

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
OFFICE OF EXTENDED STUDIES (1-800-232-1749)
SUMMER 2012**

English 508-940—GRAMMAR AND STUDENT WRITING

Instructor: Ben Varner

Dates: June 25-August 3, 2012

Credits: 3

Course Description:

This is an online course in which teachers or prospective teachers of language arts will study relationships among grammar, punctuation, and student compositions. Responses will involve discussion board postings. There will be a culminating workshop paper.

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. *Writing Supplement: Complete Edition*.. [Purchase these books online at <http://www.thebookstop.com>]

Recommended Text: David Mulroy. *The War Against Grammar*. Boynton/Cook, 2003.

Discussion Board Participation:

You will be required to engage actively in discussion board discussions regarding grammar, punctuation, and the relationship of those two elements to composition. Be sure to log on to Blackboard daily.

Paper:

There will be a ten to fifteen-page (3,000 - 4,500 words) workshop 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. This paper is required. Blackboard uses “SafeAssign” (a plagiarism detection program) for all papers submitted.

Grammar and Punctuation Exercises:

There will be weekly 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 6:00 PM on Sunday of each week. Send them to me at my personal e-mail address: ben.varner@unco.edu. 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 weekly exercises or late papers will be accepted.

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

- A note on grades:

Because of grade inflation, many students expect to earn “B’s” or “A’s,” considering “C’s” to be equivalents of “F’s.” I disagree with this assessment.

Here is how I grade:

“A” = Superior work (90-100%)

“B” = Very good work (80-89%)

“C” = Good, average work (70-79%)

“D” = Barely passing work (60-69%)

“F” = Failing work (0-59%)

Library Services for Distance Education and Off-Campus Students: Obtaining Materials from UNC Libraries

Off-campus students residing within 50 miles of the UNC campus are required to come to the library and borrow materials in person. Students residing more than 50 miles from campus may request that materials be delivered to them. All requests must include complete citations. We will supply materials from the UNC Libraries, as well as materials from other libraries obtained via Interlibrary Loan. Articles will be delivered via email. Books will be mailed first class. Delivery time by U.S. postal service is approximately 1 week. It is the responsibility of the student to return books by the date due. UNC does not pay return postage on books. For information on document delivery, call (970) 351-1446.

Requests for materials may be made through the following methods:

Online: <http://www.unco.edu/library/forms/distancerequest.htm>

By email: library.ocp@unco.edu

By fax: (970) 351-2540

Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting disability accommodation for this class must inform the instructor giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

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.

UNC's Policies

UNC's policies and recommendations for academic misconduct will be followed. For additional information, please see the Dean of Student's website, Student Handbook link <http://www.unco.edu/dos/handbook/index.html>

Notice

The Office of Extended Studies reserves the right to cancel or reschedule courses based upon enrollment. Enrolled students will be contacted with information of any change.

Student Satisfaction Evaluation

Participants will be asked to evaluate the workshop for instructors' knowledge, interest and enthusiasm as well as providing additional information on classes or topics which you would like to see developed as a future offering from UNC.

Course Withdrawal Information

In accordance with University and Colorado Department of Higher Education policy, if you drop this class after the course starts you will be assessed a drop 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 (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 you do not attend or complete the coursework.

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.]

Workshop paper due.