

**English 846: Reading and Writing Connections**  
MWF 8:30 - 9:50 am • Section AD • 2-111  
Spring 2006

## SYLLABUS

<b>Instructor:</b>	Liza Erpelo	<b>Office:</b>	Building 2-104
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<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:erpelol@smccd.net">erpelol@smccd.net</a>	<b>Office Hours:</b>	MWF 10 – 11 am
<b>Web Page:</b>	<a href="http://www.smccd.net/accounts/erpelol/">http://www.smccd.net/accounts/erpelol/</a>		T Th 11 am – 12 pm

### PREREQUISITES

English 846, which satisfies requirements for both English 836 and Reading 836, gives you five units of credit and is applicable toward attaining an associate degree. Prior to enrolling in this course, you should have passed English 826 and Reading 826 with a C or better, or placed into this course via your score on the reading placement test or any other appropriate tests.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

English 846 is a reading/writing development workshop designed to introduce you to the conventions of university-level academic composition and help you to develop as a reader, writer, and critical thinker. You will improve what you already know about reading and writing, expand your knowledge with new processes and skills, and know what you still need to work on. In this class, you will learn that writing is not a talent some fortunate people are born with but a skill that can be learned and developed through:

- **PRACTICE:** To accomplish these goals, you will be required to write — a lot!
- **HARD WORK:** You will have 1 initial writing sample, 5 out-of-class essays, 1 in-class timed writing exam, several smaller writing assignments, assorted sentence and paragraph exercises, readings and worksheets. Expect to have homework of some kind for every class meeting.
- **PATIENCE:** Nobody, even professional writers, “gets it right the first time.” Writing is a process with many steps — from thinking about the topic, to outlining your ideas, to revising and revising and revising again. This course will focus on guiding you through these steps, and so you will be required with each assignment to also complete and submit each step in this process.

You will also come to understand reading and writing as a way to make meaning in the world, thinking, talking and writing about what you read in ways that are appropriate to your purpose, audience, and the topic. To strengthen your reading ability, you'll learn strategies to actively engage with the text, gauge your comprehension, as well as augment vocabulary.

Other related skills that we will cultivate are study skills, active listening, and participating in discussions. Most of our time will be devoted to group work where you will get feedback from one another as well as from me. In sum, you will learn how reading and writing are interrelated and complimentary processes.



### TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS NEEDED

1. **English 846 Course Reader and Workbook:** Contains some of the readings, reference material, and homework exercises for this class. This will be available from the bookstore during the second or third week of instruction.

2. “**Student Record Folder**”: Available from the bookstore.
3. *The American Heritage Dictionary* (paperback)
4. *A Pocket Style Manual* by Diana Hacker
5. *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines
6. Your “**archive**”: A system to keep all of your paperwork, probably a binder that is 1” or 1.5” wide or a large accordion folder, with at least these six sections labeled:

*Class Notes*  
*Essays*  
*Handouts*

*Sentence Combining*  
*Readings*  
*Other Writing*

Because there is so much material for this class, it is important to keep it organized.

7. **One folder with two pockets:** When you turn in each final draft of an essay, you will also need to turn in this folder, which will include your rough draft, peer review sheets, and any homework/worksheets you have completed for that unit.
8. **An organizer, datebook, or planner:** To keep track of all your assignments and essay due dates.

**SUPPLIES NEEDED:**

- A 3-ring loose-leaf binder with dividers and paper for class handouts and notetaking
- 3" x 5" index cards, two colors, for vocabulary study cards
- Binder rings, clips, or rubber bands for your vocabulary cards
- Pens, pencils, highlighters, erasers, correction fluid, paper clips
- A small stapler and three-hole paper punch

<b>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</b>
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**1. Essays (60%)**

Essays will usually be between three and five pages. **Expect an essay to be due approximately every three weeks; due dates are subject to change at the instructor’s discretion.** All essays must be typed in black ink, double-spaced, on white 8.5” x 11” paper in a standard font — no exceptions. Margins should be 1” all around. Please staple all of the pages together and number the pages; you do not need a title page. I will provide a sample essay to show you the format conventions you should follow. When each essay is due, you will need to turn in a folder which includes **two clean copies** of the final draft, your peer review sheets, your rough draft, and any homework/worksheets we have done during that unit. If you are missing any of that work, the essay will be marked down by 1/3 of a grade. **You must turn in all of your essays in order to pass this class.** Essays will be graded as follows:

Essay #1	Writing Sample	<b>5%</b>
Essay #2	“Where We’re Coming From”	<b>10%</b>
Essay #3	<i>A Lesson Before Dying</i>	<b>10%</b>
Essay #4	Problems in Education	<b>15%</b>
Essay #5	Revision	<b>20%</b>

Please consider every piece of writing you do for this class to be “public property.” Part of becoming a good writer is learning to appreciate the ideas and criticisms of others, and in this course, our purpose is to come together as a writing community. Remember that you will often be expected to share your writing with others, so avoid writing about things that you may not be prepared to subject to public scrutiny, or things you feel so strongly about that you are unwilling to listen to perspectives other than your own. This

does not mean that you are not entitled to an opinion but that you adopt positions responsibly, contemplating the possible effect on others.

**Proofreading:** While the ideas, organization, and development of your essays are most important, proofreading does count. On your first essays, I will mark proofreading errors and will ask you to correct some or all of them. You should use your first essays as opportunities to discover which areas of proofreading give you the most trouble — pay close attention to the errors I mark, keep your own record of the trouble spots in addition to what I mark, and ask about anything you don't understand. If, for instance, you have difficulty with count and non-count nouns, you should keep a running list of all the non-count nouns I point out in your essays or that you ask me about. If I mark any problems with "idiom," you should keep a record of those.

In other words, take control of your writing and your learning. Some of the tools you will need to proofread effectively will be covered in class, but much of what you do to strengthen your proofreading skills will be individual work. After Essay #3, too many proofreading errors (more than an average of three per page) will mean that an essay does not pass, despite whatever strengths it may have. Also, feel free to mark up the final draft even after the essay is printed out; I'd rather get a marked-up final draft than a clean rough draft.

**Late Essays:** All essays are due **at the beginning of** class on the assigned date — any time after that time is considered late. You may turn in only one excused essay late in the semester, and "late" means by the next class meeting — for instance, if an essay was due on Monday, you can turn it in late on Wednesday. Use the "late essay" coupon attached to the end of this syllabus. When papers come in late, I will still grade them, but may not be able to provide any written feedback on the essay itself. If you turn your essay in any later, you will be penalized one full letter grade for each class meeting that it is late; otherwise, your essay will be graded "pass/fail," at the instructor's discretion.

**Revision:** Revision is a significant step in the writing process that involves much more than mere proofreading. For Essay #5, you will be able to revise one of your previous essays for a better grade. Before you work on this revision, we will schedule a conference to discuss your revision plans. When you turn in your revision, include the original essay with feedback and please highlight the changes you made on your revision.

**Plagiarism:** At all colleges, plagiarism is unacceptable. Plagiarism refers to passing off another person's ideas or words as your own, from copying someone else's words or ideas without citing that source to having people write or excessively edit your essays for you. According to the Skyline College "Student Handbook," plagiarism is:

- Incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts of another person's writing, without giving appropriate credit, and representing the product as your own work.
- Representing another's artistic/scholarly works (such as musical compositions, computer programs, photographs, paintings, drawings, or sculptures) as your own.
- Submitting a paper purchased from a research or term paper service.

Any assignment that has been plagiarized will receive an "NC" (no credit) and we will meet to discuss your status in the course. You may also be required to meet with the Dean of Language Arts for disciplinary action.

## **2. Attendance/Participation (10%)**

### **Attendance Policy**

Because all the work we do in class is directly related to your writing development, it is crucial that you come to each class prepared and ready to participate. I will take roll at every class meeting. If you cannot make a particular class, call or e-mail me to let me know. You will also need to call a classmate and be sure to get the homework assignment and any materials from him or her. You are responsible for all homework whether you've been in class or not. Missing more than three class meetings will affect your grade, and missing more than six class meetings is unacceptable and will result in a failing grade for

attendance and participation. While you are in the classroom, please turn off all cellular telephones, pagers, Walkmans, iPods, etc. before class begins. It is disrespectful to me and to your classmates.

**\* IMPORTANT NOTE \***

To keep your spot in this class, you must attend all class meetings during the first two weeks. If you are absent without notifying me during this time, you will be dropped from the class.

One more point...I suspect it may be a challenge for us to get to class on time, but that's what I expect all of us to do if we are going to get started and not be interrupted by late arrivals which invariably produce distracting paper shuffling and repeated directions/conversation. We will use the entire class period — from 8:30 to 9:50 am. Three "late arrivals" (defined either as coming in after I take roll or more than 10 minutes into the class) will be considered an absence; early departures carry the same consequences. Both will count toward the maximum of ten absences permitted.



### **Conferences**

Conferences are a major part of this class. They provide opportunities for us to work together on your growth as a writer. Please keep your appointments with me; if you have to miss a conference with me, call or e-mail me ahead of time to let me know.

- *Introductory Conference:* I will hold a short conference with each of you within the first two weeks of class to go over your first essay and talk about what you would like to accomplish this semester.
- *Revision Conferences:* For Essay #5, you will revise one of your previous essays. You must come prepared for the discussion — read my comments carefully and be ready to tell me specific ideas you have for revising the essay based on my comments.

### **Peer Review Days**

Peer review is an integral part of the class, and it works best with your full participation and cooperation. On peer review days, you and two of your peers will get together and read each other's essays and comment on them. These workshops are here to help you, by providing feedback from your readers and allowing you to reread and rethink about your work. Remember, we don't write in a vacuum — you need to get feedback from your readers.

You will need to **bring three copies of your draft to class** on these days. Your essay must be a "good-faith draft": it should be at least two pages long and shows careful thought and planning even though it may be unfinished. Notes and outlines, while important elements of the writing process, do not count as drafts.

By missing peer review, you will be letting yourself and your classmates down. Peer review is a required step in your writing process; you must attend to receive full credit for your essay. You may miss one peer review day without penalty; use the "missed peer review day" coupon at the end of the syllabus. If you do not attend a workshop for a given paper or come to a workshop unprepared and without a "good faith draft," your final grade for that paper will drop by one grade.

### **Class Discussion/Readings**

Many times in class discussion, it becomes fairly obvious who has done the reading and who has not, who is willing to speak their minds and who chooses to disengage; get your words out there. Convince me that you are prepared for class, have thought about these ideas, and are ready to participate.

### **3. Homework and Lab Work (20%)**

Homework consists of sentence or paragraph exercises, smaller writing assignments, worksheets, freewrites, and any other assignments. We will go over homework in class the day after it is assigned; I

expect everyone to have completed the homework before coming to class. Homework is a large part of your responsibility as a student and will greatly affect how much you learn in this class and how well you do on the essays. Each homework assignment is worth three points. Late homework will be accepted by the next class period and carries a point penalty.

Points	Meaning
3 points	excellent work
2 points	good work
1 point	incomplete or needs improvement
0 points	turned in late
-1 point	not turned in

*PLEASE NOTE THAT NOT TURNING IN HOMEWORK EARNS YOU **NEGATIVE POINTS**.*

**Submitting Assignments by E-mail:** I will only accept homework electronically if you are absent on the day that the work is due or if we have made previous arrangements; otherwise, your work will be considered late. Keep in mind, however, that if you e-mail me your homework, you do so at your own risk and I cannot guarantee that I will receive it on time. Please send your work in Microsoft Word format (.doc) or in rich text format (.rtf) as an attachment. **NOTE:** I do not accept essay assignments via e-mail.

**Quizzes and In-Class Work:** You may not make up a missed quiz or in-class activities; you lose points entirely.

### Lab Work

A required activity for English 846 is 16 hours of lab time during which you work on assigned activities in The Learning Center or attend other workshops and events on campus. During this time you may work on the following types of activities:

- Tutoring with an instructional aide on homework assignments for English 846.
- Work on *Academic.com*, a computerized reading program, in The Learning Center.
- Work in text materials in The Learning Center to develop specific skills, such as vocabulary development, main idea, notetaking, textbook reading, etc.
- Work in text materials in The Learning Center to more generally practice comprehension.
- Attend instructor-approved campus events, such as Learning Center or Writing and Reading Lab workshops, poetry readings, plays, lectures, etc. Proof of attendance is required with either a signed attendance slip or a written one-page summary/reaction paper of the event.
- Participate in any of the other activities described inside the blue “Student Record Folder.”

You must purchase a “Student Record Folder” to document your lab attendance. I will collect your lab folder from time to time to check on your progress. Your lab work will count towards your homework grade, with each lab hour worth 6 points, for a total possible 100 points.

If you are doing your lab work in The Learning Center, you may schedule the lab hours for your convenience. The Writing and Reading Lab in the Learning Center is open as follows:

Monday - Thursday	8:00 am – 10:00 pm
Friday	8:00 am – 4:00 pm
Saturday	10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Any hours in excess of your required 16 hours (up to 10 hours) for the semester can be counted as extra credit (3 points per extra hour) towards your homework grade.

#### **4. Final Exam (10%)**

The final exam is scheduled for Monday, May 22 from 8:10 – 10:40 am. *The final is required to pass the course.* Please do not take the course if you cannot take the final at the scheduled time; no finals will be given early.

**Extra Credit:** Options will be offered throughout the semester at the instructor's discretion.

**Special Accommodations:** In coordination with the DSPS office, reasonable accommodation will be provided for eligible students with disabilities. If you do not yet have an accommodation letter, please contact the DSPS office at (650) 738-4280.

#### **IMPORTANT DATES**

Last day to <b>ADD</b>	Monday, January 30
Last day to <b>DROP</b> without appearing on record	Friday, February 10
Last day to <b>WITHDRAW</b> ("W")	Friday, April 21

#### **HOLIDAYS**

Declared Recess	Friday, February 17 – Monday, February 20
Spring Recess	Monday, April 10 – Friday, April 14

#### **GRADING POLICY**

This course is graded A-B-C-D-F with no plus or minus grades. You may choose to take the class Credit/No Credit, but you will need to sign up for this option with me. Grades are assigned as follows:

A or Credit:	90-100% average on tests and assignments
B or Credit:	80-89% average on tests and assignments
C or Credit:	70-79% average on tests and assignments
D or No Credit:	60-69% average on tests and assignments
F or No Credit:	below 60% average on tests and assignments
W (Withdrawal):	a requested grade which can be assigned only if requested before <u>April 21, 2006</u> . Use college withdrawal procedures.

Note that the "W" is a requested grade. A "W" will not be assigned unless you follow the official college WITHDRAWAL procedures. If you wish to drop this class, you must initiate the process using the WebSMART system. Students will not be automatically dropped for missing class. If you simply disappear from class without going through the withdrawal process, you will receive whatever letter grade you deserve at the end of the semester, most likely an "F."

Essays are graded A-B-C-NP (Not Passing). Unsubmitted or late work will earn a NC (No Credit) grade. I will be handing out a detailed grading criteria sheet that will help you understand what I and the department regard as excellent work (A), good work (B), adequate work (C), and not-passing work (NP). **You must turn in all of your essays in order to pass this class.**

Don't expect to get excellent grades on your first essays — this class is here to coach you towards more complex and sophisticated writing, not to simply validate what you already know how to do. And don't despair — writing is difficult, and English 846 can hardly teach you everything there is to know. We will work together to strengthen your skills and confidence. Your attendance, participation in class, and homework will all contribute to your overall grade, but your essays compose the bulk of your grade, 60%. If you are on a borderline between grades, an overall upward trend in your essay grades will help you.

## FINAL NOTES

A few important things to remember about this class:

- Always make and keep a copy of your essay for your records before you turn it in.
- Save all essays and homework until the end of the semester.
- Exchange phone numbers/e-mail addresses with at least two of your classmates so that you can contact them for assignments if you are absent.
- This class is often in high demand — if you miss the second class meeting without notifying me or if you do not submit the required first essay, student information sheet, and syllabus contract on time, **you will lose your spot in this class.**
- Always see me any time you have questions or concerns.
- Come to class prepared, but come to class even if you aren't.

My goal is to help you discover ways to develop and support your opinions so that you will be able to think critically and write effectively when expressing your own voice as a member of the academic community.

You, however, are responsible ultimately for your success in this class, and the best way to ensure that success is to come to class every day, come to class prepared, and come see me as soon as you have a question or problem. I look forward to working with you!



*Please note that the above schedules and procedures in the course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.*

**MISSED PEER REVIEW DAY COUPON**

*Attach this form to your final draft when you turn it in.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Essay Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Paper Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Missed Peer Review Day: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reminder:** You may miss only ONE peer review day without penalty.

**LATE ESSAY COUPON**

*Attach this form to your late essay.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Essay Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Paper Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Original Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_



**Reminder:** You may submit only ONE late essay during the semester. A late paper must be turned in by the next class meeting after the due date. (For instance, if a paper was due on Wednesday, you have until Friday.) You cannot use this coupon for Essay #5.

*Please sign and return to class by Monday, January 23, 2006.*

**SYLLABUS CONTRACT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the course syllabus for English 846 AD  
**Print full name**

for the Spring 2006 term. I understand that by signing this contract I am agreeing to abide by all the rules and requirements described in this syllabus and that my failure to comply can result in my failing this course. If I have any questions concerning the requirements, I will first consult my course syllabus and then contact the instructor for further assistance.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**