Course Summary

Course description
Freshman Composition is an introductory course in academic writing designed to develop your ability to write clearly, logically and effectively in order to prepare you for writing at the college, and ultimately, professional levels. This is a writing course and you will be writing every week. Our goal will be to engage with the ideas of others to produce “inquiry” papers, not persuasive or argument essays exactly, but rather papers that focus on exploration and analysis. We will be working directly on incorporating, in appropriate and interesting ways, references to a variety of types of texts as evidence for your analysis. The key word for this semester is analysis.

We will be using a combination of texts and your own observations to investigate the question of what it means to be a college-level writer. One of the ways we’ll explore that question is to follow a Writing About Writing approach where you capture, then analyze, your experiences with writing, considering how they connect with those of your classmates and other published accounts. While there are many more aspects to who you are as a writer than just being enrolled at CCSU, your role as a college student is crucial when it comes to determining the types of writing situations you will encounter. That’s why we’ll be spending the semester investigating it.

English 110 is linked to your FYE 101 class. For the most part, these will be separate experiences but, at times, we will discuss both personal growth and academic adjustment issues as they relate to the task and discipline of writing - there are many connections that can be made, such as with the topics of procrastination, memory, stress, etc. In addition, we will occasionally use ENG 110 course material as examples during FYE 101 activities.

Required books and materials
Texts available at bookstore: They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*  
Essays on Writing (Essays)

*Always bring They Say/I Say to class.

Texts available on Blackboard: Some readings will only be available electronically. You need to print each of these on your own, read them before the assigned date, and bring them to class so you can refer to them during discussions and in-class writing activities. Set aside approximately $15 for printing costs if you will be using the CCSU printers tied to the BlueChip system.

Attendance policy
It is expected that you will be at each class meeting, on time, prepared, and ready to participate. I take attendance at each class period and if you miss more than five class periods, for any reason, you will not pass this course. Please note that missing online Peer Review and/or a scheduled conference counts as a class absence (changes in scheduled conference times can only be made in person). In addition, arriving late to class is disruptive and frankly disrespectful. Thus, two late arrivals (i.e., after I have begun class) will count as one absence.
Academic Honesty policy
All students are expected to demonstrate integrity in the completion of their coursework. Academic integrity means doing one's own work and giving proper credit to the work and ideas of others. It is the responsibility of each student to become familiar with what constitutes academic dishonesty and plagiarism and to avoid all forms of cheating and plagiarism. Students who engage in plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct will face academic and possibly disciplinary consequences. Academic sanctions can range from a reduced grade for the assignment to a failing grade for the course. From a disciplinary standpoint, an Academic Misconduct Report may be filed and a Faculty Hearing Board may impose sanctions such as probation, suspension or expulsion.

For further information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please consult the Student Code of Conduct (http://www.ccsu.edu/StudentConduct) and the Academic Misconduct Policy (http://www.ccsu.edu/AcademicIntegrity).

Course Objectives
This course is not just an introduction to college-level writing but also to college-level reading and thinking. By the end of this semester, you will be able to:

- Participate in literate and informed conversations within a variety of academic, professional, civic, and cultural communities.
- Use the composing process to develop and support your ideas.
- Analyze the ideas and viewpoints of others and communicate that analysis clearly and effectively.
- Think and communicate at a college-level to produce a paper that a college-level audience would find readable and thoughtful.
- Adapt your own writing process to meet the needs of a variety of assignments.
- Produce the writing required in the rest of your college career.

Course Approach: Writing About Writing
Writing About Writing is an approach to teaching courses like English 110 that takes advantage of decades of research into how people (especially college students) actually produce writing. It is partly based on the understanding that it is difficult, if not impossible, to predict every type of writing you will encounter in your college career, let alone your post-college experiences. What can be predicted, however, is that you will be asked to write, and to write in a variety of genres and for a variety of audiences.

Self-reflection and guided practice are the hallmarks of this approach because the opportunity to think back on an experience, and to try a task again after receiving feedback, is the best way to learn. In addition, Writing About Writing relies on readings and assignments based in the Writing Studies, or Composition Studies, field of research.
Course Content and Requirements

Assignment Breakdown
I hope that we’ll spend less time this semester worrying about the letter grades attached to assignments than concentrating on whether our writing is worth reading and sharing with others. Since I know that, no matter what I say, you are concerned about grades, this chart shows how each of the different sorts of writing you’ll do in this class contributes to your final grade.

| Class Participation (both online with discussion board posts and in-class) | 15% |
| Blogs (short writing assignments: Best 5 of 6 total)* | 15% |
| First Essay* | 10% |
| Second Essay* | 20% |
| Third Essay* | 15% |
| Fourth Essay (Research-based)* | 25% |

* These assignments will be submitted via Blackboard’s Assignments button and are due on Fridays by 3 pm, except for Essay 4, which is due on Wednesday 12/14 by 3 pm.

Note: In order to earn a passing grade in this course, all four of the major essays must be submitted.

I have loaded a file onto Blackboard that details all of the specific guidelines that apply to all of your papers, including the headings, etc. Please print and review this file carefully before you turn in any assignment.

Final grade averages will be determined using the following values:

| A= 4.0 | B+ = 3.3 | C+ = 2.3 | D+ = 1.3 |
| A- = 3.7 | B = 3.0 | C = 2.0 | D = 1.0 |
| B- = 2.7 | C- = 1.7 |

Blackboard Learn Pilot
This semester we will be part of the pilot transition from Blackboard Vista to Blackboard Learn. The four most important things you need to know about this transition are

1. During the relatively slow first week of the semester, be sure to spend some time exploring the new interface. Self-paced videos are available from Academic Technology to help with this.
2. You need to use and check your CCSU email address since that’s the one tied to Blackboard.
3. When you log in to Blackboard through CentralPipeline, be sure to use the “Blackboard Learn” button.
4. Glitches and unexpected difficulties are likely to occur. If you see something strange on the system, or don’t see what you expect, let me know and ask me questions as soon as possible, via email. Please also contact the Help Desk to see what assistance they can provide. Do not wait until the next class, after a deadline has passed, to tell me “Blackboard didn’t work.”
Readings
Assigned readings need to be completed before the class meets. You should bring either the book or a printout of the day’s readings to each class. The Course Schedule included with this syllabus indicates what you need to bring on which day; I recommend that you have it with you every day. In addition, you need to bring your copy of *They Say/I Say* to each class session.

These readings provide the context for virtually every assignment and there will be a discussion board entry, tied to the readings and posted via Blackboard Vista, required each week (except for when essays are due). Because of this, you should practice “active” or “rhetorical” reading, annotating each text as you read. These annotations will include a one- or two-sentence summary of the article, a bulleted list of the most important 3-5 points, and 2-3 responses to specific passages. In addition, marginal notations (not just highlighted passages) are expected for each reading. Making this effort while you read will save you time later when you begin writing your papers.

If necessary, reading quizzes will be administered at random intervals to check for understanding.

Blogs
These short, 300-word assignments are designed to communicate your thinking in a vehicle that is less formal than an essay but more structured than a discussion board post. You will complete six blogs, covering a variety of topics and using a variety of “genres” over the course of the semester. The highest-scoring five will be included in your course grade. In addition, most of these assignments will be visible to your classmates so you will be reading each other’s posts as a regular part of the course expectations.

Essays
In the first three essays you will submit this semester, you will be responding to the texts we have read as well as to class discussions. These four to five page papers will also incorporate (though not rely solely on) personal experience and will not require (or in some cases allow) outside research (which is a requirement for Essay 4). I will be looking for you to engage with a question or concept based on the conversations we have encountered during class and then provide a considered, thoughtful response based on that analysis. Your fourth essay will be an extended reflection that requires research into sources outside of those assigned in class.

As I read your essays, I will be evaluating them based on the criteria described in the rubric loaded on Blackboard (and defined on the next page). My comments on your papers will be focused on how you can improve the essay specifically and your writing in general. I will not be copy-editing nor marking every grammar error. If you need additional assistance with proofreading your work against the rules of edited academic English, please make an appointment to see me. In addition, your essay grade will also take into account your participation in the writing process, which includes online Peer Review and any conferences that may be required. Not participating completely in Peer Review will result in a full-grade (e.g. A to B) reduction to the applicable essay.
Draft Option: For the first two essays of the semester, you will have the option of submitting to me, on the due date, either a FINAL version to be graded or a DRAFT version to be reviewed for revision. In order to be considered a draft, however, the submitted file must meet the minimum word count as well as the other fundamental requirements of the assignment (sources, citations, etc.). If you choose this option, the submitted draft will not receive a grade, nor a complete evaluation. Instead, I will provide my impressions of the paper’s strengths and weaknesses, as well as some advice for revision via an MP3 file. Keep in mind, though, that this will not be a blueprint for everything you would need to do to get a “good” grade. Once you receive the file back, you will have five days to revise and submit the paper as a “Final.” This means that you will be working on revising one essay while we have moved onto new material.

Qualities of Effective Academic Writing

Thoughtful Ideas: Essays should contain ideas that, if not completely “original,” nonetheless go beyond stock responses, common wisdom, or ideas that have been thoroughly discussed in class. Thoughtful essays suggest that the writer has engaged in reasoned, critical analysis and creative thinking about the topic in a way that is appropriate to the task at hand.

Controlling Idea: Essays should have a controlling idea (often described as a thesis, a claim—or series of connected claims) that readers can identify clearly and that can be adequately developed within the assigned task. The controlling idea should demonstrate that the writer is aware of and willing to engage with the complexity of ideas, resisting quick, even clichéd, closure of the question under analysis.

Demonstration of Controlling Idea: Support is provided to demonstrate and/or explain the central point of the essay. Engagement with multiple voices and perspectives is essential to proper support, which may take a number of forms, such as giving examples that illustrate the point, citing relevant authorities, or referring to passages in a text being analyzed. Essays should demonstrate a synthesis of other voices with the writer’s own in order to make connections among ideas and concepts.

Effective Organization: Essays should follow a plan of development that is clear and appropriate for the particular rhetorical task. In addition, essays should show the relationships among claims or among different elements of support, so that at every point in an essay readers know where the argument is heading and how the current topic is related to the main idea.

Mature and Effective Style: Sentences should be of varied length and format; word choice should be appropriate and precise, avoiding triteness. Style should reflect a level of syntax and diction consistent with the language employed in contemporary discourse about issues and ideas.

Attention to Conventions, Readability, and Manuscript Preparation: Essays should follow conventions for college writing, including standard form for punctuation, spelling, verb tense, agreement, and other expectations for academic papers.
Preliminary Assignment List (as of 8/29/12)

Unit One: Writing Metaphors

Discussion Board Entry (due 9/7): Introduce yourself to the class by telling us ten things about yourself. Be sure to cover where you are from, why you are in college, your experience with and perceptions of writing, and a little bit about your life outside of school.

Discussion Board Entry (due 9/14): Draft two brief (3 to 4 sentences) summaries of the Tannen’s essay: one “Good” that follows the advice from chapter 2 of They Say/I Say and one “Bad” that violates that advice in some obvious (maybe even humorous) way.

Blog 1 (due 9/14; 300 words)
For your first blog assignment, think back on what you were told to expect from college-level writing. Describe that understanding with specific detail (where you developed it, what it looks like, etc). Then, compare it to the They Say/I Say description. How do the two definitions similar? How are they different? What are your initial responses and reactions to Graff and Birkenstein’s ideas? You should begin to practice incorporating the templates from They Say/I Say into your writing with this assignment. After you have posted your entry, be sure to come back and read your classmates’. You will be referencing them in your first essay.

Discussion Board Entry (due 9/21): Using two different “I Say” response modes (Agree, Disagree, Agree/Disagree Simultaneously), craft two short (2 to 3 sentence) responses to one of the texts we’ve encountered in this unit so far. A template directly taken from They Say/I Say should be included somewhere in each response.

Blog 2 (due 9/21; 300 words)
For this second blog entry, provide an anecdote (a story, told in narrative form) of a previous writing experience that feels significant to you. Then analyze how that experience is likely to influence how you approach writing now.

Discussion Board Entry (due 9/28): What are your plans for Essay 1? What are you most concerned about? What advice and/or feedback would you find helpful?

Essay 1 (due 10/5; 1500 words; Draft Option)
Thinking back on the texts we’ve read (both published and classmate-generated), propose and then explain your own metaphor for academic writing. Be sure to place your metaphor, and so structure your analysis, within an identifiable They Say/I Say “pair.”

More detailed assignment sheets to follow for the four essays.
Unit Two: Writing as a Task

Discussion Board Entry (due 10/12): Draft two brief (3 to 4 sentences) summaries of the Hjortshoj’s article: one “Good” that follows the advice from chapter 2 of They Say/I Say and one “Bad” that violates that advice in some obvious (maybe even humorous) way.

Blog 3 (due 10/12; 300 words)
For this entry, capture the actual, not planned or idealized, process you used to complete the first essay. What did you actually do? When? Where? What tools did you use? After you have described the physical process, reflect on how well it went. What would you do differently if you could? What can you learn from the experience for future essays, not just in this course but also in your other classes now and in the future? You can reference ideas from the readings in this unit regarding writing but most of this entry should be your own reflection on the experience of Essay 1.

Discussion Board Entry (due 10/19): Using two different “I Say” response modes (Agree, Disagree, Agree/Disagree Simultaneously), craft two short (2 to 3 sentence) responses to one of the texts we’ve encountered in the second unit. A template directly taken from They Say/I Say should be included somewhere in each response.

Discussion Board Entry (due 10/26): What are your plans for Essay 2? What are you most concerned about? What advice and/or feedback would you find helpful.

Blog 4 (due 10/26; 300 words)
Take your first essay, and any other writing you’ve submitted this semester and re-proofread it, looking for formatting, usage, spelling, and other mechanical errors in edited academic English that you didn’t catch the first time. Compile a list of your “common errors” and then analyze what “slips through” your proofreading filters. Your post should include your top 7-10 errors, plus 300 words of analysis.

Essay 2 (due 11/2; 1500 words; Draft Option)
Analyze how you and your classmates produce writing, using the actual Essay 1 processes captured during this unit. Use a They Say/I Say pair to put your mini-analysis in conversation with a previous study or studies.
Unit Three: Writing Concepts

Discussion Board Entry (due 11/9): Draft three separate They Say/I Say pairs: one for Christensen’s article, one for Brooks’s post, and one for Baron’s post (from class on 3/29).

Blog 5 (due 11/9; 300 words)
Compare the process you used to produce Essay 2 with that you followed for the first. Explain the differences and similarities using terminology and concepts we encountered in the second unit. Reflect on the success of any changes you made and on how useful you expect them to be in the future, both in this class and in later courses.

Discussion Board Entry (due 11/16): Describe, in your own words, the characteristics of an effective They Say/I Say pair.

Blog 6 (due 11/16; 300 words)
In this entry, summarize the feedback you received on your first and second essays—without mentioning the grade—and analyze how elements of your process affected the final product that led to that feedback. In other words, work backwards from the result (your reader’s reaction) to the actions you took that led to each result. You are particularly interested in looking for the effect that any changes in your process had on the final products. This post will be submitted via a feature in Blackboard Learn that will keep it private so your classmates won’t see it.

Essay 3 (due 11/23; 1200 words in two parts)
Choose one of the following concepts from our conversation regarding writing process in Units 2 and 3 and explore it using a clear They Say/I Say pair: Discovery, Rituals, Proofreading, Felt Sense, Writing as a Conversation, or Anxiety/Emotions.

Unit Four: Reflection and Research

Essay 4 (due 12/12; 1800 words)
Look back on the entire semester and reflect on your journey as a writer from your First-Day Essay through now. Then present and analyze the key writing concept from Essay 3 in two ways; first, an academic analysis built around a They Say/I Say pair that responds to the texts we’ve encountered in this class. This portion of the essay will require you to incorporate a response to outside research. In other words, you will be responsible for finding another “They Say” text to add to the mix for your “I Say” response. The second part will be a letter of advice to next year’s students regarding your writing concept.
## Course Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UNIT ONE: WRITING METAPHORS</strong></td>
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<td>8/29</td>
<td>Last day for Drop/Add</td>
<td>9/7</td>
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<td>Introductions</td>
<td>TS/IS Preface and Introduction</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Distribute Syllabus</td>
<td>Vetter (<em>Essays</em>)</td>
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<td>First Day Essay</td>
<td>Aronowitz (<em>Essays</em>)</td>
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<td>Introduce Blogs 1 and 2</td>
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<td>9/3: No Class</td>
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<td>Labor Day</td>
<td>TS/IS</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Chs. 1-3</td>
<td>Board post</td>
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<td>Signed contract due</td>
<td>Blog 1</td>
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<td>9/10</td>
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<td>TS/IS Chs. 1-3</td>
<td>Tannen (<em>TS/IS</em>)</td>
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<td>Blog 1</td>
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<td>9/17</td>
<td>9/19</td>
<td>9/21</td>
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<td>TS/IS Chs. 4-5</td>
<td>Writing Center visit</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Godwin/Goldberg (one BB file)</td>
<td>Board post</td>
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<td>Introduce Essay 1</td>
<td>Blog 2</td>
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<td>9/24</td>
<td>9/26</td>
<td>9/28</td>
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<tr>
<td>TS/IS Chs. 6-7</td>
<td>Essay 1 Roundtable</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Blog 1 analysis in class</td>
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<td>Board post</td>
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<td>Rubric Review</td>
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<td>10/1: No Class Meeting</td>
<td>10/3</td>
<td>10/5</td>
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<td>Online Peer Review</td>
<td>Revision Day (bring drafts to class)</td>
<td>Essay 1</td>
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<td>Mandatory Conferences</td>
<td>Complete rubric review</td>
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<td><strong>UNIT TWO: WRITING AS A TASK</strong></td>
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<td>10/8</td>
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<td>TS/IS Ch 8</td>
<td>Perl (BB)</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Hjortshoj (BB)</td>
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<td>Introduce Blogs 3 and 4</td>
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<td>Blog 3</td>
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<td>10/15</td>
<td>10/17</td>
<td>10/19</td>
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<td>Lamott (<em>Essays</em>)</td>
<td>TS/IS Ch 9</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Wyche (<em>Essays</em>)</td>
<td>Murray (<em>Essays</em>)</td>
<td>Board post</td>
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<td>Introduce Essay 2</td>
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UNIT THREE: WRITING CONCEPTS

11/5
Christensen (Essays)
Brooks (BB)
Baron, “Comma” (BB)
Spring 2013 registration begins

11/7
Lunsford and Lunsford (BB)
Introduce Essays 3/4

11/9
Discussion
Board post
Blog 5

UNIT FOUR: INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

11/26
MLA prep
Nelson (BB)
Essay 4 Roundtable

11/28: No Class Meeting
Research Day
Mandatory Conferences

12/5
Final Class
Peer Review of Essay 4

“Conference” Presentations during Finals Week
Essay 4 due Wednesday 12/12 at 3 pm

Note: This is the plan for the semester as of August 29. Due to the dynamic nature of writing instruction, aspects of the course, such as the schedule and assignments, may change as needed.
Additional Resources

Blackboard Vista
I have loaded many documents onto Blackboard Learn that give you a better sense of what I am looking for from you this semester. These cover everything from how to format your essays to my stance on cell phones (basically, turn them off when you come to class). There is too much detail in them to spend class time reviewing but please do take the time to review this information so we are all on the same page. If you have any questions about anything in this syllabus or in those documents, please ask me in class, via email, or in a separate conference.

In addition, Central Connecticut State University provides the following services to all students.

CCSU Writing Center
Tutors are available in 115 Willard Hall to provide you with extra help with your writing. You can make an appointment either by calling 832-2765 or stopping by the Center.

Computer Labs and Help Desk
The primary lab is the Marcus White Computer Lab (located in the Marcus White Annex). Hours for the semester are posted outside. In addition, the CCSU webpage lists the location and hours for other labs scattered all over campus. The Help Desk is the first line of technology support and can be reached at 860-832-1720 or techsupport@ccsu.edu.

The Learning Center
The Learning Center, located in 101 Willard Hall (phone: 832-1900), will develop an individual study plan with you, can provide content area assistance, and will review strategies for improving your overall study skills. Online tutoring is also available.

University Counseling and Psychological Services
CCSU Counseling and Wellness Center (205 Marcus White Hall) can provide confidential advice and counseling to all students free of charge. You can contact this group at 832-1945 or visit their website (http://www.ccsu.edu/counseling/).

Office of Student Affairs
Student Affairs, located in Davidson Hall (room 103), can provide assistance and information for students on a range of issues and concerns. You can contact them 832-1600.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
Please contact me privately to discuss your specific needs if you believe you need course accommodations based on the impact of a disability, medical condition, or if you have emergency medical information to share. I will need a copy of the accommodation letter from Student Disability Services in order to arrange your class accommodations. Contact Student Disability Services, room 101-04, Willard Hall if you are not already registered with them. Student Disability Services maintains the confidential documentation of your disability and assists you in coordinating reasonable accommodations with your faculty.
How English 110 Works

Homework (Encounter Conversation)
- Read
- Annotate

Class Participation (Extend Conversation)
- Discuss
- Write
- Reflect

Preliminary Analysis (Capture Conversation)
- Discussion Boards
- Blogs

Analysis (Enter Conversation)
- Collect
- Reflect
- Analyze
- Contribute Something New

Putting the Pieces Together

Analysis (Essays)
Syllabus Contract - Student Copy
(Do not sign—Print and sign the copy on Blackboard Learn and bring it to class on 9/10)
Freshman Composition: Fall 2012

I have read the course syllabus and the practices, procedures, and ground rules available on Blackboard Learn and understand the following:

It is my responsibility to come to each class period prepared to actively participate in the discussion of the day’s readings and with any other assigned work completed.

I can only miss five class sessions for any reason, including illness, family emergency, athletics, or registration problems. On my sixth absence, I will automatically fail the course.

Arriving late to class is disrespectful; every second late arrival counts as an absence. In other words, if I am late six times, I will have accumulated three absences.

If I am sending text messages, fall asleep, or am in any other way obviously disengaged from the class activities, I will be counted as absent for the day and may be asked to leave.

Peer Review is a critical element of the writing process in this course. If I do not fully participate in this online activity, not only will my grade for the applicable paper be reduced a full step but I will also be counted absent for that class session.

There is a graduated late policy in this course: there is no penalty for the first late or missing assignment; the grade drops a half a step (A to A-) with each late day (a 24-hour clock that begins at the deadline) for the second; the grade drops a full step (A to B) with each late day for the third; any subsequent late papers will not receive credit.

In order to pass this course, I must submit all four of the major essays.

Being a writer in the 21st century requires the ability to manipulate applicable technology. Therefore, it is my responsibility to learn how to properly format MS Word files, use Blackboard Learn, etc. Any technology glitches or questions are my responsibility to resolve using the support services available at CCSU.

Email (CCSU address) and Blackboard Learn are the primary means through which my professor will provide information outside of class sessions. It is my responsibility to check both frequently and to follow professional standards of courtesy, editing, and proofreading in my use of each.

There are many resources provided via Blackboard Learn for this course and it is my responsibility to follow all practices and procedures available there.

Any exceptions to any of these policies will be made solely for compelling reasons on a case-by-case basis, and only at the discretion of my professor.

Student name: _______________________
Signature: __________________________