

Course Syllabus
ENGL 101 – English Composition
3 credits

Prerequisites: Students should have a basic understanding of the conventions of standard, written English.
Students should be proficient in using English as a spoken language.

Instructors: Stacie Vesolich, MS

Contact Info: Instructor may be contacted through the Portage messaging system

Course web site address: www.portagelearning.com

Course meeting times: ENGL 101 is offered continuously

Course Description: The ability to write well is a key contributor in achieving a high degree of success in academic, business, and medical fields. To be able to effectively communicate one's ideas through a logical and methodical writing process is a necessary skill in today's competitive world. Essentials of English Composition 101 will help you, the student, to generate effective compositions using various modes of writing. The course will focus on developing your ability to utilize critical thinking, organize your thoughts, and clearly express those thoughts in standard, written English.

Course Overview: Students will demonstrate proper use of the English language in writing both in skill and form, integrating reading and research for critical thinking and effective communication. This course will focus on the writing process, the various modes of writing, the research paper process, literary analysis, and reflective writing.

Course Outcomes:

- Students will effectively write using multiple genres of composition.
- Students will utilize reading and research for critical thinking, analysis, and communication.
- Students will develop college level vocabulary skills to enhance writing.
- Students will develop their ability to think, to organize, and to communicate their ideas clearly and objectively.
- Students will write clear, coherent, and organized sentences or paragraphs with one central idea.
- Students will write with a command of the stylistic aspects of composition.
- Students will write with controlled organization and well-developed content, sustaining a logical order throughout the piece.
- Students will integrate resources to enhance writing.

- Students will generate effective compositions using various methods for the development of ideas.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to follow the conventions of standard written English.
- Students will use clear research questions and suitable research methods to present evidence from primary and secondary resources.
- Students will write using a standard method of documentation such as MLA.

Each of these ENGL 101 student learning outcomes is measured:

Directly by: (1) Essay assignments (with instructor feedback)
(2) A final Research Paper

Indirectly by an end of course student-completed evaluation survey

Course Delivery: This course is asynchronously delivered online. Contact hours include 40 - 50 hours of reviewed module assignments with instructor feedback, and 10 - 20 hours of writing a final research paper.

It is the policy for all Portage Learning courses that only one exam be completed each day. Research on best practices in learning psychology indicates that time is needed to process material for optimal learning. This means that once an exam has been completed, the next exam will not unlock until the following day. Please plan your time accordingly. If you have a legitimate need for an exception to this policy, please contact your instructor.

Required Computer Accessories: It is recommended that students use a desktop or laptop computer, PC or Mac, when taking the course. Some tablet computers are compatible with the course, but not all features are available for all tablet computers. The latest full version of Firefox is required for the optimal operation of the Portage Learning Management System. In addition, you must have the latest full version of Adobe Flash Player. We highly recommend using a high speed Internet connection when submitting your course work.

Required readings, lectures, and assignments: Portage courses do not use paper textbooks. Students are required to read the online lesson modules written by the course author which contain the standard information covered in a typical course.

There are practice exercises in the opening module that are mandatory before proceeding in the course. They include outlining, research questions, brainstorming, narrowing the topic, writing the intro, body, conclusion of a paper, etc. The module exercises are a pass/fail component of the course and will be reviewed for completeness by the instructor. Be sure to complete all of the exercises since this is an important part of preparation for the subsequent modules/writing assignments. If you have any questions please contact the instructor via the My Messages tab.

Grading Rubric:

Writing Assignment #1 (Write a Descriptive Essay)	10 pts.
Writing Assignment #2 (Write a Narrative Essay)	10 pts.
Writing Assignment #3 (Write an Expository Essay)	10 pts.
Writing Assignment #4 (Write a Persuasive Essay)	10 pts.
Writing Assignment #5 (Write a Literary Analysis: Poetry)	10 pts.
Writing Assignment #6 (Write a Literary Analysis: Prose)	10 pts.
Writing Assignment #7 (Write a Reflective Essay)	10 pts.
Final Exam: Writing A Research Paper	30 pts.
Total:	100 pts

The current course grade and progress is continuously displayed on the student desktop.

Grading Scale:

89.5% - 100% (89.5 - 100 pts)	= A
79.5% - 89.4% (79.5 – 89.4 pts)	= B
69.5% - 79.4% (69.5 – 79.4 pts)	= C
59.5% - 69.4% (59.5 – 69.4 pts)	= D
<59.5% (<59.5 pts)	= F

Guidelines for Writing Assignments:

- Superior Paper (A): Demonstrates the writer's ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective composition: focus, content, organization, style, and the use of correct grammatical conventions.
- Good Paper (B): This paper is well-written, but lacks the writing control of a superior paper in demonstrating focus, content, organization, style, and use of correct grammatical conventions.
- Average Paper (C): The writing is adequate in conveying the writer's ideas, but the paper is lacking in organization, stylization, grammatical competency, and focus.
- Weak Paper (D): The writing of this paper is underdeveloped and inadequate in organization, grammar, focus, content, and the use of correct grammar.
- Failing Paper (F): This is a poorly written essay that neglects to adhere to the directions of the writing assignment. The paper completely lacks focus, stylization, organization, and grammatical competency.

- **Plagiarized Paper:** This paper reveals evidence that the submitted work is not the writer's original work, or the submitted information has not been properly documented using the MLA format. The instructor has the right to refuse to accept this paper.

Module Topics

Module 1: The writing process requires a series of steps to ensure a quality essay or composition. Through instruction and practice exercises, students will learn to write, or enhance their writing, demonstrating a command of the stylistic aspects of composition.

1. Narrowing A Topic and Gathering Information
2. Brainstorming, Clustering, and Outlining
3. Writing a Thesis Statement and the Introduction
4. Writing the Body
5. Writing a Conclusion
6. Enhancing the paper with a well-developed vocabulary

Descriptive Writing: In this genre, the writer's goal is to make the reader "experience" the information. The writer incorporates the senses such as sound, sight, and even aroma in conveying a description. In a well-written essay, describe a place that you have visited. Henry David Thoreau once stated, "There is no such thing as pure objective observation. Your observation, to be interesting, i.e. to be significant, must be subjective." Recall the observations that you have made at a certain place (for example, a trip to Hawaii), focusing on sounds, smells, and even the local "flair and flavor" of the place.

Module 2: Narrative writing tells the story of an event. For this genre, students will write a non-fiction narrative in which they express the story of an event that impacted their life. For example, a coming-of-age situation (*bildungsroman*) in which the writer saw things through the eyes of a child but after the event, their viewpoint changed. The tone of this writing may be serious or humorous. For example, a humorous tone and story may be the time you discovered that your dad was actually playing the part of Santa, whom you sadly discovered really didn't exist. Reflecting a serious tone, the author Amy Tan (*The Joy Luck Club* and *The Kitchen God's Wife*) relates a non-fiction narrative when she first came to grips with the true motives of her somewhat controlling mother, rather than viewing or casting judgment on her mother through the perspective and understanding of a child.

- Module 3: The intent of an expository essay is to explain, inform or clarify. Students will write a cause and effect essay, explaining how one cause (or causes) leads to a certain effect. For example, the writer Jack London made observations and took pages and pages of notes on his trip to the Yukon Territory/Klondike during the years of the Gold Rush. He captured in writing the lifestyles of the miners searching for gold, often relating how their failure to see how the bitter cold (the cause), resulted in hypothermia (the effect).
- Module 4: This genre of writing should generate a response from the reader. Persuasive writing causes a change in thought or opinion. Students will read an article and/or watch a video about an issue that suggests both affirmative and negative positions. Students will develop an essay with a strong, persuasive viewpoint pertaining to the subject of the article/video.
- Module 5: Literary analysis is written to help the reader understand the concept and stylization of a novel, play, or short story. The writer should focus on the following elements: tone, diction, syntax, author's point of view, structure, imagery, and dramatic context of a selection. Students will review poetry and write a literary analysis based on the selection.
- Module 6: Continuing the theme of literary analysis from Module 5, students will review a sampling of a prose selection and will write a literary analysis based on the selection.
- Module 7: The reflective essay reflects on you and your developmental success as a writer. This essay will reflect on the sequencing of the student's work: What were the student's initial fears and weaknesses when it came to the writing process? What areas of growth occurred in the development of the student's writing skills? What modes of writing were difficult for the writer, and which were easy? What strategies and recommendations will the student establish for future writing endeavors?
- Module 8: Throughout a college or professional career, students are often required to write a research paper which supplies information from the viewpoint and labor of others, and hence, must be properly formatted and adequately documented. Beginning with prewriting and continuing through the various steps of the process, students will develop skills in writing a research paper that adheres to MLA guidelines.
1. Prewriting
 2. Outline, Research questions, and Definition of Terms
 3. First Draft

Final Paper: The final paper based on the work begun in Module 8 will be submitted.

1. Editing, Proofreading, and Submitting a Revised Paper
2. MLA: Parenthetical Citations
3. Works Cited Page

Holidays:

During the following holidays, all administrative and instructional functions are suspended, including the grading of exams and issuance of transcripts.

New Year's Day	Easter
Memorial Day	Independence Day
Labor Day	Thanksgiving weekend
Christmas Break	

The schedule of holidays for the current calendar year may be found under the Student Services menu at www.portagelearning.com

Suggested Timed Course Schedule (to complete the course within a typical college semester)

All Portage courses are offered asynchronously with no required schedule to better fit the normal routine of adult students, but the schedule below is suggested to allow a student to complete the course within a typical college semester. Despite this suggestion, the students may feel free to complete the course at their desired pace and on a schedule determined by them.

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Subject Matter</u>
Days 1-14	Module 1, Essay 1	The Writing Process Descriptive Writing
Days 15-28	Module 2, Essay 2	Narrative Writing
Days 29-42	Module 3, Essay 3	Expository Writing
Days 43-56	Module 4, Essay 4	Persuasive Writing
Days 57-66	Module 5, Essay 5	Literary Analysis: Poetry
Days 67-76	Module 6, Essay 6	Literary Analysis: Prose
Days 77-90	Module 7, Essay 7	Reflective Essay

Days 91-97	Module 8, Assignment 8	Final Paper Preparation
Days 98-108	Final Paper	Research Paper

Suggested External References:

If the student desires to consult a reference for additional information, the following texts are recommended as providing supplemental information regarding the course subject matter.

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2004.

Glencoe Language Arts. **Grammar and Composition Handbook**. New York: Glencoe McGraw-Hill, 2002.

Sadlier, William. *Writing A Research Paper*, Student Guides. New York, New York, 2007.

Learning Support Services:

Each student should be sure to take advantage of and use the following learning support services which are provided to increase student academic performance:

Messaging system which provides individual instructor/student interaction

Tech support which is available by submitting a help ticket through the student dashboard

Accommodations for Students with Learning Disabilities:

Students with documented learning disabilities may receive accommodations in the form of an extended time limit on exams, when applicable. To receive the accommodations, the student should furnish documentation of the learning disability at the time of registration, if possible. Scan and e-mail the documentation to studentservices@portagelearning.com. Upon receipt of the learning disability documentation, Portage staff will provide the student with instructions for a variation of the course containing exams with extended time limits. This accommodation does not alter the content of any assignments/exams, change what the exam is intended to measure or otherwise impact the outcomes of objectives of the course.

One-on-one Instruction

Each student is assigned to his/her own instructor. Personalized questions are addressed via the student dashboard messaging system.

Online learning presents an opportunity for flexibility; however, a discipline to maintain connection to the course is required; therefore, communication is essential to successful learning. Check your messages daily. Instructors are checking messages daily Monday-Friday to be sure to answer any questions that may arise from you. It is important that you do the same so you do not miss any pertinent information from us.

Code of Conduct: Students are expected to conduct themselves in a way that supports learning and teaching and promotes an atmosphere of civility and respect in their interactions with others. Verbal and written aggression, abuse, or misconduct is prohibited and may be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.

This is a classroom; therefore, instructors have the academic freedom to set forth policy for their respective class. Instructors send a welcome e-mail detailing the policy of their class, which students are required to read prior to beginning the course.

Academic Integrity is a serious matter. In the educational context, any dishonesty violates freedom and trust, which are essential for effective learning. Dishonesty limits a student's ability to reach his or her potential. Portage places a high value on honest independent work. In a distance learning situation, we depend on the student's desire to succeed in the program he or she is entering. It is in a student's own best interests not to cheat on an exam, as this would compromise the student's preparation for future work. It is required of each student to take exams without consulting course materials or study aids including another person, the lesson pages, printed materials, or the Internet. To this end, your instructor will be alert to any indications that a student may be violating this principle. It will be necessary to show all your work on exams. When the nature of the course does not require numerical or symbolic determination (perhaps instead just requires recitation of learned descriptions), our experienced staff is able to detect the unauthorized consultation of study aids when answering exam questions. A violation of the academic integrity policy may result in a score of zero on the exam and possible expulsion from the course, at the discretion of the instructor with consultation with an administrative-instructional committee.

Review the Student Handbook for more specifics. If you have any questions regarding the academic integrity policy, please consult your instructor **prior** to taking module exam one.

Grievances: If for any reason a student has a complaint about the course work or the instructor, the student is advised to first consult the instructor, who will be willing to listen and consider your concern. However, if you don't feel you have received a satisfactory reply, you are encouraged to contact the Academic Dean of Portage Learning for further consideration of your complaint. The formal grievances process must be initiated via written communication. If desired, please file a written grievance to academics@portagelearning.com to initiate the process.

Remediation:

At Portage Learning we allow a "one-time" only opportunity to re-take an alternate version of **one** module exam on which a student has earned a grade lower than 70%. This option must be exercised before the final exam is started. If an exam is retaken, the original exam grade will be erased and the new exam grade will become a permanent part of the course grade. However, before scheduling and attempting this retest, the student must resolve the questions they have regarding the material by reviewing both the old exam and the lesson module material. Once ready to attempt the retest of the exam they must contact their instructor to request that the exam be reset for the retest. Remember, any module retest must be requested and completed **before** the final exam is opened.

Students needing remediation for grammar, spelling, and/or reading comprehension may be referred to a verbal skills course offered by Portage. If students need remediation in addition to a review of verbal skills, they may withdraw from the course in a manner consistent with the published refund policy in order to complete the prerequisites for ENGL 101 prior to beginning the course.