



Welcome to English 103 Online!  
Sections # 24349 AND 24350 – Spring 2017  
Instructor: Alexandra Dimakos

Hello. My name is Alexandra Dimakos. I will be your instructor for English 103 and I love critical thinking!

**This is not a course syllabus.** Your syllabus, which can be downloaded from your Canvas course site on the first day of the semester (Feb. 6), provides all necessary course information. The following information is to help you understand the scope and perspective of the course and to give you a better sense if this class is right for you.

**Course Description:** English 103 is a 3-unit course which examines the principles of critical thinking as applied to writing and reading arguments on complex issues. This class focuses on close textual analysis, argumentative/persuasive writing, and logical reasoning

**Please note:** This course is 100% online and there are NO face-to-face meetings. The Canvas course site cannot be accessed until the first day of the semester (Feb. 6th at 8:00am PST – Pacific Standard Time). This course requires a great deal of discipline, organization, reading and participation several days a week (and by “several,” I mean 3-4 days a week”).

**VERY IMPORTANT: To avoid being dropped from the course as a “no show”, you must login to the course website on Canvas and complete a discussion board activity by 11:59pm on Feb 6th.** If you do not complete this assignment by the deadline, you will be dropped from the course. Again, the website becomes available for student access at 8:00am on Feb 6th.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** There is a great deal of challenging reading in this course, so please be aware that you may be asked to read anywhere from 20-30 pages a week (sometimes more in one week) from the required textbook IN ADDITION to viewing PowerPoints, handouts, videos and websites if applicable.

**Late Work Policies:** No late work is accepted. However, there is one exception to this rule. I will accept final drafts of essays 24 hours after the deadline, but they will receive point deduction. Specific point deductions for late final drafts will be outlined in the syllabus. Final drafts are the only assignments I will accept late.

**Using Technology:** I understand that technology can be unpredictable (as is life!), but the best approach would be to not wait until the last minute (or even the last hour) to finish an assignment and definitely have a backup plan (or three...or five) in case your wifi decides it doesn't feel like connecting or there's a technological apocalypse of sorts.

**Our Course is available on Canvas (NOT Blackboard):** If you are unfamiliar with using Canvas and need help logging in, you can view several tutorials online here:  
<http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/DistanceLearning/Pages/CanvasAccess.aspx>

**Getting Help:** If you have any trouble logging in, you can visit the TLC at the Valencia campus or

Room 306 at the Canyon Country Campus for assistance. Go to <http://www.canyons.edu/offices/TLC> for hours and contact information.

**Required Textbooks:** The COC bookstore will have the book listed below in stock. Although there are other editions of the texts available, **I will be using, referring to, and assigning pages from the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of this text.** If you have a different versions or editions of these books, it may be difficult or impossible for you to complete assignments and follow along in class. The required texts are:

### **Required Texts:**

- *Current Issues and Controversies* by Sylvan Barnet and Hugo Bedau. **11<sup>th</sup> Edition.** ISBN: 9781319035471

**We will be assigned reading and work after the first day (Feb 6), so you will need your book as soon as possible. You will have assignments based on information in the book after Week 1 of the semester.**

### Basic Required Online Skills:

You will need to have:

- Basic computer literacy, including skills in Internet navigation and basic document creation and handling. At the very least, you should know how to cut and paste, how to copy from one document to another, and how to attach documents to emails.
- Reliable, consistent Internet access with an up-to-date browser. AOL's browser often does not work well with Canvas, so if you are an AOL user, you will need to download another browser to use to access this course (Firefox, Internet Explorer, etc.). In case of technical problems with your computer or Internet connection, you might choose to make use of the computer labs on COC's campus.
- Access to Microsoft Word required (No Rich Text Files - .rtf ). If you are not entirely confident in your computer skills or if anything listed here sounds unfamiliar to you, I highly recommend that you also enroll in Counseling 070 (Distance Learning and Strategies for Success), a one-unit short-term course designed to improve your success in online courses.

Students who do well in online courses tend to share the following qualities:

- They are incredibly self-motivated, consistently meet deadlines and show up to class on time and prepared.
- They are strong, critical readers and communicate clearly and effectively in writing.
- They have strong time management skills.
- They enjoy active, cooperative learning experiences.
- They have reliable access to the Internet (Lack of internet access, poor Internet access or malfunctioning technology – including printers and computer programs – are **not** acceptable excuses for not completing assignments on time. Remember those back up plans?).
- They have basic computer skills, including the ability to cut/copy and paste between documents, send and download email attachments, and create and save documents in

Microsoft Word.

**Course Requirements:** This course meets the IGETC Arts and Humanities requirement for transfer to CSU and UC and therefore requires the same amount of total work hours (including time spent in class) as a regular 16-week face-to-face section.

**Assignments:** Over the course of the class, you should expect to complete anywhere from 2-4 assignments (discussion board responses, activities, and quizzes) per week IN ADDITION to one 4-5-page essay, two 5-6-page essays, and a 6-7-page revision essay (4 essays total for the semester).

**Turnitin.com:** ALL final drafts of your four essays will be automatically submitted to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) when you submit them to Canvas. Turnitin.com will check for uncited material and potential plagiarism in your assignments.

**Expectations:** Please do not take this class because you do not have time in your schedule to take a “real class.” This is a real college class (we’ll be delving into some real college readings and topics – it may even be fun!) that requires the same time commitment as a class that meets face-to-face for 16 weeks.

This is not a class where you can complete work far ahead of your classmates or make up work during the last minutes of the semester. Our class wide online discussion boards will be asynchronous, not synchronous, meaning that you can log in at a time of day convenient to you -- even 3 am. (I won’t be on at 3 am. I’ll be sleeping and dreaming of Shakespearean sonnets or cupcakes, but you’re welcome to sign on whenever you like). However, there are due dates and deadlines for assignments.

**Make-Ups and Absences:** There are no make-ups and no excused “absences” - even with a doctor’s note. An absence is an absence. If you miss an assignment, you cannot make it up. However, if you have an emergency that prohibits you from completing assignments, you must email me immediately so we can discuss your progress in the course and steps to take to ensure the best possible solution. Your prompt communication is imperative!

If you will not be able to participate in this manner, this is not the course for you.

Please feel free to email me if you have any questions regarding the course. I am diligent about checking my email and will respond to your email within a 24-hour time period. I stop checking emails at 10:00pm, and I do NOT respond to emails on Saturdays and Sundays. You can email me on Saturdays and Sundays, but I won’t respond until Monday.

I look forward to working with all of you and helping you succeed in this course. Did I mention I love critical thinking?

Best wishes and see you online on Feb 6th!

Sincerely,  
Professor Alexandra Dimakos

**Office Location:** Valencia Campus, Seco 301

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