



English 1301.003I1
Composition I
Fall 2025

Instructor: Dr. Elaine Childs (she, they)

E-mail: echilds1@com.edu

Phone: 409-933-8318 (only for voicemail)

Office Hours: Additional meeting times available by appointment. My League City office hours are in room 220 unless another professor needs that room, in which case I will either be near the front entrance or you can ask for me at the front desk.

	League City Campus		Online, Brightspace chat and email
Monday	8:30-9 AM		2:30-3:30
Tuesday	8:30-9 AM		
Wednesday	8:30-9 AM		2:30-4:30
Thursday	8:30-9 AM 2:30 PM-5 PM		

Required Textbook (online textbook): *The RoughWriter's Guide: A Handbook for Writing Well*. By Dr. Karen Palmer and Dr. Sandi Van Lieu. Available for no cost on Brightspace and at <https://pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/>

This is a free electronic textbook, and direct links to required chapters will be provided in Brightspace.

Additional Course Requirements: All major essays must be written in Google Docs and shared with me with the “Editor” role. You must have a personal Google account created with your complete legal name, and it may not be shared with any other person. You must be logged in to that account when you work on the essay.

Course Description: Composition I is an intensive study of and practice in writing processes, from invention and researching to drafting, revising, and editing, both individually and collaboratively. The class emphasizes effective rhetorical choices, including audience, purpose, arrangement, and

style. The focus is on writing the academic essay as a vehicle for learning, communicating, and critical analysis.

Grade Scale:

A = 90%-100%
B = 80%-89.9%
C = 70% - 79.9%
D = 60% - 69.9%
F = 0% - 59.9%

Your grade may be rounded up slightly (usually less than a percentage point) if **I** judge that your work shows significant improvement over the course of the term.

Grading Formula: These are the assignments in the class and how they are weighted:

ApplyTexas essay	10%
Evaluation essay	25%
Major Assignment 3	25%
Research paper	25%
Homework average	10%

**If you aren't familiar with weighted grades, an online grading calculator can be helpful in figuring out what grade you need on each assignment to get a certain final grade. I recommend this one:
<https://www.calculator.net/grade-calculator.html>

Extra Credit: I do not assign or accept extra-credit work. I encourage each of you to do your best on the major assignments.

Grading: Your major assignments will be graded based on the evidence of your writing process, not only on the quality of the final product. Rubrics for all major assignments will be provided on the assignment sheet for each assignment and will be available in the D2L course.

Feedback on Papers and Homework:

In an 8-week class, it's important for you to get your assignment grades very quickly so you will be aware of where you stand in the class. Because of this, you will not receive written feedback on papers or on most homework assignments **unless you ask for it**. For major papers, there is a detailed rubric on Brightspace that shows how well you did on various assignment requirements, but if you want more feedback than that, I strongly encourage you to ask me for more information about your assignment either via email or by coming to my student hours after your number grade is posted.

We will model this process after the first paper with a required one-on-one conference after you get your grade back. These conversations can take place over email, but if you are able to schedule our meeting in person, that's even better! More information will be posted in Week 2.

Late work policy / makeup policy: Each major assignment must be completed by 11:59 PM on the due date and the Google Docs link posted on D2L. After that deadline has passed, I will grade whatever content is in the document. If the document is blank or if you did not share the link with me by the deadline, I will drop 10 points from the paper grade, and you will have until 11:59 PM the following day to submit your paper. Papers will not be accepted more than 24 hours late.

Homework assignments like journals and reading responses may not be submitted late and may not be made up after the deadline has passed. However, I will drop your four lowest homework grades at the end of the semester.

Extension policy: My late work policy is strict because I want you plan your time and ask for help in advance. I am usually willing to be pretty flexible on extensions for major assignments (essays) **if** a student **asks** me for extra time well in advance (usually at least a week is best). Good reasons for extensions might be surgery, a major exam in another class, a long illness that made you miss a week of research or drafting time, or sometimes even if you're struggling with the assignment itself. Just remember that sometimes I will not be able to grant an extension (as in the case of group projects), so you shouldn't depend on getting one, and also that a few extra days on a 2-week project may not be enough to save your grade if you wasted the first thirteen days.

Help with drafts: It is more effective and helpful **for you** to receive revision feedback in real time, in a dialog rather than an info-dump. Over email, I can't judge if you're "getting it" or try to rephrase an explanation if the first way I explained wasn't clear; it takes longer for you to ask follow-up questions, etc. If you would like extensive help with a draft, please attend my student hours or request an appointment, either in-person or video. Email should be used for brief and simple informational questions, like "Is this a good thesis?" or "How do I cite a YouTube video?" I almost never provide revision feedback on drafts via email because I have rarely seen writing improvement come from such feedback.

Online Tutoring: COM has online and in-person tutors available to help students who would like feedback at any stage of the writing process, and I strongly encourage you to take advantage of this service! However, a tutor will not "fix" your paper for you. You are expected to actively contribute to the learning involved in tutoring sessions. Here is the website:
<https://www.com.edu/tutoring/writing-resources>

Google Docs: All essays must be composed in a Google document that is shared with me and that gives me the "Editor" role, and the document may not be deleted or the permissions revoked until final semester grades have been posted. This allows me to evaluate your writing process directly and to aid in deterring and detecting AI-based scholastic dishonesty. That means you must write and revise your papers in the shared Google document, not paste them there from elsewhere. If you do not share your document with me with the correct permissions, do not write the paper within that shared document, delete the shared document, or revoke my "Editor" role, your grade may be significantly reduced (possibly to zero).

Electronic Plagiarism- and AI-detectors. I may submit any written assignment in this class to TurnItIn and to other electronic tools to evaluate its adherence to course policies. The accuracy of AI detectors fluctuates as AI evolves, and I use whatever **paid** service is currently considered highly reliable (in addition to TurnItIn). I do not depend on free tools to evaluate the presence of AI in an

essay, and you shouldn't either: they are not reliable.

Revisions: Revision must take place **before** an essay is turned in for a grade. After an essay receives a grade, it cannot be revised for an improved one.

Attendance policy: To be counted "present" in this class, you must complete at least one graded activity per week. If you are absent for three weeks, you may receive a grade of FN for the course. Also, College of the Mainland expects all students registered in an internet class to log in to the course at least twice a week.

However, meeting these minimum requirements for attendance is unlikely to be enough to pass the class. Usually the students who are most successful in online classes log in to their classes every day or at least four or five days a week.

Communicating with your instructor: ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email or within Brightspace. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means.

I rarely check email after 5PM, but I do my best to respond to email within 24 hours Monday-Friday and usually much more quickly than 24 hours. I often check email on weekends, but not always, so don't hesitate to email me over the weekend, but don't necessarily expect me to get it until Monday morning.

Always email me ASAP if you find something wrong in the Brightspace shell: a broken link, a missing assignment, a graded assignment that says the due date has passed or that won't allow you to open it.

Weekly Checklists: Each week of class has its own checklist of assignments in Brightspace. Students are required to complete all assignments listed on the checklists by the posted due dates.

Homework Average: Almost every week you will have at least one homework assignment on Brightspace, and the average grade of those assignments is worth 10% of your overall grade. If you miss the posted deadline for a homework assignment, you will receive a zero for that assignment and will not be able to make it up for credit. That's because instead of accepting late homework, I prefer to drop your four lowest homework grades at the end of the semester.

Student Conduct: College of the Mainland requires that students enrolled at COM be familiar with the Standards of Student Conduct, which can be found in the online Student Handbook, <http://www.com.edu/student-services/student-handbook.php>. Any breaches of the Code of Conduct will result in a referral to the Office for Student Conduct and may result in dismissal from this class.

Smartphone policy: Use a personal computer to access Brightspace, not a smartphone. Brightspace's mobile app is good for getting notifications and for some class activities, but it does sometimes collapse the menus you'll need in order to find assignments. If you do choose to use a smartphone for your assignments, do so at your own risk: not being able to find assignments will not be an acceptable excuse for missing deadlines.

Student Learner Outcome	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment
1. Demonstrate knowledge of individual and collaborative writing processes.	Teamwork (TW)	Essay 3
2. Develop ideas with appropriate support and attribution.		Essay 4
3. Write in a style appropriate to audience and purpose.	Communication Skills (CS)	Essay 1
4. Read, reflect, and respond critically to a variety of texts.	Critical Thinking (CT)	Essay 4
5. Use Edited American English in academic essays.		Essay 4

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism is a serious breach of student conduct that occurs when a student turns in work from another source as if it were the student's own. The essence of plagiarism is falsification for the purpose of personal gain. Students are expected to **earn** their grades by demonstrating the skills and knowledge that they actually possess, but when a student copies a paper from the internet, uses outside sources without citing them, takes someone else's ideas and "changes the words," or allows another person or online tool to improve, add to, or rewrite their paper, then the assignment is not an honest demonstration of the student's own skills and knowledge. When students commit these acts or others like them, they defraud the taxpayer, College of the Mainland, and their future universities and workplaces and thus defeat the purpose of taking this class at all. Therefore, the first instance of intentional plagiarism will be reported to the office of the Dean of Students and will automatically result in an F for the course.

Academic dishonesty is a more general term that, according to the Worcester Polytechnic Institute, "is any act which interferes with evaluation of academic work," including such seemingly minor acts like citing a source you don't use in your paper, leaving out an in-text citation, or taking a source's ideas without acknowledging the source. These acts do not need to be intentional to be dishonest—one of the major outcomes of English 1301 is for students to learn how to integrate sources into their own writing honestly and how to cite them correctly. That is why ignorance is not an acceptable defense against charges of plagiarism or dishonesty: all students are responsible for learning and implementing the rules of source integration and documentation that will be taught in this course. Penalties for "minor" acts of dishonesty like those listed above will increase over the course of the semester and, if persistent, will result in failure of the course.

This website has more information about academic dishonesty:

<https://www.wpi.edu/about/policies/academic-integrity/dishonesty>

AI Policy: Unless a professor gives you permission to use AI in an assignment, doing so may be considered plagiarism according to COM's Student Conduct policy, which states that plagiarism "shall be defined as the appropriating, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work

and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own written work” ([link](#)). Your assignments in this class are intended to show me what **your** skills are in writing, researching, and critical thinking, and your grades reflect the skill level you are at. Using AI in an attempt to make it look like your skills or ideas are better than they actually are is falsification. Any assignment submitted for a grade in this class that I determine to be generated by AI may receive a zero and may not be rewritten.

Whether or not a paper was AI-generated or -revised will be based on various types of evidence, including but not limited to electronic AI detectors and your Google document history.

Grammarly/QuillBot, etc: In this class, you may not use Grammarly, QuillBot, CoPilot or any similar tool to paraphrase or reword your assignments. Although I do not believe there’s anything inherently wrong with using basic grammar-check tools, Grammarly and similar sites have many additional tools for skills like paraphrasing and drafting that you need to learn to do yourself in this class. Moreover, when you use these tools to alter your own writing, TurnItIn may identify it as AI-generated.

Therefore, for the purposes of this class, Grammarly and similar tools are completely banned. Be forewarned that any text identified as AI-generated may receive the same penalty as any other type of plagiarism or falsification, even if you “just used Grammarly.”

Concerns/Questions Statement: If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact the Humanities department chair, Brian Anderson, at 409-933-8186 or banderson@com.edu

Course Outline:

This schedule lists due dates for major assignments and is subject to change with prior notice. The Checklist in each weekly folder lists the requirements for reading assignments and homework activities; students are required to follow the checklists.

Week 1: August 18– August 24	Required reading assignments and homework activities are listed on the week’s checklist in Brightspace.
Week 2: August 25 – August 31	<u>ApplyTexas essay due by 11:59 PM on Wednesday, August 28</u> Required reading assignments and homework activities are listed on the week’s checklist in Brightspace.
Week 3: September 1 – 7 **COM is closed on September 1 for Labor Day. Students and faculty are not required to check email or log in to Brightspace/D2L.	Required reading assignments and homework activities are listed on the week’s checklist in Brightspace.

Week 4: September 8-14	<u>Evaluation essay due by 11:59 PM on Wednesday, September 10</u> Required reading assignments and homework activities are listed on the week's checklist in Brightspace.
Week 5: September 15 - 21	Required reading assignments and homework activities are listed on the week's checklist in Brightspace.
Week 6: September 22 - 28	<u>Assignment 3 due by 11:59 PM Wednesday, September 24</u> Required reading assignments and homework activities are listed on the week's checklist in Brightspace.
Week 7: September 29 – October 5	Required reading assignments and homework activities are listed on the week's checklist in Brightspace.
Week 8: October 6 – Thursday, October 9	<u>Research paper due by 11:59 PM on Tuesday, October 7</u> The course ends at 11:59 PM on Thursday, October 10. After that deadline, no assignments will be accepted for any reason.
11 AM on Friday, October 10	Faculty deadline for posting final grades in WebAdvisor. You will be able to see your final grade shortly after this deadline, if not before.

Institutional Policies and Guidelines

Grade Appeal Process: Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook <https://www.com.edu/student-services/student-handbook.html>. *An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.*

Academic Success & Support Services: College of the Mainland is committed to providing

students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

ADA Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodation is requested to contact:

Kimberly Lachney, Student Accessibility Services Coordinator

Phone: 409-933-8919

Email: AccessibilityServices@com.edu

Location: COM Doyle Family Administration Building, Student Success Center

Textbook Purchasing Statement: A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Withdrawal Policy: Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a “W” grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1st 8-week session is October 1. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is November 14. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is November 25.

FN Grading: The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

Early Alert Program: The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

Resources to Help with Stress:

If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at deanofstudents@com.edu or communityresources@com.edu.

Nondiscrimination Statement:

The College District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any individual on

the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, veteran status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), or any other basis prohibited by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of College District policy.