

English 102 – Spring 2012
College Reading and Composition II
(UC:CSU) – 3.00 UNITS
Professor Jessica Mintz

Welcome English 102 students. I invite you to enjoy an exciting journey this semester as you learn to analyze short stories, novels, poetry and plays. In the process of this journey you will write critical essays about the literary works you read for this class. Our focus will be to gain a greater understanding and appreciation for literature as we explore how authors use language and themes and characters to convey various perspectives on life.

In this course you will read literary works that have entered the ‘canon’ of literature because of their artistry and excellence. And as you read, analyze, discuss, and write about these literary works, you may question why a certain work deserved a place in the canon of literature; you may wonder why a certain author you love is not included in the canon; you may be curious why the textbook we are using included one author over another. Hopefully, we can have a respectful and lively debate throughout the weeks of our class on all the questions raised by the literature we read and that you begin to see how works of literature have influenced our culture as well as generations of writers and artists.

If you have taken an online class before, then you know how it works. You understand that the entire class is conducted without actually meeting face-to-face, that we have ‘discussions’ online, that assignments are submitted online (NOT via email), that the technology is durable, exciting, and flexible.

But for those of you who have never taken an online class before, the idea that we never sit in a classroom together, that you never see me ‘lecture’ at the front of the room, that no essays or assignments are actually ‘handed’ over to me, may all seem like a foreign concept. I suppose it’s like explaining an *iphone* to someone from the 19th century: “Yeah, it’s this little 3 inch plastic rectangle that holds hundreds of songs, emails, and contact information, and you can access the Internet, find driving directions, weather reports, and the latest news, all by simply tapping the screen with your finger and sliding it across the screen. Oh yeah, and it can take photographs.” I imagine the 19th century person would be quite perplexed.

Have no fear! If you can navigate through this ‘Welcome Letter,’ visit the Virtual Valley site on the LAVC homepage, find your username and password, take a quiz on the VV site to determine if you’re ready for an online class (and you succeed), then you are good to go!

Please note that this English course requires a lot of reading and a lot of writing. You will need to make a substantial time commitment in order to be successful in this class. For whom does the Etudes bell toll? In other words, is an online class right for you? Some students find they prefer online classes; others prefer a traditional face-to-face

class. You will have to decide for yourself. And one way to do that is to explore LAVC's Virtual Valley site. Read on...

Virtual Valley Website

Please take a visit to the Virtual Valley site by clicking the link below:

<http://www.lavc.edu/virtualvalley/index.html>

Remember, whether you're an online class pro or a relative beginner, **please read this entire letter** to understand some specifics of the class. Also, make sure you purchase the required textbook **before the class begins on Monday, Feb. 6th, 2012. In order to achieve a high level of success in the class, you must own a copy of the textbook, as this tool is an integral part of the course.**

How to Begin

To start, you will want to know the structure of the class:

The class is entirely on-line – there are no required on-campus meetings.

The class will begin Feb. 6th, 2012 through the ETUDES-NG website. The website and information on how to determine your username and password can be found at:

<http://www.lavc.edu/virtualvalley/index.html#>

The most direct way to logon to the Etudes class is the following: myetudes.org

This class will travel at the same pace as the in-person classroom sections. To keep up with the class and important announcements and discussions, you will need to log on regularly, if only for a short time to check in.

Important Note: You must complete the first week's two assignments in order to remain enrolled in the class. If you fail to complete the two assignments by the end of the first week of classes, you may be dropped from the class. The assignments will be available for you to see on the first day of the semester.

An online class can be both challenging and exciting. You need to have and make the time to complete all the assignments, participate in discussions, and be open-minded to learning. You also need to be self-motivated and self-disciplined to succeed. If you want to determine if an online class is really for you, take the quizzes at:

<http://www.lavc.edu/virtualvalley/tutorials.html>

What You Need For An Online Class:

Understand that this class is an English reading and writing course to begin with which means there is a vast amount of reading and writing. Also understand that due to the nature of the online environment, there will be a lot more reading and writing because anything we might 'say' in a traditional classroom, now requires that it be communicated in written form. The beauty of the increased reading and writing element of the class is that you get the opportunity to constantly work on your writing and critical reading skills!

Make sure that you have easy and reliable internet access. And think about your 'backup plan' in the event your computer breaks down or has some malfunction.

Check to make sure that your computer system is adequate, that you have all the needed software and that your settings are correct. Even if you have taken an Etudes class before, please check your settings and make certain you are using only the recommended browsers and browser version.

To learn how to set up your computer browser and learn more about the system requirements, please click on the link below:

http://www.lavc.edu/virtualvalley/etudes_basics/Lesson1_Getting_Started_main.html

Have a back-up computer (know the computer lab locations on campus) in case of problems. Technical difficulties will not be an acceptable excuse for late or missed work. Have a back-up plan in case your computer decides to crash on you. Most public libraries have free computer access. The LAVC campus has several computer labs. And if all else fails, there are 24 hour computer/Internet rental services at places like FedEx Office.

Have a working email address that you check regularly. Announcements containing important information are both posted on our Etudes class homepage and sent to you via email. You are also responsible to respond to all Private Messages sent to you by the instructor.

Help!

If you have any technical issues, visit the Virtual Valley "Help Desk" page at:

<http://www.lavc.edu/virtualvalley/help.html>

Frequently Asked Questions

To visit the FAQ page on the Virtual Valley site, please click on the link below. Here you will find information and resources about what you need to know for online classes. The FAQ's page includes answers to such questions as:

How do I know an online class is right for me?

What technology skills will I need to take an online course?

Do I have to be online at a certain time to take my class?

<http://www.lavc.edu/virtualvalley/frequentlyAskedQuestions.html>

Syllabus

The syllabus for the course will be available the first day of class on Feb. 6th. Meanwhile, for those who want to get a jumpstart on the class, keep reading below! You can purchase your textbook early and begin reading.

Textbook

Required Textbook: You are required to purchase the book before the class begins.

Literature Craft & Voice by Nicholas Delbanco and Alan Cheuse.

Please note: the textbook is a three volume set.

If you purchase a new textbook, using the **ISBN code: 0-07-736944-0**, your book will automatically come with a free 'Connect' access card. The 'Connect' access code allows you to view the videos and resource material that accompany the book and which can only be accessed on the McGraw Hill website. The 'Connect' access is a required element for this class.

It's fine to purchase a used copy of the textbook (remember, it's a three volume set). If the used textbook does not come with the 'Connect' access card, then you can purchase the 'Connect' card separately from the publishers at McGraw Hill for \$10. To purchase the 'Connect' access card separately, go to the following McGraw Hill link at:

www.shopmcgrawhill.com

The ISBN for the access card is 0077358961

The textbook is available at the LAVC Bookstore, online through the LAVC Bookstore, or online through a vendor of your choice (for example, Amazon.com).

Literature Craft & Voice by Nicholas Delbanco and Alan Cheuse.

Published by McGraw-Hill, New York, NY, 2010.

ISBN: 0-07-736944-0

The textbook information can also be found by visiting the LAVC Bookstore site below. Select: Valley College, **Spring 2012 term, English Dept., Course 102**, and section: **Mintz.**

In order to achieve a high level of success in the class, you must own a copy of the textbook and the 'Connect' access card, as these tools are integral parts of the course.

Without owning, reading, using, and reviewing the textbook (the 3 volume set), it is highly unlikely you will successfully pass the course. The hope is that you will find the fiction, poetry, and drama selections in your textbook so compelling that you not only WANT to own the textbook, but you want to keep it and return to the literary works over and over again to read and enjoy even after the class concludes.

<http://www.lavcbookstore.com/>

And finally, roll up your sleeves, watch your posture, set your hands to the keyboard and have a great time in the class. Here's how you begin once the class opens on **Feb. 6th**:

1. Read the Syllabus
2. Review all Announcements
3. Review the Class Schedule for important due dates
4. Familiarize yourself with the Modules (which contain the online lectures and important information)
5. Review any open Assignments
6. Create your Profile (directions are given to you in the first week's module)
7. Read and participate in Discussion #1
8. Complete the Treasure Hunt Assignment

My hope is that you learn from this course, enjoy the experience, and have fun in the process. See you online!

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