Composition I – RHET 1311.02  
Syllabus, Fall 1998

Vital Information
Instructor:  Heather Miller  
Room:  ETAS 230  
When:  MWF 8 to 8:50 a.m.  
Office:  SUB 100  
Office Phone:  569-3160 (leave a message)  
Alternate Office:  220-5622 (M-F between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. – or leave a message)  
Home Phone:  375-1654 (M-F between 7 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. – do not EVER call during the day; use common sense when choosing a time to call on the weekends, please)  
E-mail:  heather.miller@alltel.com  
Listserv:  rhet131102@ualr.edu  
Web site:  www.ualr.edu/~hbmiller/comp1.html

Required Textbooks


Recommended Books


Recommended Materials
- A heavy-duty, “marble” notebook to use as a journal.  
- A separate notebook/folder to use for class notes/ideas  
- A colored pen for editing (any color other than the ink on your page)

Course Description
Composition I (Rhet 1311) is a beginning writing course designed to make you more aware of your writing process. In the course, we will work on developing strategies to help you explore, understand and express your ideas; to organize, assess and revise your writing; and to respond to and edit finished papers.
This is a workshop course – not a lecture course. You will work alone sometimes, and you will work with small groups and with me. Its subject matter comes from information you possess from your personal experiences and observation, not from research or third party opinion, which you will use in Comp II. This means that you will be writing what you think and, perhaps more importantly, thinking about what you write. Evidence of thinking, of effort, and of growth in your writing skills are my measures of your success.

Comp I Rationale
Welcome and congratulations on enrolling in my section of Composition I! This is the first of two installments of college composition, and I can assure you, this first one will have you hooked. I have a lot of great assignments planned this semester, and I will be using a non-traditional teaching method, so each day should offer an interesting alternative to your other classes.

Writing is talking, thinking, therapeutic, entertaining, learning and fun! Writing can become a powerful tool for you – no matter what discipline you pursue. Professionally, it is an attractive asset possessed by job applicants. Personally, it can work as entertainment or therapy. And academically, it can work as a medium to convey ideas and messages to people whom otherwise may not understand. In this class, you will have a chance to write about all of the above. You can make the language work for you!

Comp I Objectives
• You will become a better writer. You will gain confidence as a writer. This class focuses different writing techniques and different approaches to writing and composition. You will learn the different reasons for writing and hopefully come up with some on your own.
• You will learn about the writing process, which includes pre-writing, journaling, writing, revising, editing, proofreading, collaborating and publishing. You will see how all of these elements combine to form a good piece of writing – for both personal writing and professional writing.

Assignments
Aside from an itemized listing of each assignment, the following lists the main assignments for which you will be responsible:
• **Four (4) large essays**  – Summaries of these essays are provided on a separate document. The due dates are 9/11, 10/9, 11/6 and 11/30. They should be typed, double-spaced and around 500-750 words. ALL pre-writing should be turned in with your essays (copies or originals). I want to see your writing process because I can also learn from it.
• **Journal** – This is where you record your thoughts, ideas, responses, suggestions, comments and remarks about this class and the reading. On many days, I will provide a prompt for this writing. Please try to avoid using it as a diary unless you are tying in real-life issues with our class discussions. I am interested in how you relate your life to the reading – that is part of journaling. The journal will be turned in periodically for my review. These due dates are 9/16, 10/14, 11/11 and 12/2. I will not grade these journals or each journal entry, but an overall grade for participation will count in this class, and journaling is participating.

• **Portfolio** – This will include your four main essays. The format of your portfolio can be however you like; although, you should include a cover sheet and a letter of explanation (why selected/what you learned/its representation of your effort) for each essay. This should all show me how you have critically analyzed your growth as a writer in this class. The presentation of your portfolio is also your choice. For example, you can put everything in a folder or you could have it all bound together at Kinko’s (or anything in between – even a Web site). **Portfolios are due on the day of the final exam.**

• **Final Exam** – This will be on Dec. 9 at 8 to 10 a.m. It will be an in-class essay, and the topic will be assigned/discussed beforehand. (Journals will be returned on this day.)

• **Assigned reading**

• **Come to class PREPARED!**

**Grading**

• You have the opportunity to determine your grade in this class – you are the one who has to live with it. On each draft you turn in to me, I will make suggestions/remarks and give it a temporary grade, which will have an expiration date. If you are not satisfied with the temporary grade, you will have the opportunity to revise the draft and turn it in for a better grade. I want you to be aware of my comments. If you choose not to revise, your temporary grade will become permanent upon the expiration date. (Expiration dates are noted on the separate assignment sheet.) You may also use this opportunity to argue my suggestions/remarks citing evidence.

• I will only provide letter grades – no percentages. At the end of the semester, I will average the letter grades and use good judgement based on your performance in the class, i.e. if you have mostly Bs, you’ll probably receive a B; if you have an equal mixture of letter grades, I will factor in your participation as a whole, and your desire to succeed, and use my best judgment from there.

• I don’t count off for spelling. I recommend you use a spell checker when typing on a word processor; therefore, spelling should be correct. (You should manually check for grammar, i.e. spotting the differences between words like “form” and “from.”) In your hand-written journals, I do not count off for spelling. Please focus *all* your writing efforts on your content.
ALL assignments must be turned in. If they are not, you will receive an NC (no credit) for the class.

The portfolio will be a major part of your grade. It should reflect your best efforts in this class.

Revision and Peer Revision
Revision is a part of the writing process, and most good writers do it. I realize that some of you may be new to revision and may resist it at first, but I am here to help you when you have questions about revision, i.e. Am I revising enough/not enough? I am determined to help you all become good “revisers.”

Sometimes, papers will be handed out to different students in the class for peer revision. The papers will be anonymous, and I will know which paper belongs to which student. After each student revises her/his paper, I will return them to the appropriate students, and it will be your job then to revise the paper.

Attendance and Tardiness
Per the UALR Department of Rhetoric and Writing Policy, you are permitted three unexcused absences. Each unexcused absence after the third one will result in a decrease of one letter grade, e.g. if you have an A, your grade will drop to a B.

If you have a conflict in getting to class on time everyday, let me know now or as soon as the conflict arises. I am understanding, but I’d like to know in advance.

If you miss a class, contact a classmate about the discussion you missed. This is your responsibility. The listserv is a good way to communicate about this.

If you are going to have an excused absence, provide to me a written excuse. In any case, it should be good/legitimate and, of course, well written.

Late Work
My time is valuable, and I expect your work to be on time so I have enough time to review it and return it to you in a timely manner. Late work will be penalized on a case-by-case basis. However, to stay in my good graces, turn in your work ON THE DUE DATE.

Plagiarism
All of your work should be your own. If you are caught plagiarizing, you will receive an NC for this class.

Bad Weather Policy
If the Little Rock School District is closed, then UALR classes will be cancelled. If the schools are not closed, but the weather is bad, please feel free to call me at home in the morning before class.
Disabled Students
Accommodations for disabled students will be made should the need arise. If you have any questions, please contact Disability Support Services at 569-3143.

Class Listserv
A listserv has been assigned to our class, and it will be a good way for us to communicate as a group when we are not in class. It is also a way for you to post your essays and get feedback from classmates. And, if you miss a class, you will probably get more answers on the listserv than if you just asked one person. Do the following to subscribe:
1. Send an e-mail to mailserv@ualr.edu
2. Skip the subject line
3. In the body, type: subscribe rhet131102
4. You will get a confirmation e-mail as a subscriber – the listserv will use the e-mail address from which you sent the request
5. To send a message on the listserv, use this e-mail address: rhet131102@ualr.edu

The University Writing Center
The University Writing Center is located in the Old Student Union Building, Room 116. (It faces the courtyard behind the Donaghey Student Center.) The center serves as a place for students to seek help with their writing, i.e. typing papers, editing and extensive tutoring. You can also check your e-mail there. Please sign in when visiting, so I know you have been there – it also counts as participation.

Mon. – Thurs. from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Fri. from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Closed on weekends
http://www.ualr.edu/~owl/ – more information can be found there

UALR Computer Labs
These labs are a lifesaver for those of you who do not have access to a computer off campus. There are people on staff at each lab who will help you if you are not very computer “literate,” so please visit these labs, since I expect your essays to be typed.

**SU-A 105 (PC: 569-8726 and Mac: 569-8959)**  
www.ualr.edu/~labaidel
Mon. – Thurs. 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.
Fri. 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Sat. 1 to 4:30 p.m.
Sun. 1 to 8:00 p.m.

**Library Lab (569-8727)**  
www.ualr.edu/~labaide
Mon. – Thurs. 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.
Fri. 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Sat. 1 to 4:30 p.m.
Sun. 1 to 9:30 p.m.