What is English 1010?

This course is a workshop in expository writing. Together, we will discuss, learn, and practice analytical reading strategies and methods of writing about texts. We will learn fundamentals of grammar and syntax, and complete frequent assignments in writing summaries, analyses, comparisons of texts, and such other expository forms as narration, description, and argumentation.

Perhaps most importantly, we will approach writing as a process rather than a product. We will explore all phases of writing from invention, to revision and editing. The course satisfies Pathways Required Core English composition requirement, and is not open to students who have completed English 1.7.

Put simply, this class will serve as an introduction to college-level composition. Over the course of the semester, we will practice and perfect strategies for writing expository essays and for engaging with different kinds of texts. You will learn to read actively and think critically about course reading and assigned writing. As you might expect, we will be writing both in and out of the classroom, with an emphasis on drafting and revision.

Class time will consist of writing exercises, group work, and discussions of assigned readings and student compositions. Some of the things we will focus on include: reading critically and writing analytically; developing and supporting theses and arguments; summarizing, paraphrasing, and synthesizing information from a variety of sources; structuring persuasive and cohesive essays; incorporating and integrating evidence into their writing using MLA documentation; editing and revising; using appropriate conventions of language, including correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

This syllabus lists assigned readings, essays, and other activities. It is subject to change, but you will always be informed of any and all changes I make to it.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, we will aim to

1. Read and think critically
2. Understand how language operates grammatically and rhetorically
3. Express ideas—both orally and in writing—correctly, cogently, persuasively, and in conformity with academic conventions and expectations
4. Conduct research
Course Requirements & Policies

Materials

1. Freshman Common Reading: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah* (required)

2. Course Packet (required): Online at [https://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/eng1010/readings](https://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/eng1010/readings)


Reading

Class discussion is a critical element of this course, and participation is essential. All of you are expected to have closely read and be ready to discuss all readings on the day they are assigned. There will be unannounced reading quizzes (which, never fear, will be easy for those who have done the reading). Please be sure to bring the assigned reading to every class.

Participation

We are going to be learning and working collaboratively, which means that participation is key not only to your grade, but to your general success in the class as well. You will all be expected to complete and comment on the assigned reading, contribute to class discussion, bring required materials to class, and engage in peer review and other group activities.

**NOTE:** Cellphones must be silenced and put away during class. Laptops are only allowed in class on specific days, or with my permission (for instance, accounting for disability or other unique circumstances). I was in college myself not that long ago. I know what happens to even the best of us when we use our laptops to take notes.

Attendance & Punctuality:

This course is not like biology or history. For better or worse, you can’t just teach yourself the material right out of a textbook. Being here and participating is a crucial part of learning how to become a better writer, and moving on to English 1012 (which, like 1010, is a mandatory course).

If you miss more than four classes, you will receive no credit for participation. A pattern of lateness will affect your grade.
I realize things happen. Buses get stuck in traffic; emergencies strike. The most important part of this attendance policy is that you keep me informed. If you’re going to miss class, let me know in advance. If there’s an emergency, shoot me an email if circumstances allow it. If you simply cut class for a week and then return the next week, it’s going to be a problem.

Assignments and Grading

All essays are due in person and electronically at the beginning of class unless otherwise specified. In addition to handing me physical copy of your work, you will email it to me or post it on Blackboard.

Blackboard

Each of you will maintain a reading journal in which you will record your reactions to and thoughts about assigned readings. You may do this electronically, or by hand. Each week, you will post something about an assigned reading for that given week. These posts can be summaries. They can also contain your reactions to or thoughts on that reading. No matter what, they must contain at least one question. These are graded for effort and completion (i.e. doing your best on them will get you full credit).

Essays & Other Writing

In order to pass the class, you will write five essays, all of which must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font, and formatted with one-inch margins.

1. A personal narrative (750-1000 words)
2. Two summaries (250-500 words each)
3. An argumentative essay (1000-1250 words),
4. A compare and contrast essay (1000-1250 words)

You will revise each of these essays. In addition, students will have an in-class essay exam. Students will be asked to complete other assignments, such as journal entries, in-class writing, and reading responses.

Exams

1. A midterm consisting of an in-class compare and contrast essay.
2. A Final Exam: English 1010 students must take a final exam. The exam is based on responses to two pieces of writing: one 5-7 page essay, distributed one week before the end of the term, and a second 1-2 page piece, distributed along with the question on the
day of the exam. The exam will count for 20% of the final grade for the class. We will discuss the test format in class.

LOOP workshop: The Brooklyn College Bulletin states the following:

All students in English 1010 will complete the required Brooklyn College library orientation, which will introduce them to the services and resources of the library, including access to and ethical use of its print and electronic resources.

Grading: The Brooklyn College policy on grading for English 1010 is as follows:

Grades for English 1010 are: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, NC or F. Note that the minimum passing grade is C-. Students who have completed all the course work but are not yet writing at the college level will receive a grade of NC; students who have not completed the course work will receive a grade of F.

Students who do not pass English 1010 must repeat it the following semester. The course may not be taken more than three times; students who receive three grades of F, NC and/or WU may be dismissed from the college.

NOTE: Essays turned in late will be penalized half a letter grade for each class meeting they are late. Late work will not be accepted after one week has passed from the original due date. If students miss a class during which an essay is to be submitted, students are still responsible for submitting (e-mailing) the essay on the same day AND bringing a hard copy of it the next time they attend class.

Possible grades are as follows:

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Grading Breakdown:

Essays: 60%
- Personal Narrative: 10%
- Summaries: 10%
- Argumentative Essay: 15%
- Compare and Contrast Essay: 15%
  - In-class Compare and Contrast Essay: 10%

Final Exam: 20%

Final Assignments: 10%
- This includes take-home assignments, in-class writing, and quizzes.

Attendance & Participation: 10%
- This includes attendance, promptness, participation in class discussions and group work, etc.

Plagiarism: Brooklyn College's statement on plagiarism is as follows:

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site: [http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies](http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies).

My Addendum to the Statement on Plagiarism:

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are a waste of your time and mine. If you feel swamped by an assignment, if you're struggling, if you had an emergency that prevents you from doing the work, if you've simply been behind and are now struggling to catch up—it doesn't matter. Send me an email, or come talk to me during office hours or after class. We'll figure it out. Your integrity matters more than any deadline. If you're not doing the work yourself, there's no point in either of us being here.

It can sometimes be difficult to know what constitutes plagiarism. Throughout the semester, we will discuss ways to avoid plagiarizing others' work. When in doubt, however, ask me. As stated above, I have to report instances of plagiarism to the administration. I have no interest in having to do that, so just shoot me an email or talk to me after class if you're ever worried about how to walk that line.

**Student Bereavement Policy:** Brooklyn College’s statement on non-attendance because of religious belief is located here: http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/initiatives/policies/bereavement.php

**Important Dates**

- ♣ Monday, August 27    Weekday classes begin
- ♣ Sunday, September 2   Last day to add a course
- ♣ Wednesday, September 5  Conversion Day; Classes follow a Monday Schedule, Last day to file for elective course Pass/Fail
- ♣ Saturday, September 8  Weekend classes begin
- ♣ Sunday, September 16   Last day to drop a course without a grade.
- ♣ Tuesday, November 6    Last day to withdraw from course with a W (non-penalty) grade.

**NOTE:** English 1010 is an Academic Foundations course. Brooklyn College’s policy on withdrawing from English 1010 is as follows:

Students are not permitted at any time to delete, drop, or withdraw from an assigned Academic Foundations course without obtaining permission of the academic department involved and consulting the Center for Academic Advisement and Student Success.

The full academic calendar, including many other important dates, and the undergraduate final exam “grid” are available on the [Office of the Registrar’s website](http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/initiatives/policies/bereavement.php).

**Course Schedule**

**Week 1**

**8/28**

- Introduction to the class: goals, requirements, etc.
- Syllabus
- Student and instructor introductions

**8/30:**

- Reflections on writing: process, argument, rhetorical modes and strategies
- In-class writing exercise and group activity

Readings: *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

**Week 2**
9/4

• Introductions & the diagnostic essay
• Discussion of and exercises in close reading & annotation

Readings: *Americanah*, “Leave Your Name at the Border” by Manuel Muñoz

9/6

• Crafting a personal essay
• Stages of writing: What does revision mean?
• Plagiarism

Readings: *Americanah*, “A Letter to my Mother That She Will Never Read” by Ocean Vuong

Assignment: First draft of Personal Narrative due 9/13 for teacher feedback on revisions to be made for a second draft which will be due 9/25. You can find all of the details for this on the assignment sheet given out in class.

Week 3

9/13

• Close reading and annotation: What it means to be an active reader
• Summaries: An introduction and discussion

Readings: “The Careless Language of Sexual Violence” by Roxane Gay; “Men Explain Things to Me” by Rebecca Solnit

Assignment: Second draft of Personal Narrative due 9/25 along with brief description of revision process.

**DUE: First draft of Personal Narrative**

Week 4

9/20

• Summary vs Paraphrase
• Summary vs. Analysis
• In-class exercise

Readings: “Regarding the Pain of Others” by Susan Sontag; “Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire” by Errol Morris
Assignment: Summary of one of the two articles assigned due 9/25

Week 5

9/25

• Arguments and Thesis Statements: Defining the bases of the essay
• Discussion and exercises on the topic

Readings: “The Coddling of the American Mind”

Assignment: Summary of one of the two articles assigned on 9/20 due 9/27

DUE: Second draft of Personal Narrative

9/27

• Arguments and Theses Continued
• How to structure an argument

Readings: “The Last Feminist Taboo” by Marisa Meltzer

Week 6

10/2

• How to select evidence to best support an argument
• Continued discussion of structuring an argument

Readings: “Just Walk on By: Black Men and Public Space” by Brent Staples

10/4

• How to select evidence continued
• Citation of primary sources

Readings: “Thick of Tongue” by John McWhorter

Assignment: First draft of the analytical essay due 10/11 for teacher feedback on potential revisions for second draft due on 10/23. You can find all of the details for this on the assignment sheet given out in class.

Week 7

10/9
• How to effectively quote evidence from primary sources

• Exercises in building arguments with evidence

    Reading: “The Braindead Megaphone” by George Saunders

10/11

• Revision: approaches and strategies

• Revision and the construction of an argument

        Assignment: Second draft of Analytical Essay due 10/23 along with brief description of revision process.

        DUE: First draft of your Analytical Essay

Week 8

10/16

• In-class group activity: theses, arguments, and evidence

        Reading: “Consider the Lobster” by David Foster Wallace

10/18

• Peer review of analytical essays

• Group discussion of revision and review

Week 9

10/23

• Introduction to the compare and contrast essay

• Texts in Conversation

        Reading: “Letter From a Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King Jr.

        DUE: Second draft of your Analytical Essay

10/25

• Comparative thesis statements
• Structure

• In-class writing strategies

Reading: “The Declaration of Independence” by Thomas Jefferson

Week 10

10/30

• Effective use of quotations

• Group activity and workshop focusing on signal phrases and quotations

• Reading: “Notes of a Native Son” by James Baldwin

• Assignment: First draft of the compare and contrast essay due 11/8 for teacher feedback on potential revisions for second draft due on 11/20. You can find all of the details for this on the assignment sheet given out in class.

11/1

• Argument vs. Explanation and Persuasion

• Signal phrases & other templates: sentence-level writing and structure

• Assignment: Review notes in preparation for in-class compare and contrast essay on 11/6

Week 11

11/6

• In-class compare and contrast essay

Reading: “We Are Not All Created Equal” by Stephen Marche

11/8

• Peer review of compare and contrast essays

Reading: “The Ugly Tourist” by Jamaica Kincaid

Assignment: Second draft of Compare and Contrast Essay due 11/20 along with brief description of revision process.

DUE: First draft of the Compare and Contrast Essay
Week 12

11/13
- Deconstructing the compare and contrast essay
- In-class work analyzing and learning from sample essays

11/15
- Review and synthesis of compare and contrast principles
- In-class group activity focused on constructing the compare and contrast essay

Week 13

11/20
- Review of material learned so far
- Introduction to research & MLA citation
  
Reading: TBD

DUE: Second Draft of the Compare and Contrast Essay

Week 14

11/27
- Review and synthesis of thematic material learned thus far
- Strategies of outlining and organization
  
Reading: Sample essays for final exam

11/29
- Review and synthesis of mechanics and strategies of composition
- Introduction to the final exam format

Week 15
12/4

- Rubrics and sample essays for the final exam
- Preparation strategies for final exam

12/6

- Group discussion of exam and general principles of analysis and composition

Week 16

12/11

- TBD

Readings: First essay from fall 2018 final exam