

## FL1019: ENGLISH COMPOSITION I

### Course Instructor:

Manuel Herrero-Puertas, Ph.D.

**Email:** [herreropuert@ntu.edu.tw](mailto:herreropuert@ntu.edu.tw)

**Office:** Old Main Library  
(舊圖書館), Room #21-1

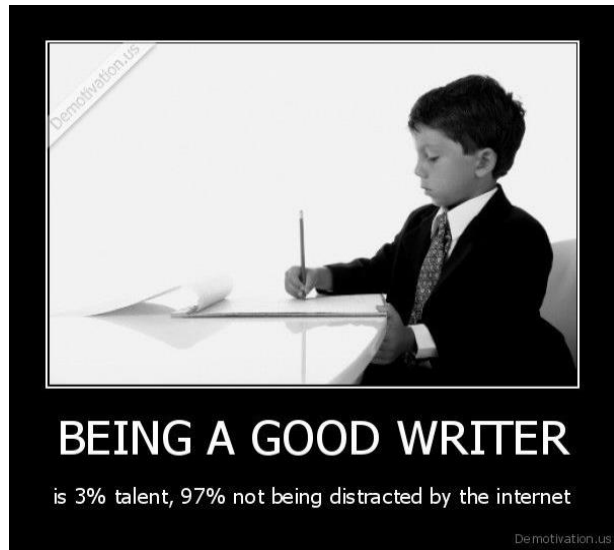
### Meeting Times:

Tuesday, 15:30-18:20pm

**Classroom:** #310, Liberal Education  
Classroom Building (博雅教學館)

### Office Hours:

Monday, 1:00-3:00 pm  
(preferably by appointment)



### Course Description

Writing is difficult. Some people believe that good writers are born that way, that they have a natural gift. My goal in this course is to fight this notion. Instead, I will argue that effective written communication can be mastered once we break it down into specific skills and tasks. In other words, writing is difficult precisely because it is a process involving several steps, from planning and organizing a text's content (catchy introductions, clear outline, original thinking) to crafting its form (word choices, sentence structures, paragraph transitions). In this course, I will familiarize you with these and related techniques. We will discuss a wide range of textual and audiovisual materials. I have selected these as models that will inspire and help you get started as a writer. You will learn by reading and watching these materials, but, first and foremost, you will learn by practicing writing. In addition to impromptu exercises, you will produce six formal writing assignments. These, together with in-class quizzes and overall participation will be the foundation of your final grade.

### COVID-19 Notice

This course has been moved to an online format for the first three weeks of the semester. During this time, we will meet via videoconference. I will post all relevant materials to NTU Cool, including the links to our online meetings as well as handouts, ppts, assignments, etc. Just check the module for each week.

Since we may have to switch to an online format indefinitely, it is vital that you check NTU Cool regularly for updates. In addition, do not hesitate to contact me with any question and/or concern. By all means, let's keep our communication lines open while erring on the side of safety.

### Course Objectives

- Understand writing as a process, becoming proficient in its early stages: pre-writing, outlining, summarizing, annotating, underlining, etc.
- Develop information-literacy and critical-reading skills: learn how to extract and evaluate information from a text, lecture, film, etc.
- Learning the basic structures of English sentences and paragraphs
- Familiarize with the main genres of non-fiction and exploratory writing: review, report, exposé, personal narrative, etc.
- Improve English vocabulary
- Review and edit one's own and others' work for both content and language
- Develop teamwork and oral-presentation skills

### Textbook and Materials

Our textbook is Lee Brandon and Kelly Brandon, *At a Glance: Writing Paragraphs and Beyond with Integrated Readings*. 6<sup>th</sup> edition. Cengage Learning, 2015. You can purchase this at Bookman Bookstore (Phone: 23658617). Bring your copy to class every week. In addition, always bring:

- One notebook
- Pen or pencil
- English dictionary (electronic or physical). I suggest you download the apps of authoritative English dictionaries such as *Merriam-Webster*
- Copies of the reading assignment for that day (printed or digital, but only in your tablet or laptop—no cellphones!)

In order to complete the writing assignments for this class, you need access to a computer and Microsoft Word processor software (which you can download for free as a NTU student). If you do not own a computer, borrow and/or use one at the library.

### References

- Brandon, Lee, and Kelly Brandon, *At a Glance: Writing Sentences and Beyond*. 6<sup>th</sup> edition. Cengage Learning, 2015.
- Ray McCuen-Metherell, Jo, and Anthony C. Winkler, eds. *Readings for Writers*. 15<sup>th</sup> edition. Cengage Learning, 2015.
- Ruetten, Mary K. *Developing Composition Skills: Academic Writing and Grammar*. Heine, 2012.
- Williams, Joseph M. *Style. Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. Longman, 2003.

### Grading

Assignments	80%
- [A1 Underlining	5%
- A2 Summary	10%
- A3 Description	15%
- A4 Narration	15%
- A5 Film review	15%
- A6 Event report	20%]
Vocabulary and grammar quizzes	10%
Class participation	10%

### **Methods of Assessment**

- Class attendance and at least one individual conference with the instructor (more than 4 absences will result in an F grade)
- Class participation: punctuality, involvement, and teamwork
- Low-stakes writing assignments (in-class)
- Six high-stakes, formal assignments
- Weekly short reading assignments, always to be completed **before** class
- In-class vocabulary and grammar quizzes

### **Cheating/Plagiarism – IMPORTANT!**

Plagiarism is the appropriation of all or part of someone else's works (such as but not limited to writing, coding, programs, images, etc.) and offering it as one's own. Cheating is using false pretenses, tricks, devices, artifices, or deception to obtain credit on an examination or in a college course.

Any student who commits academic dishonesty by plagiarism, cheating, or in any other manner, will fail the class automatically and will be reported to the University authorities.

To avoid plagiarism, address me any concerns beforehand. It is a much better idea to consult with me what may or may not constitute plagiarism in a particular assignment than to risk and be exposed to disciplinary action. If you have any questions about finding/using/citing sources, or if you suspect your work might incur in plagiarism, contact me ASAP.

### **Cell Phone and Laptop Policy**

Cell phones are to be turned off and out of sight during classes and exams. If I see you checking your phone more than once during class time, you will be marked absent for that day. The only exception is when you use your smartphone to look up words in an online dictionary. Please ask for my permission first.

Unless you have a major reason, please refrain from using a laptop/table in this class. Check with me first if you need to use one.

### **Submission Policy**

Good writers meet deadlines. Please hand in your work in time. If you need an extension, always let me know in advance of the assignment's deadline.

### **Communicating with Me**

- In my experience, successful students are not afraid to raise questions and communicate with their instructors. Do not be afraid to approach me before, during, after class as well as during my office hours.
- The same applies to e-mail communication (my address: [herreropuert@ntu.edu.tw](mailto:herreropuert@ntu.edu.tw)).
- I will use e-mail and/or NTU Cool to communicate important information about the course and upload important documents as well as reading assignments, lesson plans, and ppts. Our course website URL is <https://cool.ntu.edu.tw/courses/8561>
- When you write me an e-mail, please be aware of professional courtesy and tone (e.g. begin the message with "Dear Professor Manuel" and include your name at the bottom). For e-mail communications, allow me a maximum of 24 hours to respond.

**COURSE CALENDAR (Tentative\*)**

\*Please keep in mind that unforeseen circumstances may require us to slow down, speed up our progress, or change direction altogether. I will always announce any new dates and/or assignments in a timely fashion and in a way that is not detrimental to your grade.

**Week Two – 9/28 [online]**  
Introduction to the course  
Icebreakers  
What is good writing?

**Week Three – 10/5 [online]**  
Reading strategies  
Underlining

**Week Four – 10/12 [online]**  
Annotating  
Sentence structures (I)

**Week Five --10/19**  
Outlining  
Sentence structures (II)  
*Assignment 1 due*

**Week Six – 10/26**  
Cohesion and coherence  
Sentence structures (III)

**Week Seven – 11/2**  
Summarizing

**Week Eight – 11/9**  
Pre-writing strategies  
Paragraph structures (I)  
*A2 due*

**Week Nine – 11/16**  
Description  
Showing and telling

**Week Ten—11/23**  
Narration (I)  
Paragraph structures (II)  
*A3 due*

**Week Eleven – 11/30**  
Narration (II)  
Paragraph structures (III)

**Week Twelve – 12/7**  
Exemplification  
*A4 due*

**Week Thirteen – 12/14**  
In-class film screening (TBA) and discussion

**Week Fourteen – 12/21**  
Reacting  
Agreeing / Disagreeing  
*A5 due (first draft)*

**Week Fifteen – 12/28**  
Outing: class trip (TBA)  
*A5 due (final draft)*

**Week Sixteen – 1/3-1/5**  
*Individual conferences (no class meeting)*  
*A6 due (first draft)*

*A6 (final draft) due on 1/9 via NTU*  
**Cool**