’ policies are consistent with University policies as denoted in the CSULB Catalog. Syllabi must refer to the appropriate sections in the Catalog, specify the policies for the course on attendance and plagiarism, and ask students to inform instructors promptly of the need for
accommodation of disabilities. It is recommended that instructors include some explanation of how they assess class participation.

More detailed information can be found in “Composition 100 Standard Course Outline on this website: http://compositionatthebeach.ning.com/

Except in unusual circumstances, faculty should avoid assigning incompletes. Since one of the course competencies is to develop a fluent and effective writing process, meeting assignment deadlines is partial evidence of achieving that competency. Students should be appraised regularly of their status in the class and be advised to drop the course if they fall too far behind, or if it is likely that they will earn a “D” or an “F.” All course syllabi must include a statement regarding the university’s withdrawal policy, which can be found online.

XI. Bibliography

Below is a selective bibliography, which omits many important works. The bibliography is intended to convey the range of materials available to students and faculty. Many of the following works are in the CSULB library. Moreover, materials relevant to the course can be found in print and electronic periodicals.


