KEMBLE’S ENGLISH 1E (SPRING 2024)

## General Information

### Course Title

English 1E: College Composition and Reading: Extended Instruction

### Section

This syllabus applies to section M8161.

### Instructor

Greg Kemble

### Embedded tutor

Isabela Perez

### Office Location

**Greg: Room 1179**

**Directions:** My office is in the rear of Building 1100 (the library), but you can’t reach it from the library itself. Standing outside and facing the front of the library, walk around the right side of the building. About 3/4 of the way along the building, you'll see a glass door. Enter there, and then continue straight through the inner glass door. My office is in the second alcove on your right.

**Isabela: Writing and Language Development Center (WLDC)**

Isabela works in the WLDC, which is to the right after you enter Building 1100 (the library) from the front.

### Contact information

**Greg:**

* **Canvas Message:** This is the best way to contact me, as it helps me keep track of things in Canvas.
* **Email:** gkemble@yccd.edu
* **Voicemail:** (530) 749-3821 – Please make sure your message includes how you’d like me to get back to you.

**Note:** I’m likely to get a message more quickly though Canvas or email than through voicemail.

**Isabela:**

* **Email:** P0463115@go.yccd.edu – This is the best way to get ahold of her.
* **Canvas Message**

### Student Hours / Office Hours

I call these “student hours,” rather than “office hours,” because I want to be sure you understand that they are scheduled for you, not for me. Please don’t hesitate to take advantage of them.

If you are not available at the times listed, please contact me to set up an appointment. I’m happy to find a time that works for your schedule — even if that means connecting in the evening or on a weekend.

* Monday 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (in person, in my office)
* Wednesday: 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (via Zoom - from my office)
* Tuesday: 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. (via Zoom)

You are welcome to drop in at any of the above times, but I recommend that you contact me to set up an appointment, even for scheduled student hours. I do my best to protect these times, but I am sometimes required to attend meetings or other appointments.

**Here’s the link for the Zoom room:** <https://bit.ly/sh-s24>

Isabela is generally available to meet with you in the WLDC at these times:

* Monday after class until 12:00 p.m.
* Wednesday after class until 1:00 p.m.

She is also available by appointment, but remember that (like you) she is a student and so is not available as often as I am.

### Final exam

Our final exam is scheduled for Monday, May 20, from 10:00 – 11:50 a.m. We will not have an actual final exam, per se, but there will be an in-class writing assignment at that time. **Note:** Please plan ahead, as *this is not the same as our regularly scheduled class time.*

## Textbook

Anna Mills: *How Arguments Work – A Guide to Writing and Analyzing Texts in College*.

This course is a “Zero-Cost Textbook” course, which means that we’ll be using an Open Educational Resources (OER) textbook. (If you’re interested in OER, you can read about the initiative on the California Community Colleges OER page at <https://bit.ly/cccco-oer> )

I will make the assigned passages available to you through Canvas. I may also print out parts that we will use in class.

However, if you’d *like* a copy of the full text, you may either download the full PDF (for free) or buy a paper copy at the book’s LibreTexts page ( <https://bit.ly/1e-mills> -- hover over the blue “Downloads” button for options.)

Just to be clear: **you are not required to buy the textbook**. Further, we won’t read the whole book, so you don’t need to download the full PDF, either. You’re welcome to do so, of course, but it’s not required.

## Course Description

Here’s the description of English 1E that you’ll find in the Yuba College catalog:

An introductory course offering instruction in expository and argumentative writing, appropriate and effective use of language, close reading, cogent thinking, research strategies, information literacy, and documentation. Focus on the recursivity of writing processes and integrating reading, writing, and speaking skills. Emphasis on developing academic mindsets and student skills. Students will write a minimum of 6000 words.

If you don’t already have a lot of experience with college or with college-level writing, some of that might not make a lot of sense yet. That’s okay — that’s why you’re here! Don’t let the fancy words intimidate you.

You might notice that the course description for English 1E is almost identical to the one for English 1A. That’s because English 1E is *English 1A with additional support*. When you pass English 1E, you will have met the same requirements as if you’d taken English 1A. These include prerequisites for other classes, as well as graduation and transfer requirements.

## Time Commitment

English 1E is pretty demanding. That’s not just because we English professors are mean (though we may be); we’re also required to follow some policies that the state of California has set for us. (They even require us to include the following breakdown in the course’s syllabus!) Basically, it’s an average of two hours of homework for every hour in class.

English 1E is a 5-unit course, which means we meet, on average, for five hours a week. That translates to a total of about 15 hours per week:

* Total hours for the course: 270
	+ In-class (“lecture”) hours: 90
	+ Out-of-class (“homework”) hours: 180

Does that sound like a lot? *It is!* I am often surprised at how many students expect to be able to do the work of the course in just a few hours each weekend — or, worse, in a few hours at the end of the semester.

Now, I’m not trying freak you out. But it’s important that you understand what’s expected of you so that you can plan accordingly.

### Are you ready?

Requirements for placing into transfer level composition have changed, due to changes in California state law; placement is now mostly based on high school Grade Point Average (GPA.

This means that our class might include students with a wide range of reading and writing skills and expectations:

* some of you may have been required to take this class based on your GPA and may feel nervous or intimidated by the thought of college-level writing, or frustrated because you don’t think your GPA reflects your actual abilities (that is very possible!);
* some of you may have chosen to take this class because you don’t feel ready and would like extra help;
* some of you may be just out of high school and have not yet encountered college-level writing
* some of you have rich life experiences and have no difficulty writing about complex issues and arguments, whether as workers, parents, or citizens;
* some of you may have been away from school for a number of years and fear that you have forgotten much of what you used to know;
* some of you are masters of a language other than English, but struggle with English;
* some of you are just sure that, for whatever reason, you’re not good writers.

We — Isabela and I — will do our best to meet you at whatever level you find yourself. But you will need to do your part, too. Please: be engaged in class, do the reading, give yourself time to write, read our comments carefully, and ask questions when something is not clear.

Above all: understand that one aspect — probably the most important aspect — of college is *learning how to learn*. Don’t rely *only* on the course’s instruction; make sure you also seek answers on your own. There are a lot of good writing resources out there (I’ll point to several of them throughout the course, including later in this syllabus). The more you pursue questions on your own, the more useful Isabela’s and my help — and the help of teachers in future courses — will be.

## Learning Outcomes

### Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

The English Department at Yuba College has five Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) that guide much of our instruction in English 1E courses.

Upon completion of the course, students will:

* use reading strategies to understand argumentative texts that contain both literal and implied meanings;
* compose a clearly-written, well-organized, purpose-driven analysis;
* synthesize evidence from outside sources to support claims effectively;
* attribute and document sources correctly;
* successfully employ academic mindsets.

That isn’t the most student-friendly language, so don’t be too concerned if much of this doesn’t make sense to you yet. Things will become clearer as we work through the semester.

In addition to the official outcomes, I have a number of other objectives, as well. I would like you to:

* develop your skills — and confidence — as a critical thinker, reader, and writer;
* affect people in your sphere of influence;
* engage deeply with an important public policy issue related to a profession of your choice.

Ideally, you also have your own objectives. If you don’t, I recommend you spend some time thinking about what objectives you might set for yourself. Why (beyond earning a grade) are you taking English 1E? Why are you in school more generally?

The clearer your sense of purpose, the more likely you are to stick with the course when it becomes challenging.

## Registration Policies

### First DAY Rule

Students who miss the first class period, without contacting me in advance, may be dropped to make room for students hoping to register in the class.

### Drop Dates

This semester, the deadlines for dropping the course are as follows:

* February 2, to avoid a “W” on your permanent record and to be eligible for a refund;
* April 26, to receive a “W” on your permanent record.

If you decide you need to drop, I recommend that you see a counselor to discuss what effect that might have on things like your educational plans or financial aid.

### Student Responsibility to Drop

Every term, a fair number of students disappear from the course without letting me know why. Though I do try to drop such students before the last drop date (I am not a fan of putting an “F” on students’ transcripts), I am not always able to tell if a student has really left or has decided to prioritize her time differently. Therefore, I cannot be responsible to make sure students meet their drop deadlines.

**It is the student’s responsibility to drop by the appropriate deadlines.** If you decide you need to drop, please be sure you follow through with the Admissions Office.

**More important, though: If you find yourself tempted to quit, I encourage you to contact me or Isabela first. We might be able to help you get back on track.**

## Disability Statement

If you need special arrangements for a physical or learning disability, I encourage you to let me know, and to arrange an accommodation plan through [Disabled Students Programs and Services](https://yc.yccd.edu/dsps/) (DSPS) as soon as you can. Working with DSPS isn’t a *requirement*, but they offer helpful support for both you and me.

Please visit the DSPS website (<https://yc.yccd.edu/student/DSPS>) to see what kind of help is officially available to you. You can also drop by their office (Building 1800, at the west end of campus), or you can contact them by phone -- (530) 741-6795 -- or email (dspsinfo@yccd.edu).

## Standards

### Attendance policy

As I will explain below, a central principle in my teaching philosophy is that we learn by doing, and, for this course, a lot of that “doing” happens in the classroom. The assignments need *context* to be understood, and much of that context comes from class discussion and other classroom activities. Missing that context almost guarantees that you’ll miss important aspects of the assignment, making it difficult to complete your assignments.

I know that many students face meaningful challenges with their schedules, and I want to be flexible. But I have learned that *too* *much* flexibility with my attendance policy sets students up for failure. This is true most obviously for the absent students who miss instruction, but it can also become a larger problem: when a lot of students are consistently absent, it can be challenging to have any sense of continuity in the class – and that hurts the students who attend consistently. That’s not fair to them.

Therefore, to support your success, both individually and as a class, here’s what I’ve chosen to do:

* I will not penalize your grade based on attendance – at least, not based on attendance alone.
* **After a third absence**, however, I will require that you meet with me to discuss your situation. This is not meant to pry into your affairs; I don’t distinguish between “excused” and “unexcused” absences, so I won’t demand documentation or anything like that. Rather, the meeting will allow us (a) to make sure you’re on track with the assignments and, more important, (b) to co-create a path forward.
* **After a sixth absence**, we’ll need to meet again. In this conversation, we’ll take stock of your situation and decide if you should drop the course, or if we should set a hard limit on future absences.

Note that, as we approach the last drop date (April 26), I *may* drop a student who has been absent several times in a row. (A “W” is better than an “F” for academic probation and, possibly, for financial aid, so that seems a better choice.) However, I will try to contact the student before making that decision. (And remember: in the end, it is the student’s responsibility to drop the course in time to receive a “W.”)

### Formatting essays

Your three main essays should be formatted using MLA style. We’ll talk about this during the course, but here’s a short version:

Essays should:

* be typed, using a standard, 12-point font (e.g., Times or Times New Roman);
* be double-spaced (never single-spaced; never triple-spaced);
* have one-inch margins;
* have a correctly formatted header, title, and pagination;
* document sources correctly, using both in-text citation and a Works Cited page.

Essays that do not follow MLA format may be considered “Incomplete” and require a rewrite in order to receive credit. (I will clarify this later in the syllabus.)

Final drafts of essays, especially, should be edited, proofread, and spell-checked.

And please give each essay a clever and informative title (“Essay 1” is neither clever nor informative….)

### Submitting Essays

Most of the assignments — especially the three major essays — will be submitted through Canvas. I’ll work with you to be sure you know how all that works.

**Please don’t submit work to my personal email unless it is absolutely necessary.** It’s hard to keep track of work that is not submitted as instructed — especially work submitted outside Canvas.

If possible, please upload essays in Microsoft Word format (.doc, or .docx), as this format allows me to respond to your work most effectively. (Note that Google Docs can save a in Word format, under “File | Download.”)

If you do not have access to Word (or Google Docs), you may save and upload your essay as a PDF file. As I said, though, I am able to work more effectively with Word documents.

Note that Canvas won’t allow you to upload files in other formats (unless I’ve specified that other formats are acceptable).

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as **passing others’ words or ideas off as your own**. This may take many forms. Some may be accidental, such as forgetting to credit information you’ve cut-and-paste from the Internet, or not realizing that you have to cite others’ work even if you don’t use their exact words.

Others are simply dishonest, such as buying a paper, having a friend of family member do an assignment, having ChatGPT write an essay, and so on. (I will say more about this last one in the next section.)

Please don’t.

Plagiarism is serious, and it carries serious consequences. At the very least, plagiarized work will receive an Incomplete or be considered missing. That's not a major problem for most assignments, but it is for the three major essay assignments: an Incomplete on a major essay lowers the course grade by a full letter, and a *missing* major essay would result in a D or F in the course (we'll talk about my grading policies soon).

However, plagiarism — especially if there's a *pattern* of it — may also result in disciplinary probation or suspension, or even expulsion. (See the Student Code of Conduct at <https://bit.ly/yccd-code> for more details.)

Most cases of plagiarism that I have encountered — and I have encountered many — have arisen from desperation. I hope that my grading policy (again, more on that soon) will help reduce desperation. But if you do find yourself growing desperate, please contact me or Isabela as early as possible so that we can discuss strategies for success on the assignment.

### A word on artificial intelligence

You may have heard of so-called “Artificial Intelligence” (A.I.), especially the “large-language model” chat bots like Bing Chat or ChatGPT. These are sophisticated enough that they can actually write competent, if boring, essays — and they're only going to get better. The social media platform TikTok shows lots of students, often high schoolers, having A.I. do their homework for them. Some of my students have been over-relying on A.I. in my courses, too.

There are many problems with using A.I. this way, but I’ll point out two.

First, as I mentioned above, having ChatGPT write an essay, and then turning it in as if it’s your own work, is clearly plagiarism.

But second, and more important, using ChatGPT to write an assignment — or even relying on it too much to brainstorm or organize a paper — hurts your ability to learn the critical thinking and expression tools that this class is intended to develop. For example, chat bots do a solid job creating summaries of articles, and some argue that we should just leave it to them. If we let A.I. do what it does well, they say— if, for example, we let A.I. summarize articles for us — that would free us up to do more meaningful work.

However, the act of summarizing develops a wide range of skills: reading, analysis, critical thinking, writing, problem solving, and much more. And those skills are foundational to producing “more meaningful work.”

So yes, a chat bot can summarize an article faster, and maybe even more “accurately,” than you could do it on your own. But your understanding of the article would suffer, and that would limit your ability to use the article in your own argument.

I know that some teachers have banned the use of A.I. tools in their classes. I understand that policy, but it’s not the policy I’ve chosen. There are many ways that A.I. can help. And while I won’t be able to weave a *lot* of instruction around A.I. into this course, I will try to find ways to work things in throughout the semester.

If you're thinking of using A.I. to help you with your work, please let me know. A conversation would help you better use the tool, and would protect you against charges of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

That said, I hope that my grading policies (in the next section) will give you the freedom to explore your own thinking and your own writing — to take risks and to use the act of writing as a tool for thinking. A.I. can be useful, but it can also undermine your ability to create something authentic and meaningful for yourself and your readers.

I will add one last thought: one of the most important insights in this class — at least, this is what many students have told me — is that *your voice matters*. I'm interested in things that *only you* can say, and in the way *only you* can say it. A.I. erases your voice. Please don't let that happen.

## HOW GRADES WORK

### MY philosophy

Last year, I participated in a study group that explored ways to make grading more equitable — that is, to be sure that our grading policies don’t create unnecessary obstacles for one group of students over others.

This inquiry led me to reconsider almost everything I’ve done in the past — things that you may be used to, since it’s what you've almost certainly experienced in most courses.

My new philosophy is based on the understanding that, for most students*, grades undermine the ability to learn*. I therefore emphasize the *process* of writing rather than the *finished product*. And this emphasis encourages me to separate your grade from the *quality* of your work.

This doesn’t mean that I’m not interested in quality; I will work hard to encourage you to think and write well. To do that, though, I need to ensure that you feel free to take risks, even to fail, without fearing that your grade will suffer.

Of course, I still have to assign you a grade at the end of the semester. So let me explain how that works.

### Grading Policy

The default grade for this course is a B: if you ***complete***the required work, then you are guaranteed at least a B in the course. If you don't complete the required work, then your course grade will be lowered; if you complete work *beyond* what's required for a B, then your course grade will be raise (allowing you to earn an A and/or to offset any grade penalty). You can see how this works specifically in this table:

| **Raising the Course Grade** | **Required Work: Default Course Grade (B)** | **Lowering the Course Grade** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Not applicable (N/A) | **Complete** all 3 major essays**Note**: All 3 major essays must be **submitted** to pass the class, but they must all be**complete** to meet this requirement. | Each **Incomplete** major essay lowers the course grade **a full letter**. |
|  Reflections on each of the 3 major essays (+1/3) | Reflections on 2 of the 3 major essays  | Reflection on one or none of the 3 major essays (-1/3) |
| All 3 working draft conferences with a reasonably complete draft (+1/3) | 2 working draft conferences with a reasonably complete working draft | 1 working draft conference with a reasonably complete working draft (-1/3)No working draft conference with reasonably complete drafts: (-2/3) |
| 4 (out of 6) working draft questionnaires (+1/3)**Note:** this only applies if you attend the related working draft conference.  | N/A | N/A |
| 2 additional Annotated Bibliography entries from scholarly sources (+1/3) | 3 Annotated Bibliography entries, as assigned | 2 or fewer Annotated Bibliography entries (-1/3) |
| “Advice to Future Students” addendum to Reflective Essay at the end of the semester (+1/3) | Reflective Essay at the end of the semester (final exam day) | Incomplete or missing Reflective Essay (-1/3) |

### How it works

*Note: As I explain this, keep in mind that Yuba College only records full letter grades on your transcripts. For example, a B+ is recorded as a B; a C- is recorded as a C.*

To receive a B in the class, you’d complete all the assignments in the center column.

If you complete additional work, as explained in the left column, then your course grade would be raised. If you do not complete all the work in the center column, then your course grade would be lowered, as explained in the right column.

Note that the left and right columns offset each other. In other words, if you lose a portion of the course grade, you can earn it back by completing work in the left column; similarly, if you raise your grade, you can lose that progress if you don't complete a center-column requirement.

**Examples:**

Diana Troy completed everything in the center column, with one exception: she did not want to attend any of the working draft conferences. This lowered her course grade 2/3 of a letter, from a B to a C+. However, she really wanted a B, so she made sure she wrote a Reflection on all three of her essays. This raised her course grade 1/3 of a letter, bringing her back to a B-. (Final reported grade: B.)

Selina Kyle wanted an A in the course. She completed everything in the center column, with one exception: she couldn’t attend the Unit 3 Topic Conference. This lowered her grade 1/3 of a letter, to a B-. However, she attended all three working draft conferences with a reasonably complete draft (raising her course grade 1/3 of a letter); she wrote Reflections on all three of the essay assignments (raising her course grade another 1/3 of a letter); and she wrote Annotated Bibliography entries about two additional scholarly sources (raising her course grade another 1/3of a letter). This raised her grade to an A-. (Final reported grade: A.)

I hope you’ll see that the work that raises your grade is not *extra* work. With the exception of the last item, which is meant to support future students, I’m asking you to do work that will support you, either as you write your essay assignments, or as I offer feedback (or both).

### The grading system

For this course, I will use a "Complete/Incomplete" grading system. In other words, I will not assign points or letter grades to individual assignments. Instead, each assignment will receive one of three "grades":

* **Complete:** If an assignment gets a “Complete,” then it means that you fulfilled the requirements of the assignment.
* **Incomplete:** If an assignment receives an “Incomplete,” then it means that you didn’t fulfill the requirements of the assignment. (Note that the major essay assignments may allow rewrites. Information about that will appear on the assignments.)
* **No grade:** If an individual assignment does not have a “Complete” or “Incomplete,” then it means that (a) you didn’t turn it in by the deadline, or (b) I haven’t yet graded it.

### What does “Complete” mean?

As I said, I will be separating the notion of *quality*from your grade. Instead of grading on how “well written” your essay is, or how “proper” your grammar is, or how “insightful” your argument is, I’ll assign a “Complete” or “Incomplete” based on whether or not you completed the requirements of the assignment.

Some of these requirements are simple to understand. For example, if an essay assignment asks for 1000 words, and you turn in 500 words, the essay would be marked Incomplete. If the assignment assignment requires you to cite at least six sources, and you cite only three, it would be marked Incomplete.

Other requirements are trickier. For example, if the assignment asks you to both **explain and apply** Carol Dweck’s concept of “mindsets” to your experience (that’s Essay 1), and you mention the mindsets without explaining them, that assignment would be marked Incomplete. Or if the assignment asks you to **take a position** on an issue, but you only report on a range of positions without identifying your own, that assignment would be marked Incomplete.

These requirements will be explained in the assignment and identified in a rubric, so they should be reasonably clear. (If you don't know "rubrics" are, don't worry — I'll introduce them during the semester.) However, since some of the requirements are, as I said, trickier, please feel free to contact me if I assign an Incomplete and you don’t agree. I’m happy to talk to you.

### A note on Canvas’s Gradebook

Unfortunately, Canvas doesn't calculate grades based on Complete/Incomplete scores. This creates a real challenge: any calculation that Canvas makes is *wrong*, whether that's points, or a percentage, or a letter grade.

At the same time, the Gradebook can help students keep track of missing or incomplete assignments.

That benefit is important enough that I've chosen not to "hide" the Gradebook. However, be sure to keep that first observation in mind: **please ignore calculation that the Canvas Gradebook presents you.** Only use the Gradebook to keep track of assignments.

This semester, in response to recommendations from last semester's students, I'll be developing a way for you to monitor your progress. I hope you'll let me know what works, or doesn't, as I work with you to develop that process.

### late policy

As I mentioned above, my grading philosophy emphasizes the process of learning. In a perfect world, that would mean that I’d have no late policy at all.

Unfortunately, the world isn’t perfect. I have found — both from my own experience, and from feedback from students — that many students need hard deadlines to succeed, especially in online classes.

So here’s my general pattern for deadlines:

**Initial due date:** Every assignment has a due date that is designed to keep you "on track." This will be the due date that is listed on the actual assignment in Canvas.

**Grace Period:** I know that this class (or even school, more generally) isn't always the most important thing in your life. I know that semesters get busy, and you forget things. (So do I....) I know that things come up — health issues, family emergencies, shifting job schedules, and much more — and you won't always be able to meet that initial due date.

That's why most assignments include a "grace period" — generally one or two weeks, depending on the assignment — during which I'll accept late work with no penalty (and no judgment).

You should do your best to meet the initial due date, as much of this class involves interacting with each other as you work through the concepts and issues that you'll be writing about. Discussion Group Assignments are less useful when you get out of sync in class discussions, for example. It's also best to wrap up one essay before you have to start dealing with the concepts and issues related to the next one.

**If you miss the grace period:** I will not accept work after the grace period has expired. (There's one exception, which I'll mention in a moment.) This isn't meant to be punitive; it's meant to support your success. Putting everything off until the end of the semester only leads to shallow learning and overwhelm. (I know this from other semesters, before I'd put this policy in place.)

The exception: since you need to submit all three essays in order to pass the class, I will accept essays submitted after the grace period. However, they will receive an Incomplete, and will not be eligible for a rewrite.

A couple things I hope you’ll keep in mind, though:

* I don't assign “busy work.” Everything I assign is meant to contribute to what you're learning in the class (and not just the individual unit). So even if you miss the grace period, it would still be useful for you to finish the work for your own understanding.
* You might also use the missed grace period as an opportunity to consider how you might change your planning or schedule to avoid the problem in the future, whether in my class, or throughout your schooling (and beyond!).

### Major essays

Please note how important the three major essays are: **To receive a passing grade in the class, you must submit all three essays**. If you don’t – if you choose not to turn in one or more of the major essays – you won’t pass the class. **This cannot be offset by doing work from the left column.** You must turn in all three essays in order to pass the class.

Further, each major essay that receives an Incomplete will lower your grade by a full letter. However, this *can* be offset, at least to some extent, by doing work from the left column. (This can also be addressed by rewriting the incomplete essay, as explained in the next section.)

#### Rewrites

If you earn an Incomplete on a major essay assignment, you will have an opportunity to rewrite the assignment to meet the requirements and earn the Complete. I'll explain the exact details within the course, but here's the general idea:

* I'll provide feedback about ways that you might revise the essay in order to receive the Complete.
* After you've reviewed that feedback, we'll meet to do two things:
	+ We’ll discuss the feedback. This will provide you the opportunity to ask questions and to run ideas for revision by me; it will also provide me the opportunity to assess how well you've understood my feedback. **Note:** if you don't get the chance to review my feedback before the meeting, we'll reschedule to give you a chance to do so.
	+ We’ll agree on a deadline for the rewrite.

If you submit the rewritten essay by the deadline we’ve agreed upon, I will assess the essay again. If you’ve completed the requirements, I will award the Complete; if not, we can discuss another rewrite – though whether that is possible or not depends on where we are in the semester.

Note that, if you miss the deadline we’ve agreed upon, the Incomplete will stand. If you’ve met the requirements in

### one last thought about grading

This grading system isn’t perfect. As far as I can tell, though, no system is — there are always trade-offs.

In my judgment, the trade-offs from this system are significantly better than trade-offs from others, including more traditional ones. If you’d like to talk through what these advantages are—if you’re concerned (as some students are), or if you just want to understand better what’s going on here — I’m happy to meet with you to talk through it.

I mean that: I welcome your insights, and I’ll consider them as I continue working through these issues.

## Resources

**The Writing and Language Development Center** (WLDC) offers writing tutors, computers, and workshops. In addition to the Marysville center, they usually have a limited presence at the Sutter Center. They also have online tutoring available. You can visit them in the front of the library or on their website ( <https://bit.ly/yc-wldc> ).

Isabela works there! You can arrange to meet with her — or you can meet with a tutor from outside the class (that outsider’s perspective can help, sometimes). Either way, it’s a helpful resource, and everyone should take advantage of it at some point.

**Disabled Students Programs and Services** (DSPS) offers support for students with learning and other disabilities. If you know (or suspect) you have a learning disability, be sure to contact them. There are resources available to support you. You can visit them in Building 1800 or on their website ( <https://yc.yccd.edu/student/dsps/> ).

**The Yuba College Library** has great staff. You can walk in and get help, but they also have an online presence ( <https://yc.yccd.edu/academics/library/> ). We’ll talk a bit more about the library during the course, especially as we approach the research portion.

The **Yuba College Counseling Department** has both in-person and online counselors to help. They can help with a lot of different needs, from academic questions (what classes should I take if I want to go to Chico?) to personal questions (I’m hungry and don’t have any money. Where can I get food?). You can find them in the 100A building or online ( <https://yc.yccd.edu/student/counseling/> ).

## Closing Thoughts

As I’m sure you’ve noticed — perhaps it’s stressing you out a bit! — this course is challenging. To succeed, you’ll need to have (or develop) a high level of self-discipline, organization, and “self-starting.” It’s easy to get behind — and that can lead to feeling overwhelmed, which can lead to procrastination that gets you even further behind, and so on. It’s a nasty cycle. (I speak from experience.)

So: if you find yourself struggling, I hope you will reach out — to me, or Isabela, or to some of the resources listed above. Please don’t think that we’ll be upset, or that we won’t care, or that we won’t want to help. We want you to succeed!