

EWRT 2: COMPOSITION and CRITICAL THINKING

De Anza College

Winter 2025

This course meets via our course Canvas page for 100% of instruction.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Alex Giardino

Email: giardinoalex@fhda.edu

Office hours: Mondays, 3:00-3:50 pm online only, or by appointment

IMPORTANT ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

1. To be eligible for this course, you must have passed EWRT1A.
2. This is a GE course and is degree applicable.
3. Letter grade method of scoring.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS

1. *Asking the Right Questions*, ed. Browne and Keeley (provided on Canvas for free)
2. all required readings posted on Canvas
3. watch the films *The Wizard of Oz* and *Wicked*

COURSE GOALS

1. Develop an argument or analysis with a clear thesis, using relevant details, specific evidence, and unambiguous claims.
2. Develop techniques for writing clear, cogent arguments, including definition, summary, induction and deduction, and analysis.
3. Determine the best method of organization for an effective argument, using logic and persuasion, and careful arrangement of supporting evidence, examples, and illustrations.
4. Understand critical role of voice, tone, and style in argumentation; denotations and connotations of words, appeals to reason and emotion, abstract versus concrete language.

5. Learn to express ideas clearly and directly, avoiding vagueness, ambiguity, wordiness, truisms, clichés, euphemisms, and jargon.
6. Learn to read secondary sources purposefully by annotating, notes, quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing materials.
7. Use a variety of research sources (library and Internet). Become an efficient researcher.
8. Incorporate source material through paraphrase, summary, and quotation.
9. Exhibit full command of MLA format and citation style.
10. Develop sophisticated reading skills, including analyzing author's argument, style, and point of view and examining implicit and explicit arguments and assumptions. Identify author's use of authoritative sources, statistical information, examples and analogies, acknowledgment of opposing opinion, and counterclaims.
11. Become an adept close reader of texts to identify premises, conclusions, claims, assumptions, and biases.
12. Avoid errors in reasoning, logical fallacies, unexamined assumptions, and personal biases.
13. Apply principles of grammar, usage, and syntax to one's own writing.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Apply critical thinking skills to writing and complex readings.
2. Demonstrate academic (analytical, argumentative) writing based on reading of complex texts.
3. Demonstrate analysis, comparison, synthesis, and documentation of independent research.

CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

This is an adult course; thus, the content will not be censored. I encourage critical thinking and lively debate. I expect that we will not all agree and that you will listen with an open mind to others. Respect is key to becoming a critical thinker.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

You are responsible for spending five (5) hours per week on our course Canvas page.

During those hours, you will be expected to do any of the following, as indicated for the week:

1. read instructor lecture notes and materials as posted
2. watch videos related to course materials as posted
3. listen to audio recordings related to course materials as posted

4. complete all posted assignments due that week by the deadline (these assignments may be reading quizzes, reader responses, wiki posts, weekly forum participation, video conferences, and so forth)

You are also responsible for completing the assigned reading and taking notes on the materials so that you can successfully complete the work for this course, including related quizzes, critical reader responses, and weekly forum discussions.

Overall, this class will require about five (5) hours of your time per week.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

On a weekly basis, the instructor will check on your “Activity Report” status in Canvas. If you are not reading the lectures, watching videos, and participating in all the weekly course activities, your activity report will show that, and the instructor will contact you about your performance in class. If you do not fully participate in all the course activities for more than one week, you will be dropped from the course, unless you can provide the instructor with an acceptable excuse, as your lack of participation is similar to a classroom absence.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

You must complete ALL of the following assignments to pass this course:

1. Ten Contributions to Class Forum Discussions (20 points each) 200 pts
2. Essay #1: (1,000 words) 100 pts
3. Essay #2: (1,000 words) 100 pts
4. Self-Evaluation at end of Quarter 100 pts
5. Turn in all study guide answers in two installments 200 pts

Total = 700 points

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Final Grade Scale | A+ 100-98% | A 97.4-94% | A- 93.4-90% |
| | B+ 89-88% | B 87.4-84% | B- 83.4-80% |
| | C+ 79-78% | C 77.4-74% | |

I round up from .5

GRADING POLICY

1. Grades are final.
2. No late assignments accepted (unless you can provide an acceptable form of an excuse).
3. All work must be typed in 12 pt. double-spaced font, with 1-inch margins around the edges (basically MLA format).
4. No extra credit is available for this course, so please don't ask.
5. Failure to turn in any of the assignments will result in failure in the course.
6. You **MUST** submit all of your assignments to me via our course Canvas page. No exceptions.

GRADING RUBRIC

A = Excellence in all areas of the assignment.

1. This essay appropriately and adequately addresses the assignment.
2. It is well organized with a powerful thesis, a clear introduction, body, and conclusion; each paragraph has a topic sentence, three or more supporting points, and a clear transition sentence; and each paragraph contains a quote from course material.
3. The essay contains developed collegiate vocabulary and sophisticated sentence mechanics (use of semicolons and colons, for example); there are no fragments or run-ons. It lacks grammatical slips, such as comma misusage.
4. The essay has a strong, clear voice and is well argued and persuasive.
5. The essay has no spelling errors.
6. It is in proper MLA format, with proper use of quotation and citation style.
7. This is a very original essay with voice and style.
8. Absolutely no plagiarism.

B = Competence in all areas of the assignment.

1. This essay addresses the assignment, but may have missed a relevant point or left part of the argument undeveloped in one of the paragraphs.
2. It is well organized and has a clear introduction, body, and conclusion, but the thesis may be weak or unclear. The paragraphs may lack enough supporting evidence or quoted material, but they all have a topic sentence and transition sentence.
3. The essay contains collegiate vocabulary and sophisticated sentence mechanics, but may contain a few wrong word choices and word usage errors (affect versus effect, to versus too). May have one or two fragments or run-ons.

4. The essay has a clear voice but because it is missing some supporting ideas, it is not entirely persuasive.
5. It contains few or no spelling errors.
6. It is in proper MLA format, with proper use of quotation and citation style.
7. There is an emerging sense of voice and style.
8. Absolutely no plagiarism.

C = Low-level Competence in all areas of the assignment.

1. This essay only partly addresses the assignment, having missed relevant points or left part of the argument undeveloped.
2. It is roughly organized, but may not have a clear introduction or conclusion, and the thesis may be weak or unclear. The paragraphs lack enough supporting evidence and quoted material. They may not all have a topic sentence and transition sentence.
3. The essay contains a static vocabulary and a few wrong word choices and word usage errors (affect versus effect; to versus too). May have fragments or run-ons. May have several grammar errors (such as comma usage).
4. The essay has a weak and inconsistent voice. Because it is missing some supporting ideas, it is not entirely persuasive.
5. No spelling errors.
6. It is in sloppy MLA format, without proper use of quotation and citation style.
7. It lacks its own voice and style.
8. Absolutely no plagiarism.

D = Inadequate Competence in all areas of the assignment.

1. This essay barely addresses the assignment, having missed many relevant points or left part of the argument undeveloped.
2. It is roughly organized, has no clear introduction and conclusion, and no thesis. The paragraphs lack supporting evidence and quoted material. They do not have a topic or transition sentence.
3. The essay contains a static vocabulary and several wrong word choices and word usage errors. It contains fragments and run-ons, as well as several grammar errors.
4. The essay has a weak and inconsistent voice. It is not at all persuasive.
5. It contains spelling errors.
6. It is in sloppy MLA format, without proper use of quotation and citation style.
7. Absolutely no plagiarism.

PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

Plagiarism means copying someone else's work and presenting it as your own, without giving credit to the person who wrote and thought of the idea. Cheating means using unfair means to fulfill an assignment, such as having someone else do your work for you. What will happen anytime you plagiarize or cheat:

1. You will receive an F on the assignment without the option to redo it for a new grade.
2. The instructor will ask to meet with you to discuss issue.
3. Your name will be given to the Dean of Students.
4. If you are caught plagiarizing or cheating more than once, you will be asked to drop the course.

Cheating includes the dishonest use of artificial intelligence tools, without acknowledgment of use disclosed to the instructor. Each essay will be accompanied by a student's honest-reflection and tool-assessment paragraph, in which a student will share which AI tools were used in the preparation and completion of the assignment. This may include use of Grammarly, Chatbots, and the like.

UNDOCUMENTED STUDENT RIGHTS

Education is a basic human right. I believe that all people, regardless of their immigration status have the right to achieve their academic goals. If you have questions about how your immigration status may affect your academic opportunities, please talk to me. I may be able to help.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)

De Anza College views disability as an important aspect of diversity, and is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. Disability Support Services (DSS) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations

If you have, or think you have, a disability in any area such as, mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical, please contact DSS to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

If you are registered with DSS and have accommodations set by a DSS counselor, please be sure that your instructor has received your accommodation letter from **Clockwork** early in the quarter to review how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

Students who need accommodated test proctoring must meet appointment booking deadlines at the Testing Center.

- **Exams** must be booked at least **five (5) business days in advance** of the instructor approved exam date/time.
- **Finals exams** must be scheduled **seven (7) business days/weekdays** in advance of the instructor approved exam date/time.
- Failure to meet appointment booking deadlines will result in the forfeit of testing accommodations and you will be required to take your exam in class.
- [Contact the DSS](#) if you cannot find or utilize your [MyPortal](#) Clockwork Portal.

DSS strives to provide accommodations in a reasonable and timely manner, some accommodations may take additional time to arrange. We encourage you to work with DSS and your faculty as early in the quarter as possible so that we may ensure that your learning experience is accessible and successful.

DSS Location: RSS Building, Suite 141

Phone: 408-864-8753

On the web: <http://www.deanza.edu/DSS/>

Email: DSS@deanza.edu

For all De Anza student services, please go to:

deanza.edu/services

De Anza College is committed to equal opportunity in education.