

“Gradeless” Grading

Course Grading Policy

This course will focus on qualitative not quantitative assessment. In other words, your grade in this class will not be based on “objective” measurements so much as by a subjective and holistic self-evaluation.

The purpose of this class is to develop critical thinking and writing skills and practices, not to “get a good grade.” While you will ultimately earn a final grade at the end of the term, I will not be grading individual assignments, but rather asking questions and providing feedback that engage your work rather than simply evaluate it.

For the most part, therefore, you will be assessing/grading your own work and your own progress in the course. This makes explicit that which has always been true: While I, and your other instructors, are responsible for *teaching* you, you are responsible for your own *learning*. I will help you to succeed and develop as a writer and student in any and every way I can, but you will assess that success and learning for yourself. While as the instructor, the “official” final grade at the end of the semester is at my discretion, this grade will be based on your self-assessment and open, honest dialogue between us.

While on its face this might seem like the course will be an “easy A,” it will require a significant amount of effort and self-reflection. You will be reflecting carefully on your own work and the work of your peers. The intention here is to help you focus on working in a more organic and realistic way, as opposed to working as you think you’re expected to—to *focus on learning rather than grades*.

That being said, you cannot expect to pass the class if you do not complete all of the major assignments or attend class, just as you would not expect to keep a job if you didn’t do all your work or show up.

If this process causes more anxiety than it alleviates, see me at any point to talk about your progress in the course to date. If you are worried about your grade, your best strategy should be to do the reading, join the discussions, and complete the assignments.

Submitting Class Work

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due on Canvas at the specified time/date. Assignments should generally be formatted with 12-point Times New Roman font, one-inch margins on all sides, no extra space between paragraphs, and double-spacing between lines.

For every Essay assignment you will have to submit a polished draft on Canvas to be reviewed by your peers and possibly by me. You will then have to revise the assignment for the final draft. You should keep all of your assignments and any feedback as they are handed back to you.

Late Work Policy

As individual assignments will not be graded in a traditional sense, there is no explicit grade penalty for late major assignments (i.e., essay/exercise assignments, outlines, and drafts). However, I will not accept subsequent major assignments until the preceding assignment has been submitted. Also, I cannot guarantee timely feedback on your work if it is not turned in on time, putting at risk your own growth as a writer and your success on each assignment.

You will also be expected to complete exercises, outlines, and or drafts for each essay during the weeks leading up to submission of the final draft. Each step will need to be completed before I will accept and provide feedback on the next step.

If you are struggling to complete an assignment or feel overwhelmed, please come talk to me about it so that we can work something out rather than just not turning in assignments. It's very difficult for me help you succeed if I don't know that you need/want help.

Assignment Length and Completion Policy

For all writing assignments, page length requirements will be provided. The English Department, Auburn University, and the State of Alabama have requirements of the number of "graded" written pages expected of students in "writing intensive" classes.

I have aimed to distribute these pages over multiple assignments and I have designed each assignment with the expectation that you'll need the assigned number of pages to successfully complete the assignment. For example, if the assignment is four to five pages, your essay is expected be at least four full pages (meaning that the *entire* fourth page is filled).

You are not meeting the requirements of the course (and the University/State) if you are not meeting the page minimums. Remember, you cannot expect to pass the class if the major assignments are incomplete.