

COLLEGE OF MOUNT SAINT VINCENT

The College of Mount Saint Vincent
ENGL 110 MA1 – Writing in Context I
Spring 2024
Department of English

INSTRUCTOR	Dr. Leonard Nalencz
CLASS MEETING DAY AND TIMES	MW 11:15-12:40
CLASS LOCATION	Founders Hall Room 304
OFFICE LOCATION	Humanities Hall A321
PHONE	718-405-3311
E-MAIL	leonard.nalencz@mountsaintvincent.edu
OFFICE HOURS	Monday and Wednesday 4-5:30, and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

First course in a two-semester sequence, designed to develop college-level thinking and writing skills. Students complete speaking and writing tasks of increasing difficulty in response to literary texts, to gain facility in formulating, supporting, and revising their ideas. Paragraph-level issues will be reviewed, but the emphasis is on essay writing. Upon successful completion of this course, all students will take WIC (Writing in Context) II to fulfill the Core writing requirement. Not for English major credit. (3 credits)

TEXTS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:

Literature: A Portable Anthology, Fifth Edition, edited Janet Gardner, et al. ISBN: 978-1319035341

Please note: This textbook will also be used for English 120!

Notebook for class notes and in-class writing, and a folder with pockets in which to keep drafts and papers organized.

COURSE OBJECTIVES and ASSESSMENT of STUDENT LEARNING

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

Course Outcome	Course Assessment	Alignment with College and/or Department Learning Outcomes
1. use writing as a tool to generate thought as well as record it	1. evaluation of drafts and scaffolded writing assignments	1. written communication; analysis; DLO* #4
2. develop a coherent argument that includes a thesis and support, and demonstrates the students' knowledge of the structure of an essay	2. evaluation of drafts based on instructor's feedback	2. written communication ; DLO #4
3. show greater evidence of the skills needed for writing and editing compositions with clarity, correctness, and precision	3. evaluation of drafts; grammar and sentence-construction exercises; quizzes	3. critical thinking; DLO #4
4. synthesize information for the purpose of writing a cogent, cohesive, and interesting thesis-based essays	4. evaluation of written work according to rubrics (see attached)	4. information literacy; DLO #6
5. through the writing of argument essays and the interaction with literary texts, begin the development of a personal ethical framework	6. class discussions; papers	6. ethics and values

COLLEGE OF MOUNT SAINT VINCENT

6. through the interaction with literary texts, their own writing and that of their peers, develop an appreciation for the complementary nature of diversity of backgrounds, common humanity, and the dignity of each person	7. class discussions; papers	7. common humanity
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GRADING POLICIES:

Grading is based on the quality of drafts, written assignments, in-class writing assignments, quizzes (announced or unannounced), exercises, the frequency and quality of participation in class, degree of improvement, and attendance. Participation includes participating in class discussions showing evidence that you have read and carefully considered the assigned material, and as writers/responders in small groups. Once again, **a grade of C or better is required to pass this course.**

Unless you have arranged for an extension in advance of the due date, all late papers will be downgraded one letter grade for each day past the due date.

A	Excellent	4.0	100-93
A-	Excellent	3.67	92-90
B+	Very Good	3.33	89-87
B	Good	3.00	86-83
B-	Good	2.67	82-80
C+	Above Satisfactory	2.33	79-77
C	Satisfactory	2.00	76-73
C-	Not Passing	1.67	72-70
D+	Not Passing	1.33	69-67
D	Not Passing	1.00	66-60
F	Not Passing	0.00	59-0

COLLEGE OF MOUNT SAINT VINCENT

COURSE SCHEDULE

M 1/29	Introduction: Sandra Cisneros, “My Name” (471); George Saunders, “Sticks” (472)
W 1/31	Kate Chopin, “The Story of an Hour” (180-182); Jamaica Kincaid, “Girl” (461-2)
M 2/5	Junot Díaz, “Fiesta, 1980” (499-510)
W 2/7	Margaret Atwood, “Happy Endings” (429-432)
M 2/12	Zora Neale Hurston, “Sweat” (313-322)
W 2/14	Louise Erdrich, “The Red Convertible” (463-470)
M 2/19	Ralph Ellison, “Battle Royal” (338-357)
W 2/21	Shirley Jackson, “The Lottery” (350-357)
M 2/26	Draft of Essay #1 due in class.
W 2/28	Sherman Alexie, “This is what it means to say Phoenix, Arizona” (473-482)
F 3/1	Essay #1 due on Canvas.
M 3/4	Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “The Thing Around Your Neck” (553-560)
W 3/6	Ted Chiang, “The Great Silence” (495-498)
M 3/11	Yiyun Li, “A Thousand Years of Good Prayers” (518-529)
W 3/13	Draft of Essay #2 due in class.
M 3/18	Alice Walker, “Everyday Use” (438-445)
W 3/20	Gabriel Garcia Marquez, “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” (398-403)

COLLEGE OF MOUNT SAINT VINCENT

F 3/22	Final Essay #2 due on Canvas. <i>Spring Break</i>
W 4/3	Sherwood Anderson, “Hands” (218-222)
M 4/8	Maile Meloy, “TOME” (511-518)
W 4/10	Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper” (196-210)
M 4/15	Natasha Trethewey, “History Lesson” (779); Victor Hernández Cruz, “The Problem with Hurricanes” (737-8)
W 4/17	Langston Hughes, “Theme for English B” (666-667); Theodore Roethke, “My Papa’s Waltz” (670)
F 4/19	Final Essay #3 (Revision Essay) due on Canvas.
M 4/22	Sharon Olds, “I Go Back to May 1937” (729); Linda Pastan, “Love Poem” (708-9)
W 4/24	Gwendolyn Brooks, “The Mother” (685-686), Li-Young Lee, “Eating Alone” (769); Draft of Essay #4 due in Class
M 4/29	Seamus Heaney, “Digging” (718); Emily Dickinson, “Wild Nights—Wild Nights!” (630)
W 5/1	Naomi Shihab Nye, “Gate A4” (747-748); Gary Soto, “Moving Away” (749)
W 5/6	W.S. Merwin, “One of the Butterflies” (698); Ross Gay, “A Small Needful Fact” (795) Final Essay #4 Due

In keeping with College Policy, the final exam will be scheduled during the final week of the term.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to familiarize themselves and comply with all College policies and procedures, including but not limited to the College policies on Academic Honesty and Student Conduct as described here <http://www.mountsaintvincent.edu/5162.htm> as well as all College policies and procedures described in the Student Handbook and (for undergraduates) the Undergraduate Catalogue (for undergraduate students), or for graduate students, the Graduate Catalogue.

Any writing assignment that is plagiarized or submitted without an appropriate draft (if required) will automatically fail. A plagiarized research paper will result in failure of the course, and will be reported to the Dean of the Undergraduate College.

Academic Support Services

The College of Mount Saint Vincent offers a range of academic support services which might be helpful to students in this course; these services are described at <http://www.mountsaintvincent.edu/385.htm>.

Attendance

Each student gets two excused absences (no note needed). After that, you will lose points on your final grade for every class you miss. Three latenesses (or leaving early) equal one absence.

Disabilities

Students with disabilities should contact the College's Office of Disabilities Services. Students who are eligible to receive reasonable accommodations at the College of Mount Saint Vincent must register with the Office of Disabilities Service. Students must complete a "Request for Reasonable Accommodation" form and submit supporting documentation. Eligibility is determined under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act 2008 (ADA). Students are responsible for self-identifying and seeking services with the Office of Disabilities Services. A reasonable accommodation is defined as a service that does not fundamentally alter the programs, course design, living space, and activities provided to other students. In addition, the accommodation may not pose a financial or administrative burden to the college. A reasonable accommodation request can be initiated at any time during the student's academic enrollment at the College. However, accommodations are not retroactive. The application and decision process varies; therefore, students are encouraged to begin the process at least 4 weeks in advance of the date they are requesting to start their accommodations. To receive more information on eligibility and services, contact the College's Office of Disabilities Services located at the Seton Library, room 210.

Essay Format

Essays must be typed, in 12-point Times New Roman font with one inch margins, and double-spaced. Include your name, course (English 110 section MA1), the assignment number, date due, my name, and a title (but **no title page: don't waste paper**).

Essays should be submitted to Canvas.

*****Unless you have arranged for an extension in advance of the due date, all late papers will be downgraded one letter grade for each day past the due date.**

Grade Distribution: (percentage of final grade):

Essay 1	15%
Essay 2	15%
Essay 3	20%
Essay 4	20%
Class participation:	25%
Final Exam:	5%

Classroom Etiquette

Please turn off and put away laptops and cell phones while in class. Everyone's full attention is required at all times during class periods.

You may bring a beverage to class, but please be mindful that this is a public space: avoid food that is excessively noisy or disruptive.

Writing Assignments

Essay #1: 700 Words

This essay is an exercise in finding literary evidence. Use the writing you did in class; look for key **repetition** (of words, ideas, images, or something else you notice) and look for **figurative language**. You don't need a thesis statement to begin, just a short description of the evidence you will present in the story on which you are focusing. You may choose to write on any story we have read in the anthology.

Essay #2: 750 Words

This is another exercise in close reading. This time, you need to choose a story from the anthology that is **not** assigned on the syllabus—a story you like and want to write about. (You'll have to read a few to choose one.) Do the same thing as in the first essay: present literary evidence (repetition and figurative language). You don't need a thesis statement, other than to say what story you are considering, and what kind of literary evidence you have found.

Essay #3: 800 Words

This is a revision of your second essay. You need to consider my comments, both in the margins and at the end of your essay, and figure out how to fix or improve the things I noted. You may need to make major changes! Consider, for instance, adding another quote from the story to develop your essay further, in addition to fixing grammatical errors and/or typos. Please also use the ARC for this essay! Make an appointment with a tutor, bring your graded essay, and work with the tutor to improve. **Revision is the key to good writing!**

Essay #4: 850-900 Words

This is comparative essay, and it requires a thesis statement in the first paragraph. Choose **two texts** we have read this semester that you think have similarities, then compare them. You might compare characters, or plot, but the most interesting comparisons will consider way each author uses literary evidence. You can use both stories and poems, but **not** ones you have already written about. Be attentive to both similarities and differences in the two texts, and use your thesis statement to give the reader an idea of what you will present over the course of your essay.