To: Students Enrolled in English 101 Online/Fall 2015  
From: Dr. Leslie Burnett  
Subject: Orientation Information

Optional Text: *Rules for Writers*  
The texts are available at the COC Bookstore

Welcome to English 101. The purpose of this memo is to welcome you to the course and to alert you to the differences between an online and a traditional course, so that you may make sure that your decision to take this course online is the right one. Your syllabus, posted in your Blackboard course, provides all necessary course information. Please note: This course is 100% online. There are no face-to-face meetings. However, the course follows the schedule for Fall start and end dates. The course cannot be accessed until the first date of the semester.

There are no class meetings and work can be completed at the student’s convenience—within the rigid framework and deadlines provided. An online course certainly offers advantages in terms of flexibility, and for the most part you will be able to tailor the coursework to fit your daily and weekly schedule, while still completing assignments and activities by assigned due dates. **This is not a self-paced course and requires a tremendous amount of discipline, organization, and participation. You will be required to post/respond several times a week, often including evenings and weekends, since the majority of students work full time. Deadlines are followed strictly and no allowances are made for late postings and submissions.**

Moreover, an online course can pose unique challenges that you need to consider, since the course’s flexibility necessitates organization, discipline, and self-motivation on the students’ part. Thus, the first questions you should ask yourself before this course begins are:

1) Can I rely on myself to stay on top of the material, to complete required assignments on time, and to “check in” several times a week with my instructor and classmates?
2) Do I have access to a computer with reliable Internet access and a properly configured web browser?

If you answered “yes” to these questions, then you should be more than able to succeed in an online course. It is also important to mention that with an online course, your commitment involves more than merely submitting assignments electronically on assigned dates—although submitting your work on time is essential to succeeding in the course. You are also expected to be a part of the community that will make up this class. You will correspond with me and your classmates several times a week via the group discussion boards, both posting and responding to comments on all of the readings and other subject matter, and will be expected to
offer editorial feedback on your classmates’ work in progress. You will be required to visit the course site a minimum of 4-5 times a week. You are also required to communicate regularly with the instructor.

In order to begin to create this sense of community, your first assignment is to write a short (1-2 paragraph) biography of yourself which is to be posted by midnight on the due date listed on the first essay assignment handout. See Syllabus and announcements for details.

Finally, at College of the Canyons we are proud of the unique sense of community that we have created here, among faculty, staff, and students. We are committed to extending that sense of community into our online environments, and are pleased to have you join us on this journey. I am looking forward to a productive and enjoyable semester, and to working with you. Please feel free to contact me at leslie.burnett@canyons.edu if you have any further questions about the course or your potential as an online student or if you have any other questions or comments throughout the semester. I will respond to your e-mails promptly, usually within a 24-hour period. If I am going to be unavailable for a longer period of time, I will notify you via the “Announcements” section of the course, where I will post course updates and reminders on a regular basis.

For additional information on online learning at College of the Canyons, as well as valuable tutorials and assessments, please go to:
www.canyons.edu/offices/distance_learning