

Dubuque Community School District
Hempstead High School

Course Name: Practical Composition

Course Number: XSM339

Room: Loo3

Teacher Name: Linda Jegerlehner

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Office Hours: Period 3 in the Special Education Office

Course Description: Open to juniors who meet the prerequisite placement based on assessment and instructor recommendation This course is for students who require special education services as indicated by their Individual Education Plan (IEP). Instruction will further develop the writing skills from Practical English 1-2 and Practical English 3-4. It also explores the art of written communication. Students practice basic writing skills of paragraphs, essays, applications and forms and letter writing. Students will conduct research and practice organization in writing as the produce a career research paper.

Alignment to the Iowa Core Curriculum: Instruction, learning, and assessment are built primarily on the 11-12th grade-band expectations of the Iowa Core Writing and Language Strands. **Iowa Core**

Standards:

Standard 2: Writing

Students will routinely write to learn and to communicate for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Standard 3: Speaking and Listening

Students will participate effectively in a range of rich, structured conversations, collaborations, and presentations.

Standard 4: Language

Students will apply knowledge of the English language and its conventions when reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Instructional Strategies:

Instructor will conduct the class through

- Lecture/direct instruction/modeling
- Directing student research
- Conferencing with individual students
- Directing peer evaluation and editing
- Facilitating student self-assessment

Resources:

Students will be provided with a variety of handouts about writing techniques and/or to serve as writing models.

Students will have access to laptops and the internet daily to use to access a variety of online sources.

Reading helps improve writing by demonstrating what good writing looks like; therefore, students will be required to read a variety of written things – articles, short stories, essays, and poems, etc.

Activities/Assessments: (See course outline at the end of this document.)

Reading: short stories, poetry, nonfiction, informational texts, novels

Writing: analysis, narrative, poetry, journaling, persuasive, argumentative, writing

Speaking and Listening: pair-share, small-group discussion, large-class discussion Language:

Grammar, usage, and mechanics mini lessons and practice

Required Materials:

Writing utensils/notebook/folder/loose-leaf paper

Thumb drive or online access to all student writing is crucial in this course. Students who do not have the internet should obtain an external hard drive/memory stick to save their work on. Agenda for hall passes and scheduling

Homework/Grading Policies:

- Students are expected to hand in assignments on time. I will give students a reasonable amount of time to complete written work. Late work will only be accepted after a student-teacher conference and will receive a grade reduction of 50%.
- Students are expected to monitor their own grades in PowerSchool and alert me of any discrepancies within three days of posting.
- Students who are absent for one day are expected to turn in the work that was due on the day they return. If additional assignments were given, students will have one additional day to make up the missing work to receive full credit. For longer absences, students should make a point of speaking to me about a makeup plan
- If a student misses class but is in the building for any part of the day when an assignment is due (for example, sports, late arrivals, field trip, leave the building permits, etc...) she/he is expected to turn in the work that day to avoid a 50% grade reduction. Please find a way to get it to me.
- If a student has a legitimate emergency or condition that interferes with work completion, he or she should come and talk to me. I am a reasonable person and I understand that unexpected things can happen. I respect students who are honest and I will do what I can to accommodate students' special needs or circumstances.

Grading Scale: I follow the academic grading scale that is outlined in the student planner as follows:

A+= 98-100	B+= 88-89	B	C+= 78-79	D+= 68-69
A = 93-97	= 84-87		C = 73-77	D = 64-67
A-= 90-92	B- = 80-83		C-= 70-72	D-= 60-63

I do not weight grades. Grades are based on total points for all assignments given within the semester.

Extra Credit: I do not give extra credit. Students will be graded on the quality of work they do on the assignments given for the course. Exceptions may be given to students who have obviously excelled on an assignment through extra effort, who have attended and written about a fine arts performance, or who have submitted a piece of writing to a contest or publication as arranged with me ahead of time.

Plagiarism Guidelines:

With the advent of the Internet, the availability of information has exploded into a whole new and exciting realm for our students. The accessibility of documents has also brought with it an increasing

concern regarding plagiarism, which *www.dictionary.com* defines as: “a piece of writing that has been copied from someone else and is presented as being your own work; taking someone else's words or ideas as if they were your own.”

The English department is committed to educating our students about plagiarism and helping them come to understand what plagiarism is—especially through specific instruction in English 1-2, English 3-4, and composition classes.

We are committed to teaching students how to rightfully quote and document sources as well as how to effectively convert researched information into their own words.

The Hempstead Policy on cheating, located on p.19 of the student agenda, states: “Students are expected to do their own schoolwork. Cheating by looking at another student’s schoolwork, copying others’ work, copying from other sources or similar cheating is not tolerated. In addition to the discipline outlined in the planner, discipline may include the loss of class credit and failing grade.” In English courses, the consequences for incidental plagiarism (i.e., using a key phrase from another text without using quotation marks) will be decided by the classroom teacher. In the event that a student chooses to blatantly plagiarize (i.e., cutting and pasting entire documents or significant portions of documents), the Hempstead English teacher will institute the following specific consequences:

Composition: 1st occurrence: 0% on piece with no possibility of revision

2nd occurrence: student risks “**loss of class credit and failing grade**” for both quarter and semester

Cell Phone Usage

Students should always assume that their phones should be turned off and put away while in this class. I will tell students when it is okay to use their phones for class activities or to check their grades in Power School. **Students are never to play games or snapchat their friends on their phones while in this class. Students who act irresponsibly with their phones will have them confiscated and turned in to the office.**

Food and Beverages

Students must adhere to the school policy of clear and clear. In other words, students are allowed to drink clear water in a clear container. Students are not allowed to eat anything in my classroom.

Course Content

Effective Writing Skills (elements of style, grammar, usage, and mechanics) (covered within writing units)

Audience/purpose/tone

Effective paragraph structure

Unity, coherence and transitions

Clauses (independent/dependent)

Conjunctions (coordinating/subordinating)

Sentence variety (types)

Word choice

Complete Sentences (avoiding fragments, comma splices, rambling sentences and run-ons) Combining Sentences

Showing vs. telling

Punctuation (dialogue, quotes, separating clauses, colon, semicolon, titles, works cited) Parallelism

Active vs. Passive Voice

Avoiding Qualifiers (I think, to tell the truth)

Classroom Activities/Assessments

This class will be conducted as a workshop in which students engage in a variety of writing activities, peer editing, and sharing and supporting each other as writers. Teacher will conduct ongoing formative assessment of student work by participating in and observing the following activities:

- **Journaling** – as a means to explore ideas that may lead to longer written pieces.
- **Mini-lessons** in grammar, usage, mechanics, word choice, style, tone, etc.
- **Researching** – for information to include in written papers.
- **Planning** – Includes brainstorming ideas and outlining before writing.
- **Participating in Writers' Workshop** – to give feedback and help edit each other's papers.
- **Revising** – As a means to improve a piece of writing.

Assessment

Teacher will award points on the following:

- Student Journals
- Grammar//Usage post-tests
- Workshop reflection sheets
- Student/Teacher conference reflections
- Final Essays/Portfolio:
1st Quarter- 2 polished pieces + 1 unpolished piece
2nd Quarter- 2 polished pieces (1 is the research paper)

Student Responsibilities in the Writing Workshop

To ensure a successful experience in this type of class structure, you should

- Maintain a writing journal/notebook/folder where you journal
- Bring your writing journal to class each day o (journaling will be an essential part of this writing experience) □ Come to class each day, ready to write and reflect.
- Find and develop topics for your writing.
- Be willing to try new kinds of writing.
- Be willing to try new techniques, methods, and strategies to improve your writing.
- Do your best to learn the rules of written English.
- Be willing to work with peers in the learning of writing skills and strategies.
- Behave properly. This means following directions and not disturbing others.
- Take pride in your work and produce the best work you can.
- Grow as a writer

Teacher Responsibilities in Writing Workshop

- Mini Lessons
- Guiding the Writing Process
- Facilitating self-assessment
- Offering encouragement
- Guide the development and use of assessment and grading guidelines
- Conferencing with students over finished pieces
- Keeping students on task

Types of Writing:

Below you will find some types of writing from which you will choose. Your portfolio should demonstrate a variety of types of writing. If you have other ideas, please run them by me for approval. Please keep this form in your portfolio as a record of your writing.

1. **Descriptive/Personal** _____ Personal Narrative

_____ Life Experiences (yours or someone else's)

_____ Photo Essay

_____ Letters (2-4 letters to different audiences)

2. **Expository** (topics focus on contemporary issues)

_____ Comparison/Contrast

_____ Cause/Effect

3. **Persuasion**

_____ Editorial

_____ Review: movie, book, music, play

4. **Literary Analysis** (Literary selections should be discussed with teacher prior to reading.) _____ Short

Story or Poetry

_____ Novel

5. **Research**

_____ **3** pages, MLA format, includes Works Cited and has undergone all phases of formal writing.

6. **Creative**

_____ Poetry/Song Lyrics

_____ Short Story