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## ENGL 1102

Instructor's name: Amanda Shoemake

Office Location: Pafford 105 A

**Office Hours:** M 9-10; T 10-1 (online); W 9-12; Also available by appointment

**Writing Center Hours:** M 10-12 and 5-6 (Appointment via WC ONLY)

Email: [amandas@westga.edu](mailto:amandas@westga.edu). **DO NOT EMAIL ME THROUGH COURSEDEN! Use your student GMAIL account!**

Note: I often run errands during office hours, so email me if you plan to drop in at a specific time!

### Course Description and Learning Outcomes:

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Ysrl\\_SIDuPh3NPXGADVfoH9x26g6ovoq](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Ysrl_SIDuPh3NPXGADVfoH9x26g6ovoq)

### Heeyyy, Students!

Welcome to ENGL 1102! A few things about this document. The syllabus is important. It serves as an outline for the upcoming semester and establishes my expectations of you regarding class participation and work. If you have questions about course policies, please check here for the answer **first** before emailing/@-ing me. If you email me a question that can be easily answered by the syllabus, I will direct you to the syllabus. Literally. I will respond with "syllabus" or a ridiculous gif/meme if you ask me a question that has already been answered. I have a whole folder set aside with responses READY TO GO. Do the work first. We are the generation of Googling. Do that.

So, writing is, like, really hard. And not fun. And if someone has ever told you otherwise, that person is lying (to themselves, above all, but also to you). I get it. I have TWO DEGREES in writing, and I effing hate it sometimes. BUT. I also know how to do it well. And that's what this class is about: Clear, specific, and organized writing. This is not a literature class! This is a writing class! And more importantly, this is a critical thinking class (something we DESPERATELY need as a nation rn). We'll be working towards something big this semester. And, as I'll get into later, all without typical grades.

We will be talking about some pretty heavy stuff this semester, so I expect professionalism and open-mindedness. Some of what we discuss may run completely counter to your expectations or previous knowledge. I'm not trying to "blow your minds" with "crazy lib theories". Instead, I ask that you really think deeply about what bias is and how it will (NOT MIGHT) affect your decision-

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making. Shit is going to get real. But I have faith that we can get through it and come out better on the other side. Let's get to it.

## --Professor Shoemake

### **Required Texts:**

**None!** We will be using the *New York Times* online (a free service for all student via their westga logins). I will provide links to several podcasts, articles, and/or short stories throughout the semester. I will provide students with scans or hard copies (for my face-to-face students) of any additional texts as needed. eBooks are fine (preferably not on your phone). Everything will be available in Courseden.

**Other Material:** Flash drive or some other portable electronic storage for independent computer use (all students are responsible for producing and retaining copies of their work); paper and pen/pencil as necessary to take notes in class. Some days will be workshop days! Students will be encouraged to bring their laptops/tablets to class these days.

**Course Policies/Statements (General);** [University-Wide Common Language For Syllabi](#) (more specific language regarding the general policies is listed below)

### **Plagiarism and Excessive Collaboration Policy:**

**Plagiarism & Academic Honesty:** The Department of English and Philosophy defines plagiarism as taking personal credit for the words and ideas of others as they are presented in electronic, print, and verbal sources. The Department expects that students will accurately credit sources in all assignments. An equally dishonest practice is fabricating sources or facts; it is another form of misrepresenting the truth. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course. (See also, Excessive Collaboration).

### **The University Policies for handling Academic Dishonesty are found in the following documents:**

The Faculty Handbook, sections 207 and 208.0401 (<http://www.westga.edu/~vpaa/handrev/>); Student Undergraduate Catalog, "Academic Honor Code": (<http://www.westga.edu/undergrad/1762.htm>)

**Excessive Collaboration:** By the end of the term in both ENGL 1101 and 1102, students should demonstrate the ability to produce independent writing (writing without collaborative assistance of peers, writing tutors, or professionals in the field) that shows an acceptable level of competence. Although classroom activities and out-of-class assignments may highlight collaborative learning and collaborative research, excessive collaboration (collaboration that results in the loss of a student's voice/style and original claims to course related work) is considered another form of academic dishonesty and therefore will not be permitted.

**Disability Pledge:** I pledge to do my best to work with the University to provide all students with equal access to my classes and materials, regardless of special needs, temporary or permanent disability, special needs related to pregnancy, etc. If you have any special learning needs, particularly (but not limited to) needs defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and require specific accommodations, please do not hesitate to make these known to me, either yourself or through Disability Services in 272 Parker Hall at 678-839-6428. Students with documented

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special needs may expect accommodation in relation to classroom accessibility, modification of testing, special test administration, etc. This is not only my personal commitment: it is your right, and it is the law. For more information, contact Disability Services. **If a student wishes to file with Disability Services, he/she should provide me with the documentation within the first two weeks of class.**

**Title IX Reporting:** Effective July 1, 2016, all faculty and staff at public universities in Georgia became mandatory reporters for sexual assault. We are required to report any information concerning sexual assault, and we are not allowed to maintain the information in confidence with the student (the only exceptions being the Counseling Center, the clergy, and medical staff). You are encouraged to report any instances of sexual assault.

**HB 280 (Campus Carry):** UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance for this policy, which can be found [at this site](#). You may also visit the [designated university website](#) for help with USG guidance.

**Disruptive Behavior:** [The Student Conduct Code, section 3.00 \(Appendix A in the Student Handbook\)](#) prohibits disruptive behavior on campus, defined as “interfering with normal university sponsored activities, including, but not limited to, studying, teaching, research, university administration, disciplinary or public service activities, or fire, police or emergency services.” Reasonable examples of appropriate classroom behavior prohibit such actions as cell phone use, eating in class, talking while the instructor is talking, coming late or leaving early, sleeping, etc. Specific information on disruptive behavior in the classroom and how such behavior is addressed can be found by visiting the following: [http://www.westga.edu/vpsa/index\\_4721.php](http://www.westga.edu/vpsa/index_4721.php) (Office of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management). *In other words: Don't be an asshole.*

**Role of the Writing Center:** The role of the Writing Center is to offer consultation in which tutors question, respond to, offer choices, and encourage revision in student essays. Tutors do not evaluate or prescribe solutions to problematic areas to student essays, and tutors are specifically trained to avoid appropriating the student's work. For more information, visit the Writing Center: [www.westga.edu/writing](http://www.westga.edu/writing)

**Course Policies (Specific):**

**Technology Policy:** Please act like you (or someone else) paid to be here and pay attention in class. Turn phones off/do not disturb/silent. Put them OUT OF SIGHT when you come in to class. If it becomes a problem, I'll start taking off points from attendance.

**Revision Policy:** Students may revise Essay 1 OR 2. Revisions will come with their own set of procedures/worksheets. Revised out-of-class essays MUST include the original essay, accompanying documents outlining your approach to the revision, and a summation of my comments/critiques. Students will highlight/underline any changes made in their revised essay. Due date to be announced.

**Paper Format:** All out-of-class essays should be submitted according to MLA format. Please see *A Writer's Resource* and the UWC website for additional information. I require both hard copies of out-of-class essays AND electronic submissions through Courseden Dropbox (which will be set up prior to the due date). I require both hard copies of out-of-class essays AND electronic submissions

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through Courseden Dropbox (which will be set up prior to the due date). I WILL NOT GRADE ANY SUBMISSION WITHOUT THE PROPER SUBMISSION OF THE ELECTRONIC COPY. **This means saving each assignment as either a .docx or a .pdf file.** If you do not submit BOTH formats, I will not accept your submission.

**Penalties for Late Work:** Students are responsible for finding out material due date(s) with regard to missed work; if a student is absent on the day out-of-class work is due or if a student is present but does not turn in the work on the assigned due date, ten points will be deducted from the overall grade of the assignment for each day (not class period) the work is late. If a student finds it necessary to miss class on a day work is due, the material should be emailed to me the day work is due in order to avoid any penalty. **\*\*Note: I do not accept late assignments past three days (not class days)\*\***

**Office Consultations:** An office consultation, whether it is conducted during scheduled office hours or during a scheduled appointment, is a time for you to meet with me to discuss very **specific** issues, i.e., a specific essay, a specific in-class or out-of-class assignment, a specific grade, a specific concern as it relates to your writing, etc. **If an office consultation is scheduled to discuss a final grade on one of the out-of-class essays, you must wait 24 hours from the time I return the essay to you to meet with me. This will give you the opportunity to review my comments.** When you schedule an office consultation, you should come in prepared. Please do not come in, for example, with an essay and say you just want to "go over it." **(I will also NOT review/proofread entire drafts that are emailed to me. You MUST schedule an appointment during office hours).** This semester, I will have at least 3 hours in the Writing Center. **Any student wishing to meet with me during those 3 hours (TBA) must make an appointment in The Writing Center with Stephanie at the front desk.** In order for me to be able to give you the help you need, you need to be specific. For example, if you have an essay you are concerned about, write down EXACTLY what concerns you, i.e., thesis statement, paragraph development, comma splices, proper MLA format, etc. This will give us some guidelines during our consultation and help to generate discussion. Be aware that an email asking questions about an essay CANNOT replace an actual meeting with me during office hours. It is very difficult to respond to your questions and your needs by only responding to an email, especially if your questions are general. I welcome any email correspondence you wish to have with me; however, this type of correspondence is best used only when you have a very SPECIFIC question that does not require discussion. **\*\*Please Note: The official email communication method will be through campus e-mail (Gmail). You are also NOT allowed to meet with me about an essay on the day it is due. All office consultations must occur prior to the essay due date.**

**Course Evaluation/Grading Procedures:** Over the course of the semester, each student will be responsible for completing at least 4,000 words of formal writing. **\*\*\*A Note About Averages\*\*:** Extra Credit will be offered and accepted at my discretion. Additionally, work completed for another course will not be accepted in this course.

**Another Note on Plagiarism:** In addition to the University Policy, **students should be aware that if a student violates this policy and submits a work (ANY WORK) that is unoriginal/plagiarized, he/she may receive and "0" for the assignment and/or an "F" for the course at my discretion.** During the first few days of class, students will take a True/False Quiz over Plagiarism (answers will be reviewed and corrections allowed). At the end of the quiz,

ENGL 1102 SYLLABUS  
DOUBLE CLICK HERE AND USE THE NAV BAR BELOW

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students will sign a contract which states that I have provided them with the University Policy, My Course Policy, and adequate information about plagiarism. Signatures will signify that students understand the penalties if said policies are violated. If a student submits a plagiarized assignment, in addition to receiving an “F” in the course (after the Withdrawal deadline), that student will also be reported to Academic Affairs and the Academic Dishonesty Council. **Academic dishonesty is not a joke. Plagiarism/cheating that goes without consequence devalues the education and degree that all students are pursuing. I want to read what YOU have to say.**

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### **Introduction: Contract Grading (Language is from FYW Shared Curriculum document)**

The present “contract” outlines the requirements to receive each of the possible final grades in the course. It’s going to seem like a strange document to you, I suspect, because it probably defies most everything you’ve come to expect from an “English” class if not from school in general. So, I’d like to offer a short explanation of the contract itself before proceeding to explain the requirements in it: I hate grades. In all seriousness, though, I hate the idea of reducing people, and people’s writing, to numbers because I’ve found both in professional scholarship and my personal experience that such quantification is often an impediment to authentic learning. (If you want to talk scholarship just to confirm that I’m not just one of those “radical professors” depicted in media, and I assure you that I’m certainly not, I would love to do so.) I’m not new to teaching, nor have I forgotten my experiences as a student: grades often provoke anxiety among students, prompting them (myself included, back when) to attempt to figure out and then execute whatever strategies will result in, for example, keeping scholarships or advancing to the next course in the sequence or meeting *that* graduation requirement. In doing so, then, grades reorient the focus of the class away from authentic engagement with the learning process in the present to consideration of how a specific level of performance will affect something else, whatever else, in the future.

This contract attempts to do the opposite: *so long as you put a good faith effort into the course, you’re going to pass, and you can probably even earn an “A” or a “B” in it. In return, though, this expects a good faith effort from you, meaning that you won’t just be able to make a specific score on a test or essay to get a specific course grade. Instead, you will have to engage in a sustained and rigorous manner with the learning process.* (Read the last part again, and internalize it. It’s probably the most important passage here.)

If you put in a good faith effort, and stop worrying about specific grades, I promise that you’ll get more from the course overall, but know that you’re going to be completing a lot more work than you otherwise might. This is, I think, a good thing: our course is closer to a clinical rotation in medical school or a practicum in another professional school than it is to a traditional lecture. So, without further ado, here’s an explanation for each of the major requirements in the course, which is followed with a much-simplified breakdown of how those requirements translate into final course grades.

### **Major Assignments**

I think it reasonable to expect you to complete all major assignments (there are three, described on the syllabus), as well as a formal revision of at least one major assignment, in order to earn a passing grade—not least because I’d like to use them as a point of departure to have a transparent conversation about the relative “quality” of your writing with you.

Here’s the deal: the present contract is intended to dispel what I’ll call “grade anxiety” for you and me alike given that it largely makes your *final grade* in the course a function of how much effort (which necessarily leads to quality) is put into the course. But, I would be lying to you if I told you that quality, however defined, doesn’t matter at all. “Grammar” is a good, if complicated, example, and this particular idea requires an example to illustrate it. Most linguists would describe as “grammatically correct” all utterances in a given language or language dialect intelligible to its speakers, a definition which includes words like “ain’t,” phrases like “he always be leaving me on

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read,” and even pronunciations like “cahr,” and the same linguists would in turn describe “standard grammar” as a construct that might have political implications to varying degrees.

At the same time, though, most linguists aren’t hiring managers, typical coworkers, and clients, folks who understandably tend to value the form of English taught in the typical English language class as a common tongue that, given sufficient training, allows *all* speakers of the language to communicate in those contexts. For them, then, the quality of a person’s language is directly proportional to how well the person follows those conventions, again in those formal contexts.

The same applies to things like organization, evidentiary support, and even stylistic choices in writing. So, while your *final grade* isn’t entirely based on the quality of the work submitted, know that the class itself, particularly the major assignments, will both expect, assess, and work to improve it—often in blunter and more rigorous ways than it would if it instead made quality the primary determinant for your final grade. You can, and might, earn a “D” on a major assignment; if you do, though, you should approach it as a chance to more clearly see and work on the aspects of your writing that need improvement, rather than as (I’ve been a student) “the end of your academic career as you know it full stop.” In short, then, **you must complete all major assignments to pass the course because you must complete all major assignments to receive the kinds of insight and feedback that will empower you as an orator, writer, and communicator.**

### Other Assignments

The need to complete a certain percentage of the total work in the course in order to earn the corresponding letter grade is a little easier to explain, I think. I’m basically assuming the following two things: (1) that to become a “writer,” one needs do nothing other than write; and (2) that to improve as a writer, one needs do nothing other than write. The repetition is quite intentional: writing isn’t, like the periodic table or the trigonometric unit circle, content that can be learned through rote memorization; it’s a skill that requires practice, which honestly demands a lot more from us intellectually. (Of the following two, which is the more difficult: memorizing human anatomical structures, or performing a surgical procedure?) **So, we’re going to write, and we’re going to write often.** Sometimes, you’ll keep what you produce to include in a major assignment, and other times, you’ll workshop what you produce with the instructor and your peers in order to receive feedback; and still other times, you’ll never use or even read what you produce again. Because the point is, on some level, simply to produce. It seems practical to me, then, to use your willingness to produce as a measure of your effort to improve as a writer.

### Attendance

Attendance is similarly simple to explain, even if it here encompasses being both physically *and mentally* present at class meetings. Much of the feedback that you receive on your writing will come from class discussions—both from the instructor, and from your peers. Likewise, much of the improvement that you make, whether by graciously receiving that constructive feedback or, indeed, by graciously giving that constructive feedback to others. In other words, much of the *effort* that you put into the course will occur in the classroom. Let’s work together to ensure that we have an honest, but supportive, space in which we can commit to and benefit from that labor, promising to attend all of the classes that we reasonably can.

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Attendance will be taken each class period. Each student begins each class with 100 points. If the student is unprepared for class or is disruptive, points will be deducted. The severity of the deduction correlates to the severity of the disruption—at MY discretion. Being unprepared or being disruptive can be defined as but is not limited to: any student that has not read or completed required assignments, does not bring material to class, falls asleep, is disrespectful to the instructor or other classmates, is on his/her phone, is late, is constantly speaking over other classmates or interrupting other's ability to learn, etc. Your participation is ultimately your responsibility, and it is one of the most important things you are learning in college.

### **Portfolio Meeting**

The final requirement, what I'm calling a "portfolio meeting," is included not because it will necessarily require much effort from you, but because it provides us a capstone for the semester, a chance for you to reflect upon and celebrate your progress (and, if you're putting in the effort, you *will* make progress) as well as to receive some final recommendations from me on how to proceed going forward—your strengths and weaknesses after finishing the course. Plus, if you show up, you'll leave knowing just where you stand in relation to this contract, and therefore precisely what grade you're receiving in the course, well before the deadline for instructors to submit final grades.

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### Grading Contract for English Composition (Simplified)

**NOTE: This contract does allow for occasional, if rare, “gray areas.” Perhaps you’ve completed all major assignments and revisions at a level of high quality, submitted at least ninety percent of the other work in the course, and compiled a stellar portfolio, but still missed four class meetings. I reserve the right to exercise my judgment as an instructor, subject-matter expert, and professional in those instances, though I will always grant you the chance to “make your case,” what with our being in a rhetoric/argument course.**

#### To earn a grade of “A” in the course, you agree to do the following:

- Complete all major assignments in the course.
- Revise one or more of the major assignments in the course in consultation with the instructor.
- Complete at least **ninety percent** of all other assignments in the course.
- **Miss no more than three class meetings** during the semester without good reason (including, but not limited to, a hospitalization, a court summons, the death of a close relative, a university-sponsored event, and a life-changing opportunity).
- Compile a portfolio of your writing, and meet with the instructor to discuss it at the end of the semester.

#### To earn a grade of “B” in the course, you agree to do the following:

- Complete all major assignments in the course.
- Revise one or more of the major assignments in the course in consultation with the instructor.
- Complete at least **eighty percent** of all other assignments in the course.
- **Miss no more than four class meetings** during the semester without good reason (including, but not limited to, a hospitalization, a court summons, the death of a close relative, a university-sponsored event, and a life-changing opportunity).
- Compile a portfolio of your writing, and meet with the instructor to discuss it at the end of the semester.

#### To earn a grade of “C” in the course, you agree to do the following:

- Complete all major assignments in the course.
- Complete at least **seventy percent** of all other assignments in the course.
- **Miss no more than five class meetings** during the semester without good reason (including, but not limited to, a hospitalization, a court summons, the death of a close relative, a university-sponsored event, and a life-changing opportunity).
- Compile a portfolio of your writing, and meet with the instructor to discuss it at the end of the semester.

#### To earn a grade of “D” in the course, you agree to do the following:

- Complete all but one of the major assignments in the course.
- Complete at least **sixty percent** of all other assignments in the course.
- **Miss no more than five class meetings** during the semester without good reason (including, but not limited to, a hospitalization, a court summons, the death of a close relative, a university-sponsored event, and a life-changing opportunity).

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- Compile a portfolio of your writing, and meet with the instructor to discuss it at the end of the semester.

**You will earn a grade of “F” in the course if you (1) fail to complete more than one major assignment, (2) miss more than five class meetings, or (3) otherwise fail to meet the minimum requirements to earn a “D.”**

- In conclusion, one fails if one simply makes no effort to complete the work in the course.