COLLEGE COMPOSITION: ENG 101, Section LC03
Syllabus

Fall 2011/UMPI/Dr. J (Jacqui) Lowman/Meets in Normal 104B/Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8 to 9:15 a.m.
Telephone: 768-9745
E-mail: jacquelyn.lowman@umpi.edu. Please note, my basic e-mail differs from yours: mine is @umpi.edu.
Office: 108 Normal
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7:30 to 8 a.m., 5 to 6:30 p.m., and by appointment. I am usually in my office many more hours than these: just check to make sure.

Course Description of ENG 101, College Composition (from UMPI catalogue): The first part of a two-semester sequence in writing, reading, and critical thinking. Emphasis on expository prose, including rhetorical strategies such as observation, explanation, and persuasion. Development of awareness and refinement of the student's own writing process. Some attention to grammar and syntax, as warranted by student writing.

COURSE OVERVIEW
Welcome to COMP 101! Do you know why you’re here? You may think that it’s because it satisfies a general education requirement and you can’t graduate without fulfilling it. But there’s a deeper, more important reason.

Language is power. It is the catalyst to thought and action. Used effectively, it can move mountains and is ultimately mightier than the sword, the bomb or any other force. No matter what you wind up doing, you have to be able to express yourself in writing. This class will help you get there. It will help you tap your unique gifts as a communicator and realize power and potential you never dreamed you had. You’ll hone your skills and lay a solid foundation through supportive, stimulating classroom interactions.

So get ready to go boldly where you haven’t gone before! We’ll all grow. But it should be great fun! And don’t be overwhelmed. Remember, the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Then just keep putting those single steps together. So let’s put on our track shoes and begin.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the time you successfully complete this course, you will be able to:

---

1 This syllabus was as accurate as possible at the time it went to press. It is, however, carved in Jell-O, not in stone. As we go through the semester, we may make revisions. But WYSIWYG: there will be no surprises.

2 This is what successful completion of the course opens the door to. Imagine a set of before and after photos. When you come in, you’re that communication lightweight. By the time you leave, you’ll have the strength of 10 Grinches plus two!©
• Use written and oral communication as a means to engage in critical inquiry by exploring ideas, challenging assumptions, and reflecting on composing processes.

• Write and speak with clear purpose, point of view, and awareness of audience.

• Clearly and accurately identify and evaluate problems and arguments.

• Accurately interpret evidence/findings, especially positions different from their own.

• Distinguish between scholarly and popular sources and effectively assess the quality of the information: e.g., is it current? Reliable? Legitimate? Pertinent?

WE NEED YOU!
You are very important to the success of this class. It is a cooperative effort: all the other members are depending upon you to share your insights and perspectives. If you don’t come to class, we’ll miss you and be the poorer for it. We are counting on you to attend class and to be prepared. Assignments are expected on their due dates.

If something exceptional happens and you cannot attend class, let me know, ideally ahead of time, but at least after the fact. There are no exceptions to this rule. Otherwise, we’ll wait for you, worry and imagine that you’re lying in a ditch somewhere.

Because this class is run as a seminar, with lots of discussion, there’s really no way to completely make up what you’d miss by not coming to class. Therefore, if you miss three (3) or more classes, you risk failing the class.

WHAT WE’LL PRODUCE
This is a communication intensive class. There will be reading, writing and discussion assignments every week. This is a cumulative course: later assignments build upon previous ones and will be evaluated more rigorously. All of you come into the class at different levels. All of you will leave at different levels: this is not a cookie cutter class. But if you put forth any effort, you’ll leave a better, more confident and skillful writer. Also, all of the assignments tie into the required Essential Learning Outcomes. So everything you do is moving you further along that spectrum toward successful communicator.

WEEKLY READING, WRITING, DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENTS. Every week we’ll be reading samples of some of the best writing in the world. You’ll do short write-ups on them. We’ll discuss the reading and writing in class. You’ll share some of your written work with classmates. You’ll be able to draw on and relate to your personal life experiences. This process helps you gain new perspectives, expand your horizons. Relevant ELOs: (written and oral as critical inquiry) (clear purpose) (arguments/conclusions) (interpret) (scholarly/popular sources).
PARTICIPATION. Although this is folded into every component of the class, it is so important that it deserves a bit of private, focused attention. As the syllabus says elsewhere, you are the absolutely indispensable component of the class. We cannot get along without you. If you miss class, we’ll all (including you) be the poorer for it. I get upset because I feel cheated: I just know that the day that you’re absent was the one that you would have had an absolutely amazing insight that would have made a story sing to us all. We need you in class. And we need to hear from you: every class, every story or assignment. Nobody’s shy because we all talk and share. You’ll be astounded at what you’ll learn from your classmates and the tight bond of community that you’ll form with them. Relevant ELOs: (written/oral as critical inquiry) (clear purpose) (arguments/conclusions) (interpret).

SHORT RESEARCH PAPERS. You’ll also do three short research papers, spaced out throughout the semester. These will give you valuable practice in research, synthesis, analysis, citation, objectivity, persuasion. Whew! Do you really need all that stuff? Yes, you do—no matter what field you enter, these skills will be invaluable. Here’s another valuable skill you’ll learn: the best writers are re-writers. So each of these papers will have at least one draft before its final version.

You’ll learn about academic writing, academic style, peer-reviewed academic/scholarly sources. You’ll also learn how to build a persuasive, compelling case, not by trying to outshout others, but by marshalling solid facts. You’ll acknowledge other points of view, then demonstrate why people should agree with you: because that perspective has the soundest evidence.

The first two papers each count for 10 percent of your grade and will be on assigned topics. The final short paper will be on a topic of your choice. It will count for 20 percent of your grade. During the first week of class, you’ll come see me to discuss your topic and the class in general. Thereafter, every week, you’ll give a brief update (sometimes written) on how you’re doing with your topic. With the final paper, you’ll benefit from partnering with a classmate in addition to the general peer review. The review and draft process is all part of your grade. So be sure to factor that into your plans as you budget your time and effort. Relevant ELOs: (written/oral as critical inquiry) (clear purpose) (arguments/conclusions) (interpret) (scholarly/popular sources).

PEER REVIEW. With each of your research papers, you’ll make copies for all your classmates. You’ll wind up reading everyone else’s drafts and giving feedback on them. You’ll do this in writing and verbally, as you give the papers back to their authors. I’ll give you a rubric to guide you on what to look for. Although this may sound tedious, it’s a win-win situation. The comments you give really help strengthen your classmates’ writing. But, surprisingly, the effort that you put into critiquing will strengthen your own writing just as much. You also get great insights into people when you read their writing. By the time that you complete the class, you’ll feel that you’ve gained many new friends. Relevant ELOs: (written/oral as critical inquiry) (clear purpose) (arguments/conclusions) (interpret) (scholarly/popular sources).

UMPI CULTURAL EVENTS. There is a wealth of events that take place at UMPI: everything from talks to plays and concerts. But too often, they play to a half empty house. That certainly deprives the organizers and performers. But it also deprives you, who might have had a terrific time. This assignment will rectify that in part.
Throughout the semester, for this class, you are required to attend at least two UMPI cultural events. (You can attend additional events for extra credit, if you wish. See me for limitations: for example, you can’t turn an F into an A by attending a slew of cultural events.) For every event that you attend, you’ll do at least a one-page write-up, putting the reader there. You’ll analyze the event: what was its purpose? Did it succeed? How did it enrich people’s experiences? What could they take away with them? You’ll also tell the rest of the class about it so that we can all benefit from your experience, expanding our worlds and views.

These events tend to dry up as the semester is drawing to a close. So you need to have attended your events by November 15, when you’ll all be sharing your experiences.

You’ll note that I specifically did not say that sporting events fulfill the requirement. They do not. Usually if anything draws a crowd, it’s sports. Further, sports are likely to be the area least outside your comfort zone. College is about trying new things, meeting new people. That’s one of the major goals of this assignment. So stretch a bit. You may not wind up loving the event. But you’ll never know until you try. And, either way, it will enrich your experiences somehow. Relevant ELOs: (written/oral as critical inquiry) (clear purpose) (interpret).

JOURNEY PAPERS. We’ll end the term with journey papers and presentations. For your Journey Paper, you’ll share your personal reflections on your journey through COMP 101. If at the end of the term I asked you to take a few hours and reflect on all that you’ve accomplished during the class—how you’ve stretched, grown and done amazing communication things—you’d probably intend to. But life—that exam you need to study for, that need of your family or friends—would probably get in the way. So to give you that little push and structure you need, you’ll write a three page paper about this. This should be one of the easiest assignments of the term. Look back over where you were when you entered, where you are now, what you’ve accomplished. You’ve overcome so much. Pat yourself on the back. This can be entirely personal: I won’t share it with any classmates. Relevant ELOs: (written and oral as critical inquiry) (clear purpose) (arguments/conclusions).

FINAL PRESENTATIONS AND EXAM WEEK DEBRIEFING. Your presentation, while it can overlap with your Journey Paper, is for public consumption. So there are things you might not want to share. You can talk about nearly anything relating to the class. You can talk about your favorite stories, your papers, the cultural events you attended. Don’t stress: these are the people you’ve talked to in class every meeting all term. On the other hand, don’t waste their time. Don’t come in cold. Do give it some thought beforehand. These will be short. I will time you. You’ll use all the time well.

We’ll meet for the last time during exam week. We’ll debrief and bring the class to closure. We’ll collectively reflect on what we’ve accomplished and what we’ll be ready to accomplish. This term has paved the way for success in your life at – and after – UMPI. Relevant ELOs: (written/oral as critical inquiry) (clear purpose) (arguments/conclusions) (interpret).
Don’t let the assignments overwhelm you. Plug away on them, make a schedule, keep up and you won’t have any problems.

Our final meeting, during exam week, is a celebration of having made it through the term. We’ll share food and applaud your achievements.

**WRITING ESSENTIALS**

HHCCQER

MASEV

AUDIENCE, AUDIENCE, AUDIENCE

WIIFM/WIIFT

“So what?” “Who cares?”

SELL YOUR IDEAS

SHOW AS WELL AS TELL – PAINT WORD PICTURES

WRITE FOR YOUR WEAKEST LINK/YOUR TOUGHEST CRITIC

WRITING WELL IS ALWAYS HARD WORK:
The trick is not to let them see you sweat

Quotes to Live By

“The most important thing in the story is finding the central idea. It’s one thing to be given a topic, but you have to find the idea or the concept within that topic. Once you find that idea or thread, all the other anecdotes, illustrations and quotes are pearls that you hang on this thread. The thread may seem very humble, the pearls may seem very flashy, but it’s still the thread that makes the necklace.” Thomas Boswell, *America’s Best Newspaper Writing*, p. 35.

“What I wanted to do was get the writing to a place where it seemed effortless…. The goal was to make it so that the reader would have no sense of the fact that it was difficult to write.” Peter Rinearson, *America’s Best Newspaper Writing*, p. 122.

“The formula I try to teach is to tease the folks a little bit in the lead. They don’t mind it. You are simply trying to get them interested…. Then somewhere near the top you have to tell them what you are driving at. Then you have to show them. And along the way you do things that

---

3 For an explanation of the acronyms below, see the separate handouts, “How to Do a Chapter Write-Up” and “Easy Tips to Improve Your Writing.”

“I try to teach reporters that if they have an important point they want to make, make it repetitiously but in different ways. Make it with a figure, make it with an anecdote and then maybe wrap it up with a quote.’ Find the theme. Hammer it home.” William E. Blundell, *America’s Best Newspaper Writing*, p. 114.

**FORMATTING**

You want readers to get to the heart of what you’re saying and not be distracted by how you’re saying it. Sure, that applies to grammar and syntax, but it’s even more fundamental. You need to format your work as a professional. Please do every assignment as follows:

- **MS Word.** If you don’t have Word, don’t despair. Simply save your work in Rich Text Format before sending it on to me. As a University of Maine System student, you also have access to Google Docs, a great set of tools that include an MS Word-type word processor. And there’s also Open Office, a free suite of applications.
- **Times New Roman.**
- **12 Point Type.**
- **Double-Spaced (Except for the Boilerplate Heading, Which Should Be Single-Spaced).**
- **Page Numbers.**
- **Stapled or clipped if more than one page. Please, no origami staples.**

Every first page should start with the following boilerplate, single-spaced:

- **Your Name.**
- **Class Name and Section.**
- **Date.**
- **Chapter/Assignment. With papers, please note if this is a draft (which stage) or a final version.**

You can put my name, too, if you want.

The assignments are due in two formats, electronic and hard copy. Send me a copy by e-mail, as an attachment, and also bring a paper printout of the assignment to class.

**THOU SHALT NOT STEAL: A BRIEF WORD ABOUT PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarizing is taking someone’s thoughts or words and passing them off as your own. If you use another’s concepts or language, you need to give that person credit. Largely, we want your words and ideas: your voice. As someone who reads your work every week, I become familiar with your voice. If you submit the work of another, I’ll know. It’ll cause you to fail the class and incur further university discipline. It’s just not worth it. If you’re having trouble with an assignment, see me and we’ll figure out a solution.
THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS:  
THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE
Another component of academic honesty is telling the truth. I understand that life happens. If you’re having a problem with some aspect of class, such as an assignment, let me know, the sooner the better. I’ll work with you to come up with a successful resolution. Above all, DO NOT LIE. Your nose will grow. You’ll look very odd. And you’ll fail the class.

CLASS ETIQUETTE

1. In general: Be Courteous. Be Respectful. Participation entails active listening and knowing when to talk. When others are talking, be polite. We want to hear from everyone. My three strikes and you’re out rule holds for this area, as well.

2. Be on time. We know that life happens. People have car trouble. The weather can cause problems. We’d rather have you join us late than not at all. But you need to be fair to the class. When people are late, we wait for them. When people are late, we have to recap what we’ve already covered. This isn’t fair to the rest of the class. Repeated tardiness uses up your three strikes.

3. Always bring your name tent to class so that people will know who you are. If you make it through the term with your original name tent, you get extra credit.

4. Electronic Devices: Since this is a seminar and not a lecture, you won’t need to take voluminous notes. If you feel you need to use a laptop to take notes, please see me. Do not audio or video record without explicit permission.

Turn your cell phones off: no set to vibrate, no texting. Keep your cell phone put away. If you’re addicted to texting, leave your phone home.

MP3 players are great, but not in class. You get the idea.

If you misuse devices, they become mine. For example, I will take your phone – and everyone else’s. And none of us wants that: particularly you, since your classmates will be really, really annoyed with you.

5. NO HATS IN CLASS. I’m famous (infamous?) for this rule. This is a gender-neutral policy: it applies equally to men and women. There’s no such thing as a bad hair day. There are a number of reasons for this, including: we like to see your face; it helps prevent blocking people’s view; it’s the polite thing to do; it makes you look like the professional you’re becoming.
6. **Everyone gets a certain amount of grace.** Some people never draw on this. Some people use it up right away. When I can, I’ll give you the benefit of the doubt. But ultimately, I need to be fair to everyone in class, not just you.

**WYSIWYG**

*This syllabus is a contract between us. I try to make it as clear as possible and to make sure that there are no surprises down the road. It's my effort to protect us all. Your presence in the class means that you accept these terms.*

**REQUIRED TEXTS**


Copy Card: $20. Available from the bookstore with the course book or from the library. This covers the costs of printing out copies of your three papers for every member of class. If you have a better way to accomplish the printing than this, you certainly don’t have to buy the card. You automatically get $15 for copies on your student ID every semester. (That tends to go pretty fast.) If you want to avoid the hassle and you or your roommate have a reliable printer, by all means go for it.

**WARNING:** You’ll need the multiple copies of each of your research papers for class on the assigned day. The computer facilities in the library don’t open until 8 a.m., when the library opens. So plan ahead. Also, if you’re printing out on your private printer, make sure that you have plenty of ink and paper. Your classmates are counting on getting your paper on time. You have plenty of notice of the deadlines for your paper drafts. So please do not come into class on a deadline day saying that you don’t have your paper.

**GRADING:**

Weekly Class Reading, Writing Assignments, Attending Two UMPI Cultural Events 25%

Peer Review Assignments 10%

Mini Papers 40%

(First two at 10% each; final at 20%)

Journey Paper 5%

(Your Personal Reflection on the Wonderful World of COMP 101)

Presentation/Debriefing 10% (5% for each component)

(Related to Journey Paper, but not identical. Put some thought and effort into this. It counts! And it’s great preparation for life after this class. You HAVE to be able to stand up in front of a
group and speak clearly and compellingly. The debriefing, during our finals meeting, will be a collective reflection on our semester and your continuing journey as successful college students.)

Participation 10%
(You’ll be graded on being in class and being actively engaged: asking questions, making comments, being an integral part of our discussions, supporting your colleagues, etc.)

TENTATIVE CALENDAR

Week One:
(September 4): Introductions; review of syllabus and class etiquette; discussion of resources; exchange of contact information; make name tents. Give 30-second elevator speech. Play two statement game.

Special Written Assignment:
Profile: Write a one-page personal profile. Tell me about yourself. Please include: who you are, from where you come, your academic interests, your personal interests, what you would like to gain from this class, your career goals. Also, please tell me about the issues that matter to you. Describe your community (communities). What issues are important to that community (those communities)? This piece of writing is between you and me—it will not be shared with other class members. It will also not be graded—be as creative as you would like.

Make Individual Appointments to Choose Special Issue/Topic, Discuss Class.

For next class, read Sherman Alexie, “The Joy of Reading: Superman and Me,” 27-31; Maya Angelou, “What’s Your Name, Girl?” 31-36; Frederick Douglass, “Learning to Read and Write,” 86-92. Do a one to two page write-up on the readings. Remember the Writing Essentials and the extra handouts: How to Do a Chapter Write-up and Easy Tips to Improve Your Writing. Don’t stress about this: just do the best that you can. I need to assess your writing so that I can figure out your strengths, help you make the most of them, and figure out what you need to improve and how. So we need to get started. Personal Profile due next class.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Our book consists primarily of short stories/articles preceded by short profiles of the authors. It’s worthwhile for you to read about the authors. But when it comes to your writing, focus on the STORIES. Your audience of weakest links doesn’t care about the authors. At the end of every story are questions: The Reader’s Presence. Do read and answer these. They will influence your chapter write-ups and also our class discussions.

---

4 One to two pages gives you a rough guideline. You really cannot do the readings justice in less than a page. But you also should not be writing five pages and up.
(September 6): Do elevator speeches, two statement game. Discuss readings. Pass in chapter write-up, Personal Profile.

**NEXT CLASS, WE’LL MEET AT THE LIBRARY.**

**Week Two:**

(September 11): Fieldtrip to library. We’ll learn about the specific resources of the UMPI bricks-and-mortar library and learn something about the vast electronic resources you can access. We’ll get great advice from an expert on such things as how to do an effective online search. This will give you a jumpstart on your special topic paper research as well as your other research papers. Since these are academic papers, you need to find out about peer-reviewed, academic sources. Do a one-page write-up about the library fieldtrip: write it as a guide for someone who’s never been to the library.


(September 13): Give Special Topics Updates. Get first short paper assignment: The First Amendment. Pass out, discuss Citations. Discuss fieldtrip to library. Talk about the assignments that you’ve done for the library.

**Week Three:**


(September 20): **NO CLASS.** Use this time to work on your research papers (both the First Amendment and the long-term, personal topic paper.)

Pass in copies of chapter write-ups. Please put these in the bin on the wall by my office door. For next class, pass in first draft of First Amendment paper. Bring enough copies for everyone.

**Week Four:**
(September 25): Distribute, pass in drafts of First Amendment papers. Talk about what you’ve learned from your research and writing.

Pass out, discuss Guidelines for Peer Review.

Discuss readings.


(September 27): Pass in copies of write-ups. Discuss readings.

**Week Five:**

(October 4): Pass in copies of chapter write-ups and final of First Amendment paper. Discuss writing process (learning what to fix based on getting and giving feedback, etc.). Give Special Topics updates.


**Week Six:**

**NO CLASS OCTOBER 8, 9, 10—FALL BREAK. HAVE A GOOD ONE!**

For next class, first draft of Ethics paper due. Bring enough copies to class for everyone.

Week Seven:
(October 16): Distribute, pass in first draft of Ethics paper. Discuss the research and writing process. Discuss readings. For next class, read Charles Simic, “The Life of Images,” 575-581; Calvin Trillin, “A Traditional Family,” 581-584; Barbara Tuchman, “‘This Is the End of the World’: The Black Death,” 584-600; Sherry Turkle, “How Computers Change the Way We Think,” 600-606. Do a write-up.


NO CLASS NEXT WEEK. USE TIME TO READ AND FINISH ETHICS PAPER.

Week Eight:

PLEASE SEE ABOVE. NO CLASS THIS WEEK. GET READY FOR NEXT WEEK, INCLUDING A GREAT HALLOWEEN CELEBRATION!

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY! In honor of HALLOWEEN, come in costume to class on Tuesday, 10.30. (Yes, I know that it’s not Halloween. But it’s our closest class preceding this important holiday. And somehow, celebrating it after the fact just isn’t the same.) You’ve got great leeway in your selection. The only stipulations are that it be G-rated and connected in some way to your special topic or to writing in general. We’ll try to guess the connection. Then you can dazzle us with your explanation.

Week Nine:
(October 30): Pass in final of Ethics paper. Pass in chapter write-ups. Be dazzled by your classmates’ amazing creativity and costumes. For next class, read Thomas Jefferson, “The Declaration of Independence,” 695-700; Martin Luther King Jr., “I Have a Dream,” 701-715 (part of this are illustrations by Ho Che Anderson); Martin Luther King Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” 716-733. Do a write-up.
(November 1): Pass in final of Ethics paper. Pass in chapter write-ups. Give Special Topics updates. For next class, pass in first draft of Special Topics paper. Bring enough copies for everyone to peer review. We’re really eager to read what you have to say.

**Week Ten:**


(November 8): Pass in chapter write-ups. Give Special Topics updates. Discuss getting Special Topics to this point. Discuss readings.

**Week Eleven:**


(November 15): Discuss UMPI Cultural experiences! Pass in chapter write-ups. Discuss readings. For next class, pass in second draft of Special Topics paper. Bring two copies: one for me and one for your writing partner.

**Week Twelve:**


**NO CLASSES NOVEMBER 21-23. HAVE A HAPPY, HEALTHY THANKSGIVING!**

**Week Thirteen:**

(November 29): Discuss readings. Pass in final versions of Special Topics papers, chapter write-ups.

Week Fourteen:
(December 4): Discuss readings. For next week’s classes, you’ll be doing Journey Papers and presentations.

(December 6): **CREATIVE OPPORTUNITY: Special In-Class Assignment.

Week Fifteen:
(December 11 and 13): Journey Papers and Presentations. NOTE: You must be present for ALL presentations. You need to be there to congratulate everyone for surviving Dr. J!

Our Final Meeting Will Be Tuesday, December 18, 2012, 8 to 10 a.m., Normal 104B. It’s university policy that we meet during exam week. Sorry about the timing. But please don’t shoot me, I’m only the messenger. We’ll debrief, share food, applaud your achievements, and share some holiday cheer.

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU’VE MADE IT! TIME FOR US TO CELEBRATE THE WONDER OF YOU!

ADDITIONAL NOTES

WRITING CENTER
Located on the first floor of South Hall, the writing center offers one-on-one consultations for writers at all levels of course work, at all stages of the writing process. Call 768-9615 or stop by to set up an appointment. For more information you can also check out their Web page: http://www.umpi.edu/programs/cas/english/writing-center.

Be sure to take your assignments and other relevant materials when you go in for a consultation.

At the time we went to press, we didn’t have the semester tutoring schedule. The writing center will open for business on Monday, September 10.

ACCOMMODATION
If you need accommodations in this course because of a disability, if you have emergency
medical information to share with me or if you need special arrangements, please contact me as soon as possible. For more information and assistance, please call Mary Kate Barbosa, director, Student Support Services (123 South Hall) at 768-9613.

**Tutoring:** Student Support Services offers tutoring to all students through experienced professional and peer tutors. If you are interested in receiving tutoring, please contact Meghan Lightbown, SSS assistant director, at 768-9614.