Course Description
ENGL 1050 is a 4-credit freshman level course in which students develop their understanding of the ways that writing is situated in both local situations and the mediation of historically-provided tools and practices. Students produce a range of academic and non-academic texts, applying knowledge of composing processes, rhetorical strategies, genre requirements, and textual conventions such as grammatical structure, style, and visual/structural design. Students also learn to analyze and map the different components of literate activity (production, representation, distribution, reception, and socialization) and to produce texts that take into account the complex interactions of these components in specific writing/composing tasks.

Course Objectives
- To learn how to synthesize research and analysis into support for a strong thesis while considering and responding to opposing views.
- To learn how to find quality sources of information through research, both online and in the library, and how to cite and integrate the work and ideas of others ethically.
- To learn how to identify and then use the elements of a genre in order to become a more successful writer.
- To learn how to avoid cliché phrases and mechanical errors while crafting organized yet dynamic sentences and paragraphs appropriate for your genre, audience, and voice.

Required Course Materials:
- *Readings for Writers* (Custom) Edition: 3rd
  - Author: Bedford-St. Martins
  - ISBN: 9781319035099
  - Publisher: Bedford Saint Martin’s (MPS)
  - $40.00

- *Easy Writer* (Custom) Edition: 5th
  - Author: Lunsford
  - ISBN: 9781319034726
  - Publisher: Bedford Saint Martin’s (MPS)
  - $26.75
• Eli Review Student Subscription (Eli Review 6mth Access)
  o Author: Drawbridge
  o ISBN: 9780692476123
  o Copyright Year: 2015
  o Publisher: Drawbridge, Inc
  o $33.50
  o Purchase at the campus book store.
  o We will be using Eli Review extensively in this class. Without it, you will not be able to participate in class, which will negatively affect your grade. I expect you to purchase your Eli Review subscription by Wednesday, January 20th, which is when we will start using Eli Review in class. If you have not purchased your subscription by that time and we start using Eli Review in class, I may ask you to leave so that you can go buy it.

• $5 copy fee card, available for purchase at the bookstore. I will enter your grade for your final draft for Project 1 as a zero until you provide me with your copy fee card.

Note: Both Readings for Writers and Easy Writer have been recently updated. In particular, we will be using an updated version of Readings for Writers that is new this year. You will almost certainly need to purchase new versions from the bookstore; used versions will most likely be out of date. Also, the prices above are subject to change.

Additional Resources:
• http://lucasjmccarthy.com: I will be updating this site on a regular basis with your current assignments and readings for class. The main class calendar will be at this site, and you will need to check it routinely.
• http://elireview.com/: We will be using this site almost every day in class. You will need to buy the subscription detailed above.
• https://elearning.wmich.edu/: You will be turning in certain assignments through our class site on Elearning. I will also update the site with your grades and attendance records on a regular basis. You must submit documents as a pdf in the appropriate Dropbox for the assignment or project. You can generally save your work as a pdf by selecting “save as” in your program’s menus or choosing to “print to pdf” in your printer options. If you submit multiple versions of the same thing, I will look at whatever the last submission is unless you instruct me otherwise. We will look at the Elearning website together in class, but it is your responsibility to know how to access the site and submit your work.
• http://libguides.wmich.edu/english1050: WMU library research guide
• http://bedfordstmartins.com/easywriter: Easy Writer online

Course Calendar
All the requirements and due dates for your assignments, projects, and required readings will be detailed at the class calendar on my site: http://lucasjmccarthy.com/engl-1050-calendar-spring-2016/. That calendar will serve as the official record of what is due and when. I will be updating and revising the calendar as the semester continues. I suggest you bookmark it, because you will need to look at it constantly.
Course Requirements
Four major projects:

- PROJECT 1, Persuasive Writing: You will write a letter to the editor of the Western Herald.
- PROJECT 2, Autobiographical Essay: You will compose a personal narrative using details from your own life.
- PROJECT 3, Unfamiliar Genre: You will write a research report on a genre I will randomly assign to you, and you will create your own original work that demonstrates the elements of the genre.
- PROJECT 4, Research Essay: You will compose a persuasive argument that synthesizes your research and your own original analysis.

The requirements and grading system for each project will be provided in detail when each project is assigned.

Assignments: There will be regular assignments (generally one per class) that you will be required to do outside of class. You will need to check the course calendar on a regular basis for your assignments. When calculating your final grade, the assignments portion of your grade will be based on the average grade you received for all the assignments over the course of the semester.

Classroom Participation: I will be assigning each student a participation grade at the end of the semester based on my observations of each student’s contributions within the classroom. To do well in this class, you will need to be present on time, be prepared, and be an active participant in our classroom community. Your classroom participation will be graded on all the activities we may do in the classroom, such as class discussions, classroom writing activities, and peer review of another student’s work. Each of you will be called on to discuss the readings, and no one can expect to hide in the back of the room.

Much of your classroom participation will involve interacting with your fellow students through Eli Review. I will be monitoring the quality of your engagement as a factor in your classroom participation grade.

Our classroom is a safe place, and all of us are expected to be respectful and supportive of the work of others. Your classroom participation grade will be based in part on whether you treat your classmates with the dignity and respect they deserve. Hate speech, bullying, or disrespectful treatment of others will not be tolerated.

Please expect others in our class to read your work. Furthermore, I may ask you to share your work with the class or may discuss your work myself with the rest of the class. While our classroom is a safe place, I suggest you write about topics you feel comfortable sharing with others.

Final Grade
Your final grade will be calculated from the following weighted components:
• PROJECT 1, Persuasive Writing: (10% of your grade)
• PROJECT 2, Autobiographical Writing: (15% of your grade)
• PROJECT 3, Unfamiliar Genre: (25% of your grade)
• PROJECT 4, Research Essay: (30% of your grade)
• ASSIGNMENTS (average assignment grade): (10% of your grade)
• CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION: (10% of your grade).

Check System
For much of your work, you will be given a check mark, rather than a more critical grade. Before we can achieve our full potential, personal growth is often filled with moments when we fall short of expectations. Therefore, I will often be grading based on your effort and not the product. Failure can be celebrated if we see it as an opportunity for growth!

Under the check system, most of you will generally receive a check for completing assignments.

• Check: Student has completed the work assigned with a good faith effort to do his or her best work.

However, some of you may receive the following instead:

• Check Minus: Student completed the work assigned without showing a sufficient effort to do his or her best work.

• Incomplete: Student failed to complete the work assigned or turned in work of insufficient quality to deserve credit.

For calculating your final grade, the check system will be converted to grade percentages as follows:

• Check: 100% (A)
• Check Minus: 73% (C)
• Incomplete: 0% (F)

Percentage Grades
I will grade a few important activities more rigorously, giving you a precise percentage grade instead of a check. The only work in this class I will grade this way is the following:

• The Project 1 Persuasive Essay Final Draft
• The Project 2 Autobiographical Essay Final Draft
• The Project 3 Unfamiliar Genre Research Report Final Draft
• The Project 4 Research Essay Final Draft
• Classroom Participation

Late Work
Unless stated otherwise, assignments and project materials are due by 11:59pm on the day listed on the class calendar. **However, you are expected to finish any assigned readings prior to the start of the class on the day listed.**

Late work is discouraged and will negatively affect your grade.

Each project assignment sheet will detail the consequences of turning in project materials late.

You can turn in any late non-project assignments at any time prior to the final exam period, but you will only be able to earn a check minus. However, you are still expected to demonstrate a good faith effort to do your best work in order to receive a check minus on late work. Nonetheless, a check minus is better than a zero, and you are encouraged to complete all late non-project assignments before the final exam period.

**UNLESS SPECIFICALLY INDICATED ELSEWHERE, NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE END OF THE CLASS FINAL EXAM PERIOD. ANYTHING NOT TURNED IN BY THAT TIME WILL BE GRADED AS A ZERO.**

**Grade Scale**

Your final grade will be based on the following percentages:

- A (4.0): 93-100%
- B/A (3.5): 88-92%
- B (3.0): 83-87%
- C/B (2.5): 78-82%
- C (2.0): 73-77%
- D (1.0): 60-67%
- D/C (1.5): 68-72%
- F (0): 59 and below

At the end of the semester, I will round each student’s grade to the nearest percentage. Example: a 72.513 calculated semester grade (a possible D/C) will be adjusted to a 73% (C).

**Attendance Policy**

As active participants in the process of writing and revision, you need to attend class every day. Rather than track a grade for each in-class activity, your final grade is based on the premise that you were present to complete the activities. You are therefore only allowed a **maximum of three absences** before grade penalties will be assessed. For every absence after the third, irrespective of cause, your overall final grade drops by **ONE LETTER GRADE** for each additional absence. For example, a student with 5 absences whose overall grade at the end of the term is 93% (an A) will drop 2 letter grades (A and BA). Thus, the final grade will be a B.

I will be taking attendance at the start of every class. If you fail to be in class on time when I take attendance, you will be marked absent. If you arrive late to class, you will need to stay after class to persuade me to change your record from absent to present. I will not discuss your late arrival during class. I dislike having to give directions again and/or make the rest of the class wait because someone has arrived late. Because arriving late disturbs the class, you should always be in class on time if you want to ensure being
recorded as present. If you leave early, you will need to persuade me on why I should not change your attendance for the day to absent. Being present entails being present from the moment class begins until the moment the class ends.

Except for exceptional circumstances, I generally do not excuse absences. Requests for being excused, such as for serious illness or team activities, should be accompanied with documentation and/or contact from other university officials.

Because attendance involves more than merely being physically present, if you seriously disturb my classroom, refuse to participate during class, or otherwise violate the text or spirit of university policies or the policies contained in this syllabus, I will mark you as absent.

A Note
WMU is committed to ensuring that all students succeed. As part of this initiative, I will be reporting individual student attendance problems to WMU’s registrar’s office. If you have missed more than three classes or if I see a pattern of poor attendance that may jeopardize your success in this class, I will report this to the registrar. If the registrar’s office determines that a student is missing multiple classes or appears to be in jeopardy of failing a class or multiple classes, they may contact your residence hall director, resident assistant, or other student support person at the university.

Computers
You are required to have computer access for work and correspondence for this class. If you do not have a personal computer, there are computer labs on campus (Dunbar 4214).

We will often be doing work in class, and having your own laptop could be useful. If you have a laptop, you may bring it to class. However, you may only use your laptop when I give you permission to do so. Your laptop cannot not distract you from classroom discussions.

Having your laptop open when I have not given you permission to do so will negatively affect your classroom participation grade and may result in you being marked as absent.

For those of you who do not have a laptop or do not choose to bring it to class, university computers will be made available for you during class.

Cellphones
Cellphone use is strictly prohibited in our class. I expect all cellphones to be turned off. If I see you using a cellphone, I will only ask you once to put it away. If I see you using it again that class or your cellphone becomes a routine distraction each class, I will ask you to stay after class to discuss whether I should start marking you as absent due to cellphone use. I will not count you as attending class if you spend the time interacting with your cellphone instead. Please be aware that trying to hide that you are using your cellphone under your desk or behind your body does not work. I know what you are doing.
If for some reason it is necessary for you to check a cellphone during class, you will need to ask for my permission beforehand. My response will generally be “no,” except in special situations such as if you are a parent who needs to stay available for your minor children.

**Email**
You are encouraged to contact me via email should you have any questions or concerns. Please allow me at least 24 hours to respond. I cannot guarantee I will see your email about your paper sent 4 hours before it is due!

**Pen and Paper**
We will be writing frequently in class. Please come prepared with paper and a pen or pencil.

**Assignment Format**
I expect all assignments and project materials to be submitted in Times New Roman, size 12 font, using proper MLA format, the details of which are provided in your *Easy Writer* book.

**Academic Honesty Policy**
You are responsible for making yourself aware of and for understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate Catalog that pertains to Academic Honesty. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity, and computer misuse. If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with me if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

**Plagiarism**
Definition: Plagiarism is intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one’s own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the ideas, information, etc. are common knowledge.

Plagiarism can result in failing this course and even in being dismissed from the University. We will discuss how to avoid plagiarism in more detail during the semester.

**Writing Center**
The Western Michigan University Writing Center is a free consultation service for all WMU students, where experienced writing consultants help writers of all levels and all abilities. Consultants help writers to determine strategies for effective communication and to make academically responsible choices at any stage in the writing process and on assignments in any field of study. Both appointments and drop-in sessions are available. The Writing Center is located in 1343 Ellsworth Hall. To learn more information,
including hours of operation, and to make an appointment, visit the website: www.wmich.edu/casp/writingcenter.

**Students with Disabilities**
Western Michigan University provides academic assistance for Students with Disabilities, including the technical, academic, and emotional support necessary to achieve academic and personal success. Course related assistance and academic accommodations are provided to eligible students with documented disabilities. Services may include advocacy, reader services, interpreters, alternate exam administration, and note takers. Adaptive equipment is also available. The link for web information regarding services is [http://www.dsrs.wmich.edu/](http://www.dsrs.wmich.edu/). Students are also encouraged to contact one of the following offices:

- **Disabled Student Resources and Services (DSRS)**, 387-2116, serves students who have documented physical and psychiatric disabilities, as well as students with documented learning disabilities and related emotional issues.
- **The Office of Services for Students with Learning Disabilities (OSSLD)**, 387-4411, serves students who have documented learning disabilities and related emotional issues.
- **The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE)**, 387-8880, acts affirmatively on behalf of qualified persons who have disability related compliance issues in accordance with Federal and State guidelines and regulations.

NOTE: If you have questions regarding access to the materials for this course, you should contact me immediately.

**Smoking**
You are not permitted to smoke anything in class, even e-cigarettes.