

English 150 / Pre-collegiate Reading & Writing / Fall 2013 CRN#E4043/ MW 1:15 - 2:40 / HU 114

Instructor: Dr. Peter Blakemore

Office: CA 134; Phone: 476-4314

Writing Center: Tu 8:30-9:55; Th 10-11:30

Office hours: MTuW 10-11 am & by appt

Email: peter-blakemore@redwoods.edu

www.redwoods.edu/instruct/pblakemore/fall2013.html

"I am always doing that which I can not do, in order that I may learn how to do it."

Pablo Picasso

Prerequisite: ENGL 350 (or equivalent) with a "C" grade or better, or assessment recommendation for ENGL 150. **You may need to provide evidence of eligibility.**

Required Texts & Materials (All materials except *selected text* available at the CR Bookstore)

- Multiple online texts available for download and printing at:
<http://redwoods.edu/instruct/pblakemore/ENGL150fall2013.html>
- *Into the Wild*, Jon Krakauer
- *Tortilla Curtain*, T. Coraghessan Boyle
- *The Bedford Handbook*, 8th edition, Dianna Hacker
- One selected text based on class discussion and selection process
- A good (at least 70,000 words) paperback or electronic dictionary
- Regular access to a computer and the rudimentary knowledge of how to use it
- Paper and pen for every class
- A flash drive memory storage device

Welcome to English 150, a course in the development of college-level reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. This class will focus on basic argumentation. You will analyze ideas and structure in assigned readings and compose essays supporting arguable thesis statements.

English 150 Student Outcomes

If you successfully complete this course, you should be able to:

- Develop an effective, thesis-driven argument appropriate to an academic audience.
- Critically read and respond to argumentative texts.
- In a multi-stage process, incorporate feedback (from instructors and peers) in essay planning and drafting.
- Apply basic grammar and punctuation rules, particularly those that address sentence boundaries.

Inquiry, Critical Thinking & Our Class

At the center of any really valuable college education must be critical thinking. Thinking critically has little to do with the common ideas about being harsh or insensitively honest or merely picky. In order to think critically you will have to engage in the process of inquiry. To approach topics and issues from the perspective of inquiry requires that you weigh ideas and consider questions you or others might have regarding claims. Most importantly, inquiry means wanting to understand an issue well enough that you can come to conclusions about your own beliefs. This is a process that is generally not taught in school before the college-level in America. Though it is a process many of us engage in every day – such as when we decide to consult movie reviewers before shelling out \$8 or \$9 for a movie – it's also true that most people don't

reflect on how carefully and critically they inquire into ideas before coming to belief. College, then, must be one of the primary places where we engage in inquiry consciously. We do this not because it will help us to earn more money after graduation (though it almost certainly will); we do this so that we can prepare ourselves to examine and know the world, nature, our nation, our cultures, our communities, and ourselves as thoroughly as possible. As you might have guessed, this process can be quite difficult – sometimes frustrating, often confusing or even exasperating, and nearly always quite complicated – yet I hope you will realize how important learning and then practicing this art can be. It can liberate you, enrich your mind, and open your eyes to patterns, systems, and new ways of seeing.

Each of you will have something of your own agenda, as I have mine. As I see it, the most important reason for you to learn inquiry and how to communicate the fruits of your inquiry is that it should help you to be a better informed, more involved, more thoughtful and even more compassionate member of your community. This in turn should benefit you, me, and most everyone else you will come into contact with during the rest of your life. (Yes, I am serious about all of this.) Toward that end of modeling and practicing inquiry, I will ask you to think of the classroom as a community. If you engage with the rest of us in the ways I have developed in the reading and class schedule, you *will* play a vital role in this community. With your effort, reading, thinking, discussing, arguing, and writing, we will all come together to affect one another in meaningful, valuable ways. Please join in!

Reading: All of our writing this term will be based on things we read and the discussions that flow out of those readings. The books and articles we read will be complex and will necessarily lead to controversy and differences of opinion, so they will require concentration and careful analytical thinking. On days when reading has been assigned, we'll usually start class with writings to help us identify main ideas and authorial intentions (the writer's thesis, either stated or implied) and move us toward exploring the central issues at the heart of the text. If you come to class without having done the reading on the days we have quizzes scheduled, you will lose participation credit for the day, and what's worse, your contribution to the subsequent discussion is likely to be at such a low level that I will usually ask non-readers to work quietly apart from our discussion. If you don't take the time to think through the reading in advance of our discussion it will hurt the class in general, but it will especially affect your ability to meaningfully address the ideas. To ensure that doesn't happen, you should make out a schedule and block out specific times during the week when you will be able to give your reading the undivided attention necessary to truly engage the ideas.

You should always come to class prepared to write about and discuss our readings on the days they are listed in our schedule. If you are having trouble keeping up, let me know immediately – **DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE! DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE!**

Writing: Our writing will be directly related to the questions and ideas that arise out of our reading and discussion. Because writing about inquiry requires a rigorous process of examination, critical assessment of ideas, reflection, and revision, you will need to set aside enough time to actively engage this process. Don't sell yourself short by thinking you can whip out an essay in 30 or 40 minutes. The best way to approach the writing process is to think of your reading and discussion as the beginning of a writing project. I have built this idea into the course by requiring you to write in class before final essays are due. You should also keep more extensive notes in a journal or on three-ring-binder paper that you save for future use as you work through the process of each writing project. You should also keep notes on any small or large group discussions we have and combine these together with your reading notes in order to accumulate more material for each writing project. Indeed, your essays should begin in these

notes to yourself. It would be wise to begin notes to yourself by writing about the thoughts you have regarding our topic. You will want to determine the central question or problem that is at issue in the reading – decide what is “in dispute” – and in your notes begin to draft your answer (or answers) to that question. With feedback from classmates, your instructor, and tutors in the Writing Center, you will begin to learn how others receive your ideas and whether or not what you wanted them to know about your ideas comes across. You will also be required to revise throughout the semester.

The Essays: You will be writing formal essays outside of class and less formally in-class. As you plan your schedule for the semester, you should take into account the amount of time it will take for you to really work through the writing process. It will take sweat and quite a bit of time, so plan accordingly.

Reading Journal: I strongly recommend that you keep a Reading Journal. I will not collect or read these journals (unless you would like my feedback and specifically ask me to read them) – they will be for your benefit, and should help you immensely during the time I ask you to respond with in-class writing. If you keep a simple, inexpensive Composition Notebook and use it to jot down notes and ideas while you read for this class, and if you also use it as a place to develop ideas brewing in your mind, you’ll be able to keep track and begin digging deeper into ideas you encounter in reading, discussion, television viewing, movies, and life in general. Having a compact, handy book full of thoughts and ideas – yours and others – is an extremely useful tool for pulling thoughts together, organizing information, and generating valuable material to be used in drafting writing projects.

Proofreading, Mechanics, & Grammar: I will occasionally lead the class in mini-lessons regarding aspects of grammar and mechanics that seem appropriate for the entire class. For instance, if after reading a group of your essays, I find that many of you are having difficulty with sentence boundaries (a fairly common and easily rectified problem), I will take a few minutes of class time to review it. Individuals who have more serious problems with writing errors will receive special attention and may be asked to meet with me to work through them during my Writing Center or office hours outside of class. It will be up to you, however, to proofread and correct your writing.

Attendance: The English Department Attendance Policy: “Students at the College are expected to attend all sessions of each class in which they are enrolled. Students may not miss more than two weeks of class with unexcused absences, no matter how many times that class meets in one week. If a student exceeds the limit on absences before week 11 of the semester, an instructor will notify the student that he or she has been dropped. After that, students are still responsible to go into Web Advisor and withdraw themselves from the class, in order not to receive an F. After week 10, excessive absences will likely result in failure.”

Note: Students who do not consistently attend class are unlikely to succeed. Please contact me regarding absences beyond a single consecutive class period.

Major quizzes and writing assignments:

- 3 to 4 Reading Quizzes – open-book, letter graded as to accuracy and completeness of answers about ideas and information from class texts
- Educational Autobiography – ungraded, in-class essay

- Critical Response – ungraded, in-class essay, 1-2 pages
- 2 Synthesis Essays (based on class readings) – out-of-class essays, 3-4 pages each, assessed *High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, Not Yet Passing, Rewrite*
- Critical Review & Analysis Essay (based on group text selections) – out-of-class essay, 3-4 pages, assessed *High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, Not Yet Passing, Rewrite*
- Self-Reflection Essay (what have you learned this semester about writing, critical thinking, and yourself) – in-class, ungraded
- Summative Essay – your choice of revision of an earlier typed, formal essay, assessed *High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, Not Passing*
- Final Reading Exam – open-book, in-class response to class reading handout, assessed *High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, Not Passing*

Grades will be assessed on the following basis:

Participation will be assessed based on letter-graded quizzes, ungraded writing assignments, and participation in class discussion and group work. At the mid-term you will receive a detailed written Participation Assessment judging your work up to that point in the following way: Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Does Not Meet Expectations. At the end of the semester, I will reassess your participation and give each of you a participation grade based on the cumulative letter-graded quizzes and ungraded work to determine whether your participation *Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, or Does Not Meet Expectations*.

Writing will be assessed based on the formal out-of-class Essays and the Final Reading Exam. At the end of the semester, I will review your work and judge your writing as Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, or Does Not Meet Expectations on the following basis: 2 or more High Passes plus one or more Pass[es] (0 Low Passes and 0 Not Yet Passing)=*Exceeds Expectations*; 3 or more Passes=*Meets Expectations*; 3 or more Low Passes or Not Yet Passing/Not Passing=*Does Not Meet Expectations*. **Note well: Students who do not turn in one of the four items above can not receive more than a Does Not Meet Expectations as a final writing grade.**

The Portfolio & Summative Essay will be assessed for care and attention to revision as: *Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, or Does Not Meet Expectations*. You'll get plenty of information and assistance to define the class' expectations for the summative revision essay.

If E=Exceeds Expectations, M=Meets Expectations, and D=Does Not Meet Expectations, then:
EEE=A / EEM=A- / EMM=B / MMM=C+ / MMD=C / MDD=D / DDD=F

Plagiarism: All *Typed, Formal Essays* (the *Synthesis Essays*, the *Critical Review and Analysis Essay* and the *Summative Essay*) need to be posted to **Turnitin.com** before you can receive credit for them. (Class ID#6700743, password: grizzly) The process is simple and takes only a few minutes. I will walk you through the procedure, and you will be able to do it in the Writing Center or anywhere that you have access to the Internet. I have decided to require this because I have encountered so many cases of plagiarism in the past decade that I want to curb the temptation as much as possible. Plagiarism, which is the act of claiming another writer's words or ideas as your own without citing them as a source, is a serious breach of academic conduct and

will result in failure of the assignment and possible failure for the course. We will discuss it in detail during the term. If you aren't sure whether you're about to plagiarize or not, ask me or another instructor.

Working Online: I will be placing some of our course readings on our course webpage at www.redwoods.edu/instruct/pblakemore/English150fall13.html. You will need to access the Internet regularly and you will need to print out texts from our website. All of the required online work could be managed during your weekly Writing Center hours or in the Learning Resources Center (aka “the Library”). Please determine how you will access and print from the Internet immediately, as in “before the next class” (see the course schedule below).

Learning Disabilities: Students who have special needs due to physical or learning disabilities should let me know at the very beginning of the course (**I mean during this first week**) so that we can arrange appropriate accommodations. Since English 150 concludes with a timed writing competency exam, it is important that you make the necessary arrangements with the Academic Support Center *in advance*, preferably within the first few weeks of the semester.

An Invitation: Finally, experience tells me that people who think carefully about their education and become more reflective about it generally have the greatest success. Probably the best way to get involved in this process is to get to know your teachers and speak with them outside of the classroom. Visit them in the Writing Center during their hours. Make appointments to drop by their offices and let them know what's going through your mind as it relates to your work in their classes. And most important of all, let your teachers know if something in particular isn't coming across clearly for you. Sometimes your problem is just a particularly difficult concept, a complex section of reading, or a challenging assignment or series of assignments. Your teachers will, in almost every case, want to help you work through those tougher parts of the class. But you need to communicate with them. You especially need to communicate with me – this is an intense and very involved class that requires a lot of discipline from you. If you feel that you are falling behind, you should let me know as soon as possible. If you ask me, I will offer plenty of extra help or direct you toward others who can help. I am in the Writing Center every week (Tu 8:30-9:55; Th 10-11:30). My office hours are listed at the beginning of this syllabus, and if you cannot see me during any of these times, I'm certain we can schedule another time to meet. If you need to contact me, please call my office (476-4314) and leave a clear, specific message, including a telephone number and time when you can be reached. If you decide to email me, you should use a specific course-related subject title. If you contact me, I will get back to you as soon as possible. I look forward to getting to know each of you better and to seeing all of you succeed. Welcome and good luck!

NOTE: The lab component of the course is scheduled in the Writing Center (LRC 102), where students receive individualized instruction in critical reading, in the conventions of standard written English, and in all stages of the writing process.

Reading & Writing Schedule

Date & Day	Reading due	Writing due	Classroom Work
8/26 Monday	Syllabus and handout	First day class notes.	Introductions, syllabus, guidelines.
8/28 Wednesday	<i>Reading 1.pdf</i> “Brainology” by Carol Dweck	In-class writing: <u>Educational Autobiography</u>	Writing Center and drafting <u>Educational Autobiography</u>
9/2 Monday	<u>None</u>	<u>Educational Autobiography</u> due via email to: peter-	<u>Labor Day - No class</u>

		blakemore@redwoods.edu	
9/4 Wednesday	<i>Reading 2.pdf</i> ; education, nature and science.	Reading quiz #1 – bring marked and annotated copy of pdf to class.	Review and preparation: what is wilderness and what is it good for?
9/9 Monday	<i>Reading 3.pdf</i> , Edward Abbey's "Freedom & Wilderness, Wilderness & Freedom"	In-class writing: Critical Response #1	Review Abbey's ideas and our responses to them. Best questions?
9/11 Wednesday	<i>Reading 4.pdf</i>	In-class writing: Group determined Issues and Ideas	Speed-dating interviews
9/16 Monday	Jon Krakauer's <i>Into the Wild</i> pp. 1-46.	Reading quiz #2 – bring Krakauer's book and your notes to class.	Discuss <i>Into the Wild</i> and social issues arising in the book.
9/18 Wednesday	Krakauer's <i>Into the Wild</i> pp. 47-102	In-class writing: Group determined Issues and Ideas	Small and large group discussion
9/23 Monday	Krakauer's <i>Into the Wild</i> pp. 103- 156.	In-class writing: Group determined Issues and Ideas	Small and large group discussion
9/25 Wednesday	Krakauer's <i>Into the Wild</i> pp. 157-207	In-class writing: Summing up	Large group discussion: questions and ideas that matter
9/30 Monday	<i>Reading 5.pdf</i>	In-class writing: Synthesis Essay précis	Who are we writing for? What are we writing for?
10/2 Wednesday	Review of Synthesis Essay #1	Bring drafts of Synthesis Essay #1	Conferencing and revising
10/7 Monday	<i>Reading 6.pdf</i>	Typed, formal writing: Synthesis Essay #1	Responding to race in America
10/9 Wednesday	T.C. Boyle's <i>Tortilla Curtain</i> pp. 1-97	Informal in-class exploratory writing	Discussion of ideas that matter.
10/14 Monday	T.C. Boyle's <i>Tortilla Curtain</i> pp. 98-182 & <i>Reading 7.pdf</i>	Reading quiz 3- bring Boyle's book and your notes to class.	Discussion of ideas that matter.
10/16 Wednesday	T.C. Boyle's <i>Tortilla Curtain</i> pp. 183-257	Informal in-class exploratory writing	Discussion of ideas that matter.
10/21 Monday	T.C. Boyle's <i>Tortilla Curtain</i> pp. 261-350	Informal in-class exploratory writing	Discussion of ideas that matter.
10/23 Wednesday	Group Readings Reports on race & immigration policy	In-class writing: Group Reading reports	Group presentation and inquiry sessions
10/28 Monday	Group Readings Reports on race & immigration policy	In-class writing: Group Reading reports	Group presentation and inquiry sessions
10/30 Wednesday	Review and revise your essay.	Typed, formal writing: Synthesis Essay #2	Topic selection discussion and

			workshop.
11/4 Monday	<i>Reading 8.pdf</i>	In-class writing: <i>Reflecting on Reading Essay</i>	How groups selected texts.
11/6 Wednesday	Selected text – first parts.	In-class writing: <i>Group Reading Report #1</i>	Presentation of issues from the texts.
11/11 Monday	<u>None</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>Veteran's Day - No class</u>
11/13 Wednesday	Selected text – next parts.	In-class writing: <i>Group Reading Report #2</i>	Questions from the texts.
11/18 Monday	Selected text – final parts.	In-class writing: Work on individual drafts of <i>Critical Review and Analysis Essay</i>	Presentation of relevant arguments and responses to the texts.
11/20 Wednesday	Research reading	Incorporating research	Individual review
11/25 Monday	Review and revise essay.	<u>Typed, formal writing: Critical Review & Analysis Essay</u>	What have we learned this semester?
11/27 Wednesday	<u>None</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>Individual Analysis & Research Day - No Class meeting</u>
12/2 Monday	Review all course materials for <i>Self-Reflection Essay</i>	In-class writing: <i>Self-Reflection Essay</i>	Reflective writing
12/4 Wednesday	Course review.	Work on Portfolio and <u>Summative Essay</u>	Individual review
12/11 Wednesday Final Exam 1-3 pm	Reading Exam Handout	Portfolio with final <u>Summative Essay</u> due	Final Reading Exam

Required Syllabus Insert

Syllabus for: English 150 - Precollegiate Reading and Writing	
Semester & Year:	spring semester 2013
Course ID and Section Number:	E4043
Number of Credits/Units:	3.5
Day/Time:	MW 1:15-2:40 / HU 114
Location:	
Instructor's Name:	P. Blakemore
Contact Information:	Office location and hours: CA 134 / Mon., Tues., Wed. 10-11 Phone: 476-4314 Email: peter-blakemore@redwoods.edu
Course Description (catalog description as described in course outline): A course in the development of college-level reading, writing, and critical thinking skills, emphasizing basic argumentation. Students	

analyze ideas and structure in assigned readings and compose essays supporting arguable thesis statements. The lab component of the course is scheduled in the Writing Center, where students receive individualized instruction in critical reading, in the conventions of standard written English, and in all stages of the writing process.

Student Learning Outcomes (as described in course outline): 1. Develop an effective, thesis-driven argument appropriate to an academic audience. 2. Critically read and respond to argumentative texts. 3. In a multi-stage process, incorporate feedback (from instructors and peers) in essay planning and drafting. 4. Apply basic grammar and punctuation rules, particularly those that address sentence boundaries.

Special accommodations: College of the Redwoods complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request at least one week before the first test so that necessary arrangements can be made. No last-minute arrangements or post-test adjustments will be made. If you have a disability or believe you might benefit from disability related services and may need accommodations, please see me or contact Disabled Students Programs and Services. Students may make requests for alternative media by contacting DSPS.

Academic Misconduct: Cheating, plagiarism, collusion, abuse of resource materials, computer misuse, fabrication or falsification, multiple submissions, complicity in academic misconduct, and/ or bearing false witness will not be tolerated. Violations will be dealt with according to the procedures and sanctions proscribed by the College of the Redwoods. The student code of conduct is available on the College of the Redwoods website at:

<http://www.redwoods.edu/District/Board/New/Chapter5/Ap5500.pdf>

College of the Redwoods is committed to equal opportunity in employment, admission to the college, and in the conduct of all of its programs and activities.