

Northwest Florida State College

Writing and Grammar, LIN 1670, Fall 2010

Course Policies and Syllabus

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Online classroom: <http://LTech.nwfsc.edu> > Click on “Log on to Desire2Learn”

Welcome! I'm delighted you've joined me for Writing and Grammar online. I hope you'll find this course interesting and useful; you will find it that it keeps you busy. I employ various strategies to help students stay engaged with the material, even though we are not meeting face-to-face: podcasts (online videos), discussion boards, and a group project are key elements of this class. I recommend online study groups among students and will provide your group with a private discussion board or a web conference—just ask.

If you're required to take this class and wonder if it's going to be useful, consider these sentences, all from *Eats, Shoots, and Leaves*, by Lynn Truss:

Am I looking at my dinner or the dogs? (Without the missing apostrophe, you are looking at your dogs, not their dinners!)

And in the King James translation of the Bible, commas matter:

“Verily I say unto thee, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.”

OR

“Verily I say unto thee this day, thou shalt be with me in Paradise.” (In this version, you could be spending some time in Purgatory first!)

So, yes, punctuation matters, along with grammar and style. Maybe you will come to enjoy it; the English majors among you may even turn into “language vigilantes,” to adapt one of Truss's phrases!

Will You Succeed? Research on online courses shows that if you meet most, not necessarily all, of the following criteria, you should do well in web-based courses:

- You like or at least have done reasonably well in previous courses in the same subject area.
- You have succeeded in previous online classes.
- You are self-disciplined and organized.
- You are a returning student (over 25 years old).
- You are skilled in gathering information from text.
- You are able to navigate the Internet.

See the self-evaluation for prospective distance learners to see if you are likely to succeed online: <http://lttech.nwfsc.edu/studentDLchecklist.cfm>.

Course Overview: This three-credit course is designed for students wanting to prepare for success in English Composition or to review grammar, sentence structure, and writing skills to enhance their job

performance. The course is entirely online, except for face-to-face midterm and final exams. You will need to bring a picture ID to these exams. Military students who are TDY during these times may locate proctors at the remote base to administer the exams.

Course Objectives:

1. You will become competent in the grammar of American English with emphasis on the following language skills: word choice, avoiding wordiness, placing modifiers, coordinating and subordinating, parallelism, avoiding fragments and comma splices, using standard verb forms, subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, using adjectives and adverbs, avoiding shifts in tense, making comparisons, and punctuation.
2. You will develop paragraphs and essays that communicate thoughts effectively in standard American English.
3. You will compose paragraphs and essays employing the following rhetorical strategies: narration, description, process, comparison/contrast, and others at the instructor's discretion.
4. Some of your writing assignments will be timed (midterm and final exams).
5. You will revise your own writing and correct mechanical errors.
6. You will incorporate at least one source in an essay, following MLA format.

Course Materials: Internet access

Textbook: *Writing and Grammar*, custom edition for Northwest Florida State College

Attendance: You are expected to log on to the online classroom at least twice a week, more often when tests are scheduled. Successful students usually log on three times a week to practice grammar skills, read/post to the discussion board, view podcasts (online videos), and communicate with their peers. Failure to log on at least twice a week will result in your being withdrawn from the class; dropping behind in assigned work will result in the same consequence.

Class Conduct: Because this is a web-based class and the online environment can prove somewhat challenging, I am including this excerpt from Patrick Sullivan's article "Gender and the Online Classroom" in *Teaching English in the Two Year College*. The manner in which we all conduct ourselves online will affect the climate of the class and the amount we learn; in fact, I have put this section early in this explanation of class policies because it is so very important.

Respect your fellow classmates. There is a great deal that we can learn from each other, but this can't happen if students feel uncomfortable in class about saying what they feel (afraid that their ideas will be treated harshly or not listened to respectfully) or are worried about what will be said to them or about them once they do post their comments. Make sure you do everything you can to make our classroom culture a comfortable learning environment for everyone in the class.

Use an appropriate tone of voice. Say what you need to say, but say it in an appropriate tone of voice—one that is respectful and calm. Sarcasm and heavily judgmental or confrontational comments break down good will and create an inhospitable atmosphere and are inappropriate and unacceptable in this class. This is a particularly important issue for an online class, where tone of voice is often difficult to "read" from the language on the screen (although the use of emoticons helps reduce this difficulty in some ways). I am asking you to make a special effort to conduct yourselves with tactfulness and sensitivity.

Listen to what people say. We can learn from each other only if we are able to listen to each other, so make a special effort to concentrate on what your classmates say and try to understand as completely as you can what they're saying. Be patient.

Enjoy other people's points of view, even if—or perhaps especially if—their opinions are different from your own.

Take responsibility for making this class successful. This is your class. Ask yourself what you can do during each class [interaction] to move the class forward in a positive way.

Respect the professor. There are a number of things implied about my attitude toward you in the way I have structured this class, and I would like to make those implications clear:

- I look forward to reading what you have to say.
- I will read and listen to what you say patiently and respectfully because I believe a great deal of learning takes place as students and teachers exchange ideas and listen to each other.

That being said, I need you also to remember that this respect needs to be reciprocal. When I post my comments or communicate with you via e-mail or the telephone, I need you to listen patiently and carefully. There may be classroom management issues (like grades on particular papers or your conduct in class) that I will have to address with you, and you will need to respond to these in an appropriately respectful manner. (pp. 367-369)

Email Etiquette: Please note that I am diligent in responding to your email correspondence; in fact, you can expect a response from me within twenty-four hours, excluding holidays and weekends. However, I do not respond to email that is inappropriate in tone or content, so if you do not get a response from me, please reword your message and resend it.

When you email me, please consider how you structure your email. In a college or business setting, always begin with “Dear Dr. Southard” or something similar. Starting with “Hey” or diving right into your message is not appropriate. Similarly, sign your full name to your emails.

Assignments: Assignments include homework, written paragraphs and one essay, a group project, quizzes, and tests. Weekly assignments may also include materials found on www.MyWritingLab.com, which I recommend you use to reinforce your skills. **Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due on Sunday nights, 11:59 p.m., EXCEPT mastery quizzes, which are due the Thursday, 11:59 p.m., preceding the corresponding unit test, midterm, or final.**

If you are retaking this class, please note that all your assignments must be new for this semester; you may not “recycle” previous work.

Assignments	Points
Homework You will submit your homework twice, during the week of midterms and the week of finals. Homework must be submitted in person, via email, or via fax (850 729-5278), NOT via U.S. mail. I review key sentences in your homework each week via a podcast (online video); note that answers to practice exercises are also provided in your textbook.	100

Assignments	Points
Mastery Quizzes (6 at 10 points each; the lowest is dropped) You must earn at least 70% on each mastery quiz before you can take the corresponding unit test. Mastery quizzes may be retaken as many times as you like but are always due on Thursdays in order for me to review them in a video before you take the related unit test or midterm/final.	50
Unit Tests (4 at 50 points each; the lowest is dropped) Unit tests cover specified blocks of material. You cannot access a unit test until you have achieved at least 70% on the corresponding mastery quiz.	150
Midterm and Final (100 points each)	200
Writing assignments (100 points each; includes at least one timed writing assignment) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing assignments will be submitted via the Desire2Learn (D2L) dropbox. Word processor documents must be saved in Word or rich text format (RTF), not WordPerfect, Works, or other word processor file formats. • Before submission to D2L, writing assignments must be submitted to www.Turnitin.com. • Once a writing assignment has been graded, it will not be graded again, so be sure that you are submitting the appropriate draft of each assignment. You can check this by viewing the assignment during and after submission on D2L. 	400
	900 possible

Grading: As in all other English classes at NWFSC, the grading scale is as follows:

- A = 93-100%
- B = 85-92%
- C = 75-84%
- D = 65-74%
- F = 64% and below

Turnitin: Northwest Florida State College subscribes to Turnitin.com, an online plagiarism detection and prevention service. By enrolling in this class, you are consenting to submit your papers to Turnitin, where they will be checked for plagiarism. Papers submitted to Turnitin are saved as source documents within the Turnitin database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in other papers. Turnitin is now integrated with D2L, the platform for this online course, so you will not have to submit your papers to both Turnitin and D2L; once you submit them to D2L, they are automatically submitted to Turnitin.

Tegrity: This course employs lecture capture software to provide you with videos of your instructor's lectures/PowerPoints/notes/demonstrations, etc. and you are required to watch these. These videos can be viewed with a standard high-speed Internet connection. If your home Internet connection is not adequate, please remember that any NWFSC open lab is available to you. You need only take your own headphones with you. Please realize that the quizzes and tests are NOT released to you until you have watched specific Tegrity videos/podcasts.

Getting Help

- **Contact your instructor** via email or phone.
- **Visit the Academic Success Center** (E-149 on the Niceville campus) Students may receive assistance with coursework in the Academic Success Center (ASC) and other tutoring locations (see <http://learningsupport.nwfsc.edu>).
- **Use Smarthinking:** Northwest Florida State College provides two free hours of tutoring to each enrolled student via Smarthinking.com. Students are limited to two hours of Smarthinking assistance each year; this limit may change based on Smarthinking usage and funding availability. Students needing more time may request an additional hour from the ASC Coordinator at 729-6078. To use Smarthinking, access RaiderNet: go to <http://www.nwfstatecollege.edu> > RaiderNet.
- **Contact NWFSC's Learning Technologies staff:** For assistance with D2L, contact the LTech staff and get an answer within 24 business hours (<http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/forms/studenthelpform.html>).

Late Work: One late paragraph is accepted without penalty up to one week late or on the last day of class, whichever comes first.

If you miss one unit test, you may make up those points by writing a paragraph that illustrates all the grammatical and punctuation rules covered by the test. In the make-up paragraph, you will highlight all instances of these rules and, in footnotes, explain your rationale for constructing these sentences. Clearly, this is a great deal of work, and I recommend that you take the tests on time. If you elect to write a make-up paragraph for a unit test, contact me for more details. You will have this "make-up" opportunity only once in a semester; other missed unit tests cannot be made up. The midterm and final exam cannot be taken late, nor the points made up.

No other work, including but not limited to quizzes, homework, and contributions to any group projects (when assigned), is accepted late.

Grades of "Incomplete": An incomplete grade ("I") may be awarded at the instructor's discretion when the student is unable to finish the required work because of unforeseen extenuating circumstances such as serious illness or TDY assignment. To receive an "I" grade, the student must have successfully completed a significant portion of the required coursework and be able to finish the remaining work without attending class or participating in an online class. An "I" grade will automatically convert to a grade of "F" if the student does not complete the remainder of the coursework by the established deadline.

Electronic Communication Devices: Cell phones, pagers, and other such electronic devices must be turned off during any in-class and lab time. Communication by electronic devices, including but not limited to instant messaging, text messaging, and telephone, during class is strictly prohibited unless expressly designated as part of the learning activities. Use of electronic communication devices during examinations or other graded activities may constitute grounds for disciplinary action. Where emergency or employment situations *require* access to electronic communication services, arrangements may be made *in advance* with the instructor. In certain circumstances, (e.g., exams, presentations, etc.), students may be required to temporarily deposit cell phones or other communications devices with the instructor or lab supervisor for the duration of the specific class or activity.

Test Security: During exams, you may be required to use electronic security/authorization tools.

Special Needs: If you have special needs for which accommodations may be appropriate to assist you in this class, please contact the Office of Services for Students with Special Needs in building C-1 on the Niceville campus, or call 729-6079 (TDD 1-800-955-8771 or Voice 1-800-955-8770).

Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Academic Integrity: Students are responsible for adherence to all college policies and procedures, including those related to academic freedom, cheating, classroom conduct, computer/network/e-mail use and other items included in the *NWFSC Catalog and Student Handbook*. Students should be familiar with the rights and responsibilities detailed in the current *NWFSC Catalog and Student Handbook*. Plagiarism, cheating or any other form of academic dishonesty is a serious breach of student responsibilities and may trigger consequences that range from a failing grade to formal disciplinary action.

Miscellaneous:

- According to the NWFSC Catalog, students who have not paid their tuition fees by the established deadline are not eligible to attend classes.
- Be sure you have an NWFSC email address and that it is entered correctly when you sign up for this D2L class. I will use your NWFSC email account to communicate with you if D2L is unavailable.
- All policies listed in the NWFSC Catalog will be observed. Please review the catalog at the beginning of the semester.
- In the event of unusual or extraordinary circumstances, the schedule, requirements, and procedures in this course are subject to change. If the college closes for inclement weather or other emergency, any exams, presentations, or assignments originally scheduled for the period of closure will automatically be due the first class meeting after the college reopens.
- As a courtesy to other students and the learning process, students may not bring children with them to class/exam/orientation sessions. Health and safety concerns prohibit children from accompanying adult students in any lab, shop, office, or classroom, or other college facility where potential hazards exist. More information on college policy on children on campus can be found in the NWFSC Catalog.

Once again, welcome! I hope you find the course useful and enjoyable. Good writing skills are essential in nearly every line of work and most college classes, so this course is designed to make you a success—with your participation, we'll meet that goal.

Tentative Syllabus:

The professor reserves the right to change the syllabus, including due dates, number of tests, and test dates. Students will be informed of any changes in advance. Note that your writing assignments must be turned in to Turnitin and the D2L dropbox.

- Each week, you must read the weekly notes under Content (on the top navigation bar in D2L).
- Mastery quizzes are due by the Thursday preceding the opening date of the corresponding unit exam, midterm, or final.
- Each week, all other assigned work is due by Sunday at midnight, unless otherwise specified.

	Homework Due	Reading/Writing Assignments Due	Exams and Quizzes	Other
Aug. 30—Subjects and Verbs	Practice Sheet 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “The Four Modes: Narration” 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View all Week 1 podcasts • Create Turnitin and MyWritingLab accounts
Sept. 6—Parts of Speech	Practice Sheet 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View Writing Effective Paragraphs on MyWritingLab.com • Narrative paragraph (submit to D2L dropbox and Turnitin) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastery Quiz on Subjects and Verbs—due Thursday • Unit Test: Subjects and Verbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View all Week 2 podcasts
Sept. 13—Forms of the Verb	Practice Sheet 5			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View all Week 3 podcasts
Sept. 20—Clauses and Phrases	Practice Sheet 7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastery Quiz on Parts of a Sentence—due Thursday • Unit Test: Subjects, Verbs, Parts of a Sentence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View all Week 4 podcasts • View Clauses and Phrases: Coordination on MyWritingLab.com
Sept. 27—Subordinate Clauses	Practice Sheets 8, 9, 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised narrative paragraph (submit to D2L dropbox and Turnitin) 		View all Week 5 podcasts
Oct. 4—Sentence Construction: Fragments	Practice Sheet 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “The Four Modes: Description” 		View all Week 6 podcasts SUBMIT ALL HOMEWORK THOROUGH WEEK 6*
Oct. 11—Midterm Exam		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive paragraph (submit to D2L dropbox and Turnitin) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastery Quiz—due Thursday • Midterm Exam 	View all Week 7 podcasts
Oct. 18—Verb Tense	Practice Sheet 21			View all Week 8 podcasts
Oct. 25—Subject-Verb Agreement	Practice Sheet 22			View all Week 9 podcasts

	Homework Due	Reading/Writing Assignments Due	Exams and Quizzes	Other
Nov. 1—Pronoun Reference and Agreement	Practice Sheet 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised descriptive paragraph (submit to D2L dropbox and Turnitin) 		View all Week 10 podcasts
Nov. 8—Pronoun Case	Practice Sheet 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read “The Four Modes: Process Analysis” Process essay (submit to D2L dropbox and Turnitin) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mastery Quiz on Verbs and Agreement—due Thursday Unit Test: Verbs and Agreement 	View all Week 11 podcasts
Nov. 15—Modifiers and Prepositions	Practice Sheets 25 and 14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mastery Quiz on Case and Modifiers—due Thursday Unit Test: Case and Modifiers 	View all Week 12 podcasts
Nov. 22—Parallel Structure	Practice Sheet 16			View all Week 13 podcasts
Nov. 29—Punctuation	Read Chapters 17-20 Practice Sheets 17 and 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised process essay (submit to D2L dropbox and Turnitin) 		View all Week 14 podcasts
Dec. 6—Puzzling Words and Final Exam	Practice Sheet 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read “The Four Modes: Comparison-Contrast” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mastery Quiz on Parallel Structure and Punctuation—due Thursday Final Exam-- Comprehensive 	View all Week 15 podcasts MAIL IN ALL HOMEWORK FOR WEEKS7-156*