Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required Course Materials</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Objectives and Theme</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About Your Instructor</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absent Instructor Policy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectation of Class Work</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay Style Sheet</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay Content General Requirements</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading Standards and Points Distribution</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Policies on Multitasking and Learning Styles/Types</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Honesty</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Accommodations</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours Policy</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Use Policy</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email/Moodle Messaging Policy</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Contract</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Schedule</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Required Course Materials**

These materials are not optional; they are required to pass the course. On days we are discussing readings, you must bring the appropriate book (textbook or novella) to class.

- *Freshman Composition Course Guide, 2019–2020*. **Note:** Available only at the Louisiana Tech Bookstore: <latech.bncollege.com/>. This guide is revised yearly.
- *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. A free PDF version will be provided; but, if you want a hard copy, an inexpensive text is the unabridged Dover Thrift Edition <www.amazon.com/Christmas-Carol-Dover-Thrift-Editions/dp/0486268659>; other editions have transcribing errors. Do not get an audio or Kindle version as you need page numbers for quotes—audio has no page numbers and Kindle’s pagination varies depending upon font size settings. You can use an audio version to listen to, but you will need the PDF version or the Dover Thrift Edition to quote from.
- A way to externally backup your work (flash drive or cloud storage like Dropbox or OneDrive).
- You **need** reliable access to a dictionary, Microsoft Word, Moodle, Tech email, and Turnitin.
- For in-class writing, you will **need** loose-leaf paper and a black or blue ink ballpoint pen. No
other color ink; no rollerballs as they smear too easily. I will not read/grade papers written in pencil (too hard to read; to prepare you for professional life, many organizations have strict requirements on writing not only in pen but even on what specific color to use).

Course Objectives and Theme

Welcome to English 102: Academic Essay and Research Paper Writing. Prerequisite of this class is English 101 (or equivalent). It is your responsibility to make sure you are in the right class.

Objectives
In an increasingly complex world, critical thinking and good writing are increasingly important skills, especially in professional careers. You will use critical thinking skills—skills required by all majors and required by most employers—to analyze and evaluate literary texts and criticisms of those texts. You will be challenged in this course, but in a good way. Be open to the learning process, stretch yourself, and absorb all the nuances of the material. It will serve you well in future courses.

“At times of change, the learners are the ones who will inherit the world, while the knowers will be beautifully prepared for a world which no longer exists.”—Alistair Smith

After successfully completing the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate reading comprehension through analytical discussion and written analysis of literary works [see FCCG (Freshman Composition Course Guide) pp. 108-125].
- Write reflectively and analytically about literary works using standard, academic English grammar [see FCCG pp. 48-65; sample student essays appear in Sections IV and VIII].
- Interpret literature from a variety of perspectives and diverse theoretical approaches (for example: structural, comparative, psychological, new-historical, cultural, feminist) [see FCCG sample student essays p. 93, 97, 100, 117-125, 133-138].
- Evaluate and communicate in class discussion and in writing the effectiveness of various arguments [see FCCG pp, 36-44].
- Analyze and synthesize information from various [see FCCG pp. 48-65; sample student essays appear in Sections IV and VIII]. academic sources, use planning and organization skills in your writing, locate and evaluate relevant critical sources while researching a literary topic, and use secondary source material along with literary analysis to support and develop an argument in a literary research essay of around 2,200 words [see FCCG sample research essays pp. 93-105].
- Write researched essays using current MLA guidelines [see FCCG pp. 72-81].
- Adapt to new ideas, recognize alternative interpretations, evaluate the effectiveness of counter-arguments, and distinguish between facts, opinion, and well-developed and supported interpretations of literature.

Other course objectives are for students to continue developing lifelong learning and self-editing skills and to continue developing Tech’s goal of creating professionals and leaders.

Theme
According to Joseph Campbell, the hero journey is a universal motif. At the end of his adventure, the
hero returns to his starting point having gained physical, moral, or psychological maturity. As T.S. Eliot writes in “The Little Gidding”: “And the end of all our exploring / Will be to arrive where we started / And know the place for the first time” (5. 27-29). While we will use other critical approaches (formalist, biographical, psychoanalytic, historical, feminist, etc.), we will return often to the hero’s journey. We will be looking for the hero journey in our readings and in our own life.

![Figure 1. Comic No 3914](image)


**About Your Instructor**

I welcome you to our class and hope for a stimulating and productive term. I am Mr. David M. Merchant, your assigned instructor. The following is the extent of my credentials:

- 2009 Graduate Certificate, Technical Writing (Louisiana Tech University)
- 2006 MA, English Literature (Louisiana Tech University)
- 1997 MS, Information Science (University of Tennessee, Knoxville)
- 1992 BA, English Literature (University of Tennessee, Knoxville)
- 1984 Certification, Naval Nuclear Power Plant Operator (US Navy)

My experience includes U.S. Navy electrician and nuclear engineering technician, technology specialist, web developer, and systems librarian. My profile is at davidmmerchant.com/profile/.

**Attendance Policy**

Punctual attendance is a university requirement and a courtesy to me and your classmates. Businesses also demand punctuality; you can be fired for too many absences or arriving late too often. Tech seeks to prepare you for leadership; schedule appointments so they do not conflict with class and show up to class prepared to work.

**Absences**

You can miss three class meetings without penalty. Each absence after reduces your final course grade
by 1 point. Being late three times counts as one absence. Leaving class early is the same as being late. Attendance is taken at the start of class. If you miss the roll, see me after class to make sure you are marked late.

**Exceptions.** A verifiable university-excused absence cleared in advance, giving birth, or a verifiable family emergency gives a grace period (decided case-by-case). Otherwise, no exceptions. Blame it on bad luck, the psychic manipulations of Cthulhu, or an indifferent universe. It happens to all of us.

**Incompletes.** If the excessive absences occur at the end of the quarter, an incomplete may be arranged. However, the English Department is restrictive in giving incompletes.

**Absent Instructor Policy**

If I am absent, notices will be posted on the main classroom door and on Moodle. If we are not able to meet as a class due to absence or university emergency, class continue through Moodle. You should enroll in the Emergency Notification System at <www.latech.edu/administration/ens.html>.

**Expectation of Class Work**

This course requires a lot of work—in and out of class. Critical reading and academic writing are involved, interconnected processes; writing is an involved process for any writer. To do well, you must devote enough time to complete assignments accurately and effectively. Do not expect inflation of the grade based on effort. If you find you are dedicating a substantial number of hours outside of class to assignments and are still struggling, please come see me to discuss your concerns.

College is not high school; we want you to level up. High school is like playing a video game in Easy Mode. That is a good level for a beginner, but with college you are entering higher education—a higher level. College, then, is like playing first in Medium Mode, without any cheat codes, with the goal of playing at Hard Mode, without cheat codes or even walkthroughs, by the time you graduate (we will leave Challenger or Insane Modes for graduate school). You will need to access previously learned skills and build on them to level up. I look at you as adults working on the goal of becoming professionals.

“**When I was a child, I spoke like a child and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish ways.**”—1:Cor:13:11

To use another analogy, you are not passengers on this trip; you need to be able to figure out some things for yourself given the right information and tools. You will need good time management skills, one of the top five soft skills companies look for\(^1\). The BARC\(^2\) (in Wyly Tower) can help you learn or improve time management skills. You need to work on becoming professionals and future leaders. I do not invite you to read the assigned readings before class, I require it. My lectures and class

---

\(^1\) The top five soft skills companies look for, as determined by researchers at LinkedIn are (1) creativity, (2) persuasion, (3) collaboration, (4) adaptability, and (5) time management. You will need all five for this course.

\(^2\) http://www.latech.edu/barc/
discussions assume that you have done the readings. Instead, I will use the readings as launching pads for further discussions, further details. Of course, I am open to answering specific questions you may have about the day’s readings.

I understand that students arrive in 102 from several valid paths: some took 101 at Tech, some transferred credits from other universities; some took 101 via dual enrollment, while others received credit for 101 on the basis of ACT or AP scores. Regardless, my expectation is the same for every student: I expect all students to have mastered the material that is covered in English 101 at Louisiana Tech, and I expect all students to be prepared for the more rigorous demands of 102. I will grade grammar and English usage accordingly.

So, while we will have a few discussions on grammar, the focus of this class is writing critically about literature. Please keep in mind that you have the Writing Center to help you with grammar and English usage. Your Course Guide has useful information on grammar and usage and I have also gathered some online resources to help you at <davidmmerchant.com/writing-help/>.

“Easy reading is damned hard writing.”—Nathaniel Hawthorne

Writing, especially professional writing, is an involved process for any writer. It is difficult, but you can do it. However, you cannot write at the last minute and expect to pass. If you are unable to or unwilling to devote the time and effort or to read and comprehend large amounts of information, I urge you to drop this class until you are ready.

Assignments

Below are overviews of the assignments for this course.

Diagnostic Essay
The first essay is a reader-response paper written in class on a long passage from A Christmas Carol. Check the course schedule below for when this will be assigned: be present that day and come with several sheets of white notepaper (college or narrow-ruled) and a working black or blue ballpoint pen (no pencils and no other colors—be mature and professional and come to class prepared).

Essay 1
The first essay will be an analytical essay on A Christmas Carol.

Essay 2
The second essay will be an analytical essay on a short story OR one to three poems from the Norton text or Moodle readings.

Essay 3
The third essay will be an analytical essay on one play from the Norton text.

Essay 4
The fourth essay will be an expanded rewrite of one of the three previous essays (essays 1–3). You could expand the research on your original thesis in one of your essays; for example, if you discussed
symbolism an earlier essay, you probably covered only obvious or major symbolisms; for essay 4, you would then expand your discussion to include less obvious or minor symbolisms. Or, you could compare and contrast the literary work you analyzed in one essay to other works we have read. For example, you could compare A Christmas Carol to any story, play, or poem from the Norton text or on Moodle, or you could compare the story or poems you analyzed in essay 2 to the play you analyzed in essay 3.

**Peer Reviews**
Each essay will be peer-reviewed where you will receive comments from your peer readers. You will then revise your paper; this second write will be graded. For Peer Reviews you must bring to class a clean print copy of a typed, double-spaced, rough draft of sufficient completeness; drafts should be as full and complete as much as possible—an inadequate rough draft will lower your final draft grade by 5%, a missing rough draft will lower it by an entire letter grade (10%). Peer reviews will be done in groups of 3–4; your paper will be reviewed by each member of the group. Rough drafts are, however, rough: they will not be polished and will be works in progress.

**Writing Corrections**
You will fill out a writing corrections sheet after each essay from essay 1 to 3 is graded where you will write each error and how to correct it. See https://davidmmerchant.com/engl102/ for details.

**Exercises and Usability Evaluation**
The exercises consist of a haiku exercise and a few close reading exercises. The usability evaluation is for the class Moodle page. The haiku exercise is submitted to Turnitin. The small close-reading exercises are in-class, handwritten. The lowest score (just one) is dropped. There are no makeups for missing any work in this category—no exceptions.

**Quizzes**
Most quizzes are online (on Moodle) but some reading quizzes may be in-class pop quizzes. The lowest two scores are dropped. There are no makeups for missing any work in this category—no exceptions.

**Discussion**
Discussion, in-class and via online forums, will account for 15% of your grade.

**Bonus Points**
The maximum you can earn is 20 bonus points.

Attending the Writing Center earns you 3 bonus points for each visit, up to a total of 15 points. The Writing Center informs me every time you attend. Attending one Tech or Ruston Community Theater play earns you 5 bonus points (just once). You will need to show me a copy of your tickets and a short, one-page review of the play (what you liked about it, what was the most memorable moment, and what you did you like). Format page headings as you would for a full essay (see essay style sheet below).

**Essay Style Sheet**
- We use MLA style for formatting and documentation.
- Typed papers are to be in Times New Roman, size 12 font, on standard 8½" by 11" white paper.
- Handwritten papers will not be accepted except for in-class assignments. In-class papers must be written in black or blue ink (no other colors, no pencils).
All typed essays must be double-spaced and use margins of ONE inch for all margins.
Do not use a cover sheet.
Use the following format for the first page:

Your Name

English 101 – [section number]

Mr. Merchant

[Date in month day, year format, with the month spelled out: May 22, 2020, for example]

Essay #

Word Count: ### words

Your Original Title


- Put page numbers in the header for each page. Put your last name before the page number.
- Use American English for grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage.
- Do not bold, italicize, underline, or place your essay title in quotation marks; exception: use italics or quotation marks when referring to other works in your title. Write the title in Title Case.
- Sparingly use italics for emphasis. Try to use only one exclamation mark per essay.
- Works Cited page begins at the top of a page after the page with your conclusion.
- An outline of the essay will be the last page after the last works cited page. You do not a title at the top of the page (see below for more information).
- Any hard copies submitted must be stapled.

**Essay Content General Requirements**

For what literary genres your essays need to be focused on, see the Assignments section above.

**Length**

The diagnostic essay will be 1–2 pages in length plus a Works Cited page with the primary source listed. Essays 1–4 will have word counts; essays 1–3 will be 850–900 words, while essay 4 will be at least 2,200 words. Word count does not include the Works Cited page or the outline page.

**Sources**

You **must** have a minimum of 2 secondary sources for essays 1–3, and a minimum of 5 secondary sources for essay 4 (the diagnostic essay just has one primary source). These **must** be academic books or
journal articles from Tech’s Prescott Memorial Library databases (EBSCO Discover, JSTOR, etc.), material I have on reserves, or material I have uploaded to Moodle. Articles from Google Scholar (scholar.google.com) and relevant essays from the Norton text may be accepted as extra sources (they do not count toward meeting your minimum sources requirement); other websites are not accepted unless pre-approved by me. Failure to use reputable academic sources in this essay will result in a significant lowering of your final essay grade. Your essay needs what it needs so do not arbitrarily stop at the minimum: if you need more, you need more (you can lose points for a weak analysis).

You must also use the necessary primary sources (the stories, poems, or plays); a literary analysis paper would not be complete without numerous references to and examples from the source(s) being analyzed.

**Essay Elements and Organization**

An essay must consist of the following:

1. A proper introduction, more than 3 sentences with an attention grabber and, as the last sentence, a specific thesis statement that tells your reader exactly what to expect—the essay’s “road map”).
2. A thorough middle section (in which you explore the topic mentioned in your thesis statement and discuss a valid, relevant topic sentence for each paragraph, making sure that you support your analysis with evidence from your sources). Make sure that all paragraphs include analysis.
3. A conclusion, more than 3 sentences long (in which you offer your general conclusion and reiterate your thesis statement).
4. A works cited page with references in MLA style and in alphabetical order.
5. An outline of the essay will be after the works cited page(s), and must include your thesis statement, as well as the reason why you chose this topic and a brief paragraph-by-paragraph outline of the essay: a one-sentence summary of each paragraph (from the first paragraph—yes, you will repeat your thesis statement here—to the concluding paragraph).

**Quotations and Paraphrases**

You must also quote or paraphrase each of your scholarly sources. Try to avoid block quotes, instead, try to first paraphrase your secondary sources. Do not use summaries of the primary texts too often and never without analysis. Do not start or end a paragraph with a quote. All quotes must be integrated: introduced with some words of your own, attributed, and further analyzed after the quote.

Remember, quotations do not count toward your page count; thus, if you have a 3-page essay with a page worth of quotes, I would consider the essay only 2 pages long. I need to see analysis and critical thinking and not just a loosely bound collection of quotes. Keep quotations brief: that is, they need to be relevant. However, make sure you do not leave out any quotations that are needed: quote when you need to, no more and no less, and quote only as much of a passage as you need, no more and no less.

Your Course Guide, as well as chapters 17–22 in your textbook, have thorough discussions on citing, paraphrasing, quoting, and summarizing. My Writing Help page, davidmmerchant.com/writing-help/, has a selection of online MLA citation resources and tools. You also have the Writing Center for help. Thus, there is no excuse not to get this right as you have all the information and resources you need (you do, however, have to avail yourself of these), plus, as English 101 or its equivalent is a prerequisite for this class, you should already have the basics down.
Grading Standards and Points Distribution

Employers take a negative view of poor writing and communication skills, especially for a college graduate. Your work and your ideas will be judged in no small part by how well you communicate in your profession. Consequently, my standards are high and stringently enforced. Your level of work you perform is expected to build and improve with each assignment.

Scoring

Your final score converts to a grade using standard ranges (A = 90–100%, for example). Grading points distribution is shown in the table below. Be aware that you can earn less than 50% on an assignment. You must write carefully, thoughtfully, following the style sheet exactly, and have as few grammar and spelling errors as you can: learn to draft, review, and revise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic essay</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1 (A Christmas Carol)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 2 (short fiction/poetry)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 3 (drama)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 (rewrite and expansion of essay 1, 2, or 3)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing corrections (for essays 1–3)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion, in-class and online forums</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises and Usability evaluation (lowest score dropped)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (lowest two scores dropped)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My Philosophy on Rounding Up

Rounding up gives unearned points. For example, one student earns an 80 for the course while another earns a 79. To round the 79 to an 80 is unfair to the first student because adding 1 point to a final grade is the same as adding an unearned letter grade to a 100-point assignment. However, I will round an x.9 (but not lower) to the next singles digit (for example, 79.90 rounds up to an 80 while 79.89 rounds to a 79), but no more, so do not waste your time or mine by asking for more.

Rubric

In addition to the English Department’s grading polices found in your Freshman Composition Course Guide, I grade essays according to my course rubric which can be found on Moodle as well as at my course Wordpress site: <davidmmerchant.com/engl102/>. Many errors count off per occurrence (for example, a misspelled word counts each time you misspell it), thus, errors add up quickly. Finally, a few errors can fail a paper outright. See the rubric at the Wordpress address above for more details.

So, what is an A paper?

An “A” paper is excellent. It is difficult to improve. It demonstrates insight, originality, and attention to detail. It adheres to American English grammar and usage. It follows the assignment’s formatting.

“You might not write well every day, but you can always edit a bad page. You can’t edit a blank page.”—Jodi Picoult
requirements exactly. It is submitted on time. It understands the target audiences’ concerns and needs. The information is presented in a clear, comprehensive, ethical, and persuasive manner. It is like Mary Poppins: Practically Perfect in Every Way.

Thus, do not expect Freshman English classes to be plug-and-play, paint-by-the-numbers, or rote memorization classes. We expect you to learn to critically think and to incorporate and synthesize and not just regurgitate information or mimic procedures. Therefore, it should be no surprise that what passed for an A in high school will not pass for an A in college.

Late / Make-up Work
Deadlines are often not negotiable in the professional world. No matter how good your work is, it often needs to be ready by a set time. Missing deadlines or submitting wrong documents mean losing a contract, customer, grant, promotion, or job. Often others depend upon your work for their own deadlines (including instructors). It is your responsibility to leave time for unplanned interruptions.

For the above reasons and to be fair to those who submit their work on time, work submitted after the due date, forfeits a full letter grade per 24-hour period. No work is accepted after two days. Exception: A verifiable university-excused absence cleared in advance, childbirth, or a verifiable family emergency gives a grace period (decided case-by-case).

Missed quizzes, forum deadlines, and in-class work cannot be made up for any reason. Again, we are preparing you to become mature professionals. You will find many courses at Tech will have similar, even stricter, policies regarding late work. Never wait until the last minute.

Technical difficulties are no excuse late or missing work. Be professional: save and back up your work often (have at least two synced copies) to the cloud, an external hard drive, or a flash drive. This is a course requirement. I do not accept excuses like “I left my laptop at my friend’s house” or “my computer died” since with your work backed up, you would be able to continue working on it by using another device or using the computers at school.

Submitting Wrong Work or to the Wrong Turnitin.com Folder
You can resubmit your work until the deadline after which Turnitin will block resubmissions. A few have used “I sent the wrong paper” as a ploy to buy more time to write. Be professional: pay attention to what you are doing. Do-overs for documents in the professional world reflect badly on you and if a client is involved, on your organization as well. Again, we are preparing you for the professional world; be professional: focus and check that you are submitting the correct document to the correct folder; also, do not wait until the last minute as that is why most of these kinds of errors happen.

If, however, you submitted it to the wrong folder, you can resubmit it to the correct one. Do not ask me to do it for you. But if it is submitted to the right folder late, even if it was submitted on time to the wrong folder, I will treat the paper as being late as I often have 75 to 100 students and do not have time to search—you would not expect your boss, client, or grantor to take the time to locate your misplaced document (most will rightfully refuse to).

If you cannot resubmit your paper to the correct folder because you already submitted a wrong paper and the deadline has passed, there is a “Wrongly Submitted” folder on Turnitin that you can use only ONCE. When always check that folder when I am grading. If for a second time you could not resubmit
an assignment to the correct folder, I am sorry, but you are out of luck. Allowing one submission to the “Wrongly Submitted” folder is lenient enough.

Regrading or Rewriting

I do not regrade assignments or allow rewrites.

- “I worked really hard, but my grade doesn’t reflect my effort.” I grade on results, not effort. A client will judge a bid and a grantor will judge a grant proposal not on how much effort you put into the work but on work itself. This is life. I evaluate your coursework, not your life circumstances or your worth (great people struggle with writing).

- “I need a grade of X to keep my scholarship/graduate/get into medical school/etc.” You are not entitled to a grade because your financial aid depends upon it, you had a lot going on in your life, you are graduating, or you never got a poor grade before.

I do know what it is like to be a student and to desire to make an A (I still take classes). However, while an A is possible, not everyone will earn one. To be fair to everyone, I must grade with no partiality. A grades must be earned through hard work and not tossed out like Mardi gras beads.

Final Notes on Grading

The first paper usually causes hurt feelings. Before the first grades are in, your instructor is Obi Wan, Yoda, Ned Stark, or even Jar-Jar Binks. Then the first grade is posted and your instructor is revealed to be a Sith Lord or Joffrey Baratheon. The grades can be bad because you do not know how high the grading bar is yet. You do not how high the bar is until you run up to it and try to jump over. If you fall on the first paper, dust yourself off and get up. Use it as a diagnostic to help you improve. Your quarter’s fate has not been sealed by the first grade. If you do well on the first paper, do not become satisfied with your work: look to improve or you may take a hit on the next assignment as assignments increase in difficulty and complexity. Learn to draft, review, revise, and edit as a normal part of professional writing—the type of writing your future employers expect.

Course Policies on Multitasking and Learning Styles/Types

Increasingly, students are coming up with strange misinterpretations of assignments, including mixing instructions from assignments. This class requires a professional approach: stop multitasking while learning and rethink your perception of your learning style. I will not develop my course to take into account multitasking or all the different learning styles. You need to work on your weak areas to become future leaders and standout professionals. I will expect you to solve some things on your own (though you will be given all the information and tools to do so). My reasoning is as follows.

Multitasking

Your boss, coworkers, and clients expect you to be focused on the task you are paid to do. You can be fired for being distracted by games or social media not related to your work. We are not as good at multitasking as we think; it lowers efficiency and work quality. While our subconscious can multitask, our conscious mind cannot. It seems like it does, but the mind is actually switching back and forth rapidly and that comes with costs. As you will often be working in a team, your decreased efficiency and work quality will affect your coworkers. There are at least five problems with multitasking: distraction, attentional blink, inattentional blindness, misplaced information, and overstimulation.
1. **Distraction**: we think we are doing well multitasking when actually our effectiveness has decreased (Chew, 217). Multitasking lowers the efficiency and quality of your work the same way skipping sleep or smoking pot does. Studies show that multitasking is worse for men than for women: men drop up to 15 I.Q. points while women drop up to 10 I.Q. points (Kim). Also, in a classroom or at work, we not only distract ourselves, but we rudely distract our classmates or coworkers as well.

2. **Attentional Blink**: what we think is a momentary distraction from our work is not momentary: our brains take at least several minutes to fully refocus (Chew, 217).

3. **Inattentional Blindness**: when we focus on a task, even shortly, we miss information about other tasks even though we believe we have not missed anything (Chew, 217).

4. **Misplaced Information**: multitasking can cause new information to go to the wrong part of the brain (Levitin).

5. **Overstimulation**: multitasking overstimulates the brain, increasing the production of adrenaline and cortisol creating “brain fog” (confusion, disorientation, and frustration); this also creates a dopamine-addiction feedback loop making it difficult to stop. (Levitin).

**Learning Styles**

Your boss, client, or grantor will often give you written instructions for you to respond to. Your boss is not going to read the house style guide to you just because you are an auditory learner. Your client is not going to put a bid proposal into a PowerPoint just because you are a visual learner. Plus, there are so many learning styles; up to 71 different styles have been proposed. In your professional life, you will have to adapt to how your boss, client, or grantor presents information to you.

No one is just one type of learner; this is a myth that even some teachers believe. We may convince ourselves that we are one type of learner. Because of human pride, we do not like being wrong and do not like having our self-definition challenged; thus, we tend to discount or dismiss any opposing information. Habits are hard to break. But our minds are more adaptable and incredible than most of us realize. While we may prefer a learning style, we are able to learn from all styles; instruction that plays only to strengths but ignores weaknesses will not prepare you for the professional world. As one Tech goal is to create professionals and leaders, you need to learn how to correct and compensate for your learning weaknesses (the BARC and the Counseling Center can help).

**Be Self-Aware and in Control**

To do well in this class and in your chosen profession, you need to be self-aware about your learning process: you need to plan for learning. The BARC and the Counseling Center can help you with study skills, time management, and how to cope with technological distractions (social media and video games are designed to draw you in and keep you distracted). I know it is difficult; I have social media accounts and have been playing video games ever since Pong. But I am in charge of me, not my phone, not my social media, not even my video games (though *Mass Effect* and *Skyrim* give it a good try). You need to learn that there is a time and a place for everything.

**Academic Honesty**

*Being a student of a higher standard, I pledge to embody the principles of academic integrity* (Section Two of the Louisiana Tech Academic Honor Code).
The University has a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism and other unethical behavior. View college as if you were employed by a professional company; as an employee, you are ethically bound to work with professionalism and integrity. The first occurrence of plagiarism or contract writing (hiring someone to write your papers) is a grade of zero. The second occurrence is a grade of F for the course and a report to the Department of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, which can lead to suspension or expulsion (which has happened).

You must complete, sign, and turn in the Plagiarism Statement for the current quarter found in the current Freshman Composition Course Guide by the deadline in the course schedule. It cannot be a photocopy. The English Dept. will place a hold on your Tech Account if the statement is not submitted.

Writing Center

The Writing Center in Wyly Tower 325 is a great resource. Call 257.4477 to schedule an appointment or to ask a quick grammar question during business hours. For more information visit latech.edu/current-students/barc/writing-center/.

Special Accommodations

If you need special accommodations, contact Testing and Disability Services (318 Wyly Tower) at 318.257.4221 or <www.latech.edu/current-students/disability-services/>.

Office Hours Policy

My office hours are posted on Moodle and on my office door (GTMH 274). If you call during my office hours, I may not be immediately available as I may be helping someone or have temporarily stepped out.

Technology Use Policy

To be a professional or a leader, you need to learn to focus on the job. Most employers penalize employees for using entertainment apps or social media during work hours. Your distraction can also cause your coworkers to be distracted. If you have an emergency that requires you to monitor your phone, let me know at the start of class and set the phone to vibrate.

Email/Moodle Messaging Policy

Tech email is slow and sometimes a student’s email to spam. Gmail and Moodle messenger work better. My email addresses are at the top of the syllabus.

To Post Questions About the Course

Use the Course Questions Forum on Moodle to post course questions. Please feel free to answer a classmate’s question should you know the answer. Often a question you have, others will also have.

To Send Messages Only to Me

Use my Moodle user profile to send a message. If you send an email, use business etiquette: have a helpful subject line, and in the body tell me who you are, what class and section you are in. If I get an
email that does not follow business etiquette, I will respond only with a request that you resend it; I will be happy to reply once I have received your email with all the necessary information. I try to respond within 48 hours during the school week, however, I do not check email or Moodle after 5 p.m. on weekdays, on Saturdays (my social media Sabbath), or during holidays.

Do Not Send the Following Kinds of Messages

- “What will be/was discussed in class when I will be/was absent?” Check the course schedule.
- “Please look at an entire draft of my work.” I will not, under any circumstances, read (basically pre-grade) the entire draft. Have specific questions in mind.
- “Please submit my assignment for me because of computer problems.” Back up your work.
- “Can you extend the due date?” See “Late Work” above.
- “When will you finish grading?” During regular quarters, the turnover rate is one week. During summer quarters, the turnover rate is four days.
- “I had a lot going this quarter, but I will do whatever I can to pass, including submitting all the work I failed to submit in the first place.” See “Late Work” above.
- “I am disappointed with my grade; can you regrade it?” I am also disappointed. See “Regrading or Rewriting” above.
- “I need a particular final grade!” See “Regrading or Rewriting” above.
- “I worked really hard, and my final grade doesn’t reflect my effort.” You are not graded on effort: you are graded on results. See “Regrading or Rewriting” above.
- “I am so close to the next grade; can you round the grade up?” See “My philosophy on Rounding Up” above.
Study Contract

This syllabus is a contract between you (as the student) and me (as the instructor). By taking this class, you agree to follow the guidelines given above, to be evaluated by the requirements of this syllabus, and to follow the Louisiana Tech University Honor Code.

![Figure 3. “I Don’t Need to Study!”](image)


Course Schedule

Assigned readings are due before the class period unless otherwise noted. Since we will discuss the readings in class, you need to have read them before class. Quizzes, except for pop-quizzes, are assigned on Friday and are due before class on Monday. If I feel people are not doing the readings, I will increase the frequency of pop quizzes.

*ACC = A Christmas Carol; TNIL = The Norton Introduction to Literature* portable 12th edition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Introduction to the Class, Hero’s Journey, and Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 9/6</td>
<td><strong>Read</strong> (before class): <em>TNIL</em> pp. 1–10. <strong>Assigned</strong> (before next class): Quiz 1.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Prose: Reading, Responding, Understanding the Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|        | *“You don’t have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people to stop reading them.”*  
|        | —Ray Bradbury                                        |
| M 9/9  | **Read**: on Moodle, Nina Munteanu’s "The Hero's Journey blog postings”; from *TNIL*, pp. 12–32, 57–65 (remember, read *before* class). **Due**: Quiz 1 (remember: before class). |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Prose: A Christmas Carol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 9/16</td>
<td><strong>Read</strong>: <em>ACC</em>, staves 1 and 2. <strong>Due</strong>: Quiz 2 (before class). <em>ACC</em> forum opened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 9/18</td>
<td><strong>Read</strong>: <em>ACC</em>, staves 3 and 4. <strong>In-class</strong>: Diagnostic Essay (bring your textbook, paper, &amp; black or blue ballpoint pen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 9/20</td>
<td><strong>Read</strong>: <em>ACC</em>, stave 5. <strong>Assigned</strong>: Quiz 3; Essay 1. <strong>Plagiarism Statements due.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Prose: A Christmas Carol; Essay 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 9/23</td>
<td>Read: <em>TNIL</em>, pp. bottom of 32–56. Due: Quiz 3. <strong>Library Day: Meet at the library’s Information Desk; roll will be taken.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 9/25</td>
<td><strong>In-class:</strong> Discuss critical approaches; relevancy of ACC; hero’s journey elements in the story. Remember, discussion is 15% of your grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 9/27</td>
<td><strong>In-class:</strong> peer-review (bring a hardcopy of your rough draft). <strong>Assigned:</strong> Quiz 4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Poetry: Reading, Responding, Understanding the Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>&quot;Reality only reveals itself when it is illuminated by a ray of poetry.&quot;</strong> — Georges Braque</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 10/2</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> <em>TNIL</em>, pp. 501–508. <strong>Assigned:</strong> Essay 2; <strong>Due:</strong> Essay 1 at 7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 10/4</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> <em>TNIL</em>, pp. 730–mid-733 (“The Raven”), 675 (“Design”); on Moodle, Szymborska’s poems, Dickinson’s poem, and haikus. <strong>Assigned:</strong> Quiz 5 and Haiku.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Poetry: Essay 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M 10/7</td>
<td><strong>Student conferences 12:00–16:00. Due:</strong> Quiz 5 and Haiku both due (before class).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 10/9</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> on Moodle, Marie de France’s poems and Dr. Steel’s poem. <strong>In-class:</strong> close reading exercise (on one of Marie’s poems).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 10/11</td>
<td><strong>In-class:</strong> peer-review (bring a hardcopy of your rough draft); writing corrections workshop. <strong>Assigned:</strong> Quiz 6. <strong>Due:</strong> Essay 1 Writing Corrections at 7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Drama: Reading, Responding, Understanding the Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>“Drama is life with the dull parts left out.”</strong> — Alfred Hitchcock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 10/14</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> in <em>TNIL</em>, pp. 768–mid-771, 800–811. <strong>Due:</strong> Quiz 6 due (remember: before class); Essay 2 at 7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 10/16</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> in <em>TNIL</em>, pp. 812–873 (<em>A Doll’s House</em>). <strong>In-class:</strong> close reading ex.; discussion of Sophocles’ works. <strong>Assign:</strong> Essay 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 10/18</td>
<td><strong>Student conferences 12:00–16:00. Assign:</strong> Quiz 7.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 8</th>
<th>Drama: Shakespearian Influences; Essay 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M 10/21</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> in <em>TNIL</em>, pp. 1211–1247 (<em>Antigone</em>). <strong>Due:</strong> Quiz 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 10/23</td>
<td><strong>In-class:</strong> Shakespearian influences on science fiction, part I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 10/25</td>
<td><strong>In-class:</strong> peer-review (bring a hardcopy of your rough draft). <strong>Assign:</strong> Quiz 8.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th>Drama: More Shakespearian Influences; Essay 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M 10/28</td>
<td>Quiz 8 due. <strong>In-class:</strong> Shakespearian influences on science fiction, part II; writing corrections workshop. <strong>Due:</strong> Essay 2 Writing Corrections at 7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 10/30</td>
<td><strong>In-class:</strong> Shakespearian influences on Tolkien; Samurai version of Macbeth; Shakespeare and Charles Dickens. <strong>Assign:</strong> Essay 4. <strong>Due:</strong> Essay 3 due 7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 11/1</td>
<td><strong>In-class:</strong> first peer-review of essay 4 (bring a hardcopy of your rough draft). <strong>Assign:</strong> Quiz 9.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 10</th>
<th>Essay 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M 11/4</td>
<td><strong>Student conferences 12:00–16:00. Due:</strong> Quiz 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 11/6</td>
<td><strong>In-class:</strong> Comics and graphic stories; video games as literature; steampunk. second peer-review of essay 4 (bring a hardcopy of your rough draft).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 11/8</td>
<td><strong>In-class:</strong> writing corrections workshop. <strong>Due:</strong> Essay 3 Writing Corrections at 7 p.m. Remember, Essay 4 is due Monday, 11 November, by 7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The course schedule is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and in the news forum on Moodle. You are responsible for checking Moodle regularly (at least once before each class).