Welcome to College Writing! Englwrit 112 is the only course that satisfies the university’s CW requirement. A fundamental part of your General Education at UMass Amherst, this course emphasizes critical thinking and communication, consideration of plural perspectives, and self-reflection on one’s learning.

More specifically, the purpose of College Writing is to help you grow and challenge yourself as a college writer—for academic assignments and also for the writing demands in your personal, professional, and civic lives. In this course, you’ll examine how writing is a communicative act that always occurs within a particular context, and you’ll gain practice writing for different purposes in multiple contexts.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By writing, reading, and engaging in discussion in this course, you’ll work to improve your ability to

- write for a variety of purposes, audiences, and contexts;
- identify (and even play with) audience expectations and textual conventions;
- use the writing process, esp. peer review and revision, to re-see and extend your thinking—thus writing essays in which your thinking evolves rather than essays that defend pre-formed positions;
- develop your ideas through critical thinking, including analysis and synthesis;
- effectively and critically find, use, and cite diverse sources of information;
- copy-edit at every level (sentence, paragraph, essay) by considering conventional usage alongside your purpose; and
- develop effective writing processes and strategies to apply beyond the course.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**


How to order your books: You can purchase these books through the Amazon Course Materials tool; search for Englwrit 112 on SPIRE to get the direct links. If you search for the books online, look for them using ISBN numbers to ensure that you’re getting the correct edition. The *Student Writing Anthology* and *EasyWriter* can be purchased as a bundle (new only) or separately (new and used). For information about buying these books separately, go to your SPIRE account, see the Textbook/Other Materials section, and click the links for the textbooks labeled "optional." Copies of all texts are also available on reserve at the DuBois Library.

Additional requirements: Please bring a notebook to class for generative writing and other in-class and at-home exercises. At least once during the semester, everyone’s essays will be collected into a class publication (e.g., booklet or digital form) for your class to read.

Keep the *EasyWriter* after this semester: We encourage you to keep the *Easy Writer* during your entire undergraduate studies. This is a grammar and citation handbook, which you’ll likely use for other courses. You may be required to purchase this same book for the required junior-year writing course in your major.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

*College Writing* has been designed based on the belief that writing is a process and a social activity, that people learn to write by writing and giving/getting feedback, that writers can gain more control over their writing by cultivating an awareness of their own processes and strategies, and that texts written by students in this class community are therefore central to the course.

Students in all sections of *College Writing* are required to write five essays (each 1,000-1,250 words); each will go through an extensive writing process, and each will introduce new challenges.

- **UNIT 1: INQUIRING INTO SELF** asks you to draw on personal experience, analyze how your personal context has influenced you, and write about this to a familiar audience.
- **UNIT 2: INTERACTING WITH TEXTS** asks you to develop and write a critical response to one or more published texts and tailor the response to an academic audience.
- **UNIT 3: ADDING TO A CONVERSATION** asks you to pursue a question that interests you, engage in effective library research, and communicate what you learned to a more public audience.
- **UNIT 4: TBA** continues to work toward the course learning objectives but differs from section to section; stay tuned for your Unit 4 assignment.
- **UNIT 5: WRITER’S STATEMENT** is an essay where you’ll analyze who you are as a writer and how your writing has developed in this course.

Units 1-4 Portfolios. Each unit assignment requires that you engage in a rigorous writing process. For each unit, you’ll develop and submit a portfolio that includes the following:

- **GENERATIVE WRITING** to explore ideas and writing options;
- an **INITIAL DRAFT**;
- a substantially **REVISED DRAFT**, based on feedback from self, peers, instructor, and others;
- a further **REVISED AND COPY-EDITED FINAL DRAFT**;
- **REFLECTIONS ON YOUR OWN WRITING** to help you identify effective processes and writing choices.

Each activity, including peer review, is meant to help you focus on specific aspects of your writing; you’ll get teacher feedback once during the drafting stage of Units 1-4. With certain assignments, we may devote more time to certain stages of the process, and at other times, we may move more quickly. At least once, we’ll experiment with publishing your text.
To grow as writers, we need to write, reflect, and write some more—thus, each part of the process is required, and unit grades will be based on the entire portfolio, not only the final version of essays. Be sure to save every piece of writing! For each unit, you’ll be given instructions on what to submit, how, and when.

Unit 5 Portfolio. Unit 5 is a critical analysis of who you are as a writer and how your writing has developed in this course; portfolios for Units 1-4 and additional generative writing will serve as the basis for this essay.

Writing Community Membership. Creating a community that enables us to grow as writers depends on each person fulfilling our responsibilities, offering mutual respect, and being receptive readers of one another’s writing—cell phones off, please. All students are expected to adhere to the university’s “Guidelines for Classroom Civility and Respect”: www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/classroomcivility/).

Essential learning in this course will happen as you engage in writing-related activities with peers. Performing well in writing community membership means actively and respectfully contributing to and seeking to learn from our class community. Note that participation can take a variety of forms: e.g., asking questions and giving comments during class discussion, taking notes on behalf of a small group, sharing perspectives in writing with peers.

Writing community responsibilities include the following:

a. **BE PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE.** Being prepared includes, but is not limited to, bringing required materials to class and actively reading the required texts. Reading texts by other writers, including classmates, will help you generate ideas, engage in dialogue, and become aware of your writing choices. In addition to class meetings, you’ll meet individually with me for at least one required student-teacher conference where we’ll discuss more fully your writing and progress in the course.

b. **GIVE CONSTRUCTIVE PEER RESPONSE.** Learning to write means learning to be read by others. In our class, you’ll regularly give and get critical peer response. By giving constructive feedback and by listening carefully to others, you’ll learn to make effective global revisions and local edits.

c. **PARTICIPATE IN PEER ACTIVITIES, INCL. CLASS DISCUSSION & SMALL GROUP EXERCISES.** Our writing community activities will include discussion among the entire class as well as small group exercises—during class time, possibly on Moodle forums, too. These activities are designed to help you write and reflect on your essay assignments.

CLASS POLICIES, INCL. GRADES

Attendance Policy. Class activities are a major part of this course. You are expected to attend and be prepared for every class, including scheduled one-on-one conferences with the instructor. The university recognizes that some absences are unavoidable and thus excused, e.g., due to religious observances, required participation in athletic events, disability-related accommodations. See www.umass.edu/registrar/students/policies-and-practices/class-absence-policy. However, if you cannot attend at least 80% (10 weeks) of class meetings—even if your absences are university-sanctioned—you should take College Writing in a different term, not this semester.

Students who miss more than 20% or 3 weeks of class meetings (6 absences for TTh/MW classes, 9 absences for MWF classes)—in most cases—cannot pass the course. If you have extenuating circumstances that might affect your class attendance and/or if you might have university-sanctioned and unexcused absences, talk to me as soon as possible—ideally, during the first week of classes.

You are responsible for the following if you miss a class: (1) notify me in advance, (2) find out from me how to make up the equivalent of missed work, and (3) complete the make-up work by the original deadline. If you cannot give advance notice, talk to me as early as possible.
For non-university sanctioned absences that add up to fewer than 3 weeks, absences can impact your writing community membership grade in the ways listed below. Note: university-sanctioned, excused absences will not affect your writing community membership grade.

- If absences add **up to 1 week of classes** (for MWF schedule, 2-3 absences; for TTh/MW schedule, 2 absences), your writing community membership grade will drop one letter grade—i.e., you can earn no more than 9 out of 10% (equivalent to A-).
- If absences add **up to 2 weeks of classes** (for MWF schedule, 6 absences; for TTh/MW schedule, 4 absences), your writing community membership grade will drop two letter grades—i.e., you can earn no more than 8 out of 10% (equivalent to B-).
- If absences add **up to 3 weeks of classes** (for MWF schedule, 9 absences; for TTh/MW schedule, 6 absences), your writing community membership grade will drop three letter grades—i.e., you can earn no more than 7 out of 10% (equivalent to C-).

Note that absences may also impact the quality and completeness of your unit portfolios—and thus, may affect the grade that you’ll earn for these portfolios.

**Academic Honesty Policy.** When using ideas, words, and short passages from other people’s writing in your own writing, you are required to acknowledge the source. Failure to acknowledge the contribution of others is considered plagiarism, a serious academic offense; fabrication of sources is another form of academic dishonesty. We’ll discuss the Writing Program’s Academic Honesty Policy later in the semester, but note that suspect papers (e.g., those without drafts or works cited pages, papers which make large departures in style from your other work) may be submitted to Turnitin.com as part of the grading process. For more details, see http://www.umass.edu/writingprogram/112/policies.html. Also, see the university’s policy: www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/.

**Course Grade.** Your final course grade for the semester will be based on the following breakdown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Portfolios, 1-4 (units may or may not be weighted equally—see assignment sheets)</th>
<th>80%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 5: Writer’s Statement essay</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Community Membership</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final grades will be based on the following numerical equivalents and general definitions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>letter</th>
<th>grade pt</th>
<th>percent</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>100-94</td>
<td>excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>93-90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>89-87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>86-83</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>82-80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>79-77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>76-73</td>
<td>fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>72-70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>69-67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>66-60</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>59-0</td>
<td>failure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Grades of B and above are considered honors grades. The grade of A indicates excellence.*
RESOURCES

Office Hours. You’re welcome to come to office hours any time you’d like to discuss questions or concerns related to this course. If you have a time conflict with my office hours, please schedule an appointment.

The Writing Center. As a UMass Amherst student, you have access to free one-on-one writing support from our Writing Center, located in the W. E. B. Du Bois Library. Trained tutors can work with you in 45-minute sessions to brainstorm, structure a piece of writing, learn strategies for copyediting, and more. All student writers—whether you love writing, struggle with writing, or both—are welcome. And remember that you can keep using the Writing Center throughout your studies at UMass. Make an appointment at www.umass.edu/writingcenter/, and bring your assignment, notes, and draft.

The Writing Program. Englwr111 and 112 are offered by the university’s Writing Program. Let us know if you have questions: drop by Bartlett 305, call 413.545.0610, or email writingprogram@acad.umass.edu.

Best Text Contest & Student Writing Anthology. We encourage you to think about how your writing for this course can reach readers beyond this class. Submit your essays to the Writing Program’s annual Best Text Contest; instructors can also nominate student essays to be considered for selection in the annual Student Writing Anthology. More details at www.umass.edu/writingprogram/.

Office of Disability Services. The Writing Program is committed to making our courses accessible to all students. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with the Office of Disability Services (www.umass.edu/disability/current.html), and, at the start of the semester, do meet with me about tailoring accommodations identified by ODS to your work in this course.