



# Syllabus for ENGL 202: Critical Writing, Reading, and Research

Image: Pixabay

**Instructor Name:** Freesia McKee (please call me Professor McKee)

**Pronouns:** she/her/hers

**Student Office Hours:** Please email me at [fmckee@uwsp.edu](mailto:fmckee@uwsp.edu) at any time to set up a meeting. I am available and eager to meet with you in order to support your success in this online course!

## What is a Syllabus?

A syllabus contains an overview of how the class is set up, what the major assignments are, how they're graded, the professor's policies, and how the class will be run. In other words, **the syllabus is a roadmap that shows you how to succeed in this class**. Each syllabus is different because each instructor has their own style of teaching, so reading the syllabus is essential for understanding how a professor is coming at the class and what they expect of you. If you still have questions after reading the syllabus, please ask me via email or verbally—I'm happy to chat!

## Course Description (From UWSP):

Introductory writing classes provide an essential foundation of communication skills on which students can build throughout the rest of their university careers and beyond. They develop students' skills in analyzing audience, structuring written documents, and understanding and applying the conventions of effective writing. Subsequent writing courses build upon these skills by helping students learn to locate sources, critically analyze information, and synthesize their ideas with those of others to write well-supported academic arguments. They also provide an essential starting point for the more specialized writing students will be expected to do in the future within their fields of study.

**Course Outcomes:** Every college class has learning outcomes, which you can think about like "class goals." If you can meet the learning outcomes below, you will pass this class.

- Identify basic components and elements that shape successful writing such as topic, purpose, genre and audience.
- Compose an articulate and organized piece of writing with properly documented and supported ideas, evidence, and information suitable to the topic, purpose, and audience.
- Critique their own and others' writing to provide effective and useful feedback to improve their communication.

## Course materials:

- *Joining the Conversation: A Guide for Writers* by Mike Palmquest, Fourth Edition, ISBN: 978-1-319-36151-8
- Reliable, daily (every 24 hours or more) access to email and Canvas

## Professor McKee's Course Policies

- **Empathy:** This semester, we will appreciate and celebrate variations in our experiences. There is no "one way" to be a writer, and there is no "one way" to be a student at UWSP. We will respect each other as we seek to build community. My goal is to help each of you succeed in this antiracist, care-focused course and support your identities, values, and journeys.
- **Pronouns:** I may not be aware of the name or pronouns you use, so please let me know.

- **Mental Health and Wellbeing:** College is stressful. If you are feeling overwhelmed, depressed, anxious, or in need of a mental or emotional tune-up, visit <https://www3.uwsp.edu/counseling> or call 715-346-3553 to schedule an appointment for free, confidential support.
- **Disabilities, Neurodiversity, and Accommodations:** UWSP has an office dedicated to supporting students with disabilities. If you require disability accommodations, they can help arrange this for our course, and they will communicate with me about your accommodations.
  - **Official disabilities statement:** *UW-Stevens Point will modify academic program requirements as necessary to ensure that they do not discriminate against qualified applicants or students with disabilities. The modifications should not affect the substance of educational programs or compromise academic standards; nor should they intrude upon academic freedom. Examinations or other procedures used for evaluating students' academic achievements may be adapted. The results of such evaluation must demonstrate the student's achievement in the academic activity, rather than describe his/her disability. If modifications are required due to a disability, please inform the instructor and contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center to complete an Accommodations Request form. Phone: 346-3365 or on the first floor of the CCC.*
- **Plagiarism:** You will be the author of the writing you turn in. Claiming someone else's words as your own is plagiarism, which is academic theft and carries strict penalties. Plagiarism looks like using ChatGPT or other AI programs, paying a friend or online service to complete an assignment, lifting phrases from another writer by accident, not citing sources, etc. If you plagiarize, you will receive a 0 for that assignment and perhaps the entire course. You will not be allowed to turn in another assignment until you meet with me and explain your actions. Writers develop our skills through recursive practice, meaning that we start from scratch over and over in order to learn. **Plagiarism is not only an act of lying, it is self-sabotage.** You will not turn in work you wrote for another class, and you will not claim you have written something created or shaped in any way by AI.
- **Late Work:** As in any college course, you are expected to turn in work by or before the due date. If you are experiencing an extraordinary situation, email me to request an extension. If you have more than one missing assignment at any time, we will have a one-on-one check-in to ensure that you don't fall behind. Writers meet deadlines whether or not we feel like writing.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Many students are family caregivers for children, elders, and other loved ones. Caregiving demands immense time and energy. I welcome you to communicate with me about your caregiving duties so that we can troubleshoot scheduling or workload issues.
- **TLC/Writing Center:** I encourage you to use the TLC/Writing Center. You can sign up for virtual or in-person sessions with a one-on-one peer writing tutor who will help you work on any writing assignment, no matter where you are in the writing process:  
<https://www3.uwsp.edu/tlc/Pages/writing-center.aspx>

### **Course Structure and Typical Weekly Schedule:**

This is an asynchronous, online class. You'll work on one project per week for a total of four projects. I think of each week's project like a "portfolio" in which you turn in all of the steps of your writing process to document the steps you took on the way to completing the final draft. I will give you feedback on your writing, and **you are expected to review this feedback and incorporate it** into your next projects.

**Though the entire "portfolio" of assignments for each essay is due on Friday, PLEASE DO NOT WAIT until Friday to start these assignments.** The assignments will take you the entire week and you will benefit from working on them as early as possible. They are all due on the same day just to create an equal playing field: Some people work all weekend; some people work during

the week. I have decided to have all assignments due on the same day so that people can manage their time accordingly around their personal schedules.

Plan to spend 7-10 hours per week on our class. **Look ahead** to budget your time. **Time management is your superpower**, and this course is a great opportunity to practice time management in a way that makes your life easier. Don't wait until a few hours before the due date to start the assignment. At the very least, **look ahead a few days beforehand** to see what you need to do and how long it will take.

Finally, you must **check your UWSP email at least once a day**. I send out updates about due dates and other important info. In turn, you're welcome to email me at any time. I strive to be an approachable, collaborative, empathetic professor who responds to student emails in 24-48 hours, and usually much sooner.

**Grade Breakdown:** There are 700 total points possible in this course. Each week, you will have an assignment in each of these categories:

- A) Reading + Chapter Notes (75 points each)
- B) Brainstorming Assignment (50 points each)
- C) Rough Draft (50 points each)
- D) Outside Input/Edit (50 points each)
- E) Final Essay (50 points each)

**What is the Grading Scheme?**

Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%
A	95 or above	B	84 – 86	C	73 - 76
A-	90 - 94	B-	80 – 83	F	72 or less
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 – 79		

**\*The instructor reserves the right to change or modify the syllabus at any time during the semester. I will provide written notice if this occurs.**

**Course Schedule**

Timeline	Assignments/Readings (Due on Date Listed)
Week 1: Writing to Inform	<b>Friday:</b> Reading + Chapter Notes Brainstorming Assignment Rough Draft Outside Input/Edit Final Essay
Week 2: Writing to Analyze	<b>Friday:</b> Reading + Chapter Notes Brainstorming Assignment Rough Draft Outside Input/Edit Final Essay
Week 3: Writing to Evaluate	<b>Friday:</b> Reading + Chapter Notes

	Brainstorming Assignment Rough Draft Outside Input/Edit Final Essay
Week 4: Writing to Solve Problems	<b>Friday:</b> Reading + Chapter Notes Brainstorming Assignment Rough Draft Outside Input/Edit Final Essay