

English 1: College Composition
Spring 2006: 9:30 to 10:50 in room 701
Office Hours & Place: By arrangement
Online Reference: QCounty.com/SCC/Spring06

Dave Badtke
(707)864-7000, x5501 or (707)334-4882
Dave@Badtke.com, Dave.Badtke@solano.edu

Course Objectives: This composition course focuses on critical reading, expository writing, and research techniques, skills that will help you in all your college classes. As E. M. Forster wrote, “How can I know what I think until I see what I say.” When we write to understand, we slow our thought processes down. We read, brainstorm, plan, pre-write, write, edit and revise, repeating this process cyclically until we begin to discover what we really meant to say. Mastery of this writing cycle depends critically on learning the importance of rewriting from rethinking, from performing additional research, and from receiving audience feedback, which I and your peers in this class will provide. Additionally, of course, you’ll find it easier to practice your writing skills if you’re interested in the topics about which you’re writing. In this regard *The Brief Arlington Reader’s* essays on important themes will be especially helpful both for their content, which will encourage contemplation and discovery, and for their craft, which will encourage emulation. “The use of language begins with imitation. The infant imitates the sounds made by its parents; the child imitates first the spoken language, then the stuff of books. The imitative life continues long after the writer is secure in the language, for it is almost impossible to avoid imitating what one admires. Never imitate consciously, but do not worry about being an imitator; take pains instead to admire what is good. Then when you write in a way that comes naturally, you will echo the halloos that bear repeating” (Strunk & White 70). Finally, as an introduction to literary analysis, we will discuss E. M. Forster’s novel *A Room with a View*.

Texts: *The Brief Arlington Reader: Canons and Contexts* by Lynn Z. Bloom and Louise Z. Smith; *The Elements of Style*, 4th edition, by William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White; *A Room with a View* by E. M. Forster (Bantam edition); a journal; a dictionary and thesaurus of your choice.

Requirements:

- 1) **50% of grade:** You will write essays ranging from short reader responses to longer synthesis essays supported by multiple sources. Essays are due on the assigned date. If you hand in your paper on that date, you are allowed one significant rewrite, due within a week of receiving your paper back, to which you must attach your original. Since writing is about rewriting, a superficial, quick, maybe-I’ll-get-lucky rewrite may lower rather than raise your grade. Essays must be typed, double-spaced, and follow MLA guidelines, available online at <http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/humanities/english.html>.
- 2) **20% of grade:** You will keep a writer’s journal in which you will record your reactions to your readings through writing, pictures, drawings, photographs—any form that engages you in reading and that helps your writing creativity. I will ask you to turn in your journal from time to time.
- 3) **20% of grade:** Occasional quizzes, a mid-term, and a final exam, all of which will always be open-book and open-note.
- 4) **10% of grade:** We will workshop some of your essays in small groups. You will be responsible for making copies of your essay for each member of your group and for writing detailed comments on each essay you are workshoping.

Major impact on grade: Come to class on time with required texts, your notes, your journal, a dictionary and thesaurus, a pencil and lined paper, since all work handed in must be double-spaced, and always come to class ready to read, write, analyze and discuss. If you’d like more help, make an appointment to meet with me during the day or come to the Writing Lab where I work Monday through Thursday evenings from 5:00 to 9:00.

Readings: Your assigned readings from *The Brief Arlington Reader* will focus on themes such as identity, place, education, science and ethics, while your readings from Strunk & White, a wonderfully brief and well-written reference, will focus on grammar and style. In addition you will read E. M. Forster’s *A Room with a View*. While this novel is rather short and will not be discussed until near the end of the semester, I encourage you to begin reading it soon, watch the movie, which I’ll place on reserve in the library, and then read the novel a second time.