School for New Learning
BAIFA, BAC, BAGB, BAECE, and BADA

LL 260: Writing for Competence
Spring, 2017

**Instructor:** David Morris
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**Course Dates:** 3/29-6/7; Wednesdays, 6:00-9:15

**Credit Hours:** 4

**Course Location:** O’Hare campus

**Course Description**

In this course, students develop and practice skills associated with good writing. While the class focuses on preparing students to successfully navigate SNL’s writing-intensive curriculum, lessons learned can also be readily applied to a variety of personal and professional writing needs.

Good writing involves far more than just spelling and grammar: this form of communication requires thinking, planning, strategizing, and executing; it requires developing a method of sculpting ill-formed and often unorganized ideas into a clear, cohesive whole; it requires that the writer represent those ideas so that a reader readily understands them; it requires practice and patience. In return, it rewards the writer with great power: the power to communicate effectively, according to specific need and audience.

In class, students review and apply the essentials of good writing by identifying and building on their particular strengths and improving on their weaknesses; by developing the skills necessary for clear, fluent, and expressive writing; and by learning to give feedback on writing to one another.

Students will produce three written projects: an expository essay, a compare/contrast essay, and a persuasive essay; they will also submit several shorter written assignments. Classes will cover the following topics: idea generation, using research materials, developing outlines, building arguments, citing source material, and producing bibliographies. Students will also do extensive work on editing and rewriting to meet course goals.

**Prerequisite:** Successful completion of the SNL Writing Placement Process in Campus Connect prior to registration.

**Instructor Bio**

I love writing, and I love teaching this class.

Everyone who takes this class has the capacity to write well. It’s in you! But, for each of you, the key to success may be different: Is it about gaining confidence? Is about honing organization and direction?
Is it about viewing writing as conversation, and learning to enter and respond to that conversation? Maybe it’s about attacking procrastination? Or about gaining efficiency? Could it be about approaching academic writing as a creative (yes, creative) process? (Michelangelo had to learn his trade, too). Is it about tying good writing to academic success (great papers = great grades)? Or tying it to professional success? Maybe it’s about getting “the rules” down.

The list goes on . . . But I can tell you this: It’s definitely about practice, practice, practice, and more practice. And I can promise you this: we’ll find out together, and if you put in the time and effort, you’ll walk out of this class a more confident and more capable writer.

Writing provides the foundation for my professional life. At my company, Kaleidoscope Research Consulting, writing and research drive everything we do. Over the years, I have also written in a variety of mediums and fields, including magazine writing, academic research, legal writing, marketing and financial/business writing (I haven’t given up on creative writing).

I have had the pleasure of teaching at DePaul’s School for New Learning since 2001, after graduating from Loyola University School of Law. In addition to Writing for Competence, I have taught Critical Thinking; Ethics and Law of Internet Privacy; Ethics, Law & Justice; Market Research, Corporations, and You; and Tragedy & Drama. I still take a class here and there, and I probably always will.

**Learning Outcomes, Competences, and/or Objectives**

**Competencies: L4: Can write to demonstrate academic and professional competencies.**

1. Applies knowledge of academic writing conventions to demonstrate prior and new learning
2. Analyzes, evaluates and synthesizes experiences and concepts in writing
3. Demonstrates control over grammar, syntax, and punctuation
4. Understands writing as an iterative process and applies a variety of strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading
5. Creates a plan for ongoing improvement of writing for academic, work, and personal communication, including addressing problems and leveraging strengths

Students demonstrate this competence through the SNL Writing for Competence course or the L4 Proficiency Exam Portfolio. Students will continue to develop their writing skills throughout the program. SNL will not accept transfer courses for this competence.

**Learning Strategies & Resources**

**Learning Experience**

In this course, the following teaching and learning techniques are used: workshops, class discussions, D2L discussion boards, lectures, working in small groups, conferences, at-home and in-class assignments, critical reading, online exercise resources, learning from others through peer review, and lots and lots of writing and revising.
Required Texts and Course Materials


3. Assigned selections from Writing Guide for SNL Students at https://snlapps.depaul.edu/writing/

4. Additional readings available on e-reserve from the DePaul library through the Ares Course Reserve: http://library.depaul.edu/services/Pages/Course-Reserves-Services.aspx (select Writing for Competence).

Recommended Texts

1. If English is not your native language and you struggle with English as a Second Language (ESL) issues such as article and pronoun usage, you may want to also purchase for your own use the ESL Supplement for *A Writer’s Reference*, ISBN# 0312-45233-0.

2. A college dictionary

Learning Deliverables

- Expository essay (3-4 pages)
- Compare/contrast essay (3-4 pages)
- Persuasive essay (2-4 pages)
- Completion of all Desire2Learn postings (see below)
- Final L4 Portfolio (using Digication) and Portfolio Essay
- Participation in all class activities

We will use Desire2Learn (D2L) to post shorter assignments. While submissions will often be only a paragraph long, they provide the means to build skill sets as we move forward, and they serve as laboratories for work that can be applied readily to larger papers. Submissions often must follow strict guidelines, and they must be revised before posting, so they are more work-intensive than their brevity may suggest.

These assignments will be written in response to a short reading assignment. Rather than handing them in during class, you are required to post them on D2L by 9:00 p.m. on the day before class. This deadline is important because, among other things, I will often assess submissions that evening, so that you obtain feedback the next day. Turning in late work bogs this process down, so please avoid posting late at all costs.

A note on assignments: Because this class aims to give you practice drafting a variety of different papers, you must complete each assigned draft in order to get credit for the final draft. All paper drafts should be typed.
Assessment of Student Learning

SNL Grading Policy for Lifelong Learning Courses

This is a Pass/Fail class. However, SNL also offers students the opportunity to select a "Grading" option where grades A through C- represent passing performance. The faculty member and the individual student together decide which system will best promote the student's learning in that particular course. With no exceptions, a student must obtain permission from the instructor to use the grade option by the beginning of the third week of the quarter. After the third week of the quarter, the assessment style agreed upon (whether pass/fail or grading) cannot be changed. The instructor is required to provide the student the specific assessment criteria by which a grade will be determined prior to the student officially selecting this option.

The pass/fail policy and procedure of the university found in the student handbook should be followed where a student wishes to seek this option for a graded course. The grading scale is as follows:

- A = 95 to 100  A- = 91 to 94
- B+ = 88 to 90  B = 85 to 87  B- = 81 to 84
- C+ = 77 to 80  C = 73 to 76  C- = 69 to 72
- D+ = 65 to 68  D = 61 to 64
- F = 60 or below
- INC

Assessment Criteria

To successfully complete this course, students must:

1. Participate meaningfully in discussion and in peer revision
2. Submit class assignments in a timely manner
3. Complete all assigned D2L posts
4. Submit at least one draft to the Writing Center during the quarter
5. Receive passing grades on the two final drafts as per the SNL Paper Rubric (http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/Rubric.html)
6. Successfully complete an ePortfolio and the Final Portfolio Essay in Digication (depaul.digication.com)
7. Meet the criteria for the L4 competence as listed above

All drafts should represent a student’s best possible effort. There is little point in assessing hurried work, and work that is clearly hurried will be returned immediately for additional revision. While early drafts may not be as polished or as well developed as final drafts, they should represent your best effort to write the paper and should not be stream of consciousness, a collection of notes or a half done essay. Every draft must be spell checked before you turn it in. Final drafts will be evaluated using the Grading Rubric for Papers at the School for New Learning (http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/Rubric.html).

As the course gets underway, we will use DePaul's ePortfolio platform, Digication, to create an ePortfolio of your work. For more information, see the Digication site (http://depaul.digication.com) and the Digication help page (http://depaul.digication.com/-gethelp). These sites require logging in
using your Campus Connect login information. The Portfolio should demonstrate that you have met or exceeded the criteria for the L4 competence.

You will also use Digication to submit a **Final Portfolio Essay**, which is due at the end of the quarter. This essay 1) demonstrates what you have learned and reflects upon what you have accomplished in this class, and 2) helps you look forward to set an agenda for your ongoing development as a writer. It must include specific strategies for addressing your most common writing problems, equally concrete ideas for how to make the most of your strengths as a writer, and a clear plan for mastering the writing genres related to your focus area.

However, you have the option of taking the course for a letter grade. If you wish to take the course for a letter grade, you must inform your instructor in writing by the end of the second week of class. Once you commit to taking the course for a letter grade, you cannot switch back to Pass/Fail.

**Course Schedule**

**Week One: March 29**

In class: Writing Diagnostic; Introductions; Syllabus; Discussion about writing; *They Say/I Say*: “Preface” and “Introduction” (handouts); Writing self-assessment; Invention: discussion and exercise; Expository essay kick-off.

Homework: Invention technique application
Packet: “Krakatau”: post a response on Desire2Learn
Hacker: C1, C2, MLA-1
TS/IS: “They Say,” “Ain’t So/Is Not”

**Week Two: April 5**

Due: Expository essay topic and planning; and
D2L expository post (collected via D2L discussion thread)

In class: Exposition; Finding your voice in academic writing; Planning & drafting; Thesis, run-ons and fragments; Revision exercise.

Homework: Expository draft
Hacker: C3, G5, G6
TS/IS: “Her Point Is”
Blog entry

**Week Three: April 12**

Due: Expository draft (bring 3 copies to class)

In class: Thesis, transition and paragraph organization; Run-ons and fragments; Framing the point; Revising; Expository draft peer review; Digication.
Homework: Expository essay revision
Hacker: C4, R, S6
TS/IS: “As a Result”

Week Four: April 19

Due: Expository draft

In class: Transition and paragraph organization; compare/contrast essay kick-off; Finding and using sources; librarian session.

Homework: The Spider and the Wasp
Blog entry
Comparison/contrast topic/rough outline

Week Five: April 26

Due: D2L compare/contrast rough outline

In class: Expository essay revision

Homework: Expository essay revision
Complete compare/contrast outline

Week Six: May 3

Due: Compare/contrast outline
Revised expository essay

In class: Compare/contrast peer review

Homework: Packet: “Letter from a Birmingham Jail Cell”
Comparison/contrast draft

Week Seven: May 10

Due: Compare/contrast draft due

In class: Punctuation; Persuasion and argument; Framing meaning; Persuasive essay kick-off.

Homework Packet: “A Modest Proposal” D2L post
Persuasive essay: idea generation/topic
Week Eight: May 17

Due: D2L persuasive topic and outline

In class: Punctuation; Anticipating and answering objections.

Homework: Comparison/contrast revision
Persuasive outline

Week Nine: May 24

Due: Persuasive outline

In class: Persuasive outline peer review; Supporting the argument; Citing and bibliography

Homework: Persuasive draft
Blog entry

Week Ten: May 31

Due: Final persuasive essay

In class: Demonstrating Your Competence with Your Final Paper, ePortfolio and Final Portfolio Essay; Testing your Knowledge and Recall

Homework: Final revisions; Completed ePortfolio and Final Portfolio Essay

Week Eleven: June 7

Due: Writing Learning Plan and Portfolio: Sunday, June 11, 5:00 p.m.

Course Policies

Computer access, D2L and Campus Connect

Access to a computer for word processing and internet work: Because all of your papers must be typed, because you will be revising each paper a number of times, because you need to e-mail me drafts of your papers and because you need to use the course D2L site, you should have access to a computer and the internet for this class. The University’s computer labs are available to all students. If you need assistance with using the computers, please let me know and consult the University’s IT department at studenttechtraining@depaul.edu.

To use the D2L course site go to http://d2l.depaul.edu/ Click Login then enter your username and Campus Connect password. Here you will find this course book online, links to helpful websites and the Discussion Board.
A current e-mail address on Campus Connect: Please make sure that you have a current e-mail address on Campus Connect, as that is the e-mail address I will use to communicate with you through the D2L site. All DePaul students have an e-mail account. To find out more about e-mail go to http://is.depaul.edu/communication/email/student.asp.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance is mandatory in SNL courses. Students and faculty are expected to arrive on time, and to participate in every scheduled class session. Students missing more than two classes may not have met the requirements for a passing grade. A great deal of the work and learning of the course will take place in class. Therefore, it is necessary that you come to class, be prepared and participate. If you do miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. All work must be handed in on time, whether you are in class or not.

Late Work

Submitting work after an agreed upon due date on more than three occasions constitutes grounds for failing the class. Please communicate with me about any issues that may preclude your ability to hand in work on time.

DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students’ own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university’s academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html for further details.

DePaul University Incomplete Policy

The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request an incomplete grade in writing at least two weeks before the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades will be considered only after you have satisfactorily completed at least 75% of the coursework, and you have an unexpected, uncontrollable event that prevents you from completing your course. Do not assume that you will qualify for an incomplete. Students who are failing the course at the point where they request an incomplete will not receive one, nor will they be granted after the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades are given at the discretion of the instructor.

If you do receive permission from the instructor to take an incomplete in the course, you will be required to complete a contract with the instructor, specifying how you will finish the missing
work. Undergraduate and graduate students will have up to two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades.

Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee.

NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four-week grace period before final degree certification.

**For Students Who Need Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. Please contact your instructor as early as possible in the quarter, preferably within the first week or two of the course. All discussion will remain confidential. Please be sure to contact the following office for additional information:

Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD)
Lincoln Park Campus: Student Center 370. (773) 325-1677
Loop Campus: Lewis Center 1420. (312) 362-8002
csd@depaul.edu

**Course Resources**

**DePaul University Writing Centers**
For on-campus and online tutoring, see the DePaul University Writing Centers at http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/programs-writing-center.html

**SNL Writing Guide**
For help with organizing your ideas, grammar, citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, sample SNL assignments and much more, see the Writing Guide for SNL Students at http://snlapps.depaul.edu/writing/index.html.

**University Center for Writing-based Learning**
**Dean of Students Office**

This course includes and adheres to the college and university policies described in the links below:

- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Incomplete Policy](#)
- [Course Withdrawal Timelines and Grade/Fee Consequences](#)
- [Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability](#)
- [Protection of Human Research Participants](#)