

Nancy Murray

Assistant Professor of Academic Literacy

Writing Fellows Training Program Portfolio Reflection

May 17, 2020:

Taking the Writing Fellows Training Program has helped me overcome several challenges that have been plaguing me throughout my teaching experience. One of which is the fact that my assignment instructions often assume my student understand certain things that they may not. The program helped me to focus on clarity in my assignment writing so that the student can refer to the instructions for all of the answers to questions that might come up for them. I revised the instructions for the new government unit I taught this semester. I found that when the students turned in the essay it was clear that they all misunderstood the objectives of the assignment.

The understood the essence of the assignment but not the specifics. When I re-read my instructions, I realized that the problem was not in their willingness, but in my instructional clarity where the cause of much of the errors lay.

I was also able to work on rubric. Mine have changed myriad times over the course of my teaching. I keep trying to find the perfect rubric, but I realize that it is not possible. The best I can hope for is the perfect rubric for each assignment. In my portfolio, I tried a few different takes on the rubric. One I incorporated right in the instructions. Another I designed with the example in the Writing Fellows program as my model. Because the assignments are very different, it is fitting that the rubrics be as well. The one thing that should not be different is that they must be easy for the students to understand exactly what is expected of them.

I added a rationale to one of my assignments, too, because I realize that if the students have a clear understanding of why they are doing the assignment, how it relates to their lived experience, they are more likely to invest time and energy into getting it right.

I am already teaching a writing intensive class, but this program was helpful to me in that it showed me how to condense my assignments, and to organize the grading points into a clearer picture of what is expected of the students. I am most proud of the clarity that I was able to insert into my essay assignment. I believe it is a much stronger document now than it was before I came into the workshop.

I enjoyed reading about the ways in which other professors are incorporating writing assignments into their classrooms. I was able to glimpse into some ideas that I haven't thought of, and I will most likely incorporate some of their ideas into my own approach. That's the beauty of a program like this, isn't it?

**The Community College of Baltimore County, Spring 2020**

**School of Liberal, Academic Literacy and Languages**

***Academic Literacy 052-EC2  
(CRN: 22206)***

**I. Basic Course Information**

A. *Instructor's Name:* **Nancy Murray**

B. *Instructor's Contact Information:*

*Email:* [nmurray@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:nmurray@ccbcmd.edu)

C. *Instructor's Office Hours:*

Monday and Wednesday: **Monday and Wednesday from 2:30 to 4:30 and Friday 10:15 to 12:15.**

***What are office hours?*** These are times where you can find me in my office. These hours are reserved just for you to come and ask me any questions you have. You do not need to make an appointment – just come. If these hours don't work for you, feel free to call me to make an appointment for another time, or to ask me your question via telephone or text. The idea is to make sure you have answers to any and all questions that come up.

D. *Department or School Phone Number:*

Academic Literacy Center Administrative Assistant: 443-840-2335

E. *Class meeting days, times and locations:*

	<b><i>Day:</i></b>	<b><i>Time:</i></b>	<b><i>Room:</i></b>
<b>CLASS:</b>	Monday, Wednesday, Friday	09:05-10:00	SSRV 200
<b>LAB:</b>	Monday and Wednesday	10:10-11:05	SSRV 210

F. *Student Out of Class Work Expectations*

The U.S. Department of Education is mandating that students are to be made aware of their school work expectations outside the classroom. The standards are: For every credit hour for Face-to-Face class (with or without lab), the student is expected to have 2 hours of work outside of the class (i.e. reading; homework; study time). This class is 5 credits; therefore, students are expected to work 10 hours outside of class.

G. *Materials:*

1. Three-ring binder dedicated to this class, blue or black pen, pocket folder.

## II. Course Goals Overall

### A. *Course Objectives:*

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. use pre-reading strategies to facilitate understanding of texts;
2. read actively and critically, and effectively use textual annotation;
3. identify and deconstruct abstract ideas found in complex academic texts;
4. formulate and explain valid inferences based on information from texts;
5. write and evaluate arguments for validity and credibility;
6. synthesize ideas and information from multiple sources and varying points of view;
7. write well-organized, unified, coherent essays with a clear, purposeful thesis statement;
8. support ideas with adequate and varied evidence;
9. tailor language to address a specific audience; and
10. detect and correct major grammatical and mechanical errors.

### B. *Major Topics:*

1. Academic literacy and academic discourse
2. The reading-writing process
3. Organization
4. Critical reading, writing, and thinking
5. Reader response
6. Using source materials
7. Writing and evaluating arguments
8. Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage
9. Audience awareness
10. Essay organization and development

### C. *Rationale:*

**ACLT 052—5 billable hours, 0 credits—Academic Literacy** provides intensive instruction in critical thinking, reading, and writing as will be required for English 101 and other 100-level courses. Using theme-based readings from a variety of genres, coursework will emphasize independent reading of complex academic texts, critical response to ideas and information in academic texts, and writing essays that integrate ideas and information from academic texts.

This is a writing-focused course, which means that we will use writing as a tool for thinking about the course content critically and will focus on how writing can be a supportive tool in engaging in the reading process. There will be variety of assignments with a writing component this semester, and those assignments will be revised as needed until each unit ends and then the best work will be for the grade.

## III. Evaluation

### A. *Requirements:*

To successfully complete the course, a student must have a minimum average of 70%.

B. *Grading:* Students' final grade will be computed as follows:

Homework/Quizzes/participation	20%
Discussion Boards	20%
Essays	40%
Final Portfolio	20%

Students will earn a final grade of:

**A—90-100%**

**B—80-89%**

**C—70-79%**

**D—65-69%**

(Students who earn a 65-69% can enroll in a standalone ACLT 053 **OR** ALP: ENGL 101 and ACLT 053 co-requisites model.)

**F—64% and below** (Not eligible for ENGL 101)

**FX--Insufficient attendance** (Not eligible for ENGL 101)

#### IV. Policies and Procedures

A. *Attendance Policy:*

Attendance and class participation are necessary for the successful completion of this course. The instructor will adhere to the following rules.

- Attendance is required for both lecture and lab portions of this course.
- Students enrolled in a class which meets two times a week is permitted four absences and fails after five absences unless they meet with the instructor and complete the plan worked out in the meeting.
- Students who are absent from class, for whatever reason, are responsible for obtaining information covered in class and assignments announced in class. This should not be done during class time but should be done before the start of the next class.
- Students are responsible for submitting, on time, any assignments announced while they are absent. No Exceptions.
- Absent students are responsible for submitting any assignments due on the date of their absence. Such assignments are to be submitted through Blackboard Messages. No Exceptions.
- The Academic Literacy Department makes no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. The Department's concern is the number of absences, not the reasons for the absences.
- In case of absence, student should phone or email the instructor before class.
- Unless excused by the instructor, students who arrive late or leave early will be treated as absent.
- At the instructor's discretion, absence from the class may be the basis for academic failure.

B. *Course-Related Policies and Procedures:*

- Blackboard and CCBC Email Accounts

Blackboard is an integral part of this course and will include most materials and assignments for the course. Students will need to access BB regularly for any updates and online assignments. In addition, CCBC email will be used as a method of communication between the professor and the students. All students must set up and regularly check their CCBC email accounts.

- Proper Classroom Behavior

The goal of classroom activities is to provide the greatest educational benefit to all students. Class participants should expect and provide mutual respect and consideration in words and actions. Student behavior in class “should not interfere with the rights of others or with the educational process.” An instructor has the right to dismiss a student from class for behavior that he/she judges to be disruptive to the teaching and learning of other students in the class.

- Students will not report to class under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Students will arrive on time, remain in class and be alert for the full session.
- Students will come to class prepared with all required materials and assignments.
- Students will not engage in non-instructionally related conversations with others during class. This includes text-messaging!
- Students will not use foul language nor speak to the instructor or other students in a disrespectful manner.
- Students will turn off cell phones, tablets, MP3 players, and personal computers during class unless the instructor specifically permits their use for instruction.
- Students will not bring food or drink into the lab. Capped drinks only are allowed in the classroom.
- Students will not cheat or aid others in cheating on any assignment. If guilty, BOTH parties will receive zeros for the assignment. Second offenses will result in referral to the Office of Student Conduct.
- Students will turn in all assignments at the beginning of class on the due date. NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.
- Submissions which do not meet the minimum requirements for the assignment will receive a grade of zero.
- Students will arrive to class promptly on test days. NO MAKE-UP TESTS WILL BE ALLOWED UNLESS DETERMINED BY THE INSTRUCTOR.

**STUDENTS WHO FAIL TO COMPLY WITH ANY OF THE ABOVE RULES MAY BE ASKED TO LEAVE THE CLASS. STUDENTS WHO ARE DISMISSED FROM CLASS WILL BE CONSIDERED ABSENT AND MUST SCHEDULE A CONFERENCE AND MEET WITH THE INSTRUCTOR BEFORE HE/SHE WILL BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO CLASS.**

### C. College-Wide Policies

- For college wide syllabus policies such as the Code of Conduct related to Academic Integrity and Classroom Behavior or the Audit/ Withdrawal policy, please go to the *syllabus tab* on the **MY CCBC** page.

- *Contact Information for Course Related Concerns*

Students should first attempt to take concerns to the faculty member.

If students are unable to resolve course-related concerns with the instructor, they should contact Sharon Hayes, Academic Literacy Coordinator at 443-840-1491 or [shayes@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:shayes@ccbcmd.edu).

*The CCBC Student Concerns Policy can be found in the 2011-2012 CCBC Catalog at [www.cbcmd.edu/catalog12/senatepolicies/Student\\_Concerns\\_Policy.html](http://www.cbcmd.edu/catalog12/senatepolicies/Student_Concerns_Policy.html)*

### V. Calendar

- Last day to withdraw with a 50% refund - Friday, February 14
- Last day to withdraw with a "W" grade – Friday, April 3
- Spring Break – No Classes April 6 - 13
- Last day of classes for Spring semester – Friday, May 8
- Final Exam Week – May 11 - 17

### E. Course Calendar: {Subject to Change or Revision—especially with weather. ☺}

<b>Week 1</b>	Intros. / Syllabus review. Diagnostic in-class writing sample. (Essay 1:) Pre-writing. This may be the most important week of all.
<b>Week 2</b>	Essay 1 review. Mindset
<b>Week 3</b>	Mindset
<b>Week 4</b>	Mindset
<b>Week 5</b>	Mindset (Essay 2)
<b>Week 6</b>	Essay 2 Review. Transition to What's the point of voting?
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Mid-term Conferences</b> ( <i>mandatory attendance</i> ) During these conferences, I will apprise students of their progress, discuss a plan for success in the class, and have them sign off.
<b>Week 8</b>	What's the point of voting?
<b>Week 9</b>	What's the point of voting?
<b>Week 10</b>	What's the point of voting?
<b>Week 11</b>	What's the point of voting? ( <i>Essay 3</i> ) Media literacy lesson
<b>Week 12</b>	

	Essay Review -Media Literacy- Analysis
<b>Week 13</b>	<i>Thanksgiving Week</i>
<b>Week 14</b>	Portfolio (Essay 4)
<b>Week 15</b>	<b>Conferences and final grades</b>

**This syllabus may be changed with notification to the class.**

*Now, more than ever, the people are responsible for the character of their Congress. If that body be ignorant, reckless, and corrupt, it is because the people tolerate ignorance, recklessness, and corruption.* James A. Garfield

#### Final Assignment

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_, 2020 by Midnight

Submit finished assignment as a word document in Blackboard assignment titled: VOTING

**THIS ASSIGNMENT HAS TWO DISTINCT PARTS TO IT.**

In the first part of your final assignment you will write a formal letter and insist that your representatives vote in a way that supports you and your community's needs. First:

Go to the website: <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/> and identify a bill that interests or concerns you which is currently in some stage of the process of becoming a law.

- Click on the bill and identify who sponsored the law and what its status is.
- Learn what you can about it. There are tabs on the top of the website that help you break it down. They are labeled: [Details](#) • [Text](#) • [Study Guide](#)  
Review them before starting to write.
- Identify where the bill is in the process. For example: passed the House and on the way to Senate; Introduced (1<sup>st</sup> step), etc.

**When you feel you have a pretty good understanding of what the bill is trying to accomplish, and where it is in the process, go back to your notes and get the contact information for your representatives in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. You are going to write them a letter telling them what you expect from them when they vote for the bill in either the House or Senate.**



If the bill you selected is just introduced, then write to your representative in the House of Representatives. If it has already passed the house, write to your Senators, and ask them to either support the bill or not to support the bill.

- Be sure to address them as The Honorable Representative \_\_\_\_ or The Honorable Senator \_\_\_\_\_.
- Be sure to identify yourself and **what voting district** you are writing from.
- Be sure to explain clearly that you are writing about the specific bill. Use the correct, full title of the bill, and state who introduced it to Congress.
- Include a specific detail about the bill that feels most important.
- Provide a brief but specific personal story about how this bill would affect your life.
- The letter should have at least three substantive body paragraphs.

#### FINAL ASSIGNMENT PART TWO:

Write a **three to four paragraph** reflection about what this unit and the final assignment was like for you.

- What did you learn about the process and your role in it?
- Would you be likely to write to your representatives again? Why, or why not?
- Use information from two of the common readings and be sure to cite your sources using all three steps to cite sources in MLA format.

This part of the essay should be written to an academic audience in MLA 8 Formatting.

There should be brief review of the unit for those who did not take the class.

You must reference (quote) at least two of the readings we went over in class in order to reinforce what you are saying in your writing.

You must introduce and cite your sources according to MLA 8 guidelines.

Be sure to also cite the information you pull from the website. You can find the citation information in the tan box at the bottom of the website page.

Note: An example of formal letter format can be found in Helpful Handouts on Blackboard.

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**When you feel you have a pretty good understanding of what the bill is trying to accomplish, and where it is in the process, go back to your notes and get the contact information for your representatives in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. You are going to write them a letter telling them what you expect from them when they vote for the bill in either the House or Senate. Do you want them to support it, or to oppose it? If they are already voting the way you want them to, thank them.**

If the bill you selected is just introduced, then write to your representative in the House of Representatives. If it has already passed the house, write to your Senators, and ask them to either support the bill or not to support the bill.

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## VOTING UNIT FINAL ASSIGNMENT RUBRIC

Total: 100 points broken down in two parts.

### **60 points for the letter. Points will be awarded according to these criteria:**

- Following instructions thoroughly: up to 10 points.
- Using proper format and language to address the representative, and uses complete, well-structured sentences: up to 10 points.
- Introducing yourself and including your voting district: up to 10 points.
- Identifying the bill by proper title and who sponsored it: up to 10 points.
- Stating some main points addressed in the bill: up to 10 points
- Including a personal story that relates to the bill: up to 10 points.

### **40 points for a thoughtful and thorough reflection. Points will be awarded according to these criteria:**

- Is at least two full paragraphs written in MLA 8 format: up to 10 points.
- Includes a thoughtful reflection on what you learned in this process: up to 10 points.
- Includes a relevant quote from one of our readings: up to 10 points.
- Cites sources appropriately: up to 10 points.

## **Discussion Board Rational:**

It is important in academic writing, as well as in the professional world, to be able to give and take feedback and constructive criticism, but many of us never learn how to do it in the most positive and helpful way. The discussion board posts, and more importantly, responses to peers, is a great place to learn and practice these essential skills while also mastering the tools required for academic writing such as taking a position, stating an argument, backing up your position with evidence, and citing all sources. The discussion board is, if you let it be, the most helpful way to learn the craft of writing and communicating in a professional and academic way.

**Original Discussion Board Grading Policy:** Every discussion board is worth 25 points.

Up to 10 points are awarded for the original post. I will look for full sentences, correct spelling, and most importantly, thoughtful responses to the prompts. A thoughtful response will summarize the idea, use a quote from the reading to support the idea, and connect that idea with the theme, or use it to answer the discussion prompt.

Up to 5 points will be awarded to every response you offer to your classmates (minimum of 3). Your responses should be thoughtful, helpful and constructive. Saying, "I agree" is not a constructive response. Saying, "I agree because ..." and giving examples from the reading that support the author's idea is a constructive response because it gives the classmate something else to think about. A constructive response would also point out if the classmate has missed something. "Great post! Don't forget to use capital letters at the start of a sentence."

## **DUE DATES:**

The main post in your discussion boards are always due before the start of the next class, but the earlier you do it, the better your chances of getting into the HALL OF FAME.

The responses to at least three of your classmates are due before the following class.

**NOTE:** I will occasionally select examples of excellence to put into the Hall of Fame to hold up for the rest of the class to learn from.

**Here is an example of a 10 point response to the prompt that made it to THE HALL OF FAME:**

In Kate Evans book *Threads From Refugee Crisis*, Evans and other volunteers have been waiting to be able to donate and provide aid to refugees in the Dunkirk camp. Evans and the others were excited to finally be allowed access to the camp because the cops have had a siege limiting the volunteers' access. Their smiles turned upside down when they arrived to the camp and discovered "The cops have gone in, in force." and "Kicked all international volunteers off site" (p.118). Evans felt defeated saying "What can we do?" her friend Jet hopelessly responds "Nothing." (p.118). The cops eventually let in volunteers and the supplies they brought with them, mission accomplished.

On pages 140 and 141 Evans shows readers short stories from the refugees and things they went through in their home country. This allowed the reader to understand their mindsets, for example one refugee says "The day I left my country, I was filled with sorrow."(p.141). Evans also gave examples of the horrors such as the refugee who had people taking turns beating him "until the shovel broke."(p.140). Along with these short stories Evans inserts a message she received claiming the refugees "are chancers trying to game the system." (p.141). Evans then proposes to "Reopen asylum-processing office in Calais, and find out." (p.141).

**Here is a real example of a great peer response that made it to the HALL OF FAME:**

"Liz, this was a good response! Congrats. I really like how you incorporated quotes into your responses, but don't forget to cite the page numbers in your in-text citation.

About what you wrote, I feel sure that if any of us were in that situation and others were told to give a response regarding this, they would feel pity and sad too. Because the amount of trauma those people went through was unbearable. I also feel like if I had the power to remove those people from those camps I will, and I would establish them in comfortable and safe environments."

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

FINAL GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_ out of 20 = \_\_\_\_\_

## Final Assignment Rubric

	4: Exceptional	3: Strong	2: Adequate	1: Minimal
Following Directions	Part one formal letter and part two reflection both formatted properly. All points of assignment met and mastered.	Most of the assignment requirements met, many of them mastered.	Met minimum requirement on all points.	Did not meet requirements of many points of the assignment.
Mechanics	All sentences are written with clarity and care, appropriated spelling and punctuation, and varied structure. All paragraphs are an appropriate length.	Most sentences are written with clarity and care, appropriated spelling and punctuation, and varied structure. Most paragraphs are an appropriate length.	The ideas come through, but the sentences are often missing structure, proper spelling, and/or correct punctuation. Paragraphs do not all meet the required length.	The ideas do not come through because of too many sentence structure, spelling, and grammar issues.
Ideas and Content	Letter has a well stated main idea (thesis) supported by credible evidence that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the bill it references; a relevant personal anecdote to reinforce your position, and a direct request for specific action. The reflection is thoughtful and thorough in answering all prompts.	Letter has a well stated main idea (thesis) supported by some evidence that connects to the ideas of the bill, and a direct request for specific action. The reflection is thoughtful in answering most prompt questions.	Letter has a well stated main idea (thesis) that mentions the bill and attempts to address why it matters. The reflection answers the prompts in a basic way.	Letter lacks a main idea or information about the bill. Personal anecdote is missing or not relevant. Reflection does not meet the minimum requirements.
Referencing and citing sources	Assignment uses two quotes from our common readings as well as	Assignment uses some quotes but not all that are required, and the quotes are	Assignment uses some quotes from our common readings and cites	Assignment is missing supporting evidence and so

	information from a third source to support the main ideas, and cites those sources using all three steps for citing per MLA 8 Instructions (Introduction, in-text citations, work cited page)	cited using all three steps of the MLA 8 citation instructions. (Introduction, in-text citations, work cited page)	them using some of the three steps for citing sources per MLA 8 instructions, but not all.	also missing citations.
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ACLT 053

Discussion Board Scoring Tool

Unit 3: Why Bother to Vote.

6 discussion boards worth 25 points each.

TOTAL POINTS: \_\_\_\_\_

	Discussion Board Original Post: Full sentences 1 pt. Correct spelling 1 pt. Thoughtful responses to the prompt. 5 pts Evidence: 2 pts. Citations: 1 pt.	Peer Response 1  Thoughtful: 2 pts. Helpful: 2 pts. Specific: 1 pt.	Peer Response 2  Thoughtful: 2 pts. Helpful: 2 pts. Specific: 1 pt.	Peer Response 3  Thoughtful: 2 pts. Helpful: 2 pts. Specific: 1 pt.
Discussion 1 Due date _____				
Discussion 2: Due Date _____				
Discussion 3: Due Date _____				
Discussion 4: Due Date _____				
Discussion 5: Due Date _____				
Discussion 6: Due Date _____				

PEER REVIEW ASSIGNMENT AND RUBRIC

This assignment is worth 30 points. 15 points for the questions, and 15 points for the paragraphs.

Read the author’s essay out loud to them so they can hear when their writing was more difficult to read. Then answer the following questions and write a review of the author’s work. You must bring this to your professor and present your impressions of the author’s work before the end of class for the grade.

Essay Author’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewers Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- Underline the thesis of the essay. Is it clearly written with strong controls? Circle one:  
Yes                  No

- What are the controls?

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- Put a star next to each reference to our readings. How many are there? \_\_\_\_\_

- Did the quotes fit with what the author was talking about? Why, or Why not?

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- What are the three steps to citing a quote?

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_

- Did the author use all three for each quote? Circle one: YES      NO
- Did the conclusion reinforce the thesis? Circle one: YES      NO



