

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
OFFICE OF EXTENDED STUDIES**

**English 508-941 —GRAMMAR AND STUDENT WRITING 2009
Fall 2009**

Instructor: Ben Varner

Dates: **October 26 – December 11, 2009**

Credits: 3

This is an online course in which teachers or prospective teachers of language arts will study relationships among grammar, punctuation, and student compositions. The discussion will involve listserv activity, bulletin board posting, and possible synchronous conversation. There will be a culminating workshop paper.

Course Description:

Teachers or prospective teachers of language arts will study relationships among grammar, punctuation, and student compositions and discussion will involve listserv activity, bulletin board posting, and possible synchronous conversation.

IDLA-ENGLISH STUDENT MAJORS CANNOT ENROLL.

Juniors and Seniors with a cumulative grade-point average of 3.00 or higher may be admitted to 500 level courses but should call OES at 1-800-232-1749 or stop by Michener L50 to register in order for OES to verify the information. (2007-08 UNC catalog, pg. 57)

Objectives:

1. To investigate whether there is a relationship between a study of grammar and punctuation to successful elementary, high school, or community college student composition.
2. To develop strategies regarding instruction of grammar and punctuation within the K-12 or community college classroom
3. To review fundamentals of grammar and punctuation.

Required Text:

Susan Hunter and Ray Wallace. *The Place of Grammar in Writing Instruction*. New Hampshire: Boynton Cook, 1995.

Ben Varner. *English 508: Grammar, Punctuation, and Composition*. [Purchase these books online at <http://www.thebookstop.com>]

Online Listserv Participation:

You will be required to engage actively in online listserv discussions regarding grammar, punctuation, and the relationship of those two elements to composition.

Paper:

There will be a ten to fifteen-page research paper on the relationships among grammar, punctuation, and successful composition, especially as these elements pertain to K-12 or community college students. References may be acquired from the Internet.

Grammar and Punctuation Exercises:

There will be a number of exercises dealing with grammar and punctuation to illustrate the relevance or non-relevance of these elements to clear writing. These exercises must be written out completely with corrections and then sent to me in a simple e-mail, not within an attachment.

Assignments Due:

The workbook exercises must be completed by the end of each week. Send them to me at my personal e-mail addresses: ben.varner@unco.edu or benvarner@comcast.net. Do not post them on the listserv. The workshop paper is due no later than the last day of the course. Send it to me as a Microsoft Word attachment only. No late papers will be accepted.

Course Grade: Your workshop grade will consist of the following components: (1) The research paper (50%), (2) Listserv activity and bulletin board contributions (25%), and (3) Grammar and punctuation exercises (25%). The workshop paper must be completed. A grade of "incomplete" may be given only for special circumstances and after prior discussion with me.

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 59 and below

Student Evaluation:

All students enrolled in the workshop must complete a Student Satisfaction Evaluation form at the end of the workshop.

Disability Support Services

Students who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the UNC Disability Support Services at 970-351-2289 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Honor Code

All members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: *Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility*. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community's academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

Weekly Assignments**Week One:**

Discussion of Past Attitudes toward Grammar and Punctuation Instruction

Cheryl Glenn: "When Grammar Was a Language Art"

Jon Olson: "A Question of Power: Why Frederick Douglass Stole Grammar"

Gina Claywell: "Reasserting Grammar's Position in American College Composition"

Submit the following pages from the workbook:

1-6 (A Grammar Test) [Send just the letter answers.]

12 (Complete Sentences) [Write out all sentences.]

19 (Comma Splices and Fused Sentences) [Write out all sentences.]

Week Two:

Continued Discussion of Past Attitudes toward Grammar and Punctuation Instruction

Richard Boyd: "Grammatical Monstrosities: Sacrificial Violence in the Late Nineteenth-Century Usage Handbook"

Garry Ross: "The 1945 NCTE Commission on Teaching the Grammar/Writing Connection"

Submit the following pages from the workbook:

23-24 (Subject-Verb Agreement) [Write out all sentences.]

33-34 (Pronoun Agreement) [Write out all sentences.]

38 (Pronoun Reference) [Write out all sentences.]

Week Three:

Present Concerns about Grammar and Writing

John Edlund: "Grammar as System Versus Language in Use"

Joan Mullin: "The Use of Grammar Texts: A Call for Pedagogical Inquiry"

R. Baird Shuman: "Grammar for Writers: How Much Is Enough?"

Submit the following pages from the workbook:

44-45 (Pronoun Case) [Write out all sentences.]

53-54 (Adjectives and Adverbs) [Write out all sentences.]

65-67 (Commas) [Write out all sentences.]

Week Four:

Continued Discussion of Present Concerns about Grammar and Writing

Bushman and Ervin: "Rhetorical Concepts of Grammar: Views from Writing-Emphasis Course Instructors"

Brown, Boswell, and McIlvoy: "Grammar and Voice in the Teaching of Creative Writing"

Wendy Bishop: "Teaching Grammar for Writers in a Process Workshop Classroom"

Submit the following pages from the workbook:

68-70 (Commas) [Write out all sentences.]

86, 88-90 (Other Punctuation) [Write out all sentences.]

98 (Proofreading) [Write out all sentences.]

Week Five:

Future Places of Grammar in Writing Instruction

David Blakesley: "Reconceptualizing Grammar as an Aspect of Rhetorical Invention"

Irene Brosnahan and Janice Neuleib: "Teaching Grammar Affectively"

Submit the following pages from the workbook:

118-119 (Dangling and Misplaced Modifiers) [Write out all sentences.]

124-125 (Parallelism) [Write out all sentences.]

130-131 (Comparisons) [Write out all sentences.]

Week Six:

Continued Discussion of the Future Places of Grammar in Writing Instruction

Eric Hobson: "Taking Computer-Assisted Grammar Instruction to New Frontiers"

Neil Daniel and Christina Murphy: "Correctness or Clarity? Finding Answers in the Classroom and Professional World"

Submit the following pages from the workbook:

120-121 (Dangling and Misplaced Modifiers) [Write out all sentences.]

126-127 (Parallelism) [Write out all sentences.]
132-133 (Comparisons) [Write out all sentences.]
148-149 (Passive and Active Voice) [Write out all sentences.]
154-160 (A Grammar Test) [Send just the letter answers.]

Research paper due.

WITHDRAWALS AND REFUNDS: In accordance with University and Colorado Commission on Higher Education policy, if you drop from this class after the course starts you will be assessed a withdrawal fee. The drop fee is pro-rated up to the half-way point in the class. You are legally responsible for payment of full tuition once 50% of this course has been concluded. In order to be eligible to receive any refund of tuition, you must contact the Office of Extended Studies at 1-800-232-1749 to formally withdraw from your class. Your refund, if applicable, will be based on the date of contact with our office. Withdrawals received via telephone during non-business hours will be processed and dated on the next working day. Failure to notify us will result in UNC tuition being owed even though student did not attend or complete the coursework.