

READING AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Course Syllabus

I. BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

1. **Course Title:** Basic Writing 2
2. **Course Number:** COM-051-3332
3. **Course Name:** Communications
4. **Credit Hours:** 3
5. **Prerequisite(s):** COM-021 Basics of College Reading and COM-040 Basic Writing 1 with Workshop or COM-041 Basic Writing 1 with grades of C or better; or appropriate score on the placement assessment.
6. **Instructor:** Troy E. Spier
7. **Semester:** Spring 2015-2016
8. **Meeting Times:** 7:30-8:50 MW

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course helps develop basic writing skills. Students will begin to develop a sense of themselves as writers and a sense of the elements that constitute effective academic writing. They will compose short expository essays through guided practice in a variety of activities. Students will also be introduced to basic methods of library research.

III. RATIONALE OF COURSE

Communicating effectively in writing is a skill needed for most college courses as well as for professional and personal writing situations. This course provides a foundation for students to develop writing skills necessary for college-level writing.

IV. COURSE COMPETENCIES

1. Compose expository essays ranging in length from 500 to 1000 words.
2. Use the terminology of writers to discuss writing processes and written texts.
3. Use a variety of prewriting strategies to identify topics and to generate ideas for essays.
4. Develop a piece of writing around a central, controlling idea.
5. Structure essays with introductions, bodies, and conclusions.
6. Organize ideas logically within both individual paragraphs and an essay as a whole.
7. Revise essays for clarity, organization, and development with assistance from peers, tutors, and instructors.
8. Express ideas in mature and varied sentences.
9. Edit writing with attention to word choice, usage, spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
10. Prepare a manuscript according to Modern Language Association (MLA) conventions for format.
11. Locate information on topics using basic online and print research tools.
12. Include researched information in essays using MLA guidelines.

V. COURSE MATERIALS

1. Required Textbooks:

Arlov, Pamela. *Wordsmith: A Guide to College Writing*, 6th Ed. 2010. Pearson Education, Inc. Print.

Clines, Raymond H. and Elizabeth R. Cobb. *Research Writing Simplified: A Documentation Guide*, 8th Ed. 2014. Longman. Print.

2. Supplemental Materials:

You will need a three-subject notebook for this course, and it should contain the following sections: *Grammar/Punctuation, Readings and Practice*, and *Journal Writing*. Any other materials used will be provided by the instructor in class or through Canvas.

VI. REQUIREMENTS

1. **ATTENDANCE:** Regular attendance is necessary for your success in this course. This includes not only coming to class (on time!), but also participating in class discussions and activities. If you arrive more than twenty minutes late to class without a valid excuse, you will be marked as absent for that session. Should you miss three or more sessions, a faculty-initiated withdraw may be initiated. If you find that you need to leave early or will arrive late, you need to speak with me as soon as possible to ensure that you're not being unnecessarily penalized.

2. **CELL PHONES:** You may keep your cell phone turned on and set to vibrate during class; however, any excessive use of your phone will result in a loss of participation points for that session, and you may be asked to leave if your usage is especially egregious. If you are expecting a call during class, please inform me beforehand.

3. **COURSEWORK:** After assignments and exams have been evaluated, grades will be uploaded online. If you wish to review your performance at any point, please arrange a meeting with me. If assignments are turned in late without an approved excuse or an extension, five percent (5%) will be automatically deducted per day. Essays may be revised for a higher grade, excluding the final research paper, but they must be submitted with the original version no later than one week after they have been returned.

VII. ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

It should be understood that all work formally submitted for evaluation by the instructor must be prepared individually, i.e. with honesty and integrity. According to the guidelines set forth by Reading Area Community College, this means you will not engage in plagiarism, fabrication, cheating, the unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material, etc. Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be accepted and will result in a failing grade for the assignment, in addition to formal reporting at the university level. Although we will discuss this topic at length in class, it is suggested that any lingering questions be addressed to the instructor or answered by consulting the RACC Handbook.

VIII. GRADING SYSTEM AND ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN

Grades are earned based on your performance on assignments and quizzes, your attendance, and your participation. Should any discrepancies exist between your calculations and mine, contact me immediately to discuss the issue. Listed below is the grading system used at RACC.

A	=	95-100%	C+	=	75-79%
A-	=	90-94%	C	=	70-74%
B+	=	87-89%	D	=	65-69%
B	=	83-86%	F	=	0-64%
B-	=	80-82%			

There are five required essays in this course: one personal expository essay (300-500 words), three summary essays (200-300 words each), and a research essay (750-1000 words) with an annotated bibliography. More specific information about each of these written assignments will be provided in class. There will also be five short quizzes throughout the semester. These are not meant to be punitive; rather, they are used to evaluate your understanding of the material discussed in class and are intended to be grade boosters. In addition to the written assignments and in-class quizzes, you will also receive points for attendance and participation. Finally, there will be one or two opportunities to earn extra credit during the semester. Details will be provided as the semester progresses.

Personal Expository Essay	100 pts.
Summary Essays	150 pts. (50 pts./each)
Annotated Bibliography	50 pts.
Research Essay	200 pts.
Attendance/Participation	50 pts.
Quizzes	50 pts. (10 pts./each)
Final Exam	100 pts.

Total: 700 pts.

IX. ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations are considered on an individual basis. Obtaining documentation of a disability from a qualified professional is the responsibility of the student and is a prerequisite for receiving accommodations. Students must work with the Center for Academic Success/Office of Disability Services in Berks Hall #209, so that the appropriate procedures are followed. If you do not have a formally diagnosed disability but are having difficulty in the course, please speak with me privately. I want to see you achieve success!

X. OTHER INFORMATION

If any comments, questions, or concerns arise throughout the semester you can contact me at tspier@racc.edu. When writing your email, please make sure that you provide the course number and section.

"The limits of my language are the limits of my world."

Ludwig Wittgenstein

"We tend to look through language and not realize how much power language has."

Deborah Tannen

"Language has no independent existence apart from the people who use it. It is not an end in itself; it is a means to an end of understanding who you are and what society is like."

David Crystal

XI. TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

- January 18 NO CLASS – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- January 20 Introduction to Course and Syllabus
Personal Introductions
- January 25 Writing as Phenomenon/Process/Product
History of Writing and Non-Standard Varieties of English
- January 27 *The Writing Process (Chapter 1)*
Preparing to Write (Chapter 2)
- February 1 *Building a Framework: Thesis and Organization (Chapter 3)*
Discuss Personal Expository Essay Requirements
- February 3 *Introducing the Essay (Chapter 4)*
Quiz #1
- February 8 *Developing Body Paragraphs (Chapter 5)*
Peer Review and Conferencing
****Bring to Class: Two (2) Copies of Personal Expository Essay**
- February 10 *Concluding the Essay (Chapter 6)*
Examining Logical Connections (Chapter 10)
****Due: Personal Expository Essay**
- February 15 Framing an Argument, Part I
Discuss Summary Essay #1/Assign Article
- February 17 Framing an Argument, Part II
- February 22 Peer Review and Conferencing
****Bring to Class: Two (2) Copies of Summary Essay #1**
- February 24 Argument Evaluation and Logical Fallacies
****Due: Summary Essay #1**
- February 29 *Sentences with Style (Chapter 22)*
Coordination and Subordination (Chapter 14)
Quiz #2
- March 2 Summarizing, Paraphrasing, Quoting
Discuss Summary Essay #2/Assign Article
- March 7 NO CLASS – Spring Break
- March 9 NO CLASS – Spring Break
- March 14 Peer Review and Conferencing
****Bring to Class: Two (2) Copies of Summary Essay #2**

- March 16 Discuss Summary Essay #3/Assign Article
****Due: Summary Essay #2**
- March 21 Quiz #3
 Peer Review and Conferencing
****Bring to Class: Two (2) Copies of Summary Essay #3**
- March 23 Choosing a Topic for Research Essay
 Locating and Evaluating Sources: Books and Databases
****Due: Summary Essay #3**
- March 28 Taking Effective Notes for Research
 MLA: Citations and Works Cited
****Bring to Class: *Research Writing Simplified***
- March 30 Quiz #4
Library Research Day
- April 4 Making an Outline
****Due: Annotated Bibliography**
- April 6 MLA: Page Formatting
 Evaluate and Revise Sample Essays
****Bring to Class: *Research Writing Simplified***
- April 11 Evaluate and Revise Sample Essays
 Quiz #5
- April 13 Peer Review and Conferencing
****Bring to Class: Two (2) Copies of Research Essay**
- April 18 Wrap-Up Day¹
- April 20 Discuss Final Exam Essay
****Due: Research Essay**
- April 25 Practice for Final Exam Essay
- April 27 Practice for Final Exam Essay
- May 4 Final Exam (7:00-9:00 P.M.)
- May 10 Final Grades Due

¹ We will discuss any last-minute concerns about the research essay, share our topics and findings with the class, and consider what we've learned this semester that contributed – or didn't – to writing growth.