HOW TO HELP STUDENTS BE STUDENTS
RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BRANCHBURG, NJ

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FACULTY OF THE FUTURE
MAY 30, 2014
Composition Courses at RVCC

Courses Offered

For a list of courses being offered this semester, please see the online course schedule. You can also view the official course outlines online.

**ENGL 050:** Introduction to College Reading and Composition I (ICRC I)

**Prerequisite(s):** Appropriate score on placement test.

Reading and Composition I is an intensive developmental course designed to provide students with the foundations needed for academic reading and writing. In this integrated reading and writing course students develop a range of strategies for reading different kinds of texts and will practice the stages of the writing process with special attention given to paragraph organization and sentence structure. This six-credit class meets for six hours each week: three hours in a traditional classroom and three hours in a computer lab.

**ENGL 060:** Introduction to College Reading and Composition II (ICRC II)

**Prerequisite(s):** Grade of C in ENGL 050 - Introduction to College Reading and Composition I or appropriate score on placement test.

Introduction to College Reading and Composition II is an intensive developmental course designed to provide students with the foundations needed for academic reading and writing. In this integrated reading and writing course students continue to develop a range of more advanced strategies for reading different kinds of texts and will practice the stages of the writing process with special attention given to essay organization and sentence structure. This four-credit class meets for four hours each week: two hours in a traditional classroom and two hours in a computer lab. This four credit class meets for four hours each week: two hours in a traditional classroom and two hours in a computer lab.

**ENGL 070:** English Composition I Workshop

**Prerequisite(s):** Grade of B in ENGL 050 - Introduction to College Reading and Composition I or ENGL 060 - Introduction to College Reading and Composition II or appropriate score on placement test.

**Corequisite(s):** Each section of this course is linked to a single section of ENGL 111 - English Composition I.

English Composition I Workshop is linked to English Composition I and is designed to enhance that course for students who need support in reading/writing. It takes place in a word processing lab where students are coached in structured ways to use the computer as a tool to improve reading and writing skills with an emphasis on process. The combined English Composition I and English Composition I Workshop sections allow students to work on English Composition I reading and writing assignments in a way that is paced, encourages full comprehension of the reading, and provides guidance during revision.

**ENGL 111:** English Composition I

**Prerequisite(s):** Grade of A in ENGL 050 Introduction to College Reading and Composition I or ENGL 060 Introduction to College Reading and Composition II, grade of B in ENGL 050 or ENGL 060 with corequisite of ENGL 070 English Composition I Workshop, or appropriate score on placement test.

English Composition I is the first in a two-course composition sequence. The central purposes of English Composition I are to develop critical reading and thinking skills and to write thesis-driven, text-based essays. The course takes a process-oriented approach to writing that incorporates prewriting, drafting, reviewing, and revising. Students in English Composition I learn basic research skills and apply them to at least one text-based research essay.

A Quick Guide to Composition Course Sequencing
If a student takes this course. . . . and gets this grade for the course. . . . then he or she moves on to . . .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICRC I (050)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>English Comp. I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>English Comp. I with Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>ICRC II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Repeats ICRC I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICRC II (060)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>English Comp. I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>English Comp. I with Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Repeats ICRC II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Comp. I with Workshop (111 &amp; 070)</td>
<td>Any passing grade from A to D</td>
<td>English Comp. II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Repeats English Comp. I with Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Comp. I (111)</td>
<td>Any passing grade from A to D</td>
<td>English Comp. II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Repeats English Comp. I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Comp. II (112)</td>
<td>Any passing grade from A to D</td>
<td>All composition requirements have now been fulfilled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Repeats English Comp. II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes and Explanations:

**Final grades for ICRC I (050) and ICRC II (060)** are determined through a process of portfolio review. At the end of the semester, each student submits a portfolio that contains a sampling of his or her work during the semester; this portfolio is read by at least two faculty members. If the readers determine that the student is ready to move on to English Composition I, then the student gets an “A” for ICRC I or ICRC II. If the readers believe that the student needs English Composition I with Workshop, then the student receives a “B” for ICRC I or ICRC II. If a student in ICRC I submits a portfolio that indicates he or she should take ICRC II next, then the student gets a “C” for ICRC I. In short, the final course grade for ICRC I and ICRC II is determined by the strength of the student’s portfolio, not by an average of grades assigned during the semester. (Instructors typically do not give letter grades to students’ work in ICRC I or ICRC II, although they are expected to give frequent and constructive feedback to students throughout the semester.)

Students who take **English Composition I with Workshop** register for linked sections of **English Composition I (ENGL 111)** and **English Composition Workshop (ENGL 070)**. ENGL 070 is always paired with English Composition I; it is never taught as a stand-alone course or in conjunction with any other composition course. Students who pass the ENGL 111 component of English Composition I with Workshop receive a grade of “pass” for ENGL 070. Students who fail the ENGL 111 component receive a grade of “fail” for ENGL 070.

A “D” grade is considered to be a passing grade in ENGL 111 and ENGL 112; however, the credits will not transfer to another school if the student earns a grade of “D.”

The **pre-requisite for any 200-level literature elective** is English Composition I (111). Students may take English Composition II (112) before, during, or after taking a literature elective.

Updated 8/30/12 by SA
FAQ: Best Practices in the Classroom

What should an essay assignment include?

All essay assignments should be distributed to students on paper (rather than just verbally described). Such assignments should specify the due date, page length requirement, and a clear purpose for the assignment. It can be helpful to initiate brainstorming by asking questions that might generate topic ideas. It's also helpful to clarify the criteria you'll be looking for (thesis, argument, support, organization, etc.). This document is also helpful if a tutor at the Academic Support Center is helping your student.

Should I give my students the in-class essay prompt in advance?

In-class essays are typically treated like an exam. Students should be told in advance which texts to read so they can reread and annotate, but they should not be given the actual essay question in advance.

What can students refer to when they write their in-class essays?

Students should definitely refer to their textbook so that they can incorporate quotes into their essays as support. Throughout the course, they should be encouraged to annotate their texts, so it's appropriate for them to refer to such annotations during the in-class essay. However, you should make sure that they haven't written out an actual essay in the book. Likewise, if they won't write in their books (despite the bookstore policy that it doesn't make a difference in the price they'll get for it), encourage them to use post-it notes. They could refer to such post-it notes during the in-class essay, again assuming they don't have entire paragraphs written on them. A dictionary and thesaurus may also be used.

Are students allowed to revise their in-class essays for a higher grade?

No. You may allow students to revise their graded out-of-class essays if you wish to do so, but students may not revise their in-class essays.

How much feedback and what kind of feedback should I give on drafts?

There is no one single answer to this question. When you provide feedback on rough drafts, it can be helpful to focus on the big picture (like thesis, argument, support, and organization), as opposed to focusing on editing grammar or technical errors. When you provide feedback on a final draft, comments about those issues should continue, but more specific comments regarding topic sentences, transitions, style, grammar, etc. could be added. Too many comments can be overwhelming, and too few can be unclear.

How do I handle plagiarism?

If you suspect plagiarism, try to get proof (e.g. type a sentence from the student's paper into Google, and it may take you to the student's source). If you find proof, we recommend that you write a memo to the Dean of Academic Affairs outlining the situation and providing copies of the evidence. If you go through the office of the Dean of Academic Affairs, the first offense is considered a warning, but the second offense can get the student expelled. You do, however, have considerable discretion regarding how you handle the situation. Some instructors fail that particular assignment; some instructors fail students for the course. If it's not too late in the semester, some instructors recommend that the student drop the class. There are a variety of options depending on the situation.

If you do write a memo to the Dean of Academic Affairs, it should be cc'd to the student and to the Chair of the English Department. It should also explain the assignment, the details of the student's violation, and your response. You should also attach the student's paper with the plagiarized source text, and highlight the identical or similar passages (if applicable). Remember to keep copies of everything for your own records. Don't hesitate to contact the Chair or the Adjunct Liaison if you suspect plagiarism; we can also provide you with a sample memo to the Dean.

Updated 8/17/12 by SA
Introduction to College Reading and Composition I
Introduction to College Reading and Composition II

Spring 2014

Portfolio Preparation

Purpose:

The purpose of this assignment is to prepare for the submission of your final portfolio. The portfolio will be read in order to determine your placement for the next semester:

- English Composition I (ENGL 111)—3 Credits/Grade=A
- English Composition I with Workshop (ENGL 111 and ENGL 070)—6 credits/Grade =B
- Introduction to College Reading and Composition II (ENGL 060)—4 credits/Grade=C*/F
- Introduction to College Reading and Composition I (ENGL 050)—6 credits/Grade=F
- Note: The grade of X is no longer going to be used for ICRC I/II.
  *Please note that ICRC II students cannot be assigned a grade of C.

Content:

Your final portfolio must be submitted in the manila folder provided by your instructor and include the following in order:

1. A Table of Contents (see the sample provided by your instructor)

2. A 1-2 page Self-reflection. Your self-reflection should include the following:
   a. An opening paragraph that introduces yourself as a reader and a writer and introduces your portfolio.
   b. A paragraph about the first essay (the diagnostic essay) included in your portfolio—How does this essay demonstrate your strengths and weaknesses as a writer? Be specific.
   c. A paragraph about the second essay (the text-based essay you chose) included in your portfolio—Why did you choose this essay? How does this essay demonstrate your strengths and weaknesses as a writer? In what ways is it different than the previous essay? Be specific.
   d. A paragraph about the third essay (the final in-class essay) included in your portfolio—how does this essay demonstrate your strengths and weaknesses as a writer? In what ways is it different than the previous essays? Be specific.
   e. A concluding paragraph that summarizes the ways you have improved as a reader and a writer this semester and areas that you think you still need to work on in future writing courses.
3. A total of three (3) essays
   a. The diagnostic essay
   b. One text-based essay of your choice
   c. The common final in-class writing

**Format:**

1. Each essay must have your G number in the upper left-hand corner of the page.
2. Each essay should have a title (for your Table of Contents)
3. Each essay that is more than one page must be stapled.
4. Each essay (including your self-reflection) must be double-spaced.

**Due Date:**
Portfolios are due **on the last day the class meets; no late portfolios will be accepted for review.**
SAMPLE TABLE OF CONTENTS

G#

Introduction to College Reading and Composition I/II (choose either I or II)

Spring 2014

Final Portfolio

Table of Contents

1. Self-Reflection
2. Essay Title or Diagnostic Essay
3. Essay Title
4. Essay Title
Contact Information

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# Student Development Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STDV 013</td>
<td>Student Success Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STDV 100</td>
<td>The College Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STDV 101</td>
<td>Career Development Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STDV 102</td>
<td>Leadership Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STDV 103</td>
<td>Dual Enrollment/Freshman Transition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## STDV100—The College Experience

The College Experience course is a two college credit course that aids students in transitioning to the college environment. The course is a hybrid first year seminar as students spend half the course learning strategies related to college success and half of the course with self-assessment and exploration.

The course is instructed by a variety of faculty, including full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and college administrators.

A core aspect of the course is that students become connected to the circle of learning, critical thinking, and how course content from specific disciplines can be applied to their lives as college students as well as their personal and professional lives. Disciplines that are connected to the course via the faculty include: Anatomy and Physiology, Marketing, Sociology, Psychology, Computer Science, and Education.

An emphasis on career planning and non-cognitive assessment is also a part of the self-assessment component of the course. Students are challenged to analyze their strengths and areas that are ripe for improvement within the context of their K-12 educational experiences. This context is used to help students become intentional learners who are proactive in their approach to their coursework and managing their academic careers.

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### Texts used for STDV 100:

- **Focus on Community College Success** by Constance Staley
- **Breaking Night** by Liz Murray
- **Warriors Don’t Cry** by Melba Pattillo-Beals
- **The Thinking Life** by P.M. Forni

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### Important aspects of STDV 100:

- Students who complete STDV100 earn a .5 higher GPA than students who do not take the course.
- The course is required of students in the two lowest levels of developmental English and mathematics.
- The course teaches strategies concurrently with a schedule that parallels important points throughout each semester.

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96% of students who complete the course recommend other new students take the course.

Students who complete the course report that they feel better prepared to meet with success in their remaining college courses.

First-Year Experience Office
College Center - 143

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