

Skyline College
Official Course Outline

Date: April 2007

1. **TITLE:** English 826

Course Title: Basic Writing Skills

Units: 3.0 Units

Hours: Five class hours per week

2. **COURSE CLASSIFICATION:**

Course not applicable for the Associate Degree.

3. **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**

A. Catalog Description: *Recommended: Eligibility for Read 826 and Engl 826 by appropriate scores on college placement tests and other measures as necessary. Co-requisite: Read 826 if indicated by college reading placement test.*

Course in basic writing focusing on paragraph and essay organization, sentence skills, and text-based writing. Students will write essays in and out of class and complete assignments to strengthen sentence skills and writing/reading strategies. English 826 prepares students for English 836. Plus one hour per week by arrangement.

B. Schedule of Classes Description: *Recommended: Eligibility for Read 826 and Engl 826 by appropriate scores on college placement tests and other measures as necessary. Co-requisite: Read 826 if indicated by college reading placement test.*

Course in basic writing focusing on paragraph and essay organization, sentence skills, and text-based writing. Prepares students for English 836. Plus one hour per week by arrangement.

4. **COURSE JUSTIFICATION:**

According to matriculation statistics a significant percent of incoming students (20% on average) need remediation before attempting a developmental English course.

5. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLO'S):**

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Overall essay unity/thesis: Write focused, coherent, well-developed essays appropriate to the basic skills level organized into effective paragraphs with major and minor supporting details, which support a clear thesis statement, and demonstrate competence in standard English grammar and usage.
- Critical reading/writing/thinking: Demonstrate critical reading, writing, and thinking skills through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of important ideas from multiple points of view.
- Critical reading/writing/thinking: Apply documentation skills.
- Metacognition: Perceive themselves as improved writers and thinkers.

6. **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**

During the course, students will be asked to:

A. Develop critical reading skills as they apply to the analysis of pre-college level texts from diverse cultural sources and perspectives:

1. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate a range of pre-college level texts, which may include book length works.
2. Differentiate fact from opinion in text.
3. Detect prejudice and recognize the tone used by an author.
4. Identify and analyze structure of arguments and supporting evidence.

B. Develop critical writing skills as they apply to the written analysis of pre-college level texts from diverse cultural sources and perspectives:

1. Create text-based essays which employ a variety of writing strategies that may include persuasion, evaluation, interpretation, comparison/contrast, classification, and definition. Essays should be at least 2 to 4 pages in length, which cumulatively add up to 2,500-3,000 words (10-12 pages).
2. Expect students in their essays (in and out of class), to be able to:
 - a) use the various stages of the writing process to develop interpretations, analyses, and evaluations of the texts read;
 - b) establish and state clearly a unifying claim or thesis;
 - c) construct sound arguments in support of claims;
 - d) organize essays which support and develop ideas;
 - e) select relevant examples, details, and other evidence from the texts read to support claims;
 - f) develop greater sophistication in using precise diction, writing varied and complex sentences, organizing coherent paragraphs, and writing for a specific audience;
 - g) integrate quotes into their essays and cite properly.
3. Use self-evaluation exercises to increase awareness of one's own thinking and learning processes.

7. COURSE CONTENT:

ENGL 826 includes instruction in the following areas:

A. Reading strategies

- 1. Distinguishing between main ideas and supporting details
- 2. Understanding relationships between ideas
- 3. Recognizing tone, strategies and rhetorical devices
- 4. Distinguishing between fact and opinion
- 5. Outlining, paraphrasing and summarizing readings
- 6. Reflecting, analyzing and connecting ideas
- 7. Analyzing organizational patterns
- 8. Using logical reasoning
- 9. Examining assumptions about themselves and the world

B. Writing strategies through the practice of written compositions

- 1. Pre-writing/drafting activities
- 2. Supporting details and analysis
- 3. Organization: unity and coherence
- 4. Topic sentences/thesis statements
- 5. Introductions and conclusions
- 6. Revision, editing and proofreading
- 7. Sentence combining such as coordination and subordination
- 8. Personal writing to text-based writing, including integrating, quoting, paraphrasing and citing sources as well as analysis and interpretation of textual content
- 9. Introduction to essay forms, which may include, among others, persuasion, evaluation, interpretation, comparison/contrast, classification, and definition
- 10. Introduction to research

C. Editing and proofreading techniques and practices

- 1. Fragments and run-together sentences
- 2. Verb tenses and subject/verb agreement
- 3. Punctuation and capitalization
- 4. Pronoun, adjective and adverb use
- 5. Concrete subjects and active verbs

8. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

A. May include lecture, demonstration/ modeling, and discussion including small group work, individual work with the instructor, computer work, in -class writings, conferences, PowerPoint and video.

B. Create essay assignments at least 2-4 pages in length, which cumulatively add up to 2,500-3,000 words (10-12 pages); 20-30% should be in-class essays (such as in-class midterms and final essay exams).

C. Assign other writings including but not limited to drafts, reaction papers, journals, study questions.

9. ASSIGNMENTS:

- **Reading Journal:**

Teachers assign reading journals to help the student read actively. An active reader engages himself/herself in the material, that is, thinks about it, reflects on it, makes connections to his/her own experience, asks questions, and generally reads the text critically and carefully.

The following is an example of a reading journal assignment:

1. Write the name of the article (enclosed in quotation marks "Title of Article") and the name of the author, correctly spelled.
- 2.... Give the author's background.
- 3.... What is the article about? (1 sentence)
- 4.. How does the author feel about the subject of the article? (1 sentence)

5. Give specific reasons/details stated by the author to support his/her opinion.
6. Do you agree/disagree with the author's point of view on this subject? Give your reasons.
7. Vocabulary. Look up the words on the study guide sheet. Then look up three other words that you do not know.

- **Essay topics:**

Essays are written in response to the class readings. Here are two examples of essay assignments:

Topic 1: In a 2-3 paged typed essay respond to the following: The media, especially the television and film industries, are often accused of exploiting all kinds of stereotypes. Pick a favorite television show or movie, and write a comparative character analysis, choosing one male character and one female character. Use the articles in the unit "Who Has it Tougher-Boys or Girls?" pp. 59-75 as source material or to help you establish a vocabulary for your analysis.

Topic 2: In a 3-4 page typed essay, use the articles and editorials discussed in your reading journal assignments and in class discussions to write a persuasive argument either for or against requiring high school exit examinations.

- **Proofreading and editing skills:**

- Sentence combining, grammar practice in context of writing
- Skills practice exercises, assigned to individual students, based on their needs
- Collaborative group work to edit and proofread peer writing
- Online, CD, and lab supplemental exercises

10. EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE:

Letter grade will be based on:

- Essays: Organized, coherent, unified essays the majority of which will be text-based and written both in class and outside of class
- Journals: Written responses to readings and class discussions
- Oral Participation: Active participation in class discussions demonstrating understanding of and response to the reading.
- Quizzes: Adequate comprehension of material.
- Homework: Completed assignments focusing on particular English writing skills, such as freewriting, brainstorming, outlining, answering guided questions, organizing information into charts, practicing skills in English usage and grammar, etc..
- Final Exam: Demonstrated competence in text-based essay writing, using standard English.

11. RECOMMENDED or REQUIRED TEXT(S):

Include non-fiction and fiction selections and, possibly, one full-length text.

RHETORICS

Author/Editor Title

Departmental handbook:

Hacker, Diane. *Rules for Writers*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003.

Wilson, Paige and Teresa Ferster Glazier. *The Least You Should Know About English*. Heinle, 2005.

READERS

Author/Editor Title

Ankar, Susan. *Real Writing with Readings: Paragraphs and Essays for College, Work, and Everyday Life*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006.

Eggers, Philip. *Process and Practice Guide for Developing Writers*. Addison Wesley Publishing Company, 1997.

Gillotte, Helen and Jan Gregory. *Readings Across American Cultures*. Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 2002.

Langan, John. *English Skills*. McGraw-Hill, 2005.

Robinson, William and Pam Altman. *Integrations: Reading, Thinking, and Writing, for College Success*. Heinle, 2002.

FICTION

Author/Editor Title

Cisneros, Sandra. *House on Mango Street*. Vintage, 1991.

Comer, James P. *Maggie's American Dream: The Life and Times of a Black Family*. Plume, 1989.

Haddon, Mark. *the curious incident of the dog in the night-time*. Vintage, 2004.

Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun*. Vintage, 1994.

Kidd, Sue Monk. *The Secret Life of Bees*. Penguin, 2003.

Kincaid, Jamaica. *Lucy*. Le Livre de Poche, 2002.

Naylor, Gloria. *The Women of Brewster Place*. Penguin, 1983.

Pham, Andrew X.. *Catfish and Mandala: A Two-Wheeled Voyage Through the Landscape and Memory of Vietnam*. Picador, 2000.

Thomas, Piri. *Down These Mean Streets*. Vintage, 1997.

Villasenor, Victor. *Macho!* Arte Publico Press, 2007.

NON-FICTION/MEMOIR

Author/Editor Title

Angelou, Maya. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. Bantam Books, 1983.

Houston, Jeanne Wakatsuki and James D. Houston. *Farewell to Manzanar*. Bantam Books, 1983.

McCourt, Frank. *Angela's Ashes*. Harper Perennial, 2005.

Rodriguez, Luis. *Always Running: La Vida Loca. Gang Days in L.A.* Touchstone, 2005.

Sikes, Gini. *8 Ball Chicks*. Anchor, 1998.