Syllabus for English 1A

Course Information

Semester & Year: Spring 2020
Course ID & Section #: English 1A- V0897
Instructor's name: Ruth Rhodes
Day/Time or *Online: Online
Location or *Online: Online
Number of units: 4

Instructor Contact Information

Office location or *Online: CA 132
Office hours: TBA and by appointment
Phone number: 707-476-4587
Email address: ruth-rhodes@redwoods.edu

Required Materials

Textbook Title: *They Say, I Say (4E)*
Edition: 4th
Author: Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein
ISBN-13: 978-0393631678
Other requirements: Notebook or Desktop computer, word processing software with grammar/spell checker, high-speed internet access. A video camera (even through a phone) is highly recommended for conferencing.

Catalog Description

This is an introductory course that offers instruction in expository and argumentative writing, close reading, cogent thinking, research strategies, information literacy, appropriate and effective use of language, and documentation.

Primary Focus

In this online class, we will learn how to read, write, and think at the college level. You will read, take notes on, and discuss diverse and engaging texts, from opinion pieces to in-depth scientific studies. You will identify interesting questions at issue—questions about which there is significant disagreement between people—questions you think are worth exploring—and then you will write essays trying to answer those questions. Over the course of the semester, our readings will focus on three different themes, which we will explore one at a time:

1. Why don't we see eye-to-eye in America?
2. What's the value of a college education?
3. How is modern technology radically changing our lives—and what should we do about it?

Course Student Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate the capacity to read, analyze and evaluate non-fiction texts in support of academic inquiry and argumentation.
2. Utilize flexible strategies for writing expository and argumentative college-level essays.
3. Incorporate primary and secondary sources into essays using appropriate documentation format.

Evaluation & Grading Policy

Possible grades: A (100-90%) / B (89-80%) / C (79-70%) / D (69-60%) / F (59-0%)

There are **no pluses or minuses** in this class.

Due Dates: Most work is due at the end of the week, on Sunday, just before midnight. Except for essays, work cannot be turned in late, so keep the due dates in mind; don't wait until the last minute to submit an assignment. The assignments close automatically.

Before the end of the week, check to make sure your work uploaded properly. Quizzes (see more about them below) are graded automatically, so always check to see that your quiz grades are recorded. If they aren't, send me a message.

I do open Weekly modules early, so if you plan to be away from a computer for more than a week, in most cases, you can complete your work in *advance* of the deadline.

Critical Practices (30% of total grade)

One of our course learning outcomes in this class is to "demonstrate the capacity to read, analyze and evaluate non-fiction texts in support of academic inquiry and argumentation." To build these skills and, in turn, to write strong essays, you will engage in what I call **critical practices**:

- Writing notes on the readings answering **critical reading questions**
- Taking **quizzes** embedded in the lectures to self-test your level of engagement and understanding. You can retake them as many times as you want until the assignment closes.
- Generating **pre-writing** materials like outlines and essay drafts to organize your ideas
- Completing essay **reflections** that analyze and evaluate how successful you were on essay assignments

For the most part, I don't *grade* critical practices as much as *check to make sure they are complete* and submitted on time. Students who complete the critical practices on a regular basis tend to get the best grades, not just because they earn the points. The critical practices help them build the skills they need to write essays. A high score on the critical practices correlates strongly with high essay grades and a high final grade.

Formal Writing: Discussions (20% of total grade) and Essays (50% of total grade)

Discussions

You will write once or twice weekly discussion posts in response to a prompt (and often in response to the posts of others on the thread). These discussions are part of your formal writing, and each is required to be a carefully crafted 300+ words. In other classes, discussions may be considered "informal." Not so with this class. Discussions are graded as **formal writing assignments** and are worth 20% of your course grade. Your classmates are counting on you to join in the discussion, so, just like critical practices, discussions cannot be turned in late.

Essays

You will write three formal essays in this class, each demonstrating your developing reading, writing, and thinking skills. Essays 1 (1000+ words) is worth 15% of your total grade, Essay 2 (1200+ words) is worth 15%, and Essay 3 (1500+) is worth 20% (that's 50% total).

Altogether, your formal, graded writing, including Discussions and Essays, will total over 6,000 words.

Like the discussions, essays are evaluated in terms of quality, not just completeness. Essay grades are sorted into three graded categories: Exceeds Expectations (100%), Meets Expectations (75%), or Does Not Yet Meet Expectations/Revise (50%). This last grade may seem harsh, but remember that Essays 1 and 2 can be revised if they are not passing. If you choose to revise, your grade will never go down. Remember, though, that unless you address the issues that kept it from passing the first time, your grade may not go up. With a revision, you can earn up to a Pass (75%), but no higher.

Late Essays

Unlike critical practices and discussions, I **do** accept late essays. Some people need more time for longer projects—and these essays are worth a lot, so I want you to write them with care. They can be turned in up to 7 days after the due date. You don't need to ask for an extension. You have one automatically. But please note that **late essays can't be revised**. Furthermore, **Essay 3** cannot be turned in late **or** revised because it is due at the end of the semester.

Essay Feedback

I comment extensively on your essays, not just in the Canvas comment box, but **on your document** in comment bubbles. Looking at and responding to feedback is one of the best ways to improve your writing skill, and students call it out as one of *the most useful things they get from this class*.

In order to see my comments, click on the **Assignment** (in the GRADES or ASSIGNMENT section), and then **VIEW FEEDBACK**. You then must click the **FULL SCREEN** feature in the corner, expanding the box so that my comments will appear in boxes on the right-hand side. I will provide a tutorial for how to do this, but please know *it's tricky the first time*.

Prerequisites/co-requisites/ recommended preparation

Placement into English 1A is determined according to the default AB 705 guidelines or the results of the guided self-placement process.

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 accommodations, please see me or contact Disability Services and Programs for Students. Students may make requests for alternative media by contacting DSPS based on their campus location:

• Eureka: 707-476-4280, student services building, 1st floor

• Del Norte: 707-465-2324, main building near the library

• Klamath-Trinity: 530-625-4821 Ext 103

Student Feedback Policy

One of the challenges of online education is finding a way to have deep, meaningful communication with one another. It's very important that instructors and students have regular, effective contact—and that there be meaningful and fulfilling communication between students.

I take great pride in working hard to communicate clearly with students and provides quick, helpful feedback. But I do have some limitations, including work hours and workload.

Professor Workload

This semester, I have 112 students in English 1A—that's 4 full sections. It is an overload, and it's a lot to read and grade. I can handle it, but it's good for you to put in perspective how challenging time management might be for me over the next 16 weeks. I know many of you have similarly challenging workloads. I feel your pain.

Professor Work Hours

My normal work hours are 8:30 am-4:30 pm, Monday-Friday. I take holidays and weekends off, and every 2nd and 4th Friday I spend on the Eureka Campus in committee meetings (pretty much all day). I try to avoid reading e-mail and text messages outside of work time. Like you, I have a life (in my case, four children, dreams of being a novelist, and a writing consultancy in social justice comic books). I can't really do it all, but I'm shooting for the moon anyway. I do need some downtime, away from the computer. I bet you do, too.

For those of you doing college work during evenings and weekends, please be patient and give me time to get back to you if you send me a message outside of my normal work hours.

One on One Help

I will gladly meet with you during or outside of my normal work hours (I love making contact with you guys—it makes you feel more *real* to me when we meet). We can talk on the phone, swap e-mail messages, or use my video conferencing app called ConferZoom (it's really cool). The latter is usually the best since we can look at the same document together.

Regular, Effective, Meaningful Contact

Here are some additional bullet points about my commitment when it comes to communication and feedback:

- Within the framework of my work schedule, **I will reply to your messages within 24 hours** (and probably sooner—I want to help you when you need it!).

- I will create **meaningful learning activities** that connect directly to the skills you need to master to succeed in this class, with **rapid feedback** so you can see when you're making progress. No bull-sh*tty assignments. I hate those, and so do you.

- I will facilitate and monitor regular **threaded discussions** between students in both **small and big groups**, so you practice critical thinking and critical writing skills in a highly interactive and supportive cohort. If your group isn't working for you, let me know. I will probably rearrange the groups several times during the semester as enrollment shifts.

- I will **read and evaluate your critical practices within one week of submission, including your discussion posts**.

- I will grade your essays **within two weeks** of submission. That's a tall order for me this term, but I think I can do it.

- Even though I'll build the course in advance of the semester, I'll chime in with current **Weekly Announcements** that relate directly to the progress you've made as a class and the direction you're headed.

- I'll **adjust** elements of the class, syllabus, and schedule if they aren't working for some reason. You can e-mail me or send me a Canvas message if you don't think something is working, or you can make an anonymous online comment though this link, also accessible in the Modules section of Canvas.

Proctored Exams

No proctoring is required in this class.

Student Access

These standards are required by federal regulation. Students will have access to this course that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and College of the Redwoods policies. Course materials will include a text equivalent for all non-text elements; videos will include closed captioning, images will include alt-tags, hyperlinks will use descriptive/meaningful phrases instead of URLs and audio files will include transcripts. All text will be formatted for use with screen readers and all course materials will be understandable without the use of color.

Students who discover access issues with this class should contact the instructor.

Admissions deadlines & enrollment policies: Spring 2020

- Classes begin: 1/18/20

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day (all-college holiday): 1/20/20

- Last day to add a class: 1/24/20

- Last day to drop without a W and receive a refund: 1/31/20

- Census date: 2/3/20 or 20% into class duration

- Lincoln's Birthday (no classes): 2/14/20

- Last day to petition to file P/NP option: 2/14/20

- President's Day (all-college holiday): 2/17/20

- Last day to petition to graduate or apply for certificate: 3/05/20

- Spring break (no classes): 3/16/20-3/21/20

- Last day for student-initiated W (no refund): 4/3/20

- Last day for faculty initiated W (no refund): 4/3/20

- Final examinations: 5/9/20-5/15/20

- Semester ends: 5/15/20

- Grades available for transcript release: approximately 6/1/20

Students who have experienced extenuating circumstances can complete & submit the Excused Withdrawal Petition to request an Excused Withdrawal (EW) grade instead of the current Withdrawal (W) or non-passing (D, F & NP) grades. The EW Petition is available from the Admissions and Records Forms Webpage. Supporting documentation is required.

Academic dishonesty

In the academic community, the high value placed on truth implies a corresponding intolerance of scholastic dishonesty. In cases involving academic dishonesty, determination of the grade and of the student's status in the course is left primarily to the discretion of the faculty member. In such cases, where the instructor determines that a student has demonstrated academic dishonesty, the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment and/or exam and may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct (AP 5500) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the College Catalog and on the College of the Redwoods website.

Disruptive behavior

Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include, but is not limited to: unwarranted interruptions; failure to adhere to instructor's directions; vulgar or obscene language; slurs or other forms of intimidation; and physically or verbally abusive behavior. In such cases where the instructor determines that a student has disrupted the educational process, a disruptive student may be temporarily removed from class. In addition, the student may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct (AP 5500) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board

policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [College Catalog](#) and on the [College of the Redwoods website](#).

Offensive Ideas

The personal beliefs and prejudices of fellow classmates can indeed be upsetting and offensive. As your instructor, my primary goal is to facilitate learning for everyone, and that includes monitoring discussions to ensure that we treat each other with respect, following the student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)).

However, learning cannot happen in an environment where controversial ideas cannot be spoken or freely "tried out." I will strive to protect free expression in this class, including speech that many of us find ignorant and offensive, as long as it does not violate the Code of Conduct. In other words, don't be deliberately mean. Recognize that your values are shaped by individual experiences limited to your life. Other people see the world differently because they experience it differently. They have much to tell us, even if we find it wrongheaded or offensive. We're going to practice avoiding overgeneralizations and oversimplifications; in other words, let's not label each other and each other's ideas until we've really tried to understand the different perspectives out there.

As an educator, I see a trend in academic culture that sometimes privileges "safety" and protection from offensive ideas over real discussion and debate. I do not believe in silencing ideas that might, for example, reflect racist or sexist or classist attitudes. Ideas need to be held up to the light of reason, not hidden away (especially ones that are based on prejudice). How else can we grow our critical thinking skills? This is public education. It is meant to serve the public.

In that same vein, side-stepping controversial ideas is counter-productive to student learning. It comes from the mistaken notion that students are weak-minded and cannot think their way towards what is reasonable. It also comes from the growing misconception that people who disagree with us ought to be framed as our adversaries. Nothing could be further from the truth. We are on the same journey here. As people in pursuit of education, **all of us** must constantly examine and reexamine those things we hold as true and right and good; it is part of the critical thinking process.

Expect to be introduced to new ways of seeing things. Understand in advance that your ideas, values, and beliefs may be challenged in this class—in fact, ought to be challenged—as part of the learning process.

Gender-Inclusive Language in the Classroom

College of the Redwoods aspires to create a learning environment in which all people feel comfortable in contributing their perspectives to classroom discussions. It therefore encourages instructors and students to use language that is gender-inclusive and non-sexist to affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Just as sexist language excludes women and men's experiences, non-gender-inclusive language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of any gender (for example, first year student versus freshman, humankind versus mankind, etc.), affirms non-binary gender identifications, and recognizes the difference between biological sex and gender expression.

Preferred Name in Canvas

I would like to address you as you would like to be addressed. Students have the ability to have an alternate first name and/or preferred pronoun appear in Canvas. Contact Admissions & Records to request a change. Your preferences will only be listed in Canvas. It does not change your legal records. See the Student Information Update form.

If you have a pronoun preference that you want to share with me, please tell me. Like most people, I make assumptions about gender based on visual cues and first names. Sometimes they're wrong; feel free to alert me if you have a preference or I'm getting it wrong.

I like to be called "Professor Rhodes," but if you want to invent a nickname for me that is both dignified and approachable, by all means, do it. If you want to talk about me in the third person, she/her/hers pronouns work for me—or for the daring and who appreciate the literary reference—I like "she who must be obeyed."

Canvas Information

Log into Canvas at https://redwoods.instructure.com
Password is your 6 digit birth date
For tech help, email its@redwoods.edu or call 707-476-4160

Technology skills, requirements, and support

Tech equipment and skills are required for student success, and of equal importance as required textbooks and materials,

Students can obtain a free Office 365 license (includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint and more) with a valid CR email.

Necessary Computer Skills **-** [instructor: identify the computer skills necessary for students to succeed in your course.]

Technology Requirements (computer, other hardware, and software) **-** [instructor: identify the computer requirements and any hardware or software necessary for students to succeed in your class.]

Technology Support **-** [instructor: identify your role in providing technology support]

Before contacting Technical Support please visit the Online Support Page. For password issues with Canvas, Web Advisor or your mycr.redwoods.edu email, contact its@redwoods.edu or call 707-476-4160 or 800-641-0400 ext. 4160 between 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M., Monday through Friday.

Emergency procedures / Everbridge

College of the Redwoods has implemented an emergency alert system called Everbridge. In the event of an emergency on campus you will receive an alert through your personal email and/or phones. Registration is not necessary in order to receive emergency alerts. Check to make sure your contact information is up-to-date by logging into WebAdvisor https://webadvisor.redwoods.edu and selecting 'Students' then 'Academic Profile' then 'Current Information Update.'

Please contact Public Safety at 707-476-4112 or security@redwoods.edu if you have any questions. For more information see the Redwoods Public Safety Page.

In an emergency that requires an evacuation of the building anywhere in the District:
- Be aware of all marked exits from your area and building
- Once outside, move to the nearest evacuation point outside your building

- Keep streets and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and personnel

Do not leave campus, unless it has been deemed safe by the campus authorities.

Student Support Services

The following online resources are available to support your success as a student:
- CR-Online (Comprehensive information for online students)
- Library Articles & Databases
- Canvas help and tutorials
- Online Student Handbook

Counseling and Advising offers academic support and includes academic advising and educational planning.

The Learning Resource Center includes the following resources for students

- Academic Support Center for instructional support, tutoring, learning resources, and proctored exams.
- Library Services to promote information literacy and provide organized information resources.
- Multicultural & Diversity Center [waiting for hyperlink and Mission]
- Math Lab & Drop-in Writing Center

Special programs also available for eligible students include

- Extended Opportunity Programs & Services (EOPS) provides financial assistance, support, and encouragement for eligible income disadvantaged students at all CR locations.
- The TRiO Student Success Program provides eligible students with a variety of services including trips to 4-year universities, career assessments, and peer mentoring. Students can apply for the program in Eureka or in Del Norte
- The Veteran's Resource Center supports and facilitates academic success for Active Duty Military, Veterans and Dependents attending CR through relational advising, mentorship, transitional assistance, and coordination of military and Veteran-specific resources.
- Klamath-Trinity students can contact the CR KT Office for specific information about student support services at 530-625-4821
- The Honors Program helps students succeed in transferring to a competitive four-year school.

Honors

If you are enrolled in the honors program, ask me about taking English 1A for honors credit. This means agreeing to engage in more challenging reading, writing, and research assignments, including the analysis and evaluation of peer-reviewed journal articles, at least one full-length book, and interdisciplinary research.