

**English 101: College reading and composition I**  
**Instructor O'Connell**  
**9:35—12:45 Sat, JH303**

**Spring '07**  
**Classroom section #0459**  
**[www.snorko.org/lacc](http://www.snorko.org/lacc)**

### **Course texts**

Chomsky, N. 2006. *Failed states*. New York: Metropolitan.

Mosley, W. 2004. *White butterfly*. New York: Norton.

Shakespeare, W. and P. Holland. 2000. *Richard III*. New York: Pelican.

**Welcome to English 101**, a requirement for virtually all college students. This course develops students' ability to grasp content of college level materials and write well-developed, logical expository essays. Find below details on the assignments, readings, and other course information. Dates and schedule subject to slight revision due to class needs or unforeseen events. Essay assignments below show basic requirements. Much more detail and practice will be provided in class. All essays All essays should be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point Verdana font, 1" margins, with in-text citations and references arranged in APA-style format.

**Attendance** is required, and as per college policy, students may be dropped after missing a week of class. Arriving late and leaving early adds up to unexcused absence as well as skipping class completely. An attendance record will be posted each day, and students should sign in upon entering class. Online courses are available for students looking for a more independent schedule.

**Warning: late essays are not accepted for credit.** Late essays will not be scored but will be marked zero. Don't be late: a zero on any of the essays would severely decrease course grades. Students are encouraged to submit drafts early, both for revision tips and to avoid being late due to emergencies.

**Essay #1: Analysis and refutation** (8 pages total, due in four 2-page parts—part 1.1 due 2/24, part 1.2 due 3/3, part 1.3 due 3/10, and 1.4 due 3/17, with an optional bonus 1.b to be due 3/24)

Write four 2-page analyses of assigned text theses, newspaper editorials, opinion columns, or persuasive essays. The four separate parts of essay #1 are due on different days but averaged into one score. Students should choose one of two approaches: either refute ideas from *Failed states* using the assigned essays and other supporting points, or use *Failed states'* ideas to argue against the contrasting essays, columns, or ideas. Use the chart below to help organize your work.

Due date	Op/ed column, persuasive essay, or thesis/argument	Contrast to <i>Failed states'</i> hypotheses, implications
E1.1 2/24	<p>"We are exceptional. We are unique. And we are the greatest force for good in the world, despite what the left, the terrorists or the United Nations may claim. It is for these reasons that we remain the last great hope in the world for freedom."</p> <p><b>Pastore, F. 2004, Nov. 5. Christian conservatives must not compromise. Los Angeles Times.</b></p>	<p>"The [US government] 'system' is coming to have some of the features of failed states, to adopt a currently fashionable notion...applied to states regarded as potential threats to our security (like Iraq) or as needing our intervention to rescue the population from severe internal threats (like Haiti)...[1] inability or unwillingness to protect their citizens from violence and perhaps even destruction...[2] tendency to regard themselves as beyond the reach of domestic or international law...[3] 'democratic deficit' that deprives their formal democratic institutions of real substance."</p> <p><b>(Chomsky, <i>Failed states</i>, p 1–2)</b></p>
E1.2 3/3	<p>"PELLEY: Do you think you owe the Iraqi people an apology for not doing a better job?</p> <p>BUSH: That we didn't do a better job or they didn't do a better job?</p> <p>PELLEY: Well, that the United States did not do a better job in providing security after the invasion.</p> <p>BUSH: Not at all. I am proud of the efforts we did. We liberated that country from a tyrant. I think the Iraqi people owe the American people a huge debt of gratitude, and I believe most Iraqis</p>	<p>"The willingness of top planners to risk an increase in terrorism, possibly with awesome consequences, does not of course indicate that they welcome such outcomes. Preventing terrorist attacks is simply not a high priority in comparison with serious geopolitical and strategic objectives—specifically, controlling the world's major energy resources, recognized to be 'a stupendous source of strategic power' and 'one of the greatest material prizes in world history'"</p> <p><b>(Chomsky, <i>Failed states</i>, p 36)</b></p> <p>"when he spoke of the great sacrifices we Americans have made for Iraq, the president...didn't even mention the \$200-billion annual price tag of the war in Iraq.... If we weren't spending \$200 billion a year to help the Iraqi people, we could—for</p>

	<p>express that. I mean, the people understand that we've endured great sacrifice to help them. That's the problem here in America. They wonder whether or not there is a gratitude level that's significant enough in Iraq.</p> <p><b>Bush, G. W., and S. Pelley. 2007, Jan. 14. CBS News interview.</b></p>	<p>instance—be funding universal healthcare (at an estimated \$100 billion a year, according to a <i>New York Times</i> analysis) and a universal preschool program (\$35 billion a year). With the \$65 billion we'd have left over after that, we could create a comprehensive national service program for young Americans, or more than triple the foreign aid we provide to developing countries.</p> <p><b>Brooks, R. 2007, Jan. 19. Those ingrate Iraqis. Los Angeles Times.</b></p>
<p>E1.3 3/10</p>	<p>"My wife would like to see us kick the United Nations out of the United States. I, for one, think it's a swell idea."</p> <p><b>Prelutsky, B. 2006, Feb 18. It's time to evict the UN. Townhall.com.</b></p> <p>"it would be one thing if the U.N. actually, you know, worked. But the problem is that the history of the U.N. is a history of unrelenting failure."</p> <p><b>Goldberg, J. 2006, Jul. 21. The great UN delusion. Townhall.com.</b></p> <p>"there is no United Nations. There is an international community that occasionally can be led by the only real power left in the world, and that's the United States, when it suits our interest and when we can get others to go along. And I think it would be a real mistake to count on the United Nations as if it's some disembodied entity out there that can function on its own."</p> <p><b>Bolton, J. 1994. quoted in Goodman, A. 2006, Jul. 27. Democracy Now.</b></p>	<p>"The hideous crimes of the twentieth century led to dedicated efforts to save humans from the curse of war. The word save is no exaggeration. It has been clear since 1945 that the likelihood of 'ultimate doom' is much higher than any rational person should be willing to tolerate. These efforts to end war led to a broad consensus on the principles that should guide state action, formulated in the United Nations Charter...[which] opens by expressing the determination of the signatories 'to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought 'untold sorrow to mankind.' The 'scourge of war' had threatened not just 'untold sorrow' but total destruction."</p> <p><b>(Chomsky, Failed states, p 79)</b></p>

E1.4 3/17	<p>“get out and vote. You'll be hearing it from television newscasters, MTV, newspaper ads, radio talk show hosts, weathermen, schoolteachers ... you get the idea. Everyone has a duty to vote, they will say. No they don't. If a person is utterly ignorant about matters of public policy, then he or she has a solemn obligation <i>to refrain from voting</i>. The percentage of people who fall into the utterly ignorant category is estimated to be about 25 percent of eligible voters.”</p> <p><b>Charen, M. 2004, Oct. 22. Stay home; don't vote. <i>TownHall.com</i>.</b></p>	<p>[in opinion polls] “the public called for the deepest cuts in the programs that are most rapidly increasing, and for substantial spending increases in areas that are shortchanged.... The findings reveal a dramatic divide between public opinion and public policy...people do not feel that the government is responsive to their needs.”</p> <p><b>(Chomsky, <i>Failed states</i>, p 235)</b></p>
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For each of the four parts of essay #1, study both the week's reading from *Failed states* and the contrasting essays. Determine what each author believes (topic + opinion = thesis) and why (reasons, examples, and evidence = argument). Organize your 2-page analyses into three long paragraphs in the following fashion:

The first sentences of the first paragraph should list the author, title, date and thesis of the work and identify that it is to be refuted. Here are a couple models: **On page 11 of his 2006 book *Failed states*, Chomsky wrongly blames the US government of inciting attacks by planning or building space-based weapons that could “crush someone anywhere in the world”—or—Cornyn’s 2005 bill S Res 92 wrongly argues that cooperating with the rest of the world “threatens the sovereignty of the United States.”** Next, briefly list the reasons given in the original as support. The last sentences of the first paragraph should state a contrasting opinion on the topic to be argued as the alternate thesis.

The second paragraph should explain in detail the original argument of the refuted position and argue against the original, point by point. Explain why the original has misunderstood the situation, gone too far in its approach, forgotten important information, presented an impractically idealistic goal, or otherwise created a flawed analysis.

Try to use ethical, associative, and predictive reasoning to critique the argument refuted:

Ethical reasoning: judge right and wrong standards of morality as applied to topic

Associative reasoning: compare to other situations or events as they inform topic

Predictive reasoning: predict hypothetical future results as models for action

The third paragraph should explain reasons, examples, or other evidence to support the alternate thesis. Do not simply repeat the refutation of the second paragraph, but argue a case in support of the alternate thesis. Try to use ethical, associative, and predictive reasoning to support your alternative thesis. Use as an example at least one outside source of information on the topic found through research and give an author, title, date reference.

Grading rubric for each part to essay #1;  
four categories, up to one point each

\_\_\_\_\_ The original source info, thesis, and argument of an assigned work are identified in the first paragraph and designated unsatisfactory;

\_\_\_\_\_ An alternate thesis on the topic is presented at the end of the first paragraph;

\_\_\_\_\_ The argument supporting the original is refuted point by point in the second paragraph;

\_\_\_\_\_ An argument supporting the alternate thesis is developed and sufficiently explained in the third paragraph, perhaps using ethical, associative, and predictive reasoning; one referenced outside source explained as support.

**Essay #2: Community analysis, contrasting colloquial fiction and academic non-fiction styles (3-page short story + 3-page academic analysis = 6 pages total, due half-done on 3/31—3 pages total, half-done draft of each part; due complete 4/14)**

Research a current event in a local LA neighborhood and analyze it using Chomsky's three features of failed states to test his hypothesis on the local level. Find several sources of information on the topic and different opinions on what should be done. Consider Mosley's novel *White Butterfly* and his non-fiction work in essays, interviews, and other writings. Create an original, fictionalized version of the LA event in a 3-page short story. Create characters, describe the setting, and

explain the plot using at least three other literary devices to convey the story's theme(s). Outline, draft, and revise a 3-page formal academic persuasive analysis of the situation with clear introduction (including thesis and outline of argument), fully explained body of argumentation (perhaps structured around ethical, associative, and predictive reasoning), and conclusion (restating thesis and summarizing argument). Prepare in-text references and reference page in APA style. More details and practice provided in class.

**Midterm: Saturday, March 31, 10:00 AM—Noon, meet in JH303**

The midterm exam will be similar in style to essay #1 and incorporate aspects of the department final. Students should bring a composition blue book to campus and take the hand written exam in person. Instructor will provide an op/ed essay, and students may refute either the essay's thesis or ideas from *Failed states*.

**Essay #3: Metaphorical lessons from literature on today's world (6 pages complete, half-done draft due on 5/5; due complete 5/19)**

Create and argue a thesis comparing the metaphoric lessons two different characters from Shakespeare's *Richard III* offer toward an issue or event discussed in *Failed states*. Develop a metaphor on your thesis in which the two characters are interpreted to represent correct and incorrect courses of action on the issue or event. Research a wide variety of editorials and news stories, and include analysis of at least 4 newspaper articles, editorials, or opinion columns published in the last six months and not previously used for essay #1 or #2. Cite sources in APA format as above. Use rubric presented in class to help organize and revise essay.

**Journal: scored weekly and averaged**

Class notes, students' ideas on discussion, responses to other students' ideas, and drafts of essays should be posted weekly. Students may choose a quote from the week's readings, research online for supporting or contrasting opinions, then explain the topic and personal opinions. Choose the quotes and research that offer the most interest and promise for upcoming essays, and make the journal on the readings the first steps in researching topics to consider. Include research notes and drafts toward upcoming essays. Respond to at least one other student's post each week as part of the journal as well. Students should expect to write about a page (250 words) of draft-quality notes and analysis each class week.

## **Final exam: 5/25**

Department final exam given Friday 5/25 and also with Saturday 5/26 classroom students: see previous terms and forthcoming information.

**Grade weights** (all assignments scored on 4-point scale then adjusted to fit 100 point total)

Essay #1: 25% (4-point rubric score x 6.25)  
Essay #2: 25% (4-point rubric score x 6.25)  
Midterm: 5% (4-point rubric score x 1.25)  
Essay #3: 25% (4-point rubric score x 6.25)  
Journal: 10% (4-point rubric score x 2.5)  
Final exam: 10% (4-point rubric score x 2.5)  
Total: 100% (100 adjusted points total)

A = 90—100% (4-point scale scores 3.6—4.0)  
B = 80—89% (4-point scale scores 3.2—3.59)  
C = 70—79% (4-point scale scores 2.8—3.19)  
D = 60—69% (4-point scale scores 2.4—2.79)

## **Readings**

*FS* 1, 2, 3, etc. refer to the chapters of Noam Chomsky's *Failed states*. LAPL has many copies. *WB* 1, 2, 3, etc. refer to the chapters of Walter Mosley's *White Butterfly*. LAPL has many copies of this novel. *RIII*, I, II, III, IV, and V refer to the acts of the play *Richard III*, by William Shakespeare. The Pelican paperback in the bookstore is good, but most libraries will have annotated Shakespeare texts that will serve as well—perhaps included in a volume of the collected works. Free online non-annotated versions are in the public domain (for example MIT's [www-tech.mit.edu/shakespeare](http://www-tech.mit.edu/shakespeare)), also useful for searching with an edit→find computer function. Other reading assignments will be freely available online, particularly in newspaper editorials and opinion columns.

## **Calendar of readings and assignment due dates (all Saturdays except 2/9 & 5/25)**

Week 1 (2/10): *FS* Preface, Afterword; course orientation

Week 2 (2/17): Presidents' day holiday; *FS* 1

Week 3 (2/24): *FS* 1; *WB* 1—5 E1.1 due

Week 4 (3/3): *FS* 2; *WB* 6—10 E1.2 due

Week 5 (3/10): <i>FS</i> 2; <i>WB</i> 11—15; <i>RIII</i> I	E1.3 due
Week 6 (3/17): <i>FS</i> 6; <i>WB</i> 16—20; <i>RIII</i> I	E1.4 due
Week 7 (3/24): <i>FS</i> 6; <i>WB</i> 21—25; <i>RIII</i> II	E1.b bonus option
Week 8 (3/31): <i>FS</i> 3; <i>WB</i> 26—30; <i>RIII</i> II	E2.1 half-done draft; midterm, 10:00—noon
Week 9 (4/7): spring break	
Week 10 (4/14): <i>FS</i> 3; <i>WB</i> 31—35; <i>RIII</i> III	E2.2 due complete
Week 11 (4/21): <i>FS</i> 4; <i>WB</i> 36—40; <i>RIII</i> III	
Week 12 (4/28): <i>FS</i> 4; <i>RIII</i> IV	
Week 13 (5/5): <i>FS</i> 5; <i>RIII</i> IV	E3.1 half-done draft
Week 14 (5/12): <i>FS</i> 5; <i>RIII</i> V	
Week 15 (5/19): <i>RIII</i> V	E3.2 due complete
Week 16 (5/25): Final exam (8:30—11:00 AM or 6:30—9:00 PM) or 5/26, 10:00 AM—noon	