UNAS 1115 01 – Writing Style: Sentence Mechanics
Summer 2015 (1 credit)

Schedule: M T TH – 4:30 p.m. to 6:35 p.m.
Room: Stokes Hall 141N

Instructor: Dustin Lee Rutledge
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Office: Stokes Hall 381S
Office Hours: By appointment

Boston College Mission Statement

Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation’s finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description

From a stylistic perspective, this course examines one of the building blocks of any piece of writing—sentences. Although writing a sentence is often taken for granted, in fact writing even a single sentence involves many choices. For any sentence, usually there isn’t only one way to grammatically structure it, isn’t only one way to arrange its parts, isn’t only one way to word it. This course unpacks important stylistic choices, demonstrating that how a sentence is written determines what meaning it conveys. To better appreciate sentence mechanics, students will analyze the writing style in published articles and posts, and will also complete short writing exercises and assignments and analyze their own writing style. Through this practice, students will learn how to write sentences that are clear and effective.
Course Objectives

1. Students will gain factual knowledge about grammar and grammar’s rhetorical effects by completing reading assignments from the course textbooks.

2. Students will develop the skill of expressing themselves in writing by completing exercises, quizzes, and an exam in which they apply stylistic concepts to analyze and write sentences; and by completing exercises that contextualize these stylistic concepts within the writing process as a whole.

3. Students will demonstrate competency across cultural settings, learning about the impact of culture, gender, and age in writing (and in reading) by completing supplementary reading assignments written by and/or about a diverse group of individuals; and by developing an awareness of the perspectives that they, the students, bring to any reading assignment because of their culture, gender, and age.

4. Students will demonstrate ethical competency, appreciating the inherent ethical implications of writing (and of reading), by completing supplementary reading assignments that, expressive of real feelings and thoughts, invite students’ reciprocal feeling and thinking; and by completing writing exercises in which they practice finding their voices and conveying their voices to readers.

Grading

Grading System: The undergraduate grading system consists of twelve categories: A- (3.67) or A (4.00) for excellent work; B- (2.67), B (3.00), or B+ (3.33) for good work; C- (1.67), C (2.00), or C+ (2.33) for satisfactory work; D- (0.67), D (1.00), or D+ (1.33) for passing but unsatisfactory work; and F (0.00) for failure. Additionally, I (0.00) is given for incomplete work, W (0.00) for official withdrawal from the course, and F (0.00) for dropping the course without notifying the office.

Grading Criteria: Here’s how your coursework will be weighted.

Beginning-of-class Quizzes: 20%

   Except for the first and final meeting, these quizzes—given to make sure students have read their homework—will be given at the start of each class.

End-of-class Quizzes: 30%

   Except for the final meeting, these quizzes—given to assess students’ understanding of course material—will be given at the conclusion of each class.
Participation: 20%

Participation includes students’ homework (i.e. their Discussion posts on Canvas) and their contributions to in-class activities and discussions.

Exam: 30%

Students will take this exam on the final class. The exam is cumulative—a final exam.

Grade Reports: All students are required to log in to Agora online to access their semester grades. Students must use their BC username and password to log in. If your username or password is not known, the HELP Desk located in the Campus Technology Resource Center (CTRC) in O’Neill Library will issue a new one. The CTRC requires a valid picture ID (a BC ID, driver’s license, or passport) for you to obtain your password.

Texts (Required)


Course Policies

Academic Integrity: Students must produce original work in the course and cite any references appropriately. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on exams or assignments, and submitting the same paper or substantially similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work, etc. Please see the Woods College’s complete statement on academic integrity at

http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/schools/advstudies/guide/academicinteg.html.

Attendance: Attendance is an important component of learning; students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive by the beginning of and remain for the entire class period. When an occasion prevents a student from attending class, the student must inform the instructor of the conflict before the class meets and must still meet all assignment deadlines. If a student knows he or she will be absent for a particular class, the student is responsible for seeing the instructor beforehand to obtain assignments.
for that class, for turning in any written assignments and completing any reading assignments by the deadline, and for making up work by getting a classmate’s notes and handouts from the missed class. Attendance counts towards a student’s participation grade; if you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with the missed class. (Types of absences that are not typically excused include weddings, showers, vacations, birthday parties, graduations, etc.) Additional assignments, penalties, and correctives are at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absences from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. In all cases, students will accept the decision of the instructor regarding attendance policies specific to the class.

Consistent with the Woods College’s commitment to creating an academic community that respects and welcomes persons of differing backgrounds, we will make every reasonable effort to allow any student to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. Students should review the course syllabus at the very beginning of the semester and should consult the instructor promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. If asked, the student should provide accurate information about the obligations of observing the particular holiday. It remains the student’s responsibility, however, to complete all class requirements for any class missed due to a religious holiday.

Certain circumstances may necessitate a departure from the class attendance policy. In this case, feel free to contact the Woods College at (617) 552-3900 for consultation.

**Deadlines:** Assignments are due at the start of class. Late assignments will not receive full credit.

**Request For Accommodations:** If you have a disability and would like to request accommodations for this course, please register with either Dr. Kathy Duggan—(617) 552-8093, kathleen.duggan@bc.edu—at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities or Dean Paulette Durrett—(617) 552-3470, paulette.durrett@bc.edu—in the Disability Services Office regarding all other types of disabilities.

**Course Assignments**

This is a 1-credit class that meets for 2 hours and 5 minutes on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from June 8 through June 18. Expect to spend additional time completing homework assignments. Your assignments for the semester are listed below. (Changes to our course schedule—or policies, etc.—may be made at the instructor’s discretion; any changes would be announced.)
Monday, June 8 – Avoiding The Overuse Of Nominalizations.

In class: Style pgs. 30-33, 36-37, 45

“My Encounter With A Bicycle Thief” from The Boston Globe Magazine

Tuesday, June 9 – The 4 Basic Sentence Types; Some Common Grammatical Mistakes: Comma Splice and Run-On; The Writing Process.

Reading due: Writing Analytically pgs. 393-396

Rhetorical Grammar pgs. 61, 71-74, 148-150, 169-171

“Isabella Stewart Gardner Heist: 25 Years Of Theories“ from The New York Times

Writing due: Discussion post on Canvas. (See our class website for details.)

Thursday, June 11 – Parallel Structure; Another Clause Type: The Elliptical Dependent Clause; Important Phrase Types: Participial Phrase, Appositive, Gerund Phrase, Infinitive Phrase; Some Common Grammatical Mistakes: Fragment and Dangling Modifier.

Reading due: Writing Analytically pgs. 401-402

Rhetorical Grammar pg. 53

Rhetorical Grammar pgs. 154-155, 164-168, 179-181, 185-188, 147-148

Writing Analytically pgs. 424-425

Rhetorical Grammar pg. 207

“Highland Kitchen Satiates Somerville Neighborhood’s Cravings“ from The Boston Globe

Writing due: Discussion post on Canvas. (See our class website for details.)

Monday, June 15 – Emphasis: Coordination, Subordination, and Clause Order.

Reading due: Writing Analytically pgs. 398-400

Style 83-85 (continued on next page)
Writing Analytically pgs. 403-406

Style pgs. 153-155

Molly McGaan’s Fake Harvard Rejection Letter

“High School Student’s Faux Harvard Rejection Letter Goes Viral” from The Boston Globe

“Student Behind Faux Harvard Rejection Letter Gets Real One” from The Boston Globe

Writing due: Discussion post on Canvas. (See our class website for details.)

Tuesday, June 16 – Concision; Putting Sentences Together: Cohesion and Coherence.

Reading due: Style pgs. 126-131, 139-140

Style pgs. 67-75

Writing due: Discussion post on Canvas. (See our class website for details.)

Thursday, June 18 – Exam.

Writing due: Practice exam questions

In class: Exam