

### **Basic Course Information**

- A. Andrew Rusnak
- B. 443.653.2777 – mobile; [arusnak@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:arusnak@ccbcmd.edu)
- C. Office hours: (See attached schedule).
- D. Required materials (See attached reading and writing assignment handout.):
- E. Supplemental instructor handouts to syllabus:
  - Reading and Writing Assignment Schedule;
  - The Difficult and Thoughtful Road to a Strong Thesis Statement;
  - Essay Format;
  - Reading Habits;
  - Reading Fiction; and
  - Essay Response Form
- F. Prerequisites: Students must have earned a C or better in ENGL 101.
- G. **Course-related concerns:** Students should first attempt to take concerns to the faculty member. If students are unable to resolve course-related concerns with the instructor they should contact Ms. Brooke Bognanni, Coordinator of English for CCBC-Essex at (443) 840-1531 or [bbognanni@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:bbognanni@ccbcmd.edu). At the Catonsville campus, contact Mr. Evan Balkan, Coordinator of English at [EBalkan@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:EBalkan@ccbcmd.edu); The CCBC Student Concerns Policy can be found in the 2011-2012 CCBC College Catalog at [www.ccbcmd.edu/catalog12/senatepolices/Student Concerns Policy.html](http://www.ccbcmd.edu/catalog12/senatepolices/Student%20Concerns%20Policy.html).

### **The Seven Rules of the Apocalypse!**

- 1) **Be on time;**
- 2) **No electronics in class, no cell phones, no internet. If you insist on using your cell phone in class I will ask you to leave;**
- 3) **Turn your papers in on time and use the correct format;**
- 4) **Do all the readings and be prepared for reading quizzes as necessary;**
- 5) **Actively participate in class discussions and in-class writings (speak your mind);**
- 6) **Be prepared to think critically and imaginatively.**
- 7) **English 102 is a three credit course. Students should expect to work two hours on assignments and preparation outside of class for every one hour of class time.**

## **Common Course Outline**

### **ENGL 102, 3 Credits**

#### **Description**

**ENGL 102 – 3 credits – College Composition II** increases the writing and thinking skills developed in English 101 and applies critical thinking and writing skills to a variety of academic assignments, including analyzing multiple and varied complex texts, furthering complex arguments and ideas, conducting research and sophisticated source use.

#### **3 Credits**

**Prerequisites:** Grade of C or better in ENGL 101.

#### **Overall Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- A. advance the following skills:
  1. employ a recursive writing process that includes invention, planning, drafting, revising, proofreading, and editing;
  2. work collaboratively with peers to plan, develop, and carry out writing projects and provide constructive feedback;

3. support a complex thesis with details, examples, reasons, and other logical evidence;
4. apply the critical thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation to a variety of complex texts;
5. employ strategies in a manner appropriate to a given audience;
6. use technology to solve problems in real-life situations;
7. conduct in-depth research, including accessing and choosing appropriate academic sources;
8. apply Western standards of academic integrity and changing attitudes toward intellectual property through source-based assignments;
9. document sources according to Modern Language Association (MLA), American Psychological Association (APA), or the assigned formatting and style guide; and

B. develop the following skills:

1. analyze multiple and varied complex texts from diverse perspectives and authorship.
2. analyze historical, social, and/or political contexts through multiple writing assignments;
3. identify and evaluate bias in multiple modes of communication;
4. demonstrate ethical communication through audience awareness, faithful representation, and the avoidance of fallacy in argument;
5. develop and advance complex arguments and ideas with appropriate and thorough support;
6. synthesize appropriate academic sources into essays by summarizing, quoting, and paraphrasing correctly and effectively; and
7. transfer and apply knowledge of composition in real world contexts and across curricula.

**Major Topics**

- I. Analyzing point of view in complex texts from diverse perspectives and authorship
- II. Evaluating and synthesizing sources
- III. Essay organization and development
- IV. Rhetorical strategies
- V. Academic integrity and intellectual property
- VI. The place of writing in a changing communicative setting, including multimedia and social media.

**Course Requirements**

Individual writing assignments will be determined by the instructor and will be described in the syllabus for each section. However, all students will:

1. Participate actively in class discussions and activities, including at least two of the following activities: peer review of written work or similar types of writing workshops; collaborative writing assignments; small group discussions; and formal or informal group presentations;
2. Write at least four individual essays; at least three of the four essays must include multiple and varied academically appropriate sources.
3. Multiple assignments must infuse CCBC General Education Program objectives, and at least one assignment worth at least 10% of the total course grade must allow students to demonstrate *at least* the following General Education Program outcomes: Written Communication; Critical Analysis and Reasoning; Technological Competence; Information Literacy; and Local and Global Diversity.
4. Graded course writing must exceed a minimum of 5000 words, and at least 80% of the final grade will be based on the student's writing, either graded cumulatively or in a portfolio at the end of the course.

**Other Course Information**

Students will utilize learning management systems and other technology as appropriate to the academic environment.

This course is an approved General Education course in the English Composition category. Please refer to the current CCBC Catalog for General Education course criteria and outcomes.

## English 102: **STEM and Creative Composition**, Andrew Rusnak, Associate Professor



This class is designed for students who desire to explore the integration of creative nonfiction writing and science and technology subject matter. This semester we will:

- Analyze the various components and elements of creative nonfiction and theory by reading, writing, viewing, and interpreting/analyzing text and films imaginatively and critically;
- Develop a writing style, a narrative voice, that you're comfortable with and that suits whatever sub-genre is being explored. Learn to think of your work as a story;
- Recognize the differences in how creative nonfiction is structured, from traditional linear narratives to fabula and sujet;
- Learn how to think critically and imaginatively, or develop skills in “reality-directed imaginative thinking”;
- Recognize the “mechanical” elements that drive creative nonfiction like characterization, dramatic tension, descriptive passages, recollection, theme, irony, relevant digression, and dialogue, and determine a suitable balance for each;
- Distinguish various sub-genres like profiles, nature writing, travel writing, science writing, personal essay/memoir; lyrical essays, critical essays, belletristic essays, political essays, even case studies. (This is by no means an exhaustive list, but is designed to demonstrate the wide variety of writing that is loosely placed in this category of “narrative nonfiction”);
- Read, analyze, and discuss complex STEM ideas and products and how they affect culture and society;
- Recognize how our preconceived notions and assumptions about science and technology and the scientific method can keep us from having an open mind and why it is important to truly evaluate where and how your own ideas originate and are reinforced as well as where others are coming from;
- Edit, edit, and edit some more; and
- Finalize your creative work for possible submission and publication.
- Comprehend and apply basic rhetorical strategies to all assignments;
- Take and defend a position/thesis;
- Fully define and comprehend targeted audiences;
- Understand and apply the rudimentary principles of grammar, mechanics, and usage;
- HAVE FUN! NO FEAR! Accept the challenge.

You will be successful in this class if by the end of the semester you can say three things:

- “I worked very, very hard”;
- “I learned a great deal and successfully applied what I learned in a variety of ways”; and
- “I had fun”.

**This is your mantra for the semester:** *Imagination is more important than knowledge, for knowledge is limited to all we know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand.*

—Albert Einstein

**And:** *Irrationally held truths may be more harmful than reasoned errors.* —Thomas Huxley

Required Texts:

- *Best Science and Nature Writing: 2014, Deborah Blum, Ed.*
- *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene, Roy Scranton*
- **Assigned Readings**



Assignment	% of Grade	Word Length	Due Date
<p><b>Come Prepared and Participate:</b> Attendance, completion of readings, participation in student-led class discussions, and completion of in-class writing assignments are a critical part of your grade. As you read each essay in the anthology, keep a notebook of words and definitions you do not know. There will be reading quizzes administered throughout the semester.</p>	30		
<p><b>Paper #1: First person immersion/thematic experience.</b> 1) Study <i>What Our Telescopes Could Not See</i>, Pippa Goldschmidt and <i>O-Rings</i>, Sarah Stewart Johnson from <i>The Best Science and Nature Writing 2014</i>. Also read Joe Wilkins' <i>Out West</i> on the website. Your goal in this essay is to immerse yourself in an outside, "transcendent" experience, a hike in a remote place, a panoramic, picturesque landscape, somewhere that evokes, if not awe, than reflection. This is an experience you will need to record, take notes on your reaction. 2) Then, come up with a theme that is relevant to your life, something you think about or contemplate, an insight that you have that you consider to have relevance not just to you, but to the human condition. Or not, it could be a question you have that is consistent, but as yet you are exploring a suitable answer. 3) Write an essay that synthesizes these two elements into meaningful and guided observation/description, reflection, analysis. Integrate, blend your theme and your experience so the two nurture each other, so that they are linked and have direction. Include memory, obviously. Techniques you can use to achieve this are analogy, metaphor, simile. This essay is a process of discovery, so what you end up "knowing" by the end of the essay is much more refined than what you started with. The reader discovers, takes the ride, with you.</p>	20	2,000	Assigned readings.
<p><b>Paper #2: Profile.</b> For this assignment, choose someone currently working in science, technology, or nature, someone you have or can gain access to. Your subject cannot be a relative. For this assignment, I want you to approach your subject in as neutral a way as possible, disassociate yourself from any emotional connection. This does not mean that writing a profile about a relative is not a worthy essay. For this assignment I want you to gain experience approaching people you do not know, someone you are curious about, someone who may have a career you want t pursue. Use the list of questions below as a guide for constructing your story. We will study profiles in class.</p>	20	2,000	Assigned readings from text.
<p><b>Assignment #3:</b>  <b>Research Essay:</b> Based on the text <i>This Will Change Everything: Ideas That Will Shape the Future</i>, John Brockman, ed. Choose an essay questions/assignments, use the questions in the PowerPoint that breaks down the essays in your text found on <a href="http://www.writingforstem.com">www.writingforstem.com</a>. Use the Essay Checklist below as your guide. Manage your time wisely, do not procrastinate. It will affect the quality of your work.</p>	20	2,000	Assigned readings from text.
<p><b>#4: Final – Learning to Die in the Anthropocene: Reflections on the End of a Civilization, Roy Scranton.</b> This is your final exam. Write a 200-250 word reflection on each of the five chapters in this book for a total of 1,000-1,250 words. Do not use any sources. This is your reflection. State the main theme of each chapter and then write your reflection.</p>	10	1 essay = 1,000-1,250 words	

**Writing Assignments, words that challenge the imagination, critical thinking skills, and original thinking:**

**Come Prepared and Participate:** Completion of readings, participation in student-led class discussions, and completion of in-class writing assignments are a critical part of your grade. All students must read all assignments. Class discussion will be based on the readings Reading quizzes may be administered upon my discretion based on whether I suspect you are not completing the readings. Strive for "accuracy of thought and imagination." Do not hesitate to "think outside the box." Remember, this is a large percent of your final grade. It's ok to take a "calculated risk" here as long as there is an investment of strong thought. **Also, you must use examples from the text how and where they are called for.**

## Assignment 2, Profile

The following questions should be used as a guide for assignment 2, the profile. These questions are designed for you to get to know your subject, they do not have to be followed in any absolute, rigid way.

- 1) Where are you from?
- 2) Age?
- 3) What is your ethnic background?
- 4) Family status? Married? Children? Parents? Siblings? Close friends?
- 5) How important is family to you? If it is important, in what ways?
- 6) What did your parents do for a living? What were they like?
- 7) What is your earliest memory?
- 8) What do you remember about your childhood? What sticks out? What were your tastes? Your ambitions?
- 9) Where did you go to school? What was it like?
- 10) At what age did you come to the United States?
- 11) Have you met your career goals?
- 12) How important is education to fulfilling your goals?
- 13) Describe your job?
- 14) Does your job now meet the expectations you had when you were a student?
- 15) How important is the work you do and why?
- 16) What three words would you use to describe yourself and why?
- 17) What were three important struggles in your life and how did you overcome them?
- 18) What do you feel are the three most important ingredients to being successful and why?
- 19) If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be and why?
- 20) If you could change three things about American culture, what would it be and why?
- 21) What are some of the things you like to do in your free time? Do you have any hobbies?
- 22) Do you practice a religion? If so, what? How important is religion to you and your family? To the culture of your country? Have you ever experienced a profound spiritual moment? What was it like?
- 23) What are the things you are most proud of? Why?
- 24) Who would you say is your greatest mentor? Why?
- 25) Would you say you've ever experienced "tragic" times? Can you describe them?

Prof. Andrew Rusnak

**Creative Nonfiction Evaluation Rubric** (Must be completed for each story you write):

Story: \_\_\_\_\_ Writer: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Describe how this element is used in the story and if it's successful</b>
<b>Theme</b> - What main and minor points run consistently throughout your story?	
<b>Characterization</b> - Can reader identify with a character and his/her experiences, emotions, actions, dialogue even if the character is you?	
<b>Dramatic Tension</b> – How is tension created? Why does the reader want to keep reading?	
<b>Tone</b> - How does the story “sound?” Is narrative loud or soft? Deep or superficial? Punchy or contemplative?	
<b>Structure/Plot</b> - Does the story follow a traditional linear pattern or is the beginning, middle, and end juxtaposed in an unorthodox way?	
<b>Imagery</b> - Imagery can be simply defined as descriptive language. The intent is to appeal to the senses.	
<b>Setting</b> - Describing how you use setting, how it can also cross over to affect elements of tone, imagery, theme, style, etc .	
<b>Narrative POV</b> - From what point of view are you telling your story? First person (“I”) or 3 <sup>rd</sup> person?	
<b>Style</b> - All of this adds up style. Is the voice unique?	

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

**I will not grade your essay and you will lose one letter grade if the first 7 conditions are not met:**

My essay:

- 1) Is the right word count \_\_\_\_.
- 2) **Uses six legitimate outside references.** Direct quotations or paraphrasing must be 20 percent or less of your overall content. Do not string quotes together. **Two of these sources must be graphs, charts, diagrams that support your position.** Legitimate sources are academic research. (You may use magazines, journals, books, LEGITIMATE websites. You may not use, dictionaries, Wikipedia, or other such references) \_\_\_\_.
- 3) Uses at least two direct quotations from the primary source (this does not include the 6 outside sources) \_\_\_\_.
- 4) **Uses APA format,** with parenthetical references in the body of the narrative and a properly formatted References page \_\_\_\_.
- 5) Is on time \_\_\_\_.
- 6) Has a thesis statement that is underlined. This is the only content that should appear in your first paragraph \_\_\_\_.
- 7) Has this checklist attached \_\_\_\_.
- 8) Is stapled in the upper left corner and does not use plastic covers or unnecessary folders \_\_\_\_.

**The following items are considered to be part of the learning process. I may still ask you to revise and work on some of these:**

- 9) Has an original and creative title \_\_\_\_.
- 10) **Has a well-developed/thought out, concise, strong thesis statement** that declares a purpose and/or position, and functions to point the reader in the direction I intend to go. I understand that the thesis is the one stand alone statement in the text that can be extracted and offered as a guide for the reader. Elements in the thesis are used as an outline and to structure the essay. The thesis statement should be preceded by a good introduction and followed by a transition to the next paragraph, to the body of the essay \_\_\_\_.
- 11) **Has a well-developed body, overall organization/structure and content.** The body of my essay works hard to elaborate and expand on those salient elements outlined in the thesis. There is a mathematical arrangement where the main points in my thesis are the main focus or topic of each subsequent paragraph. There are no redundancies and each idea is well-thought out and developed beyond cliché and common thought so that it is personal, original, and imaginative. My essay maintains a well-mapped structure with strong logic, coherent paragraphs, and overall cohesive unity \_\_\_\_.
- 12) **Uses effective sentence variation, clarity, and relevant word choice.** My sentences vary in length and **arrangement** to create smooth narrative flow. My word choice accurately reflects definitive knowledge of subject matter, reactions, and reflections \_\_\_\_.
- 13) **Is free of grammatical (mechanics and usage) errors \_\_\_\_.** (If you are struggling with grammar and/or mechanics issues, I will ask you to complete exercises from the website to be turned in with your revision or the next paper.)
- 14) Has been given to someone to proofread for me \_\_\_\_.
- 15) Avoids redundancy and cliché \_\_\_\_.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Essay#: \_\_\_\_\_

### Reading Habits: Learn to Understand

- 1) *Read carefully!* Most of the time that means read slowly to examine as many implications and connotations as possible. It is far better to spend several hours, even days, rereading a single, difficult passage than to rush through an entire book in the same period of time and only comprehend superficial qualities.
- 2) *Read carefully!* Isolate the main theme or topic sentence. Does it make sense? Do you agree or disagree? Or, do you need to read further to decide? Start every reading experience with an open mind. Try to be conscious of your preconceived notions and prejudices, how you look at the world or how your world view has been shaped. Learn the benefit in reading something you feel you will not agree with. Sometimes, there is exposure to new and exciting points of view. Other times old notions are reinforced.
- 3) *Read carefully!* Stop after the first couple paragraphs or every time a new thought is introduced and ask yourself whether you agree or disagree. Why or why not? If you disagree, where is the rub or conflict? Is the writer being consistent but you disagree with the central idea? Or is the writer being objective and you simply disagree with some part of the idea(s) she/he is promoting? Do you agree? Why? Don't take any ideas for granted, even your own, especially your own. Carry on a dialog with yourself. Reading promotes self understanding and our position in the world and helps you become a better writer.
- 4) *Read carefully?* Does the writer's central idea apply to any other situations you can think of?
- 5) *Read carefully!* Look up every word you do not know. Reread the sentence. Does the definition fit? Does the sentence make sense in the context it was presented? Agree or disagree? Why or why not? Keep a small notebook of new words you like that you may want to use in a future writing assignment.
- 6) *Read carefully!* Make notes on the text. Use a "Hi-Liter" or copy important passages on "idea cards," or in a notebook. This will help you organize thoughts later if you have to write an essay.
- 7) *Read carefully!* Look for patterns. How does the writer communicate thoughts? What is their style? Is it straight forward and objective? Does he/she use metaphors and analogies? Is the language abstract? Difficult to understand? Are the sentences short, light, and snappy, or heavy and long with many clauses? Are the sentences in the text short in some places and long in others? What does this mean? Many times the greatest reading experiences—epiphanies, revelations, light bulbs—come from wrestling with difficult language. Don't give up!
- 8) *Read carefully!* Challenge yourself. If all you read are newspapers or romance novels, pick up something you would not normally read. Don't stop reading what you like, but try and broaden your understanding of language and the many ways it can work to introduce yourself to yourself. Read a poem a day for a month. Read the editorial page of a collection of essays by an old Russian. For the greatest rewards and to advance your education, read to understand. Learning to understand is a process. It is not a goal with an end, once you have a degree. You should approach every reading and writing project with the idea, "I'm going to learn something new and I'm going to decide where it fits into my world view."
- 9) *Read carefully! It might also mean, "Read Slowly!"*

Wherever you work, whatever career you pursue, the more you read, the better your language skills, the more you will be perceived and judged as competent, smart, innovative, analytical, and a leader, a "go to" person. Reading does what visual media does not. It forces you to think on your own. The practice of reading does not think for you, like watching a movie or a TV show does.