

English 103: Critical Thinking and Composition
Syllabus
Summer 2023
Professor: Tina Nuñez

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Office: C27

Office (Student Success) Hours: T W 11:00 am – noon (online) and by appointment

Phone: 922-6966 x 3775

E-mail: tnunez@hancockcollege.edu (preferred)

Required Texts: *Current Issues and Enduring Questions 13th ed.* (Barnet & Bedau)
The Handmaid's Tale (Atwood)

Recommended Texts: A good grammar handbook
A good dictionary
A three-ring binder for lecture notes



Course Description

Welcome to English 103. Learning to communicate effectively is one of the most valuable skills you will cultivate at Allan Hancock College. Being able to express yourself clearly, persuasively, and with style will empower you, not only during your college career, but also

throughout life. This transfer-level college course is designed to sharpen students' analytical and writing skills and to fulfill the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum critical thinking requirement. Students will develop critical thinking skills with special emphasis on logic, argument, and close textual analysis. Students will also receive in-depth instruction in advanced composition with a special focus on argumentative and documented essays. I look forward to an engaging, productive term.



Course Requirements

Online Instruction: This section of English 103 is unique because it is a distance-learning course that requires no on-site attendance. All participation, discussions, workshops, quizzes, essays, and the final exam will be conducted and submitted online. Internet courses are a perfect match for some students, while others would benefit more from participating in a conventional class. **Before you commit to this online course, please carefully consider the following:**

- Are you a self-motivated, independent learner?
- Do you follow written instructions well?
- Are you able to work well under minimal supervision?
- Do you have convenient access to a reliable computer?
- Are you proficient in Microsoft Word and/or Google Docs?
- Are you comfortable working on the Internet?
- Do you have reliable Internet access?
- Are you proficient using e-mail and Canvas messaging?
- Do you know how to access your Hancock e-mail account?
- Do you know how to navigate Canvas, our online course management system?
- Do you work well under firm deadlines?

- Do you have time to commit to this transfer-level online college course: approximately ten hours per week?

If you answered yes to all of the above questions, you may be an ideal candidate for this class. Online courses are very different from traditional face-to-face courses, yet they have the same reading, writing, and participation requirements. You will need to be self-motivated to improve your essays on your own without much of the personal help students may receive in conventional classes. However, the online delivery of this course will enable you to manage your coursework to fit your busy schedule.

Recommended Equipment Minimums: Students must have direct, personal access to the Internet, as well as a current Hancock e-mail account, as it is essential that I am able to contact you via e-mail. If you do not check your Hancock e-mail regularly, please forward your Hancock e-mail to your personal e-mail account. Please note that Canvas, our online course management system, has an effective internal messaging system, which I encourage you to use, and which I will use to contact you regarding course reminders, grading updates, and other communications that will comprise part of our regular, substantive interaction over the term. Note, too, that Microsoft Word or Google Docs is highly recommended, and **for many assignments Firefox, Safari, or Chrome work much better than Internet Explorer.**



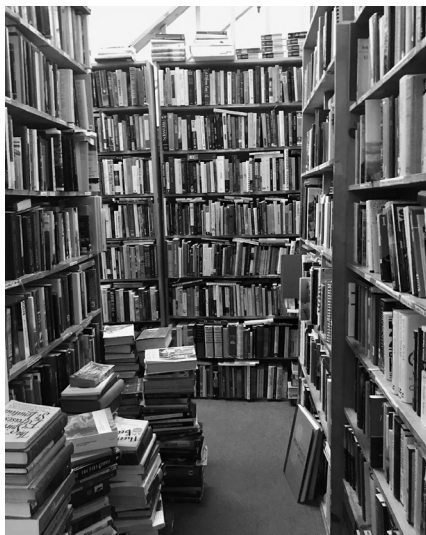
Participation: Successful learning in English 103 requires active participation, including being fully prepared, participating weekly on the Discussion Board, working collaboratively, and reading and writing regularly. Please consult the course Schedule of Assignments to stay abreast of week-by-week reading, writing, and other requirements. **You are advised to check the Announcements page on our Canvas class site daily, as I will regularly post course updates, important reminders, instructional material, and other information essential to your success.** **Important note: As this is a university-level course, and because this is an accelerated eight-week class, please be prepared to spend approximately two hours outside of class for each class hour on reading and related writing assignments: approximately ten hours of work per week total.** Yes, this course is like an eight-week part-time job. The good news, however, is that you have the opportunity to complete the course in eight weeks rather than in sixteen.



Attendance: Your attendance will be calculated via your online participation. Students who participate often, daily or nearly so, have a much better success rate in this course. Please keep the following mantra in mind: **consistent course participation facilitates course success.** Note, too, that **because this is an intensive, accelerated course, if you go more than one week without participating in the course, I reserve the right to drop you from the class.** However, if you are unable to participate regularly, it is your responsibility to officially withdraw from the course, although I certainly hope this will not be the case, and I encourage you to contact me prior to withdrawing, as I am here to help you, and I strive to facilitate your success. **Important note: It is insufficient to only take quizzes and submit essays. You must be active weekly on the Discussion Board to meet the attendance and participation requirements.**



Decorum: It is our mutual responsibility to foster an online academic environment where we can communicate and learn in an atmosphere of integrity and respect. Class participants are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, mature manner, demonstrating courtesy and cooperation. In the unlikely event that your participation is not conducive to a positive learning atmosphere, you will be warned. If the inappropriate behavior continues, you may be dropped from the class, and the matter will be turned over to the Vice President of Student Services.



Reading: English 103 includes a demanding reading load. Required readings will serve as writing models, as tools for strengthening active reading and critical thinking skills, and as material to generate writing and discussion. Especially given the fact that this is an accelerated course, it is essential that you keep up with the weekly reading schedule and that you read actively and critically. Required texts are available at the [Allan Hancock College Bookstore](#), and they are on reserve at the [Allan Hancock College Library](#). Lecture Notes are located in the weekly module folders on Canvas. **Each week, then, ideally on Monday, you should check the latest module for that week's Lecture Notes and Discussion Board assignments.** Do not wait until the end of the week to check that week's Discussion Board assignments, as some assignments, such as Net Tutor, require you to participate early in the week. Remember, please, to read the Announcements page regularly, preferably daily.



Writing: English 103 requires students to write approximately 6,000 words over the course of the term, which will be evaluated for critical thinking, active reading, sound writing, solid rhetorical structure, and accurate grammar, punctuation, and spelling. This writing requirement is fulfilled through a combination of graded essay drafts, workshop feedback to peers, revised essays, Discussion Board postings and peer responses, quizzes, and a final exam.

Discussion Board: This course requires several weekly Discussion Board postings and responses to assigned readings and specific prompts. These postings/responses, which will be posted on the Canvas Discussion Board, will provide you with interactive writing practice and should demonstrate active reading and critical thinking. In addition to posting your responses,

you will be responsible for responding to several classmates each week. A successful Discussion Board is interactive and collaborative; you are required to post your responses and respond to your peers' postings as directed. Please do not wait until the last minute each week to post, as you will not benefit from peer and instructor interaction. Instead, **post early and often**. You may revise and edit your posts prior to the due dates. While I will read and evaluate all of your postings, I will not be able to respond to them all. However, I will dip in and out of the Discussion Board regularly, and I will provide global feedback via the Announcements page, Canvas messaging, gradebook responses, and/or Lecture Notes. **You will be evaluated on the quality and quantity of your Discussion Board postings and for following specific directions for each forum.** Please read the Discussion Board forum instructions carefully. Discussion Board due dates are indicated on your course Schedule of Assignments and on each Discussion Board forum on Canvas. Except in extenuating circumstances, **late Discussion Board postings will not receive credit.** Please note that the Discussion Board is our formal class participation/discussion venue. As in a conventional classroom, it is a forum to exchange and foster intellectual ideas. Therefore, both postings and responses to peers should be thoughtful, inquisitive, substantial, etc. Please also note that you should edit your postings for both accuracy and clarity, as the Discussion Board is an opportunity for you to practice and demonstrate solid writing, active reading, and sound, critical thinking. **Discussion Board participation constitutes 25% of your overall grade.**

Essays: Three formal, documented essays are required over the course of the term, including an essay based on research. All essay assignments require first drafts and final revisions: for a total of six submissions. Essay drafts should reflect significant effort, and final essays should demonstrate substantial, thoughtful development and revision. **Essays should closely follow the assignment guidelines**, which are located in the module folders on Canvas (typed, properly formatted, correctly documented, and carefully proofread), **and are due electronically no later than midnight on specified dates: please refer to your Schedule of Assignments.** You will submit your final essays via Canvas; specific instructions will be provided. If you do not have access to Microsoft Word or Google Docs, you should save and submit your essays as PDF files; otherwise, I may not be able to access your papers, and you may not receive credit for your submissions. Except in extenuating circumstances, **no credit will be given for late drafts, and late final essays will be downgraded one full grade. Final essays that are more than one week late will not be accepted. You must submit all final essays to be eligible to take the final exam and pass the course. Your last essay must be submitted on time because final grades are due shortly after the last day of instruction. Final essays are worth 50% of your overall grade.** *Important note: As a general rule, I do not accept essays or other assignments via e-mail. Also please note that you may not submit an essay for this course that you have already written for another class.*



Workshops: We will workshop drafts of student essays in small groups several times throughout the semester, providing a genuine audience for your work prior to final submission. Students will work collaboratively during workshops, providing and receiving essential feedback. Such collaboration will give you an opportunity to critique classmates' essays, thereby honing your reading and critical thinking skills. Furthermore, workshops will enable you to receive constructive criticism from peers who are undergoing the same writing experience. For many of you, this feedback will be essential. In order for you to receive draft and workshop credit, as well as vital help from your peers, you must be prepared; specific workshop instructions will be provided. Please especially avoid not participating in workshops or having an underdeveloped draft for your group. **Workshops will typically be conducted on the Group Discussion Board rather than on the regular class Discussion Board:** more information will be forthcoming. Except in extenuating circumstances, **no credit will be given for late drafts, and missed workshops cannot be made up. Drafts and workshops constitute 5% of your overall grade.**

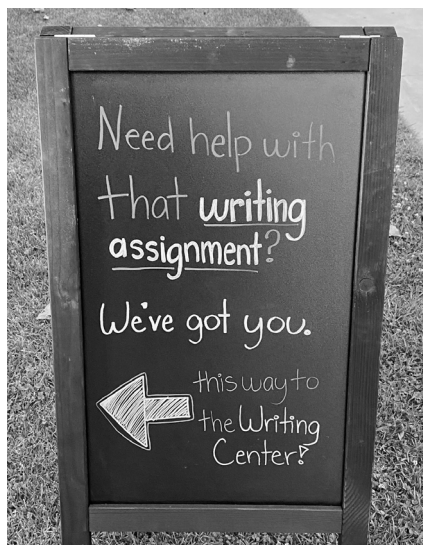


Quizzes: Timed, online quizzes based on ongoing instruction (Lecture Notes, PowerPoint presentations, Discussion Board instruction, instructive announcements, etc.) and assigned readings will be administered during specified weeks: **please refer to your Schedule of Assignments.** Quizzes, which are located in weekly module folders on Canvas, will typically be available by Thursday each week and must be completed by midnight on Sundays. Except for extenuating circumstances, **there are no make-up quizzes. Quizzes constitute 10% of your overall grade.**

Final Examination: This timed online exam will be comprehensive. Please print or download, actively read, (highlight and/or annotate), and save all Lecture Notes and quizzes. **The final exam is worth 10% of your overall grade.**



Office (Student Success) Hours and Getting Help: Successful college students take advantage of instructors' help, so I invite you to visit me during office hours, make an appointment with me as necessary, or contact me via e-mail or Canvas messaging to discuss your progress, questions, and/or concerns. You can also receive writing assistance through Hancock's Writing Center or via the [Academic Resource Center's](#) tutoring program. The [Learning Assistance Program](#) is also available for those with unique learning needs. Most importantly, it is crucial for you to ask for help when you need it. Let me emphasize, please, that I am here to assist you. I am available and I am happy to help.



Writing Center: The Allan Hancock College [Writing Center](#) provides one-on-one in-person and online (via Zoom) writing support services to all AHC students for any reading and writing assignment for any class with the goal of helping students to become more skillful and confident writers. The AHC Writing Center offers assistance with any aspect of the writing process: brainstorming, organizing ideas, thesis development, citing sources, sentence structure, and more. Writing Center faculty do not proofread or edit assignments; instead, students work with faculty to address specific writing concerns in a non-judgmental, welcoming environment. The

Writing Center also offers writing skills workshops, support materials, and computers for students to work on writing assignments. Students who wish to access the Writing Center's services must enroll in the free, noncredit BASK 7015 Reading and Writing Lab course. Students can enroll through myHancock. Please enroll, as we may be utilizing the Writing Center to receive essay feedback.

Summer 2023 Writing Center Hours:

Monday – Thursday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Peer Mentor: This course has been selected to participate in the Allan Hancock College Embedded Tutoring (Peer Mentor) Program. Thus, a trained Peer Mentor/tutor who has already successfully taken English 103 will participate in our class and be available to support you throughout the course. Peer Mentors are intended to help you understand the course content and assignments and focus on study skills to help you to become a better independent learner. I will provide more information regarding the role of our Peer Mentor.



Academic Dishonesty: Using others' words and/or ideas without giving proper credit to the source constitutes plagiarism, a serious academic offense. **Plagiarism is essentially theft and will not be tolerated.** Here are some examples, not exhaustive, of plagiarism and academically dishonest behavior:

- Copying from other students' work (including Discussion Board postings);
- Submitting someone else's work as your own (including Discussion Board postings);
- Using other people's ideas, words, images, or artistic works from any medium, including the Internet, without acknowledging them with proper documentation (this includes using sources in your essays without proper Works Cited documentation and listing sources on your Works Cited page without proper in-text documentation in your essays);
- Using A.I.-generated material, such as that from ChatGPT;
- Giving answers to another student without instructor approval;
- Taking a test for someone else; and
- Completing an assignment for another student.

All incidents of plagiarism or cheating will result in a zero for that assignment and probable course failure. The student may also be subject to further disciplinary action through the Vice President of Student Services. While it has become increasingly easy for students to plagiarize from the Internet, it has also become increasingly easy for instructors to detect online plagiarism. Note, for example, that Turnitin, which we will be using for every essay assignment, has a new A.I.-detector plug-in, which flags A.I.-generated material for plagiarism. **The bottom line follows: do not plagiarize. Do not use Artificial Intelligence to write any part of any assignment for this course. Otherwise, be prepared to fail.**



Regular and Substantive Interaction: My commitment to students' academic success includes a commitment to regular and substantive interaction with students in this course. I will do so in ways including, but not limited to, the following:

- Discussion Board interaction,
- Canvas messages,
- Canvas announcements,
- Canvas Gradebook comments and annotations,
- E-mail communication,
- Audio/visual instruction, including announcements, presentations, and feedback,
- Graded quizzes, including comments and feedback,
- SuccessNet referrals,
- Student success office hours, and
- Video and/or face-to-face conferencing.

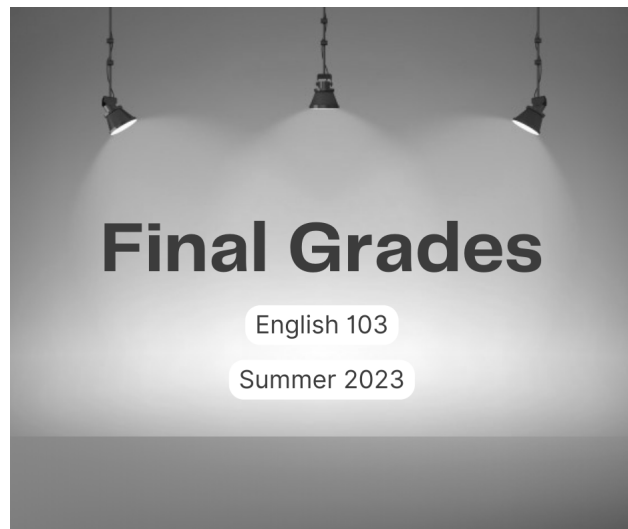
My overall intent is to be present, available, and communicative in this course to assist your progress and facilitate your academic achievement. I am here for you.

Academic Freedom: The spirit of free and open inquiry is essential to the well-being of our pluralistic, democratic society. This course will critically examine potentially controversial subjects including race, class, gender, politics, and religion. Students who may have strong reservations about participating in such areas of discourse should consult with me and carefully preview course materials and assigned readings before continuing with the course.

Anti-Racism Statement: I am passionately committed to acknowledging, confronting, and actively striving to eradicate all forms of racism and ethnic oppression. Thus, this course operates from the belief that racism is real, present, and something that Black, Indigenous, and all People of Color face daily. Part of my objective for this course, therefore, is to create a safe and brave space that enables all of my students to engage openly, safely, equally, equitably, and honorably with their education. In taking this course, you are expected to do your best to embrace these values; while I expect that we will all make mistakes along the way, I also expect that we will work together to engage with all of our classmates and with the material through thoughtful respect of everyone and their individual truths. Please note that this statement also applies to sexism, classism, etc.

Americans with Disabilities Act: Any personal learning accommodations that may be needed by a student covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) must be made known to the instructor as soon as possible. This is the student's responsibility. Information about services, academic modifications, and documentation requirements can be obtained from the [Learning Assistance Program](#) (LAP). For more information about services available to AHC students with disabilities, contact (805) 922-6966 ext. 3274 (Santa Maria Campus).

Syllabus Change Policy: *Except for changes that substantially affect the implementation of the grading policy, the professor reserves the right to modify the syllabus and the corresponding Schedule of Assignments if needed. Students will be notified in writing in advance of such a change.*



Grades: Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Essays	50 %
Discussion Board	25 %
Drafts and Workshops	5 %
Quizzes	10 %
Final Exam	10 %

Total 100 %

Note: Final grades are calculated according to percentages in each of the above categories. You may check your progress as you proceed through the course on the Canvas gradebook.

Grading Breakdown:

90 - 100%	A
80 - 89%	B
70 - 79%	C
60 - 69%	D
Below 60%	F

Grading Option: Letter grade only.

Prerequisite: English 101.

Note: Please put your full name on every document you submit online, including essays and e-mail messages. Also, please keep a hard copy of all documents for your personal records.

English 103 Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Write argumentative essays using strategies of reasoning and techniques of rhetoric.
2. Identify flawed thinking and evaluate credibility of argument.

Final Important Notes: Due dates listed on the corresponding course Schedule of Assignments are firm unless amended by the professor. Computer failure, lack of compatible software, lack of computer proficiency, etcetera, are not acceptable reasons for late work. That said, if you run into a deadline issue, please contact me to request a reasonable extension.

In general, please feel free to contact me via e-mail or Canvas messaging if you have any related questions or concerns. Again, I look forward to a productive, engaging semester. I am here to facilitate your success, so please do not hesitate to reach out to me for assistance. I am happy to help. Onward! Thank you, Professor Nuñez.

