

# COMPOSITION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT 2015

## 1. What are the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for your unit? How do you inform the public and other stakeholders (students, potential students, the community) about your SLOs?

Students who complete Composition I at UAM should:

1. Use the conventions of standard, written English
2. Develop skills in thesis formation
3. Develop skills in writing expressive and expository themes
4. Develop skills in organizing such themes
5. Develop an awareness of audience and stylistic variations in effective writing
6. Develop the ability to edit stylistic and grammatical problems in student's own writing

Students who complete Composition II at UAM should:

1. Write approximately 3500 words a semester (5 papers), including a documented research paper
2. Develop skills in writing primarily persuasive/argumentative essays
3. Continue to learn and use the rules of standard, written English

These learning outcomes are on all course syllabi (see Appendix A for an example syllabus).

## 2. Describe how your unit's Student Learning Outcomes fit into the mission of the University.

The University of Arkansas at Monticello Mission Statement reads as follows:

*The University of Arkansas at Monticello shares with all universities the commitment to search for truth and understanding through scholastic endeavor. The University seeks to enhance and share knowledge, to preserve and promote the intellectual content of society, and to educate people for critical thought. The University provides learning experiences, which enable students to synthesize knowledge, communicate effectively, use knowledge and technology with intelligence and responsibility, and act creatively within their own and other cultures.*

*The University strives for excellence in all its endeavors. Educational opportunities encompass the liberal arts, basic and applied sciences, selected professions, and vocational and technical preparation. These opportunities are founded in a strong program of general education and are fulfilled through contemporary disciplinary curricula, certification programs, and vocational/technical education or workforce training. The University assures opportunities in higher education for both traditional and non-traditional students and strives to provide an environment, which fosters individual achievement and personal development.*

The Composition program's Student Learning Outcomes are reflected in UAM's mission in the following ways:

For Composition I, Student Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 is reflected in the university's mission to communicate effectively. Learning Outcome 5 aligns with the university's dedication to synthesizing knowledge and engaging in critical thinking. Understanding audience requires students to make decisions about the rhetorical strategies within their compositions.

For Composition II, Student Learning Outcome 1 is demonstrated in the university's commitment to using knowledge and technology responsibly, as students conduct research and incorporate it into their compositions. Outcomes 2 and 3 once again meet the university's dedication to all students communicating effectively.

Aligning these learning outcomes to the university mission statement is challenging; to meet this challenge, we designed this assessment project in part to consider revised learning outcomes that would more explicitly connect to the values of UAM.

Overall, the Composition program's Student Learning Outcomes are vital and integral to the university mission of teaching critical and creative thinking, the ability to synthesize knowledge, and the skills necessary to communicate effectively. The Composition program also promotes progressive thought, an understanding of history, and an appreciation of diverse cultures.

### **3. Provide an analysis of the student learning data from your unit. How is this data used as evidence of learning?**

#### ***Description of Assessment Process:***

To assess how well students are mastering the learning outcomes of the first-year composition sequence, all instructors of composition I and II submitted to the Coordinator of the Composition program (Dr. Leigh Graziano) 5 essays from the first formal writing assignment of the course and 5 essays from the final formal writing assignment of the course. All identifying information (student name, instructor name, section number, etc.) was removed from the papers. Using their WeevilNet rosters, instructors submitted the papers from students 1, 5, 6, 13, and 21 for paper one, and the papers from students 2, 8, 15, 16, and 20 for the final paper. These numbers were selected arbitrarily to get a random sampling of papers.

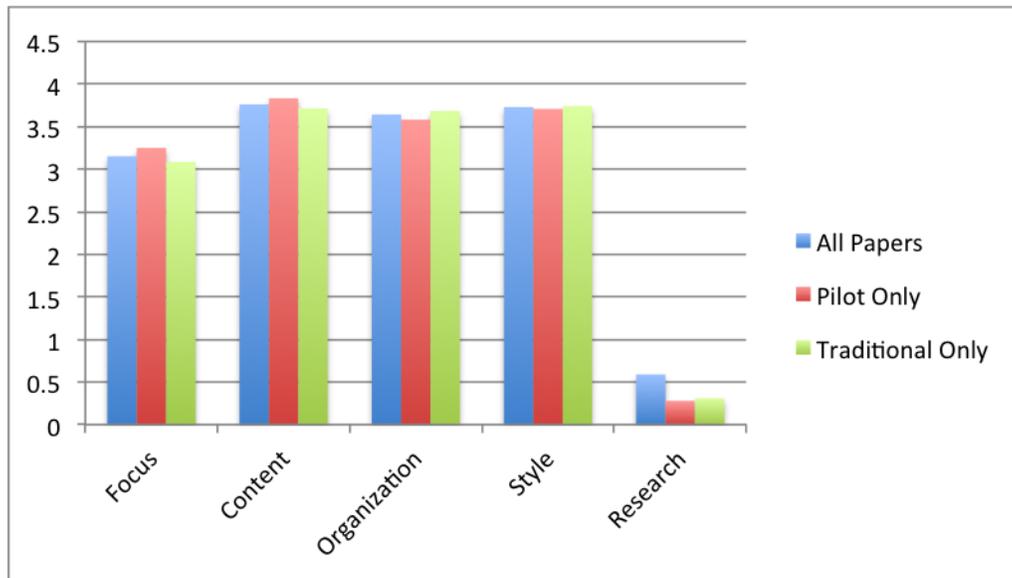
In addition, the composition committee ran pilot sections (designed by Dr. Julie Platt) of composition I and II following new guidelines. These sections used a new required textbook, *Everyone is an Author*, taught the same writing genres, and employed new learning outcomes. These sections also participated in assessment and were coded differently so as to compare how well these students were achieving the learning outcomes compared to our traditional sections.

Composition instructors graded all papers submitted according to an assessment rubric (Appendix B). In brief, students scoring 0 to 2 fell below the SLOs. Those scoring a 3 or 4 were meeting learning outcomes, and those scoring a 5 or 6 were exceeding the SLOs of composition I and II.

#### ***Analysis of Composition I Assessment Data:***

Table 1 shows the performance of students at the beginning of the semester upon completion of their first paper in composition I. These averages indicate where students are when they come into the course. This data is also represented graphically in Figure 1.

<b>TABLE 1</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Style</b>	<b>Research</b>
<b>All Papers</b>	3.153	3.763	3.644	3.73	0.59
<b>Pilot Only</b>	3.25	3.833	3.583	3.708	0.28
<b>Traditional Only</b>	3.086	3.714	3.686	3.743	0.31



**Figure 1: A graphic representation of the data in Table 1. This data is from the first paper of Composition I.**

Based on this data, students are meeting our learning outcomes in four of the five categories when they enter composition I. Since most of our instructors begin with the personal narrative, this data suggests the comfort level of our students with composing in this familiar genre. They have not yet been challenged with more complicated academic genres. Although the difference is marginal, the students sampled from the pilot sections are demonstrating these learning outcomes slightly better than our traditional sections in 3 of the 5 categories. Predictably, students have little to no experience with research, so their averages currently demonstrate that their research skills fall way below learning outcomes.

Table 2 illustrates student performance at the end of the semester in their final paper. These averages represent where students are at the end of the course. This data is also represented graphically in Figure 2.

<b>TABLE 2</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Style</b>	<b>Research</b>
<b>All Papers</b>	3.333	3.313	3.313	3.646	2.542
<b>Pilot Only</b>	3.692	3.538	3.538	3.615	2.692
<b>Traditional Only</b>	3.2	3.229	3.229	3.657	2.486

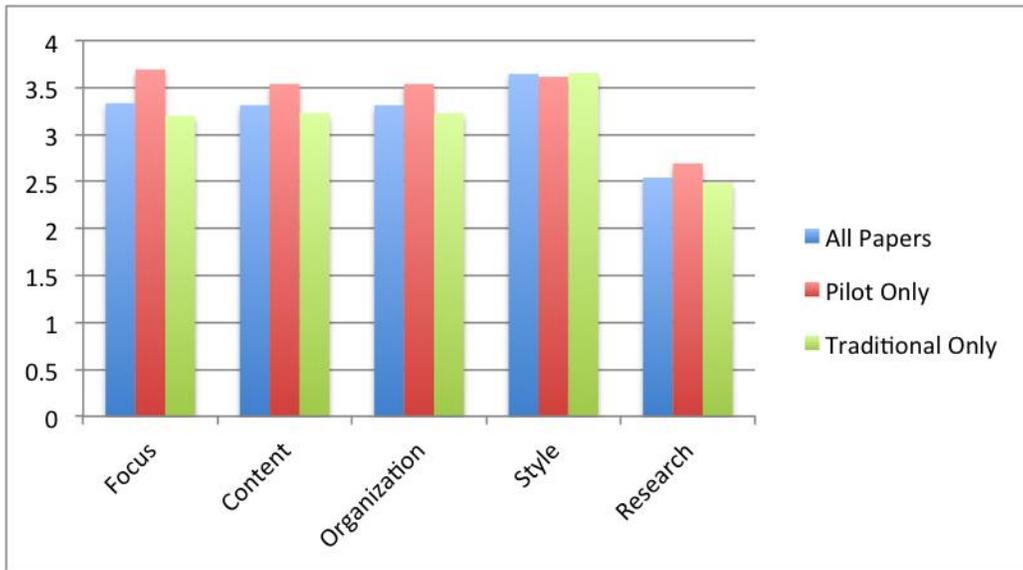


Figure 2: A graphic representation of the data in Table 2. This data is from the last paper of Composition I.

Based on this data, we saw increases in focus and research and decreases in content, organization, and style. The key distinction here is the degree of difference. In most cases, the pilot sections saw a smaller decrease and a larger increase than the regular sections (See Table 3)

TABLE 3	Focus	Content	Organization	Style	Research
All Papers	5.71%	-11.96%	-9.10%	-2.26%	330.78%
Pilot Only	13.61%	-7.57%	-1.25%	-2.51%	951.53%
Traditional Only	3.69%	-13.09%	-11.77%	-2.30%	700%

On a large scale, the general decrease in demonstrating the learning outcomes is likely because students are completing their longest and most challenging academic genres. As students take on more difficult writing tasks, they often need additional scaffolding, which includes content that has already been covered. Overall, this data tells us that students are not receiving enough scaffolding at the end of the semester in terms of content, organization, and style to improve further. Students are, however, continuing to master having a focused and controlled topic or thesis to their essays. Likewise, they have improved enormously in research. Although their final averages still put them below meeting the learning outcomes, they have demonstrated incredible growth in their research skills, something that cannot be adequately taught in just one semester. Because students are still below where they should be at the end of the semester, this data suggests that students also need additional support throughout the semester to conduct and incorporate research and document it responsibly. The consistent pattern, though, is that the pilot sections are doing a better job helping students achieve the course outcomes.

***Analysis of Composition II Assessment Data:***

Table 4 indicates the averages of students upon completing their first writing assignment of the course. This marks where students are at the beginning of Composition II, as well as lends some insight to how well students are transferring what they learned in Composition I. This data is also

represented graphically in Figure 3. One problem with the data we were able to collect this semester is that there were only two pilot sections to survey compared to the five of the fall semester, yielding less data than the traditional sections.

<b>TABLE 4</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Style</b>	<b>Research</b>
<b>All Papers</b>	3.6	3.65	3.8	3.78	1.98
<b>Pilot Only</b>	3.2	3.7	3.8	3.5	0.2
<b>Traditional Only</b>	3.68	3.64	3.8	3.84	2.34

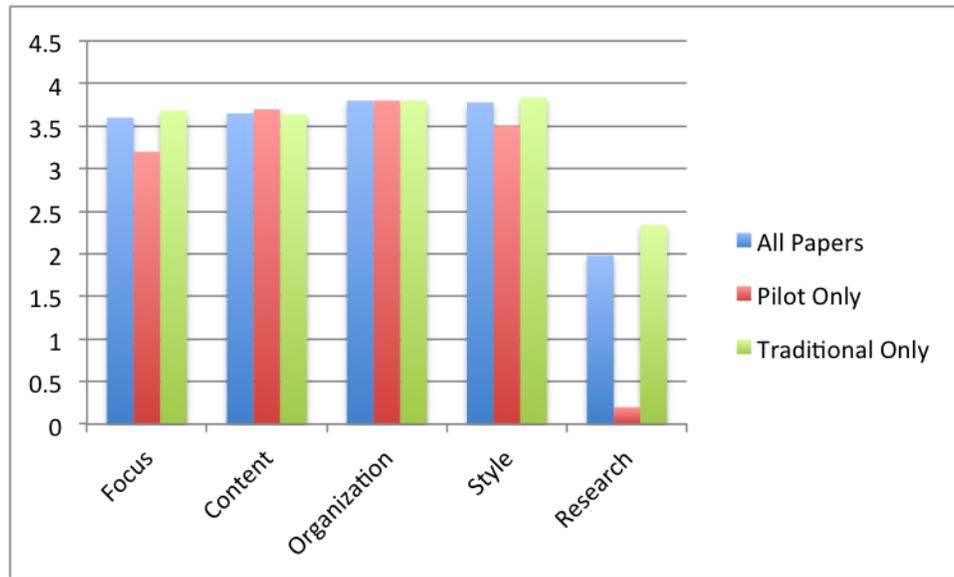


Figure 3: A graphic representation of the data in Table 4. This data is from the first paper of Composition II.

With the exception of research, students are overall entering composition II performing at about the same level at which they left composition I. This indicates that students are retaining the skills they learned in composition I and are able to demonstrate them still when beginning a new semester in composition II. The drop in research is concerning, but is likely attributed to the fact that few instructors begin with an assignment that includes research. The pilot sections, in particular, had no research as part of the first assignment, which led to their low averages.

Table 5 illustrates the averages from the end of the semester. This data is also graphically represented in Figure 4.

<b>TABLE 5</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Style</b>	<b>Research</b>
<b>All Papers</b>	3.7	3.78	3.8	3.63	2.97
<b>Pilot Only</b>	4	4	3.7	3.9	3.7
<b>Traditional Only</b>	3.64	3.744	3.58	3.58	2.82

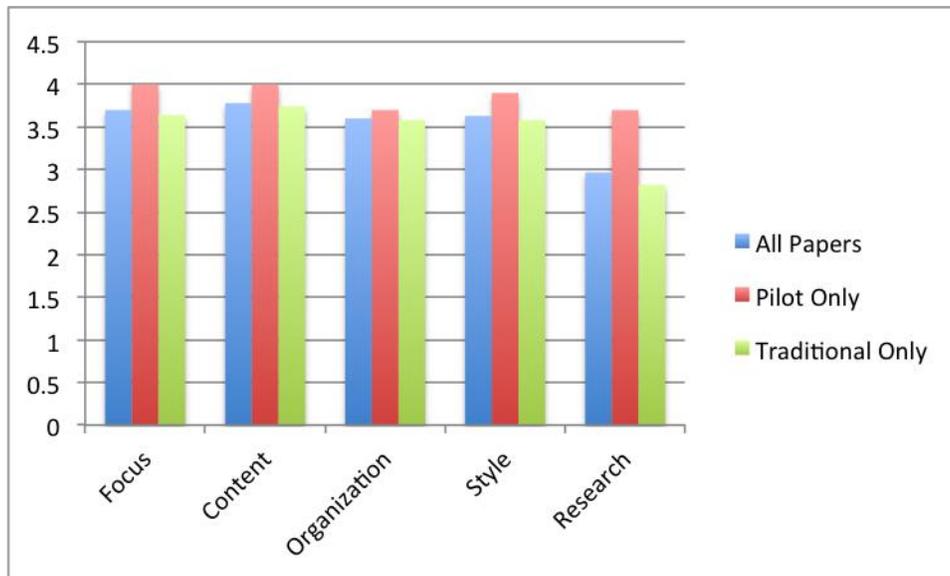


Figure 4: A graphic representation of the data in Table 5. This data is from the final paper of Composition II.

The pilot sections demonstrate considerable growth, particularly in focus and content. Their students are performing on the highest end of the rubric in meeting student learning outcomes. Likewise, the pilot sections have shown a high increase in terms of research. At the end of the semester, students should be writing their research paper, the most challenging genre of Composition II. The growth of the pilot students from composition I to composition II, suggests that remaining with the same textbook and learning outcomes has helped students see the relationship between the two courses. Table 6 illustrates the percentage increased or decreased since the beginning of the semester.

TABLE 6	Focus	Content	Organization	Style	Research
All Papers	2.78%	3.56%	-5.26%	-3.97%	49.85%
Pilot Only	25%	8.10%	-2.63%	11.43%	1750%
Traditional Only	-1.09%	10.40%	-5.79%	-6.77%	20.51%

All sections have decreased in their ability to demonstrate a strong ability to organize the content of an essay. Again, I attribute this to the fact that students are completing their most challenging paper and clearly need more support and review of structure at this point in the semester. Style is also something students still struggle with at the end of the semester. This includes control of surface level errors, language use, sentence structure, and adhering to conventions. More attention is needed here throughout the semester.

**4. Based on your analysis of student learning data in Question 3, include an explanation of what seems to be improving student learning and what should be revised.**

Because this was a broad and small-scale assessment, it is difficult to speak specifically to what is improving student learning, as we did not examine what individual teachers are doing in their classes. It is clear, however, that the differences in the pilot sections are leading students to better meet these outcomes. Key things to be revised then are the required texts we assign, the genres we

teach, and the learning outcomes we use to guide the development of our students. These revisions are described in greater detail in question 6.

**5. Other than course level/grades, describe/analyze other data and other sources of data whose results assist your unit to improve student learning.**

For this small-scale assessment of the first-year writing program, no other data was considered.

**6. As a result of the review of your student learning data in previous questions, explain what efforts your unit will make to improve student learning over the next assessment period. Be specific indicating when, how often, how much, and by whom these improvements will take place.**

All improvements will take place beginning in Spring 2016. The Composition Committee, chaired by Dr. Graziano, will meet early in Fall 2015 to discuss and prepare for these changes.

All sections of composition I and II will adopt a new required textbook: <i>Everyone is An Author</i> .	All instructors
All sections of composition I and II will use the new student learning outcomes.	All instructors
The language of the new student learning outcomes will be revised with Bloom's taxonomy in mind. Too many of the outcomes begin with "develop" currently.	Dr. Leigh Graziano
In order to get students more involved in the assessment process, all sections of composition I and II will distribute a survey at the end of the semester where students can assess how well the course helped them achieve each outcome	Survey designed by Dr. Leigh Graziano (Fall 2015)  All instructors
The composition committee will discuss standardizing the genres taught in composition I and II so that we are all teaching the same ones. This will include a research assignment in both classes, as this is a weakness of our students.	All instructors
All sections of composition I and II need an increased attention on grammar. Although this was not formally part of our assessment, the frequency of errors noted by the graders has made this a concern we want to address.	Worksheets and Workshops designed by Dr. Craig Olsen (CWC Director) and Travis Nicholson (Assistant CWC Director).  All instructors

**7. What new tactics to improve student learning has your unit considered, experimented with, researched, reviewed or put into practice over the past year?**

One of the challenges in our current first-year writing program is the learning outcomes, in no small part because they are more like paper requirements than actual learning outcomes. The composition committee designed new student learning outcomes that are more appropriate for composition I and II, and are also in line with the [CWPA](#) (Council of Writing Program Administrators) recommended outcomes for first-year composition courses in U.S. postsecondary education. The CWPA represent and regularize the priorities for first-year composition, which often takes the form of required general-education courses. Our current learning outcomes are not comparable to what other open-admissions universities (with CWPA-style SLOs in place) are requiring of their students.

Designing new learning outcomes meant designing a new model for our composition classes because they currently are not organized or taught in a way to achieve those outcomes (Appendix C). We ran multiple pilot sections that taught according to these new learning outcomes (see syllabus in Appendix D). In addition to new learning outcomes, these sections also used a required rhetoric for the first time, *Everyone's an Author*. This provided students with specific writing instruction as well as a reference to use for their major assignments. The pilot sections also taught students the same academic genres, although the actual assignments differed teacher to teacher.

Based on the assessment data discussed above, the pilot sections often demonstrated stronger proficiency in our assessment categories; thus, we'd like to use them as a model to redesign all our composition I and II sections to be more like them.

### **8. How do you ensure shared responsibility for student learning and assessment among students, faculty and other stakeholders?**

All composition I and II faculty participated in assessment. This extended beyond simply turning in papers. Rather, most faculty also volunteered their time to grade the assessment papers according to the assessment rubric. These instructors spent time discussing the rubric, the meaning of the categories, as well as participating in norming to ensure that we all graded approximately the same.

Currently, students are not involved in the assessment process. This is another change we would like to make, as outlined in question 6.

### **9. Describe and provide evidence of efforts your unit is making to recruit/retain/graduate students in your unit/at the university level. (A generalized statement such as “we take a personal interest in our students” is not evidence.)**

Since composition I and II are required general education classes, recruitment is not a central effort. However, retention is always a concern. Across many different institutions, it seems that students tend to struggle to pass general education first-year writing classes, so putting effort into making these classes effective makes sense for retention. One major effort we are introducing in fall 2015 is honors sections of composition I and II for students with an ACT score of 24 or higher. Honors doesn't mean more work; it means different work. These classes will offer our brightest students more rigorous intellectual engagement.

In addition, the Center for Writing and Communication is always part of our retention efforts. Not only does it provide students with a place to go to get specific writing help, but also provides our

teachers with resources to improve the engagement in our classrooms. Under the leadership of Dr. Julie Platt and Travis Nicholson, tutors are developing a number of workshops (MLA, APA, thesis development, etc.) to present in class with activities for students. These workshops will give teachers other resources to support student learning.

## APPENDIX A

### Sample Syllabus for a Traditional Section

COMPOSITION I (English 1013, 3 credit hours):

#### **COURSE THEME: Parent-Child Bonding & Non-Judgmental Love**

Dr. Robert Moore (Red Hawk)

E-mail: [Moorer@uamont.edu](mailto:Moorer@uamont.edu)

FAX: 870-460-1961

Office: MCB 208

Office Phone: 460-1738 (see office hours)

Arts & Language Office Phone: 460-1078 (Mon.-Fri., 8:00-4:30)

(\*NOTE: Please don't call me at my home unless you are considering suicide. There is nothing I can do to help you there)

**OFFICE HOURS:** MW: 12:00-3:00

T-Th: 12:30-3:00

Fri : 12:00-2:00

(I will be available for you any other time you wish by appointment.)

**COURSE ADMISSION:** A grade of 'C' or better in Fundamentals of English 0133, or an ACT score of 19 or better is required for admission to this course.

**COURSE EXIT:** A grade of 'C' or better must be earned in English 1013 for you to advance to English 1023, Freshman Comp. II. Those who score below 19 on the reading part of the ACT will be required to complete a reading lab project in the Writing Lab **and will fail this course by state law if they do not complete the lab in required time.**

**TEXTS:** The UAM Reader

The Pocket Handbook, (Kirszner & Mandell).

any standard paperback dictionary.

(All texts available at UAM Bookstore)

#### **EXPECTED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**(By conclusion of course you should be able to):**

- 1) Review the conventions of standard, written English in the context of each student's own writing
- 2) Develop skills at thesis formation
- 3) Develop skills for organizing such a theme (expressive and expository)
- 4) Develop an awareness of audience and stylistic variations in effective writing
- 5) Develop ability to revise and edit essay & correct grammar & style problems

#### **MOORE'S LAWS:**

1) Don't interrupt.

2) No eating, chewing, drinking, wearing hats, or **cell phones** in my classroom.

3)**ABSENCES:**

1) More than **three (3) unexcused absences**, you will be dropped ONE (1) FULL LETTER GRADE FOR THE SEMESTER (official UAM functions excused) **\*\*NOTE:** You are solely responsible for finding

out about, and making up work missed by absence.

### ESSAY RULES:

1) All essays must be typed or computer-generated, double-spaced (that is: 2 full spaces between lines for me to write in--I will return those which aren't and they will be **one-day-late**).

2) **LATE ESSAYS:** (NOTE: you must complete all 4 essays or you fail the course)

a) **THERE IS NO ACCEPTABLE EXCUSE FOR A LATE ESSAY.**

b) An essay is one-day-late if it is turned in AFTER the regularly scheduled class time that day, or the next. c) You are docked **ONE-FULL-LETTER-GRADE** for every **DAY(not class)** your essay's late (NOTE: An 'F' is worth points; NO paper=zero & you will fail the course) **E-mail or FAX before class=on time!** 1 week late = ZERO!

3) You will write 4 essays (400pts)+ 5 reading quizzes (100) & grammar quiz (100) in this class.

GRADE SCALE FOR TESTS & ESSAYS: SEMESTER GRADE SCALE:

A = 90-100

A = 600-540

B = 80-89

B = 539-480

C = 70-79

C = 479-420

D = 60-69

D = 419-360

(based on 6 grades; adjust if fewer)

WHAT THE GRADES MEAN: **2-points-off for each grammar error; 2-points-off for each error in the form.**

**A=** creative, interesting, intelligent, original, an excellent paper; 1)**Focus:** clear, well-defined focus (main idea); clear thesis sentence; clear key terms; 2)**Support:** well-developed ideas with good examples and specific details; avoids generalizations; 3)**Organization:** Well-developed introduction with good thesis and key terms; well developed body with good topic sentences and good use of transitions throughout; well-developed conclusions, thoughtful and thorough; 4)**Mechanics:** good word choice, no problems in form or grammar which interfere with comprehension.

**B=** a good paper, but less interesting, original, creative or thoughtful; 1)**Focus:** clear focus with good thesis & key terms; 2)**Support:** good support, but not as many details or examples to enliven the writing & make it interesting; not as thorough or uses too many generalizations; 3)**Organization:** fairly well developed intro. with good thesis sentence and key terms; perhaps an occasional problem with development in the body or conclusion; good use of key terms and transitions throughout; 4)**Mechanics:** occasional minor problem with form or grammar, but nothing major;

**C=** a fair paper with some problems in form &/or grammar &/or content; 1)**Focus:** there is a focus but it may be too vague or general (usually problems with thesis sentence &/or key terms); 2)**Support:** weak support for key terms; often relies excessively on generalizations in the body of the paper; lacks specific details and examples; poorly developed; 3) **Organization:** lacks a clear introduction &/or conclusion; problems with topic sentences and key terms; fails to use transitions consistently; 4)**Mechanics:** some serious formal &/or grammar problems interfere with comprehension.

**D=** a poor paper with major problems in form &/or grammar &/or content; 1)**Focus:** lacks focus (serious problems with thesis or topic sentences, key terms); 2)**Support:** very little or no support for key terms; excessive reliance on generalizations; few or no specific details and examples; poorly or not developed paragraphs; 3)**Organization:** poorly developed introduction &/or conclusion; unclear thesis with vague key terms or none at all; fails to use transitions; content vague and without focus; 4)**Mechanics:**

major formal &/or grammar problems interfere with comprehension. F= 1) You do not attend class; OR 2) You do not hand in your essays; OR 3) You hand in your essays very late and lose appropriate letter grades; OR 4) Excessive errors in the form, grammar and content.

**\*NOTE: 1) grammar errors=2 points off for each error; 2) errors in the form=2 points off for each error; 3) poorly developed concl. Paragraph=3-6 points off.**

#### COURSE STRUCTURE:

- 1) Course introduction.
- 2) Introduction to the Writing Lab (MCB 113)
- 3) Review of 8 major grammar errors.
- 4) THE CLASSICAL ESSAY FORM (a simple, precise, elegant, and formal approach to writing essays).
- 5) **Unit #1: BIRTH & BONDING With the Mother & FATHER: The Classical Form.**

**a. Reading Assignment:** 1) "The Plug-In Drug." UAM Reader, 746-752; 2) "Every Father's Prayer" 346. Study Guide Questions (reading quiz #1): from "The Plug-In Drug": 1) Studies show that TV interferes with family activities & the formation of what? 2) Findings suggest that TV has a disruptive effect on interaction & presumably on what? 3) the traditional opportunities within the family for expressing what, have been reduced or destroyed by TV? 4) The more direct forms of parental love require what 2 things? From "Every Father's Prayer": 6) a good & decent man is one who is what? 7) One of love's secret keys is what? 8) Every father prays his daughter finds a man who stays through what? 9) Such a man's only desire is to do what for her heart? 10) A truly free man finds his freedom where?

**b. Essay topics:** 1) Failure to bond w/your father; 2) failure to bond w/your mother; 3) failure to bond w/father & mother; 4) successful bond w/your father & your mother. (If you never knew your father: successful bond w/mother &/or Grandparents).

**c. Videos:** 1) "What Babies Want;" 2) "Hardwood"

- 6) **Unit #1(Reading Quiz #2):** What is a "real man/woman": Relationships & How They Work

**a. Reading Assignment:** 1) "He Turns Boys Into Men" (Handout) 2) "Why I Am Faithful." UAM Reader, 352. Study Ques.: From "Boys Into Men": 1) 3 lies which make up 'false masculinity' 2) 2 things which make up 'strategic masculinity' 3) masculinity is the capacity to do what 2 things in relationships? From "Why I Am Faithful": 4) The poet says his wife ruined him not with sex but what? 5) When you meet a woman with this trait, you have got to do what? 6) If you don't do this, what will happen? 7) No matter how pretty women are, what does the poet do?

- 6) **Unit #2: NON-VIOLENT DISCIPLINE: The Argument Paper**

**a. Reading Assignment:** 1) "The Natural Child Project" (handout). (Study Ques: 1. What does hitting teach children to become? 2. what 2 messages does it give? 3. The child's greatest need is for his parents' what? 4. spanking produces good behavior based on what? 5. Gentle instruction produces good behavior based on what? 6. Discipline helps children develop what? 7. It also encourages them to feel what about themselves? 8. Discipline teaches children to do what for themselves? 9) The most important thing is to teach children to do what without hurting or attacking other people? (reading quiz #3)

**VIDEO: 1) "Monty Roberts: A Real Horse Whisperer"; 2) "Woodruff: A Lesson of Non-Violence"**

**B. Make a stand-- for or against hitting children. Select the most important characteristic for disciplining a BONDED child: that will be your key term. In the INTRO. paragraph, you will define what you mean by "good discipline." In your 1<sup>st</sup> BODY para., you will define your key term. 2nd body para. = Rebuttal Paragraph. You must have 1 quote from handout in paper, with proper citation. 7) Unit #3: The Personal Narrative: Patience--the first KEY to Non-Judgmental Love.**

**a. Reading Assignment:** "What's Love Got To Do With It?" UAM Reader, 428-431; 2) "Old

Love Knows Best.” 348. (Study Ques. Reading Quiz #4: From “What’s Love Got To do With It?”: 1) What percent of all marriages in this country end in divorce? 2.) 2 major reasons that people find and get involved with somebody. 3.) At the moment we pick a mate, we are blinded by what? 4) They get counseling to learn how to do what? 5) Partners may be helped to handle marriage by making more what kind of choices? 6) What kind of love is described as “...infused with myth and projection and doomed passion?” From “Old Love Knows Best”: 7) Old love is not marked by anger or dread, but by what 2 characteristics is it know? 8) Death only rules the dust, but what does not decay?  
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b. Video: “For Better Or Worse” (documentary): What it takes for marriage to survive

c. Essay topic: Are you patient or impatient? Who was your model? Write your paper on that model & how their modeling of patience/impatience, influenced you & your intimate relationships.

8) Unit #4: FORGIVENESS: the second KEY to Non-Judgmental Love (Final Exam Essay)

A) Reading Assignment: 1) “Family: Idea, Institution & Controversy.” UAM Reader; 2) “The Weeping of Women Is the Only Dharma We Need,” 349. (Study Questions, Reading Quiz #5: From “Family”: 1) In a nationwide poll, 78% said they were dissatisfied w/ today’s what? 2-3-4-5) The core sentiments of family life that define what a family is for most Americans are what 4 things? From “The Weeping of Women...”: 6) Who never profits from war? 7) Only who profits from war? 8) There are far worse ways for a man to plan his life than to avoid at all costs doing what? 9) What has brought the poet to his knees? 10) Women have blessed the poet’s heart in their what?

B.) Essay topics: 1) Someone you have forgiven; 2) someone who forgave you; 3) someone you won’t (not can’t) forgive; OR 4) someone who won’t forgive you.

This final exam essay is a matched-pair with essay #4 on patience. It is the second piece of a puzzle we will be working on all semester long.

C) video: 1) “The Forgiveness Equation” 2) “As We Forgive: Darfur”

**\*\*Note : Academic Dishonesty:**

- 1. Cheating: Students shall not give, receive, offer, or solicit information on examinations, quizzes, etc. This includes but is not limited to the following classes of dishonesty:
  - a. Copying from another student’s paper;
  - b. Use during the examination of prepared materials, notes, or texts other than those specifically permitted by the instructor;
  - c. Collaboration with another student during the examination;
  - d. Buying, selling, stealing, soliciting, or transmitting an examination or any material purported to be the unreleased contents of coming examinations or the use of any such material;
  - e. Substituting for another person during an examination or allowing such substitutions for oneself.
- 2. Plagiarism: Plagiarism is defined as adopting and reproducing as one’s own, to appropriate to one’s use, and to incorporate in one’s own work without acknowledgement the ideas or passages from the writings or works of others. \*Note : Plagiarism = “To steal or use the ideas or words of another as one’s own.” You must cite your source or otherwise indicate when you are using the words &/or ideas of another in your papers. To not do so is plagiarism and will result in an “F” or “0” for the paper. (See p. 65, UAM Catalog: “Academic Code Violations”.)
- 3. **\*\*Please Note: Americans With Disabilities Act:**

It is the policy of the University of AR at Monticello to accommodate individuals with disabilities pursuant to federal law and the University's commitment to equal opportunities. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of any necessary accommodations at the beginning of the course. Any student requiring accommodations should contact the Office of Special Student Services located in Harris Hall Room 120; phone 870 460-1026; TDD 870 460-1626; Fax 870 460-1926. Contact Ms. Mary Whiting with questions (whitingm@uamont.edu)

Please note, for the colleges of technology:

McGehee: Office of Special Student Services representative on campus; phone 870 222-5360; fax 870 222-1105.

Crossett: Office of Special Student Services representative on campus; phone 870 364-6414; fax 870 364-5707.

\*\*Note: Student conduct statement:

Students at the University of Arkansas at Monticello are expected to conduct themselves appropriately, keeping in mind that they are subject to the laws of the community and standards of society. The student must not conduct him/herself in a manner that disrupts the academic community or breaches the freedom of other students to progress academically.

\*\*Note: UAM will no longer mail grade reports to all students. You may access your grades through Campus Connect on the UAM homepage, <http://www.uamont.edu/>. To have your grades mailed to you, complete the grade request form available in the Registrar's Office in Monticello or the Student Services offices in Crossett and McGehee.

## APPENDIX B

### The Assessment Rubric

Learning Outcomes (LO) for Composition 1 & 2	Exceeds Demonstrate LO		Demonstrates Expected LO		Does Not Demonstrate LO	
	Exemplary (6)	Mature (5)	Competent (4)	Developing (3)	Beginning (2)	Basic (1 or 0)
Focus	Challenging, original, informed thesis demonstrating sophisticated critical thinking	Explicit, fully developed thesis statement	Identifiable, predictable thesis statement	Ambiguous or tentative thesis statement	Absent thesis statement but gestures towards a focus for the essay	No thesis statement and no clear focus
Content	Comprehensive exploration of topic; detailed and varied support for major claims	Reliable and detailed exploration of topic; sufficient support for major claims	Adequately chosen content, but lacking in range and quality; Satisfactory support for major claims	Unfocused or undeveloped content with only some supporting detail; May contain off-topic material	Weak level of detail; confusing or overly simplistic content	Ill-defined and underdeveloped subject; poor or no support for claims
Organization	Multiple organizing strategies; coherent paragraphs; excellent transitions that create an engaging momentum for the reader	Solid organization with firm guidance for readers; coherent transitions	Standard organization; mechanical transitions; ideas are organized by priority	Mechanical organization; major problems with transitions	Rambling organization; missing transitions; poor sequencing and prioritizing of ideas	Weak paragraph unity; loose or unclear organizational structure; missing or ineffective transitions
Style	Creative use of conventions; Innovative voice, tone, sentence structure, and vocabulary; Absence of surface errors	Adheres to conventions; Deliberate language use, varied sentence structure; Minimal surface errors	Adheres to conventions with minor problems in layout; Somewhat varied language use; Occasional surface errors	A major pattern of surface errors; weak grasp of writing style; little varied in language use	Distracting surface errors; Language use is basic and redundant	Disruptive surface errors to the point that comprehending the essay proves difficult
Research (if applicable)	Weaves together information from multiple sources to advance the student's original argument/focus; Responsible documentation of sources	Utilizes multiple sources to advance an interesting argument; Accurate documentation of sources	Uses a few sources but has issues integrating them; Adheres to documentation standards with minor errors	Over relies on one or two sources, not enough to support an original argument of his/her own; Nonstandard documentation of sources	Uses minimal sources, insufficient to support argument; Major distractions in documentation style	Uses no sources or elements of plagiarism present; Disruptive, inaccurate documentation of sources

## **APPENDIX C**

### Student Learning Outcomes

*Upon completion of Composition I and II at UAM, students will be able to:*

#### **Apply Rhetorical Knowledge**

- Understand the purpose, audience, and context of a variety of texts
- Understand and use appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality in a variety of writing tasks
- Understand genre, how genre shapes reading and writing, and how to write in a variety of genres and rhetorical modes

#### **Engage in Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing**

- Understand and use writing for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communication
- Understand the relationships among language, information, and power
- Understand themselves as parts of a writing community, and how to integrate their ideas with the ideas of others

#### **Understand Process**

- Understand writing as an open, repeated process that requires idea generation, drafting, revision, and editing at all stages
- Understand the collaborative and social aspects of the writing process
- Understand how to productively critique their own work and the work of others

#### **Exhibit Knowledge of Conventions**

- Understand and demonstrate the conventions of structure, tone, and mechanics in various genres and rhetorical modes
- Understand and practice appropriate means for documenting work
- Understand and apply the conventions of Standard Edited American English

#### **Compose in Electronic Environments**

- Use electronic environments for drafting, reviewing, revising, editing, and sharing texts
- Locate, evaluate, organize and use research material collected from electronic sources, including scholarly library databases, other official databases (e.g. federal government databases), and informal electronic networks and Internet sources

**APPENDIX D**  
Sample Syllabus from a Pilot Section

**UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT MONTICELLO SCHOOL OF ARTS AND  
HUMANITIES**

**ENGL 1013, Section 14: Composition I Fall 2014**

**COURSE INFORMATION** Course Title: Composition I

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Course Date and Time:** Tuesday & Thursday 9:40am – 11:00am

**Course Location:** BBC 123

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Instructor:** Dr. Julie Platt

**Email:** [platt@uamont.edu](mailto:platt@uamont.edu)

**Office:** 113B MCB (inside the Center for Writing and Communication)

**Office Hours:** Monday and Friday 9:00am – 12:00pm, Tuesday and Thursday 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm,  
and by appointment (*Seriously. I can almost always make time for you. Just ask!*)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Composition I is a writing course stressing the importance of reading to build and maintain effective writing skills. This particular section of Comp I takes *writing* as its subject. Why do we write? Whom do we write for? What makes writing effective? What does and doesn't "count" as writing? What does it mean to be a writer, especially now that a large portion of our everyday writing tasks take place in digital spaces? We will explore these questions through discussion, activities, and, of course, formal and informal writing assignments.

**COURSE ADMISSION AND EXIT**

Students must make a C or higher in ENGL 1013 this course to advance to ENGL 1023 (Composition II).

**COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

*Upon completion of Comp I and II at UAM, students will be able to:*

**Apply Rhetorical Knowledge**

- Understand the purpose, audience, and context of a variety of texts
- Understand and use appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality in a variety of writing tasks
- Understand genre, how genres shape reading and writing, and how to write in a variety of genres and rhetorical modes

## **Engage in Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing**

- Understand and use writing for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communication
- Understand the relationships among language, information, and power
- Understand themselves as parts of a writing community, and how to integrate their ideas with the ideas of others

## **Understand Process**

- Understand writing as an open, repeated process that requires idea generation, drafting, revision, and editing at all stages
- Understand the collaborative and social aspects of the writing process
- Understand how to productively critique their own work and the work of others

## **Exhibit Knowledge of Conventions**

- Understand and demonstrate the conventions of structure, tone, and mechanics in various genres and rhetorical modes
- Understand and practice appropriate means for documenting work
- Understand and apply the conventions of Standard Edited American English

## **Compose in Electronic Environments**

- Use electronic environments for drafting, reviewing, revising, editing, and sharing texts
- Locate, evaluate, organize, and use research material collected from electronic sources, including scholarly library databases, other official databases (e.g. federal government databases), and informal electronic networks and Internet sources

## **REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS**

- A notebook that you feel comfortable writing in (and occasionally tearing pages out of).
- A flash drive of at least 4GB (*can be purchased in the UAM bookstore*).
- Additional readings and materials, made available in class or via Blackboard.
- Lunsford, Andrea A. *Everyone's an Author*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2012. Print. ISBN-13 978-0393932119
- Bryant, Lizbeth, and Heather Clark. *Essays on Writing*. Harlow: Longman, 2008. Print. ISBN-13 978-0205521449
- Kirszner, Laurie G., and Stephen R. Mandell. *The Pocket Wadsworth Handbook*. 6th ed. Boston, MA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2015. Print. ISBN-13: 978-1285426617

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS** In 2014, any kind of writing you might do will require you to be able to use digital technologies effectively. Thus, this course has Blackboard components. We will be doing Blackboard-based writing assignments, you will submit major projects using Blackboard, and I will be putting all essential course materials (syllabus, schedule, assignment sheets, daily PowerPoint lessons, etc.) on Blackboard as well. If you are not familiar with Blackboard (e.g. how to submit an assignment, how to use the discussion board, etc.), then you are responsible for contacting Academic Computing for support (see below). This course assumes that you have access

to a computer with updated word processing software, preferably Microsoft Word. This course also assumes you have access to your UAM email address and check it daily. If you have a laptop computer and/or a smart phone that allows you to access the Internet, you may bring them to class *for use in specific activities*. While technology makes life easier, it can also be difficult (broken flash drives, deleted work, unavailable Internet connections, Blackboard crashes, etc.). So, plan accordingly. "Blackboard was down" or "my computer died" are not acceptable reasons to blow off doing assignments. **It is in your best interest to leave extra time, especially in the first few weeks, to ensure that technology does not get in the way of your coursework.**

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT INFORMATION** *Issues with Blackboard:* Office of Academic Computing: phone 870-460-1663. Open Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 4:30pm Help Desk at [fendley@uamont.edu](mailto:fendley@uamont.edu) or phone 870-460-1663. *Issues with Email:* Office of Information Technology: phone 870-460-1036. Open Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 4:30 p.m. *Library and On-Campus Computing:* The computer section in the Library is open during regular Library hours: For Taylor Library hours: <http://www.uamont.edu/library/>

## COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**Attendance:** All college writing courses, no matter what school you take them at, are interactive and require high levels of student participation. We will be completing daily activities that cannot be made up, and you will find that, in a fast-paced writing class, missing a class meeting will leave you behind. There is no official UAM policy for attendance, so you will not specifically lose points for skipping class, arriving late, or leaving early. However, I will be keeping track of your attendance for my own records. If you tell me that you're hopelessly lost, and my records show that you haven't attended class in three weeks, it will be pretty clear to both of us what happened.

If you need to miss class for a school-sponsored activity, please provide me with documentation before the absence occurs. In the case of catastrophic events or extended illnesses, we can work together to determine a way for you to successfully complete all graded assignments within a timeframe that I determine. In all cases, if you are unable to demonstrate by the end of the course that you can meet the Student Learning Outcomes, you will be unable to earn a passing grade for this course.

**Late Assignments:** Major projects and other graded assignments will be docked 10% for each day they are late. After any kind of assignment is seven days late, it will be recorded as a zero. There will be no exceptions to this policy unless arrangements are made **BEFORE THE DUE DATE**. This policy is intended to prepare you for the rigor of college work. **YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL MAJOR PROJECTS TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR A PASSING GRADE IN THIS COURSE.**

**Contacting Your Instructor:** I will use your UAM email address, and you should use mine if you'd like to email me. If you email me something, I will email you back, ordinarily within 48 hours, to tell you that I have received your message. However, if you don't receive my email reply, this means that I did not receive your message. **I answer emails Monday – Friday from 8am to 4pm. Expect a reply within 48 hours.** (FYI: If you email at, say, 3:00am expecting a reply from me at 3:15am, you will be sorely disappointed.) I hold formal office hours at the time and location listed above, but if

you need to see me at a different time, please know that I am more than willing to see students by appointment.

**Remind:** I use a free app called Remind to communicate with students via text message alerts. It doesn't require you giving me your phone number, nor me giving you mine. It's not required, but if you check your text messages frequently, it might be useful.

To sign up, go to <https://www.remind.com/join/drpl> and enter your cell phone number. You'll then receive a text with a verification code, which you'll enter into the website. Then you just need to add a bit of information and you're all set. I send Remind messages after each class period reminding you of your homework and assignments, but you should always make sure to check our course calendar, your UAM email, and Blackboard as well.

### **Academic Dishonesty:**

1. *Cheating:* Students shall not give, receive, offer, or solicit information on examinations, quizzes, etc. This includes but is not limited to the following classes of dishonesty:
  - Copying from another student's paper;
  - Use during the examination of prepared materials, notes, or texts other than those specifically permitted by the instructor;
  - Collaboration with another student during the examination;
  - Buying, selling, stealing, soliciting, or transmitting an examination or any material purported to be the unreleased contents of coming examinations or the use of any such material;
  - Substituting for another person during an examination or allowing such substitutions for oneself.
2. *Collusion:* Collusion is defined as obtaining from another party, without specific approval in advance by the instructor, assistance in the production of work offered for credit to the extent that the work reflects the ideas of the party consulted rather than those of the person whose name is on the work submitted.
3. *Duplicity:* Duplicity is defined as offering for credit identical or substantially unchanged work in two or more courses, without specific advanced approval of the instructors involved.
4. *Plagiarism:* Plagiarism is defined as adopting and reproducing as one's own, to appropriate to one's use, and to incorporate in one's own work without acknowledgement the ideas or passages from the writings or works of others.

For any instance of academic dishonesty that is discovered by the instructor, whether the dishonesty is found to be cheating, collusion, duplicity, or plagiarism, the result for the student(s) involved will be a zero on the assignment in question. Depending on the egregiousness of the violation, the instructor may reserve the right to fail the student for the course and report the incident.

We will be having discussions and activities early in the semester exploring plagiarism and its definitions, and how to avoid it. If at any time you have doubts about whether or not you are using your own or another's writing ethically, just ask. Don't risk making a huge mistake.

**Student Conduct Statement:** Students at the University of Arkansas at Monticello are expected to conduct themselves appropriately, keeping in mind that they are subject to the laws of the community and standards of society. The student must not conduct him/herself in a manner that disrupts the academic community or breaches the freedom of other students to progress academically.

During class time your attention should be focused on communicating with your classmates and your instructor. I cannot force you to pay attention to me (that is your choice), but I do expect you to be quiet and considerate while other classmates are speaking, and to not distract them or interfere with their learning. This applies to phones, texting, iPods, Facebook, earbuds, eating and drinking, vaping, et cetera. If I determine you are doing something – anything –which is distracting, I will ask you to stop, and reserve the right to ask you to leave if the distracting behavior continues. I expect my students to be professional. Don't do anything that you wouldn't want me to tell a potential employer in, say, a letter of recommendation.

**Students with Disabilities:** It is the policy of the University of Arkansas at Monticello to accommodate individuals with disabilities pursuant to federal law and the University's commitment to equal educational opportunities. **It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of any necessary accommodations at the beginning of the course.** Any student requiring accommodations should contact the Office of Special Student Services located in Harris Hall Room 120; phone 870 460-1026; TDD 870 460-1626; Fax 870 460-1926; email: [whitingm@uamont.edu](mailto:whitingm@uamont.edu)

**Final Exam Meeting:** UAM requires that each class meet for a two-hour final exam period. We will meet in our regular classroom at our scheduled final exam date and time: Tuesday, December 9, 1:30pm - 3:30pm. There is no actual exam, but you will be giving your multimodal presentations.

### **Special Dates of Concern:**

August 22 (F): Last day to register or add classes

September 1 (M): Labor Day. No classes. University offices closed

October 29 (W): Last day to drop a class. Grade will be W

October 30 (H): No class session; Dr. Platt at IWCA Conference. Blackboard activity assigned.

November 26 – 28 (W – F): No classes. Holiday

December 5 (F): Last day of classes. (Thursday, December 4 is OUR last day of class.)

December 9 (T): FINAL EXAM MEETING. You must be present!

### **GRADES IN ENGL 1013.14**

Project 1: Narrative Composition (200 pts)

Project 2: Evaluative Composition (200 pts)

Project 3: Analytical Composition (300 pts)

Project 4: Argumentative Composition Multimodal Presentation (300 pts)

Weekly Response Posts (16 @ 25 pts each) (400 pts)

Writing Notebook and Class Participation (8 @ 50 pts each) (400 pts)

**TOTAL: 2000 pts**

### **Grading Scale at UAM:**

A= 90 — 100 (1790 - 2000 pts)

B= 80 — 89 (1590 - 1789 pts)

C= 70 — 79 (1390 - 1589 pts)

D= 60 — 69 (1190 - 1389 pts)

F= 59 and below (1189 pts and below)

### **ASSIGNMENT DETAILS**

This course will consist of the following assignments:

### **MAJOR PROJECTS**

You will complete four (4) major projects this semester. Each of these includes three components.

1. A rough draft, which you must turn in. (25% of the project's total point value)
2. An in-class writing workshop, which you must participate in. (25% of the project's total point value)
3. A final draft, which you must turn in. (50% of the project's total point value)

Each of these components contributes to the project's final grade. For example, if you do not participate in the in- class writing workshop for Project 1, you will lose 25% of the project's total point value. That means your grade will immediately fall to 150/200 points, or 75%, a C.

Along with the final draft of each major project, you will turn in (as a separate document) a letter of reflection on the assignment addressed to me and your classmates. It should be at least 300-400 words. **You will not receive a grade without submitting this letter.** I will provide you with examples of strong reflective letters well before you turn in your final draft of your first major project.

Between receiving instructor and peer comments and turning in your final drafts of major assignments, you will have at least one week to work. The final draft of your project will be receive a letter grade and will be assessed according to a rubric that I will provide to you along with your assignment sheet.

## MULTIMODAL PRESENTATION

In this project, you will transform one of your text-based essays into another form; that is, you will *remediate* one of the projects you have composed for this class already (we'll talk about what remediation is this semester). The format is up to you; you may wish to make a video, a poster, a website, a PowerPoint presentation, a digital poem, or some other kind of multimodal composition that you can present to the class in some way. You are responsible for finding a way to get “the point” of your essay across, even in a different mode or combination of modes. Your letter of reflection should articulate and justify your rhetorical choices in both content and design. As with other assignments, the presentation will receive a letter grade and will be assessed according to a rubric that I will provide to you along with the assignment sheet.

## WEEKLY RESPONSE POSTS

The best way to get better at writing is to write—a lot! Therefore, you will be completing some informal writing each week in the form of graded responses that you will post to the discussion board on Blackboard. As I generally tailor these assignments to the issues and needs of individual classes, the subject and format of these response posts will vary. You will be responding to readings, ideas, issues—anything of interest that comes up in class.

There will be sixteen of these (one for each week of the semester). Each is worth 25 points, for a total of 400 points. I generally assign these at the end of class on Thursday, to be completed by the start of class time on the following Tuesday, but the dates may change (with plenty of notice from me). You will need to write 300 words per response to be eligible for full credit. I assess these responses according to a rubric, which I will provide to you.

## WRITING NOTEBOOK AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

Writing can be difficult and scary; some of us do everything we can to avoid writing, and then suddenly we have a paper due in 12 hours and we haven't even started. To begin to conquer these fears and unhelpful habits, we need to practice writing every single day. This is why the largest part of your participation grade will come from your writing notebook. You will write in your notebook at least **50 words per day, every day. EVERY DAY.** Not just class days and not just weekdays; you will write on weekends and holidays, too. You can write more than 50 words, of course, but if you write 150 words on Monday, you're not excused from writing 50 words on Tuesday and 50 words on Wednesday.

I will grade your notebooks every two weeks. On the day of submission, you and a classmate will read each other's notebooks and choose the most interesting entry for that two week period. I will collect these entries and from them select the five (5) best. I will type up and pass out the winning pieces, and each winner receives a treat, toy, or other small neat thing. To further incentivize this activity, I will be doing my daily writing right alongside you, and you're welcome to check my notebook to see if I'm being honest.

## \*\*REVISIONS OF MAJOR PROJECTS

I want you to start thinking about writing as a process (one that you move through recursively,

which we'll talk about in class). As such, I want you to take revision seriously. Revisions of final drafts are optional but encouraged. You may revise *two major projects* this semester. My revision policy is as follows:

1. You must turn your revised project no later than a week after the graded final draft was handed back to you.
2. You must also meet with me, or make an appointment with a consultant in the Center for Writing and Communication, to discuss your plan for revising your project. You may rewrite and resubmit another reflective letter, but it is not required.
3. You must submit your project **via email** to me. I will grade your revision, then average the grade on the original final draft and the revision to produce your final grade on the project.

### **A FINAL WORD**

Some say that writing is humanity's greatest invention. If that's true, would you then expect writing to be easy? Writing is challenging for everyone—even for professionals whose job it is to write all the time (like me). It will never not be challenging, but if you practice, you will get better at it. Your willingness to take that challenge seriously is the most crucial factor in your success in this class. I will be here for you every step of the way. Good luck.