English 150
Your New Landscape
Fall 2011

Instructor: Sara Beth Parks sbp@iastate.edu
In-office visiting hours: T/R 8:00-9:20 a.m. Thursdays 5:00-6:00 and by appointment
Office: Ross 449

Textbooks and Materials

ISUComm Foundation Courses Student Guide for English 150 and 250, Iowa State University, Department of English, 2011 – 2012. (required and not returnable)
1 Flash drive on which to save all your English 150 work. (required)

Objectives

The purpose of English 150 is to prepare you for communicating successfully in your academic courses, as well as in your work, personal, and civic lives. Because of what the National Council of Teachers of English calls the importance of 21st-century literacies, most of the course will be devoted to writing, but you will also practice and analyze oral, visual, and electronic communication. You’ll also compile and reflect on a portfolio of your work. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

Written

• adapt your writing to specific purposes, audiences, and situational contexts
• integrate and document a range of informational sources, from personal interviews to print and electronic publications
• practice varied organizational strategies and transitional devices
• match expression to situation and audience, avoiding errors that distract or confuse
• design effective presentation forms by attending to spacing, margins, headings, color, and typography
• develop strategies to revise your own writing
• reflect upon your communication processes, strengths, goals, and growth

**Oral**
• interview others, asking effective questions and listening actively
• function as an effective team member in small groups as contributor, listener, collaborator, and presenter
• develop basic oral presentation skills, focusing on meaningful information, clear organization, and engaging delivery

**Visual**
• use typography effectively, particularly in creating headings and subheadings
• create an appropriate layout format for a bookmark, brochure, fact sheet, or newsletter
• analyze visual communication, such as art on campus
• use visuals effectively (e.g., imported, scanned, or digital pictures) and integrate them with written texts
• accurately document visual sources

**Electronic**
• use appropriate format, voice, and language in a professional email (e.g., correspondence with an instructor)
• use word processing skills, including making headings, attachments, tables, etc.
• create an electronic composition (e.g., communication eportfolio)
• choose one or more suitable media for delivering a communication to its intended audience

**Assignments**
All work completed outside of class should be typed. **Make sure you have a backup copy of all work before you turn it in to be graded.** Major assignments will be penalized one letter grade (from B to C) for each day they are late and after two class periods, the work will not be accepted and an F will be recorded for it. Not completing all major assignments seriously jeopardizes your ability to receive a passing grade at the end of the semester.

In addition to major assignments, there will be shorter assignments to practice strategies important to a major assignment or to explore visual and oral communication. Shorter assignments are important components of your process, and failure to complete them may result in a failing grade for that assignment.

**Class Attendance and Participation**
One of the consistent components in the ISUComm Foundation Courses is an attendance policy. Classes are in a discussion/workshop format and depend on your active learning; therefore, regular attendance and productive, courteous participation with classmates and the instructor are important. Absences damage your grade in the class and create the probability that you need to drop the course. Much of what we do in English 150 cannot be rescheduled for you individually, made up, or accepted late, regardless of your reason for missing class. To ensure that you stay on track with your attendance and submission of work, the following policies, developed by the Director of ISUComm Foundation Courses, will be enforced in sections of English 150:
• Missing more than four classes (MWF) or three classes (TTH) will lower your grade, and excessive absences (three weeks of classes) will result in a failing grade for the course.
  ○ Specifically, if your absences total five – eight (MWF) or four – five (TTH), your class grade is reduced two increments (a B+ becomes a C; a C becomes a D+). This happens for the range of 5 – 8 (MWF) or 4 – 5 (TTH) absences, not for each individual absence within the range. Even so, the impact on your grade is severe once you go over your allotted number (four on MWF or three on TTH).
  ○ After a total of nine (MWF) or six (TTH) absences, you must drop the course or you will receive an F.
• Even with a valid reason to miss, you can accumulate so many absences in a semester that your work and classroom experience are too compromised for you to remain in the class. The Director of ISUComm Foundation Courses and your instructor will advise you and your advisor if your absences—regardless of their reason—are too numerous for you to remain in English 150 and you need to drop the class and take it in a semester when your schedule permits regular attendance.
  ○ Please do not assume that exceptions will be made for you. If you are concerned about the number of times you anticipate missing, speak to your instructor or the Director of ISUComm Foundation Courses (blakely@iastate.edu) immediately. If there is a medical condition, you must speak to the Disability Resources Office at the beginning of the semester (see page 4 of this document). If the time of day for the class is not convenient for you, you need to speak to your advisor.
• If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you will be counted absent.
• Missing during group work or on the day of your oral presentation means taking an F for that activity, as it cannot be made up individually.
• When classes are cancelled for scheduled conferences, missing a scheduled individual or group conference counts as an absence.
• Your advisor will also be notified of attendance issues that threaten your ability to pass the class and you may receive a midterm low-grade report because of your attendance.
• Do not schedule travel that requires you to leave campus early for Thanksgiving Break or for semester break, as this could conflict with your class and/or your final exam. Your instructor cannot make individual arrangements for you.

**Evaluation**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>In-Class Writing (Week 1)</td>
<td>no grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>Sharing Experiences: Letter-as-Essay or Memoir (Weeks 2-3)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>Exploring a Campus Program or Organization: Public Document and Profile (Weeks 4-6)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Assignment 4</td>
<td>Understanding Campus Place or Artifact: Report and Commentary (Weeks 7-9)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 5</td>
<td>Composing Visual Communication (Weeks 10-12)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 6</td>
<td>Portfolio (Weeks 13-15)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Part of the portfolio is due during Final Exam time (Week 16); there are no exceptions to our class final exam time designated by ISU. Check this website now so you do not make travel plans that conflict with your final exam: http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/exams/tentative.shtml

**Daily Work and Classroom Participation** (including class and small-group contributions, as well as your University Lecture write-up) 10%
End-of-Semester Portfolio

After you’ve completed the first 5 major individual assignments of the semester, you will revisit these projects to compile a presentation portfolio worth 15% of your semester grade (See Assignment # 6 under Grading and Evaluation). This portfolio’s purpose is to present your communication work and your ability to reflect on and project ahead about this work.

To showcase your learning, you’ll select from your previous work, revising one major piece of writing (the “W” mode on which English 150 concentrates most heavily), presenting other parts of your work to demonstrate your competence in the related 3 modes (-OVE—oral, visual, and electronic). You’ll write a reflection on these pieces to discuss changes you made to the originals, why, and to assess the new versions.

Specifically, the portfolio components are:

- Portfolio conference with your instructor (in which you lay out what pieces your portfolio will include and what sorts of issues you will discuss as you reflect on them—during Week 13)
- Portfolio (the first 3 parts will be due during Week 15; the last part—closing reflection—will be written in class during your university-scheduled final exam period)
  - Introduction to and closing reflection on the portfolio’s work
  - Revision of a writing (W) and reflection
  - -OVE products and reflection

Because it’s not possible to know exactly what you’ll include in this final portfolio or what you’ll say about your chosen pieces right now, it is very important to save everything you do in 150, both in electronic and hard copy, so that you have a lot of material from which to draw when you begin to put your portfolio together.

Grades

In English 150 and 250, as in other university courses, the work required of you at the university level is different in type and level of difficulty from what you did in high school. Expectations are also naturally higher since your work is now in a pool with that of others who are also pursuing degrees at this large university. Iowa State is committed to rigor and excellence. This means that instructors will evaluate your work so that its grade reflects the quality of work when compared to university expectations.

Students admitted to the university are assumed to be able to perform satisfactorily (earning Cs); however, earning As and Bs at the university level requires strong, consistent effort. The grade descriptions below reflect that reality. Notice that the C description describes work that is “satisfactory,” “clear,” and “competent” with “nothing remarkably good or bad.” If you received As and Bs for work that met this description in high school, please understand that your expectations for university grading may be unrealistic.

Your assignment sheets in English 150 and 250 include evaluation criteria and your instructor will provide various forms of feedback on your work, including a rubric and comments. Be realistic in your expectations about grades; start assignments early and work steadily to avoid last-minute rushing. If you are disappointed in a grade, make an appointment with your instructor if you do not understand what you can do differently on subsequent work.

Always refer to all your textbooks (The Call to Write, The Everyday Writer, and the ISUComm Student Guide, 2011 – 2012), as many commonly asked questions are answered in one or more of those texts. See especially pages 30 – 33 in your ISUComm Student Guide, 2011 – 2012.
A Excellent and outstanding. The qualities of a B assignment, plus imagination, originality, and engaging expression.

B Thorough analysis of the communication problem; a satisfactory solution to the problem, judgment and tact in the presentation of this solution; good organization and solid expression.

C Satisfactory analysis of the problem, clear organization, and competent style; nothing remarkably good or bad. A C means your work met the demands of the assignment in a minimally acceptable way.

D Presence of a significant defect in context, substance, organization, style, or delivery in a lackluster paper; inadequate treatment of the assignment.

F Inadequate coverage of essential points, uncertain or misguided purpose, poor organization; ineffective and inconsistent expression; significant defects in standard usage.

**Academic Honesty**

Detecting plagiarism in English 150 and 250 is often fairly easy for an instructor who is familiar with your work. Once detected, it is mandatory that the Director of Foundation Courses be notified and consulted about consequences. Read thoroughly all of the material provided in your ISUComm Student Guide 2011 – 2012, (page 33). Also read pages 191 – 192 in *The Everyday Writer* (Lunsford) and pages 415 – 418 in *The Call to Write* (Trimbur). Plagiarism is a serious legal and ethical breach, and it is treated as such by the university. If you have questions about using work other than your own in your paper, see your instructor before you turn in an assignment.

**Computer Ethics**

You are expected to use the university computers responsibly and to communicate courteously with others in your class—including the instructor—electronically. You are also expected to follow your instructor’s instructions on class days in the lab, using the computers for class-related activity only. If a computer is used for an activity (email, Facebook, MySpace, etc.) other than that dictated by the instructor, you are counted absent for the day. See page 35 in your ISUComm Student Guide, 2011 – 2012.

**Diversity Affirmation**

Iowa State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, marital status, or disability. Effective learning environments value and support diversity.

**Disability Accommodation**

If you have a disability and require accommodations, you must provide documentation of your disability to the Disability Resources (DR) office, main floor of the Student Services Building, Room 1076, 515-294-7220. That office, your instructor, you, and the Director of ISUComm Foundation Courses will then agree on how your learning needs may be appropriately met. This needs to happen very early in the semester, for your benefit.

“Good writing may be the quintessential 21st century skill.”  
~The National Council of Teachers of English