

# Resources for Writers

## **English Department Writing Center**

Flowers Hall G05 / 245-3018

Email: [nw05@txstate.edu](mailto:nw05@txstate.edu)

Hours: M-T-W-H 9 am-9pm; F 11 am-5 pm

[www.writingcenter.txstate.edu/](http://www.writingcenter.txstate.edu/)

## **English Department Macintosh Lab**

Flowers Hall 120 / 245-9134

## **English Department Windows Lab**

Flowers Hall G13 / 245-2169

Flowers Hall 114 / 245-239

## **Student Learning Assistance Center (SLAC)**

Alkek Library, 4th floor / 245-2515

[www.txstate.edu/slac](http://www.txstate.edu/slac)

## **Website for *The Scott Foresman Handbook 8e***

[wps.prenhall.com/hss\\_ruszkiewicz\\_sfhandbook\\_8/](http://wps.prenhall.com/hss_ruszkiewicz_sfhandbook_8/)



*The rising STAR of Texas*

Texas State University-San Marcos is a member of  
the Texas State University System.

# First-Year English Syllabus

## **English 1310 and 1320 College Writing I and II**

Department of English  
Texas State University-San Marcos  
San Marcos, TX 78666  
(512) 245-2166  
[www.english.txstate.edu](http://www.english.txstate.edu)



## First-Year English Syllabus

This syllabus outlines policies common to all sections of first-year English at Texas State University-San Marcos. Please read the syllabus carefully, and ask your instructor to explain any information that you do not understand.

### Course Information

English 13\_\_\_\_\_ Section\_\_\_\_\_ Room\_\_\_\_\_

Days\_\_\_\_\_ Time\_\_\_\_\_

Instructor\_\_\_\_\_

Office\_\_\_\_\_

Hours\_\_\_\_\_

Phone\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_

### Required Textbooks

Handbook\_\_\_\_\_ *The Scott Foresman Handbook 8e* \_\_\_\_\_

Reader\_\_\_\_\_

A college dictionary approved by the instructor

*I believe in miracles in every area of life except writing. Experience has shown me that there are no miracles in writing. The only thing that produces good writing is hard work.*

~Isaac Bashevis Singer

## Description of First-Year English

In first-year English, you will study the principles of expository writing—the kind of objective, audience-directed prose used in college and beyond to explain and defend ideas. Because reading, viewing, and writing are inextricably linked, first-year English also emphasizes critical reading and viewing, teaching you to analyze and understand a variety of texts, including expository and literary texts that represent diverse voices and ideas, visual images, and your own writing.

First-year English has long been a cornerstone requirement in the undergraduate curriculum because of its practical value in the classroom and on the job. The two courses in the first-year English sequence address the Texas State General Education reading and writing competencies:

**Reading.** Students will demonstrate the ability to comprehend, analyze, and synthesize a variety of texts and genres.

**Writing.** Students will demonstrate the ability to draft, revise, and edit focused, organized, and appropriately developed documents for specified purposes and audiences.

At Texas State, the first-year English requirement also looks beyond these competencies. It aims to discipline thought and expression, giving you the opportunity to study the art of writing for its intrinsic worth.

Some of the defining characteristics of first-year English are as follows:

- It introduces you to the writing process, helping you understand the multi-stage, recursive nature of that process.
- It equips you with skills and strategies needed for each stage of the writing process—from finding a topic to proofreading a finished paper.
- It explores writing as a means of communication and as a tool for learning. Writing to communicate challenges you to produce clear, coherent prose adapted to purpose, occasion, and audience. Writing to learn gives you tools for understanding complex texts and ideas—and for exploring your own thoughts and experiences.
- It offers frequent opportunities for writing. Besides producing papers with related drafts and revisions, you may comment on the work of other students, respond informally to assigned readings, or keep a writing log.
- It challenges you with a variety of thought-provoking expository and literary texts and offers strategies and diverse perspectives for reading and understanding those texts, both print and visual. Reading selections and visual images provide ideas for discussion and writing and serve as texts for rhetorical and stylistic analysis.
- It prepares you to integrate the work of others into your own writing, showing you appropriate ways to cite and document that work.
- It provides instruction and practice in using technology as a tool for writing.

## English 1310: College Writing I

English 1310 is a course in expository writing. You will study the principles of effective composition, with emphasis on critical reading and viewing and the improvement of papers through revision. While self-expressive and narrative writing may serve as a means of supporting ideas within a given paper, such writing is not, in itself, the focus of the course.

After completing English 1310, you should be able to draft, revise, and edit a paper for a particular audience and purpose in which you demonstrate the ability to

1. \*formulate a thesis (central idea);
2. \*develop that thesis in an orderly way;
3. form clear and effective paragraphs and sentences;
4. use an appropriate vocabulary;
5. apply the grammatical and mechanical conventions of written English; and
6. apply critical reading skills to your own writing and to the writing of others.

\* Objectives 1 and 2 have been identified as key General Education Learning Outcomes for the 2009-10 academic year.

See Appendix A, page 16, for a sample English 1310 course calendar.

## English 1320: College Writing II

English 1320 is a continuation of English 1310, with emphasis on expository writing as a means of analyzing and understanding texts. While some instructors teach literary texts in English 1320, the course is not an introduction to literature. Rather, it is a composition course in which you learn to read critically and to draw on written sources to support your ideas. All papers in the course are documented, with at least one of them (1000-word minimum) requiring the use of several print and/or online sources.

After completing English 1320, you should be able to draft, revise, and edit papers in which you demonstrate the ability to

1. understand and analyze a variety of texts;
2. quote, paraphrase, and summarize print and/or online sources to support your ideas; and
3. \* use standard procedures of citation and documentation.

\* The two components of objective 3 have been identified as key General Education Learning Outcomes for the 2009-10 academic year.

Additionally, you must continue to meet the six objectives outlined above for English 1310.

See Appendix B, page 19, for a sample English 1320 course calendar.

## Writing Assignments

Both English 1310 and 1320 require a minimum of 4000 words of graded writing divided among at least five papers. The final exam is in addition to this minimum. Besides the papers you submit for a grade, you will do a good deal of other writing in the course, including drafts, commentaries on the work of other students, and impromptu reactions to reading assignments. You may also be asked to keep a journal or a writing log.

## Format for Papers

A standard format for typed papers is illustrated on pages 735-746 of *The Scott-Foresman Handbook 8e*. Unless your instructor tells you otherwise, follow this format in preparing final copies of your papers.

## Reading Assignments

Your instructor expects you to complete every reading assignment. But you should not assume that all assignments will be discussed specifically in class or given equal treatment if they are discussed. Instructors may emphasize material of particular relevance to a given class, but they always assume that students have read the entire assignment before coming to class.

## Course Textbooks

*The Scott-Foresman Handbook 8e*—a comprehensive guide to writing—is required for all sections of English 1310 and 1320. You will find this book useful not only in first-year English but in any course that requires writing.

Even if your instructor does not make extensive reading assignments from *The Scott-Foresman Handbook 8e*, you should regard the book as an essential reference tool—a resource to keep at hand as you draft, revise, and edit your papers.

The following table suggests several particularly useful sites that you may want to mark by placing small post-it notes or post-it tabs on the indicated page in your handbook.


*Scott-Foresman Handbook Tabs*

Page	Content	Write on Tab
27	Thesis statement	Thesis
41	Outline format	Outlines
46	Strategies for drafting	Drafts
57	Strategies for revising/rewriting	Rewriting
87	Writing essay exams	Essay exams
211	Commonly used transitions	Transitions
199	Introductions and conclusions	Intros & concls
229	Biased language	Bias
349	Sample business letter	Business letter
355	Sample resumé	Resumé
459	First person “I”	“I”
547	Using commas correctly	Commas
563	Other punctuation	Punct.
571	Quotation marks	“ ”
685	MLA directory	MLA
691	MLA works-cited format	WC
735	MLA sample paper	Paper format
825	Glossary	Glossary
857	Index	Index
Back flyleaf	Revision symbols	Symbols

The other book required in first-year English is a collection of readings, which serves as a basis for class discussion and as a source of paper topics. A good part of what you gain from first-year English—including the ability to read more perceptively—depends on your careful and conscientious attention to assignments from this text.

## Members of the Class

Exchange names, phone numbers, and email addresses with several members of your class. Because you are responsible for all assignments, even when you are absent, you should know how to reach a classmate in an emergency. You may also want to contact a classmate to discuss an idea for a paper or to seek advice about an upcoming assignment. Think of your first-year English class as a community of writers; strive to become an active member of that community.

## Special Needs

If you have special needs, as documented by the Office of Disability Services (ODS), you must notify your instructor at the beginning of the semester. Your instructor will work with you and with ODS to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations.

## Attendance

Because the skills taught in first-year English are cumulative, regular and punctual attendance is essential. Many instructors conduct their courses as workshops in which students draft and revise their papers and comment on one another's work. You cannot benefit from such activities unless you are there to participate. You should therefore plan to attend and be on time to every class meeting.

If you must be absent because of illness, your instructor may require a written statement from the Student Health Center or a private physician before excusing the absence. Each instructor may establish a specific attendance policy; if yours does, make sure that you understand it.

## Deadlines

Students have rightly protested that those who hand in late work enjoy an unfair advantage over those who complete work on time. Your instructor is not obliged to accept late papers or to allow you to write an in-class assignment after the rest of the class has done so. Late work—if your instructor agrees to accept it—may be penalized by grade-reduction.

Should you have a legitimate excuse for lateness, speak with your instructor in advance. Each instructor may establish a specific policy for late work; if yours does, make sure that you understand it.

### **Laptops and Cell Phones**

If you bring a laptop computer to class, you should use it only for class work, such as taking notes or working on some stage of an assigned paper. You should not check email, news, or your bank balance; watch videos; chat; play games; or in any other way distract yourself and your classmates from what is going on in the classroom.

Please turn off your cell phone at the start of class. If an emergency situation requires you to be available by telephone, confer with your instructor for his/her preference for handling this situation.

### **Class Discussion of Reading Assignments and Ideas**

The university classroom is a diverse community. During class discussions, you may hear points of view with which you disagree, as well as express points of view with which others will disagree. Remember that such exchanges are critical to both the development and the communication of informed opinions and beliefs.

So expect to disagree with, refute, and/or challenge the ideas of others. However, when doing so, remain calm, polite, and respectful at all times toward your classmates, your instructor, and their ideas.

### **Class Discussion of Student Work**

Students learn much about how to improve their own work by reading and discussing the work of other students. Your instructor may duplicate some of your and your classmates' papers to use as texts for discussion by the entire class. You should therefore consider your work available for public discussion by an audience (your class) once you have turned it in.

## Final Exams

The final exam in first-year English is a substantial in-class paper. The paper may be impromptu, or your instructor may announce topics in advance and allow you to bring notes. In any event, the paper itself must be drafted and revised during the regular final exam period. The exam will count for no more than 20% of the course grade.

## Conferences

All instructors keep regular office hours and encourage students to take advantage of those hours. When you observe a persistent problem in your writing or have questions about an assignment, seek help from your instructor. If you cannot meet the instructor during regular office hours, make an appointment for another mutually convenient time.

## Grades

The grade you earn on a paper indicates the way you have met the demands of a particular assignment; it is not a cumulative grade, nor does it assess your character. While your instructor may use tests and class participation to measure your performance, your final grade in first-year English is based primarily on the papers you write.

All graded papers, except the final exam, are returned to you during the semester in which you write them. Note, however, that many instructors ask students to keep papers for use later in the course. In any case, you should routinely save copies of all your work.

## Grading Standards

The following general standards apply to all papers written in English 1310 and 1320. Early in the semester—and as the course progresses—your instructor may spell out specific criteria in addition to these.

*C* *C* indicates a satisfactory performance. A *C* paper demonstrates positive qualities and avoids serious errors. The positive qualities include the presentation of a central idea that is adequately developed and competently organized. The errors to be avoided include serious flaws in the construction of paragraphs and sentences, in the selection of appropriate words, and in the use of conventional written English. The style of the writing is generally clear.

*B* The *B* paper surpasses the *C* paper by demonstrating a higher level of effectiveness in the organization and development of a central idea. The *B* paper shows greater complexity of thought and development, while sustaining clarity in expression. It has few or none of the common errors in the use of conventional written English. The style of the writing is generally fluent and polished.

*A* The *A* paper is outstanding work. It is clearly a superior performance according to the criteria of clarity of expression and logical development of a central idea. It shows originality of thought and imaginative competence in the development of the material. It engages and holds the reader's attention and invites rereading. The style of the writing is consistently fluent, polished, and distinctive.

*D* *D* indicates an unsatisfactory performance. A *D* paper is flawed by any one or several of the following: weakness in establishing or developing a central idea; serious errors in sentence or paragraph construction; serious errors in grammar, spelling, or the mechanics of written expression.

*F* *F* indicates an unacceptable performance. An *F* paper is flawed by one or more of the following: failure to follow the assigned topic; failure to conceive, state, or develop a central idea; serious repeated errors in sentence construction or paragraph development; serious repeated errors in grammar, spelling, or the mechanics of written expression.

See Appendix C, page 22, for a sample student paper with instructor annotations.

## Academic Honesty

The complete *Texas State University Honor Code* and university policies on plagiarism are available online at [www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01.html](http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01.html). The English Department expects all students to be familiar with the Honor Code and related policies.

The *Texas State University Honor Code* states,

As members of a community dedicated to learning, inquiry, and creation, the students, faculty, and administration of our University live by the principles in this Honor Code. These principles require all members of this community to be conscientious, respectful, and honest.

**We Are Conscientious:**

We complete our work on time and make every effort to do it right. We come to class and meetings prepared and are willing to demonstrate it. We hold ourselves to doing what is required, embrace rigor, and shun mediocrity, special requests, and excuses.

**We Are Respectful:**

We act civilly toward one another, and we cooperate with each other. We will strive to create an environment in which people respect and listen to one another, speaking when appropriate, and permitting other people to participate and express their views.

**We Are Honest:**

We do our own work and are honest with one another in all matters. We understand how various acts of dishonesty, like plagiarizing, falsifying data, and giving or receiving assistance to which one is not entitled, conflict as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.

*The Pledge for Students*

Students at our University recognize that, to insure honest conduct, more is needed than an expectation of academic honesty, and we therefore adopt the practice of affixing the following pledge of honesty to the work we submit for evaluation:

*I pledge to uphold the principles of honesty and responsibility at our University.*

*The Pledge for Faculty and Administration*

Faculty at our University recognize that the students have rights when accused of academic dishonesty and will inform the accused of their rights of appeal laid out in the student handbook and inform them of the process that will take place.

*I recognize students' rights and pledge to uphold the principles of honesty and responsibility at our University.*

*Plagiarizing* is submitting work that is in any way not your own. Refer to *The Scott-Foresman Handbook* 8e, pages 653-655.

Any cases of verifiable plagiarism, whether deliberate or accidental, will result in a failing grade on the assignment and may result in a failing grade for first-year English. (Note: Peer review and consultation with your instructor or a counselor at the Writing Center do not constitute plagiarism and are encouraged.)

Your instructor may ask you to write and sign the Texas State student academic honesty pledge on all written work in the course. Your instructor may also require you to submit your papers to Turnitin, an online program that will check your work for originality. If your instructor requires these measures, he or she will provide specific directions.

## Writing Center

The English Department Writing Center (Flowers Hall G05) offers individual counseling for students in English 1310 and 1320. The Center is supported by course fees, and the Department expects all students to take advantage of its services as a regular part of their work in first-year English.

The Center is not merely a resource for struggling writers; it is a place where all students can get helpful advice about their work in first-year English or in any other course. While counselors cannot proofread your papers for you, they can help you during any stage of the writing process—from exploring an idea to polishing a draft.

Your instructor may advise you to visit the Writing Center or may require that you do so. You may also seek help on your own. To make an appointment, stop by the Center, call 245-3018, or email [nw05@txstate.edu](mailto:nw05@txstate.edu).

The Student Learning Assistance Center (SLAC), located on the 4th floor of the Alkek Library, also offers free counseling for student writers. Call 245-2515 for information, or visit SLAC's online site at [www.txstate.edu/slac](http://www.txstate.edu/slac).

## Macintosh Computer Lab

The English Department offers some sections of first-year English in its Macintosh computer lab. When classes are not in session, the lab is open to all students for word processing and Internet access. Visit the lab in Flowers Hall 120, or call 245-9134 for more information.

## Windows Computer Labs

The Department has two Technical Communication labs equipped with Windows computers. These labs are used most of the day for writing classes, but when class is not in session, the computers are available for general student use, including word processing and Internet access. The labs are located in Flowers Hall G13 (phone 245-2169) and Flowers Hall 114 (phone 245-2397).

## Online Resources

The Companion Website to *The Scott-Foresman Handbook 8e* ([wps.prenhall.com/hss\\_ruszkiewicz\\_sfhandbook\\_8/](http://wps.prenhall.com/hss_ruszkiewicz_sfhandbook_8/)) offers a wealth of information for writers. From this URL, you can access resources on various aspects of writing, rewriting, and research.

Your instructor may ask you to use Internet sources to supplement course readings or to support ideas in a documented paper. You will find detailed information about using print and Internet sources in *The Scott-Foresman Handbook 8e*, chapters 44 (“How Do You Find Information?”) and 45 (“How Do You Evaluate Sources?”).

Email gives you a convenient way to extend the boundaries of your writing class by communicating with your instructor and your classmates. If your instructor has a course TRACS site, you can access it via your active Texas State email account. You can create, activate, or reactivate this account online at [www.txstate.edu/computing/apps/newuser.html](http://www.txstate.edu/computing/apps/newuser.html).



## Other Writing Courses

If you would like additional writing instruction beyond first-year English, the Department offers various advanced courses in expository writing, technical writing, professional writing, creative writing, and editing. The Department also offers a writing minor and an English major with emphases in professional and creative writing. For more information, visit the English Department in Flowers Hall 365, or call 245-2163.



## Appendix A

### Sample Course Calendar English 1310: College Writing I Fall Semester / M-W Schedule

Instructors design their own course calendars for English 1310. The following example will give you a general idea of what to expect.

*The Scott-Foresman Handbook 8e* = *SF*  
*The Arlington Reader* = *AR*

#### Week 1

W Introduction to the course: college reading, writing, and thinking

#### Week 2

M Labor Day holiday

W Paper 1 written in class; *SF* chapter 1 (what writing involves)

### **THEMATIC UNIT I: HOW DID WE BECOME WHO WE ARE?**

#### Week 3

M Paper 1 returned and discussed; *AR* 1-7 (critical reading); *SF* chapter 8, sections 8a-8b (pp. 108-119) (critical reading)

W *AR* 112+ (Liu); *AR* 626+ (Bugeja); *AR* 233+ (Zernike); Paper 2 assigned

#### Week 4

M Thesis/plan for Paper 2 due; workshop; *SF* chapter 2, chapter 3, chapter 4 (planning and drafting)

W Typed draft of Paper 2 due; *SF* chapter 5, sections 5a-5c (pp. 56-66) (revising, editing, and proofreading)

#### Week 5

M Second typed draft of Paper 2 due; peer review; *SF* chapter 5, section 5d (pp. 66-75) (peer review)

W **Paper 2 due**; workshop—papers annotated, proofread, and discussed; bring *SF* to class

**Week 6**

M *AR* 298+ (Rodriguez)

W Paper 2 returned and discussed; review of writing conventions using *SF*

**THEMATIC UNIT II: HOW CAN EDUCATION CHANGE US?****Week 7**

M *AR* 322+ (Gardner); 51+ (Naylor); 337+ (AIR); Paper 3 assigned

W Thesis/plan due for Paper 3; workshop; *SF* chapter 12, sections 12a-12b (unified and organized paragraphs); chapter 13 (pp. 199-206) (beginning and ending paragraphs)

**Week 8**

M Typed draft of Paper 3 due; peer review; *SF* chapter 14 (pp. 207-215) (transitions)

W **Paper 3 due**; workshop—papers annotated, proofread, and discussed; bring *SF* to class

**THEMATIC UNIT III: HOW CAN SOCIAL ACTION CHANGE US?****Week 9**

M *AR* 580+ (Birmingham clergy statement); *AR* 565+ (King)

W Paper 3 returned and discussed; review of writing conventions using *SF*; Paper 4 assigned

**Week 10**

M Thesis/plan due for Paper 4; workshop; *SF* chapter 16, sections 16e-16j (pp. 264-287) (effective sentences)

W Typed draft of Paper 4 due; peer review

**Week 11**

M **Paper 4 due**; workshop—papers annotated, proofread, and discussed; bring *SF* to class

**THEMATIC UNIT IV: HOW DO IMAGES AND IDEAS INFLUENCE US?**

W *SF* chapter 9, section 9b (pp. 132-138) (critical viewing); view images in *AR*, pp. 102, 318, 396, 491

**Week 12**

M *AR* 319+ (Plato)

W Paper 4 returned and discussed; review of writing conventions using *SF*

**Week 13**

M Thesis/plan due for Paper 5; draft Paper 5 in class

W Typed draft of Paper 5 due; peer review; *SF* chapter 17, sections 17a-17e (pp. 288-308) (stylish sentences)

**Week 14**

M **Paper 5 due**; workshop—papers annotated, proofread, and discussed; bring *SF* to class

W Thanksgiving holiday

**Week 15**

M *AR* 622+ (Gorry)

W Paper 5 returned and discussed; review of writing conventions using *SF*; course evaluations

**Week 16**

M Review of writing portfolios; preparation for final exam



## Appendix B

### Sample Course Calendar English 1320: College Writing II Spring Semester / T-H Schedule

Instructors design their own course calendars for English 1320. The following example will give you a general idea of what to expect.

*The Scott-Foresman Handbook 8e* = *SF*  
*Literature for Composition* = *LC*  
*The Things They Carried* = *TTC*

#### Week 1

- T Introduction; course policies
- H Paper 1 written in class

#### Week 2

- T *LC* 3-8 (“Reading and Responding”); 13-21 (“Developing a Thesis, Drafting, and Writing an Argument”); selection from *LC*
- H Paper 1 returned and discussed; selection from *LC*

#### Week 3

- T Paper 2 assigned; *SF* chapter 11 (writing about literature); selection from *LC*
- H *SF* chapter 47, section 47a (pp. 656-59) (quoting); selection from *LC*

#### Week 4

- T Thesis/plan for Paper 2 due; workshop; *LC* 33-36 (“Revising an Argument,” “Outlining an Argument,” “Soliciting Peer Review,” “Thinking about Counterarguments”)
- H Typed draft of Paper 2 due; peer review; works cited page; *SF* chapter 5, sections 5a-5b (pp. 57-65) (revising and editing)

**Week 5**

- T **Paper 2 due**; proofreading; *SF* chapter 5, section 5c (pp. 65-66) (proofreading)
- H *TTC* 39-61 (“On the Rainy River”)

**Week 6**

- T *TTC* 1-26 (“The Things They Carried”)
- H Paper 2 returned and discussed; Paper 3 assigned; *TTC* 67-85 (“How to Tell a True War Story”); 225-246 (“The Lives of the Dead”)

**Week 7**

- T Thesis/plan for Paper 3 due; workshop; *SF* chapter 46, section 46b (pp. 648-653); chapter 47 (quotation, paraphrase, summary)
- H Library and Web research (meet in Alkek); *SF* chapters 44 (finding sources) and 45 (evaluating sources)

**Week 8**

- T Typed draft of Paper 3 due; peer review (global)
- H Revised draft of Paper 3 due; peer review (editorial); works cited page

**Week 9**

Spring Break

**Week 10**

- T **Paper 3 due**; proofreading; bring *SF* to class
- H Paper 4 assigned; *SF* chapter 50 (documenting sources)

**Week 11**

- T Bring library/Web sources; Paper 3 returned and discussed; revision plans developed
- H Typed draft of Paper 4 due; peer review

**Week 12**

- T **Paper 4 due**; proofreading; bring *SF* to class; Paper 5 assigned  
H Selection from *LC*

**Week 13**

- T Selection from *LC*  
H Thesis/plan due for Paper 5; Paper 4 returned and discussed

**Week 14**

- T Typed draft of Paper 5 due; peer review  
H **Paper 5 due**; proofreading; bring *SF* to class; course evaluations

**Week 15**

- T Review of writing portfolios; in-class writing in preparation for final exam; bring *SF* to class  
H Paper 5 returned and discussed; bring *SF* to class; preparation for final exam continued

## Appendix C

The following student essay, by English 1310 student Teryn Chamrod, was written in response to this prompt:

In his *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, Douglass relates how he learned at a young age that education was “the pathway from slavery to freedom.” Does ignorance still enslave people, perhaps economically, professionally, politically, or in some other way? Can education still prove to be the “pathway” to freedom?

Teryn’s essay provides an example of the format, tone, and style appropriate for college writing. Like many successful first-year English essays, this paper provides an intersection between text and personal experience. The annotations provided to the right of the essay highlight some of its qualities and characteristics.

Teryn Chamrod

English 1310

### Ignorance to Freedom

For Frederick Douglass and many slaves like him, the 1800’s were not easy times in which to live. His life changed, however, when he realized that education was “the pathway from slavery to freedom” (78).

The student author’s name and the course are double spaced and typed flush with the left-hand margin.

Two double spaces separate the heading from the title.

The centered title introduces the topic to the reader. No additional spaces separate the title from the text.

Teryn puts a phrase quoted from Douglass’s text in quotation marks, followed by the page number in parentheses, and the final period of the sentence.

Even today, education can be a way out of bondage for those enslaved by various forms of professional and social ignorance.

Sexual harassment, a type of professional slavery, affects both men and women every day. Unfortunately, too many victims either cannot or simply do not know how to stand up for themselves. Their ignorance is like a brick wall that can be torn down only with the right tool: education. Imagine Sarah, a middle-aged woman, widowed and raising two children. After years of struggle, she finally graduates from college and is employed by a highly reputable firm. Her dream is slowly coming true as she advances to a deserved and respectable position. Sarah does not realize that her dream will soon become a nightmare, and the respect currently being shown her will be overshadowed by the worst kind of disrespect. Her employer will begin

Teryn underlines her thesis statement, as requested by her instructor. The thesis has both a topic (*education*) and a comment (*can be a way out of bondage for those enslaved by various forms of professional and social ignorance*). It provides a clear focus for the essay.

To develop her first body paragraph, Teryn introduces a hypothetical (made-up) illustration. She identifies it as hypothetical by using the word *Imagine*.

to sexually harass her. After weeks of repeated attempts to persuade him to cease, she is threatened with her job if she does not comply. Day after day, she is tormented by the harassment, as well as by the thought of losing what she has worked so hard for. Unaware of how to stop the abuse or where to turn for help, Sarah continues to live her nightmare. Like Frederick Douglass, she is enslaved by her ignorance. In order to break down that ignorance, she must educate herself. Research on the topic of sexual harassment can provide the answers she desperately needs and wants. Once she discovers her rights and her options for stopping the abuse, she can put an end to her torment, re-gain her self-respect, and keep her job. Education will serve as her “pathway from slavery to freedom” (78).

Ignorance not only enslaves those in the workplace, but also those in society in general. For example, my parents have always disapproved

Teryn’s language is not pretentious, but it is appropriately formal and obviously carefully chosen. Note, for example, her use of such words as *disrespect*, *cease*, *comply*, and *tormented*.

Teryn compares Sarah’s plight to that of Frederick Douglass, keeping in her reader’s mind the selection that prompted the assignment and her own essay.

Again, Teryn quotes Douglass, citing the source in the same format she used earlier in her paper.

Teryn begins her second body paragraph with a transition sentence that both summarizes the first body paragraph and introduces this one. Note that each paragraph is indented 5 spaces.

of interracial dating, simply because of ignorance.

When they found out that I was involved in an interracial relationship, they were worried about how my reputation would be affected, how others would treat me, and how I would emotionally handle the snubs of peers and close friends. What they were not aware of, is that society is becoming more liberal about such issues. My generation is different from my parents' in that some things that were intolerable years ago, are now more readily accepted. My parents were trying to shield me from something that did not exist among my peer group and in my social world. As my parents, they were trying to protect me, but because of their ignorance, we suffered through months of arguments, separation, and a great deal of grief. If they had only been more educated concerning current social mores, the interracial relationship would not have been such an explosive issue for so long. Finally, my

Teryn uses a personal illustration in this paragraph, restricting details to those relevant to her thesis. It is appropriate for her to use the pronoun *I* in this case. Notice, however, that she never uses *you*, which is rarely appropriate in a formal essay.

As Teryn explains how ignorance enslaved her parents, her repetition of the word *ignorance* also increases the coherence of the essay.

parents realized that there had been no change in the way anyone treated me. And just as Douglass's education eventually brought him physical and mental freedom, their increased knowledge and understanding freed them from social bondage.

Various forms of professional and social ignorance still enslave people today. In most cases, as with Frederick Douglass, Sarah, and my parents, education can still serve as a pathway to freedom.

Just as she had done with her first illustration, Teryn directly compares this situation with Douglass's.

Teryn's short concluding paragraph re-states her thesis and reminds the reader of all three illustrations to which the paper has referred. The last sentence provides closure or "sounds finished."

Students in English 1310 should keep this syllabus for use in English 1320. An online version of the syllabus is available at [www.english.txstate.edu/resources/syllabus.html](http://www.english.txstate.edu/resources/syllabus.html). Click on "Student Resources" and then "First-Year Syllabus."

This syllabus was prepared by **Sue Beebe**, Director of Lower-Division Studies, Department of English.

Special thanks to **Michael Hennessy**, Chair of the Department of English, who developed and produced earlier editions of this syllabus; and to **Sarah Morrison** and **Joshua Krezinski**, who created the design.

Thanks also to members of the First-Year English Committee: **Beverley Braud, Robin Cohen, Nicholas Courtright, Dina Giudubaldi, Chad Hammett, Susan Hanson, Shannon Hasselman, Dickie Heaberlin, JoAnn Labay, Rene LeBlanc, Patty Margerison, Susan Morrison, Deb Morton, Stephanie Noll, Octavio Pimentel, Jon Marc Smith, and Nancy Wilson.**

And thanks to the many graduate teaching assistants whose ideas and suggestions have been incorporated in this edition of the syllabus. Although it is impossible to name them all, specific contributions include **Nadine Cooper**'s table of handbook tabs and **Charlene Gill**'s statement about tolerating diverse points of view in the first-year English classroom.

Finally, thanks to the Marquette University Department of English for providing some of the material used in the syllabus.

