

ENGL 1120: OBJECTIVES, REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Objectives for ENGL 1120

- To continue to develop the student's proficiency at using writing processes, with more attention on the research process. This would include locating sources in a variety of media; evaluating sources for validity, reliability, and applicability; and making intelligent choices of sources that are appropriate for the requirements of the assignment and the rhetorical objectives of the essay.
- To use the research process to develop and support claims. In particular, to quote, paraphrase, and summarize sources accurately, to incorporate sources smoothly into the essay, and to use sources to support an argument of the student's own making.
- To learn to apply correctly the mechanics of documentation and citation according to the Modern Language Association (preferred) or some other established organization.

To further develop the student's critical reading skills, as evidenced in various written exercises, with attention given to the text's argumentative validity and its appropriate use of rhetoric and logic to advance its case.

Course Requirements for ENGL 1120

Textbooks

The instructor's supplemental syllabus will list the textbooks students are required to buy. Instructors with one or more year of experience teaching composition at Auburn may select their own texts, provided that these include a handbook, an anthology of nonfiction readings (commonly called a reader), and a text that provides instruction in the writing process (a rhetoric). A single text that combines two or more of these functions can also be used.

Instructors teaching composition for the first time at Auburn are required to select their textbooks from the following list:

Handbook:

Hult, Christine A. and Thomas N. Huckin. *The New Century Handbook*. Custom ed. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2005. (Includes some rhetoric.) (Custom edition only, ISBN 0-536-74819-5) Reader and/or Rhetoric. NOTE: Some of the texts below include rhetorical and handbook parts. Instructors may want to review these books, since some of them could be used in place of *The New Century Handbook* or other texts listed below.

Axelrod, Rise B. and Charles R. Cooper. *Reading Critically, Writing Well*. 7th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2002.

Mauk, John and John Metz. *The Composition of Everyday Life: A Guide to Writing*. Boston: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2004.

Rottenberg, Annette T. *Elements of Argument*. 8th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2002.

Writing Requirements for ENGL 1120

Students will write between 3500-4500 words for graded work. This will be divided among the following writing assignments:

- Three essays to be written out of class. These essays will count for 80% of the course grade. Instructors should require students to practice drafting and revision for all essays.
- Writing that supports the three essays. This may include short papers, journals, and responses to reading assignments. Instructors will generally score or grade this work, and the details for doing so will be explained in their syllabus. This writing counts for 10% of the course grade.
- A final exam, to be written during the university-mandated exam time, and counting for 10% of the course grade.

The three essays for this course are described below:

- An essay that evaluates sources according to criteria developed by the instructor and that builds on the critical reading skills developed in ENGL 1100. The assignment may begin by asking students to write an annotation or précis of each source, but the final document should be an essay that evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the sources and assesses their value in the student's research for the course. Instructors should be clear on the number of sources required for this assignment and should also use this assignment to teach their students proper documentation format.

At least one of these next two essays requires the use of sources and their proper citation and documentation.

- An essay that argues for a claim or thesis, or that develops and argues for the validity of an idea or for the student's understanding of an idea. Students should be reminded that this is not an opinion paper only. The essay is to be grounded in a sound knowledge of the subject matter and of the writings of others on the subject. The paper should go beyond persuasion and should be addressed to readers who are familiar enough with the subject to make an intelligent assessment of the essay's

- credibility.
- An essay that identifies and demonstrates the existence of a problem, evaluates proposed solutions, and argues on behalf of a solution or a combination of solutions.

Grades in ENGL 1120

General Grading Policy

Instructors of ENGL 1120 use their experience and professional judgment to evaluate a student's writing. The criteria for separate grades given below help guide them in their evaluation and can help students understand what will be expected of them in the course. As the criteria show, instructors evaluate more than grammar and the formal correctness of the essay. They'll take into account support and evidence for claims, the quality of the prose, and other rhetorical features that aid the reader in understanding the essay.

Students are encouraged to read these criteria carefully and to ask their instructors to explain anything they don't understand. As students will find, these criteria differ in many ways from those they might have become familiar with in high school. Just as importantly, students should not use their grades in high school English as a predictor or indicator of their performance in college composition. Nor should they count on the opinions of former teachers or parents to overrule the evaluations of their ENGL 1120 instructor.

Instructors may build additional requirements into their assignments that will factor in to the grade a student gets. These factors should be consistent with the philosophy and objectives of the course.

Challenging a Grade on a Paper or for the Course

Students who wish to challenge the grade on a paper or for the course must follow the procedures for filing an academic grievance, as spelled out in *The Tiger Cub*. Before doing so, students should know specifically what kinds of grievances are possible. Merely believing that one should have gotten a higher grade does not usually qualify as a legitimate grievance. Students who believe they do have a legitimate grievance should first contact their instructor. If the instructor is unavailable (or upon referral from the instructor), they should come to the English Department and ask to speak with the Coordinator of Composition. After speaking with the Coordinator of Composition, they may be referred to the Department Head.

Grading Criteria for Essays in ENGL 1120

The same factors which go into evaluating and grading essays in ENGL 1100 are applicable to essays written in ENGL 1120. The difference is that expectations are higher, and papers will be evaluated on their research, the quality of argument, and documentation mechanics. These are covered below.

The “A” Essay

This essay demonstrates the student’s ability to address rhetorical situations in innovative, creative, and perceptive ways. The topic is well-researched and demonstrates the student’s understanding of the topic. The purpose is distinguished by some depth and breadth of insight, and the support is interesting, relevant, and thought-provoking. The organization is coherent and appropriate to the rhetorical situation. The writing exhibits finesse in style, diction, and sentence structure. There are no grammatical and mechanical errors. The sources are smoothly incorporated into the essay and documentation and citation are free of errors.

The “B” Essay

This essay demonstrates the student’s ability to address the rhetorical situation in a way beyond mere competency. The point is original and interesting, the organization shows a high degree of sophistication, and the support is specific, substantive, and relevant. The style and tone reflect attention to rhetorical concerns and the audience’s needs. Sentence structure and diction show a strong ability to use language effectively. The writing is free of distracting errors. The research is used to support the student’s thesis and rhetorical goals, and documentation and citation are correctly done.

The “C” Essay

This essay meets the requirements of the assignment in a competent way. The essay displays some evidence of rhetorical and audience awareness and includes adequate support of a recognizable claim. The organization is logical but at times formulaic or not appropriate for the intended audience. Coherence is compromised by weak or formulaic paragraphs. The tone and style are appropriate, but there is little evidence of a sophisticated use of writing to advance the argument. The paper is readable (though not necessarily engaging) to the intended audience, but errors in usage and mechanics will occur often enough to hinder the audience’s understanding. Sources are incorporated into the essay, though not always smoothly, and there are no (or very few) errors in documentation and citation.

The “D” Essay

The essay only begins to meet the requirements of the essay, but is flawed in one or more of the following ways: the essay’s purpose may be confused or general; its support may not be specific, wholly accurate, relevant, or sufficient; the essay lacks coherence; there may be no or very weak paragraph transitions. The voice and tone may be inconsistent or inappropriate. The style is awkward, making reading difficult. Sentence structure is at times awkward; word choice is vague; and the number of grammatical and/or mechanical errors distracts the audience. Sources have not been incorporated smoothly, and documentation and citation are incorrect.

The “F” Essay

This essay does not meet the requirements of the assignment or is seriously flawed in one or more of the following ways: the essay lacks purpose and/or a claim that is clear, suitably limited, and on the assigned topic; it lacks support and any apparent organization or development; it has a voice or tone that alienates the audience, or a style that is unreadable or deviates significantly from the conventions of standard written English. Research has not been appropriately incorporated and is incorrectly documented.