

## **FORMER Course Descriptions for College Writing I and II**

College Writing I and College Writing II introduce students to critical thinking and the writing of expository prose, helping to prepare them to understand and write discourse acceptable at the university level. Even when faced with challenging topics, students should demonstrate the ability to comprehend texts at more than a superficial level; their writing should exhibit focused theses, systematic methods of analysis and argumentation, awareness of the needs of their audience, strong organization and development, clear presentation of ideas, appropriate syntax and diction, and correct grammar and usage.

To achieve these ends, the courses focus on principles of analysis and reasoned argumentation. Through close reading of texts, students learn both to identify underlying issues, assumptions, and values, and to identify rhetorical strategies by which these are conveyed or revealed. Students also learn to monitor and adapt their own writing processes. Since the ability to evaluate one's own writing and carry out appropriate revision strategies is particularly crucial to effective writing, all students are introduced to and will practice the writing process, which might include any of the following: brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising, and individual conferences with the instructor. Students develop skill in evaluating and revising their own writing.

### **College Writing I (42.101)**

Building on the basic expository writing skills assumed of all our first year students, College Writing I introduces students to academic writing. In this course, students focus on the basic elements of argument and analysis, honing their expository writing skills by generating several essays and revising them extensively. The broad learning objectives for this course include the following:

- Students will develop critical reading and thinking skills.
- Students will practice writing persuasion and argument about specific issues.
- Students will practice the writing process, including drafting, revising, and editing.
- Students will review relevant grammar and mechanics.
- Students will be introduced to a college research assignment.
- Students will be expected to practice academic honesty.
- Students will produce seven formal essays or the equivalent, including a final exam to be given during the final exam period. (The equivalent is approximately 25 pages of writing with 250 words per page.)

In part, these learning objectives will be achieved by the use of a non-fiction text taught in all Fall semester College Writing I classes and by the special events and programs that will enhance the use of this text. In addition to helping us to meet learning objectives, the shared experience of studying this text should help student begin to form the bonds that will shape their learning community across the disciplines and forge a cultural life at the University that is based on conversations about what they are reading and learning.

### **College Writing II (42.102)**

Designed to complement College Writing I, this course builds on what students have already learned by asking them to read, think, discuss, and write about sophisticated texts and ideas. Reading and writing about texts, whether fiction or nonfiction, helps students to develop analytic and interpretive skills that they can apply to any discipline. Students will continue to develop and practice the research skills they learned in College Writing I. The learning objectives for College Writing II include the following:

- Students will continue to sharpen their analytic skills by writing analyses of texts.
- Students will practice the writing process, including drafting, revising, and editing.
- Student will review and employ relevant grammar, mechanics, and documentation.
- Students will be expected to practice academic honesty.
- Students will produce six formal essays or the equivalent, including a final exam to be given during the final exam period. (The equivalent is approximately 25 pages of writing with 250 words per page.)

As with College Writing I, there will be a common text introduced in all Spring semester College Writing II classes. Students in these classes will attend the performance of a play at the Merrimack Repertory Theatre and study the script of the play they will attend.

Again, this experience will help us to achieve our learning objectives, but it will also enhance students' first-year experience at UMass Lowell through a shared intellectual, cultural, and artistic experience.