

**ENGLISH W164: ENGLISH COMPOSITION
(SUMMER 2008)**

Course credit: 3 hrs.

Room: Evans 262

Meeting time: 10 a.m - 11:45 a.m.

Instructor: Dr. Paul Ruffin

Office: 152A Evans

Office hours: 9-10, 2-3 M-F

Phone: 1429

E-mail: eng_pdr@shsu.edu

Texts: *The Longwood Guide to Writing (Lunsford and Bridges)*

Course goals: English 164, Freshman Composition I, a composition course designed to introduce the student to the fundamentals of good prose writing, focuses on the formal and informal essay.

Students will be encouraged not simply to think creatively and critically but to put their ideas on paper in a form that demonstrates a mastery of conventional grammar and composition skills.

All students will be required to choose a minimum of ten topics of interest to themselves and (it is hoped) to others in the class and to write about those topics in a series of essays based on several prose patterns: description, comparison/contrast, argumentation, etc.

As conditions warrant, students will receive remedial instruction in grammar skills; they will, furthermore, be required to demonstrate spelling and vocabulary skills.

Students are required to keep a writing journal for the duration of this course; this journal will include notes taken from readings from *Guide to Writing*.

Grade derivation: Grades will be derived from written assignments, spelling and vocabulary tests, writing journals, class participation, attendance, and the final exam.

Writing journals: Your writing journals will consist largely of your responses to reading assignments from Lunsford and Bridges. These entries must be thorough and insightful, highlighting the major points of the chapters and pointing out the best and worst writing samples in them. All papers should be at least three pages in length. I will check them on a regular basis.

Formal papers: All formal papers must be typed, double-spaced, and you must follow conventional grammar and composition rules. All documentation must follow current MLA style. Formal guidelines are attached.

Late Work: I will accept late work; but unless you have a very good excuse, there'll be a grade penalty. I don't want to seem harsh here, but I have to discourage late work.

Absence policy: After one absence unless you have a legitimate excuse grade reduction will commence: two absences—five points off final grade; three absences—ten points; four absences—twenty points; five absences—automatic failure in course. Obviously I will make allowances for protracted illness or family emergencies. Two instances of tardiness will count as one absence. (Please try to avoid being tardy, since interruptions are unfair to me and the rest of the class.)

Academic Dishonesty: Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, consult the course instructor. See Student Syllabus Guidelines (<http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus>).

Americans with Disabilities Act: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. See Student Syllabus Guidelines (<http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus>).

Religious Holidays: Students are allowed to miss class and other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Students remain responsible for all work. See Student Syllabus Guidelines (<http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus>).

Visitors in the Classroom: Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.

Classroom Etiquette: Cell phones must always have ringers turned off. If a phone vibrates and the student perceives an emergency situation, he or she may, of course, leave the room and take the call.

SYLLABUS

Tuesday, June 3 – Course orientation. **Assignment:** Select ten topics for papers.

Wednesday, June 4 -- Library tour.

Thursday, June 5 -- Discussion of topics for papers. **Assignment:** Write tabloid piece.

Friday, June 6 – In-class biographical essay.

Monday, June 9 – Further discussion of topics. **Assignment:** Read pp. 1-41 from *Guide*.

Tuesday, June 10 -- Discussion of readings from *Guide*. Presentation of tabloid pieces.

Assignment: Read pp. 143-179 and 269 (bottom)-271 (top) from *Guide*.

Wednesday, June 11 – Introduction to the personal essay. Discussion of readings from *Guide*.

Assignment: Select topic for personal essay; prepare a list of a dozen grammatical problems you would like to have discussed.

Thursday, June 12 – In-class draft of personal essay. **Assignment:** Read 631-695 from *Guide*.

Friday, June 13 – Discussion of grammatical problems. **Assignment:** Prepare final version of personal essay.

Monday, June 16 – Personal essays due. Presentation of personal essays. **Assignment:** Read pp. 181-236 from *Guide*; prepare a list of topics for informative essay.

Tuesday, June 17 – The informative essay. Discussion of topics and readings from *Guide*.

Assignment: Prepare for spelling test on Tuesday, June 24.

Wednesday, June 18 – In-class draft of informative essay. **Assignment:** Read pp. 73-104 from *Guide*.

Thursday, June 19 – Revision. Discussion of graded personal essays. **Assignment:** Prepare final version of informative essay.

Friday, June 20 – Informative essays due. Presentation of essays.

Monday, June 23 – Discussion of graded informative essays. **Assignment:** Prepare for vocabulary test on Monday, June 30.

Tuesday, June 24 – Spelling test. **Assignment:** Read pp. 331-361 from *Guide*.

Wednesday, June 25 – Discussion of evaluation essays and readings from *Guide*. **Assignment:** Prepare a list of topics for evaluation essay.

Thursday, June 26 -- In-class draft of evaluation essay. **Assignment:** Prepare final version of evaluation essay for presentation Friday, June 27.

Friday, June 27 -- Presentation of evaluation essays.

Monday, June 30: Vocabulary test. Final exam.