

ENGLISH 150: College Newspaper SYLLABUS and COURSE CREDIT INFO

Section J (Thurs., 12:30 to 1:20 p.m., Room #2951) *Truman College, SPRING 2018*

Instructor: Benjamin Ortiz, Assistant Professor
Office: Room #2737
Hours: Monday & Wednesday 8:20 to 9:20 a.m. /
Tuesday 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. / Thursday 11-Noon
(...also by appointment, per your request and teacher availability...)

Phone/E-mail/

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→ **English 150 Description and Objectives**

Registration for English 150 consists of signing up to earn college credit for working as a staff member of Truman’s *Uptown Exchange* student publication. The *Uptown Exchange* is a copyrighted public forum for open expression and is not a laboratory publication — in other words, it’s not a “class project” but a media organization run under professional journalistic guidelines. (See the *Uptown Exchange* handbook for full info on newspaper operations.) As a public forum, Truman’s student newspaper is free and independent from control by any city or state employee or Student Government member — student staff members collaborate to produce content that is a product of their own work and decision-making.

All Truman students are welcome to participate as extra-curricular staff members of the *Uptown Exchange*, and enrollment in English 150 also awards one credit to those students seeking formal coursework in journalism – students may enroll in College Newspaper over four separate semesters, for a total of four credits.

Working at the newspaper provides valuable experience in producing a publication under the professional standards and practices of a typical news organization. Students who successfully complete English 150 will gain specific training as well as general education in the world of journalism, worth putting on your resume. Moreover, you will start to appreciate firsthand the importance of journalism for our democracy, freedoms, community life, and intellectual spirit.

→ **Required Text for English 150**

Kanigel, Rachele. The Student Newspaper Survival Guide. 2nd ed. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

The text is available for purchase online, and two copies are on reserve at the library.

→ **Summary of Learning Outcomes**

Students successfully earning credit for English 150 will be able to

- collaborate professionally as news-organization team members
- demonstrate ethical professional behavior in a specialized area of journalism and business operations in general
- contribute toward production of journalism under professional guidelines and ethics
- value the place of journalism in creating community, democracy, and individual freedom
- identify options for a future in journalism and related careers, from PR to marketing, etc.

→ General Education Goals

Earning English 150 credit meets the following Truman General Education Goals:

- The student exhibits social and ethical responsibility and is aware of her or his place in the global community.
- The student communicates effectively in both written and oral formats.
- The student demonstrates the ability to think critically, abstractly, and logically.
- The student gathers, interprets, and analyzes data.

English 150 credit also meets the following City Colleges of Chicago General Education Goals

- GOAL 1 (...communicate effectively in written and oral forms)
- GOAL 2 (...demonstrate the ability to gather, interpret, and analyze data)
- GOAL 3 (...demonstrate the ability to think critically, abstractly, and logically)
- GOAL 4 (...demonstrate the ability to perform effectively in the workplace)
- GOAL 5 (...exhibit ethical and social responsibility in a global community)
- GOAL 6 (...learn independently).

→ Assignments/Grades

The instructor will determine the final grade based on calculating performance in the following areas.

1. STATEMENT OF LEARNING GOALS

Students and instructor will collaborate in the development of this brief, introductory piece of writing that will help in understanding team interests and customizing semester activities.

2. JOB AND PROJECTS

The instructor will use the Staff Application to identify and assign the best position for every student staff member, and everyone signed up for English 150 should also discuss with the instructor via e-mail (by Week Eight of the semester), in a Mid-Term Report, very specific contributions that the student has made toward *Uptown Exchange* production.

3. BRIEF NEWS WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Everyone will learn the basics of news reporting and writing and contribute brief articles to be graded and possibly published in the *Uptown Exchange*.

4. FINAL SELF-ASSESSMENT

This brief, end-of-semester piece of writing should be submitted by the last (Week 16) session of English 150, as an instructor-guided self-assessment by the student of their overall work and specific contributions toward *Uptown Exchange* production.

5. MISCELLANEOUS EXERCISES

This grade will be an average of quizzes, exercises, conference reports, and other activities.

6. PARTICIPATION AT GENERAL STAFF MEETINGS

English 150 sessions will serve as general staff meetings of the *Uptown Exchange*. Students should prepare to participate fully at these meetings by contributing ideas and discussion. In order to participate, students must of course be present and on time. Since English 150 runs just one day out of the week for only 50 minutes (for a total of 16 sessions), then it is all the more crucial to arrive *early*, so we can get meetings started exactly on time.

For record-keeping purposes, five or more minutes late or missing will be counted as a full absence.

Students should participate professionally at meetings, with courtesy to other staffers, guests, and instructor. Also, staffers are expected to turn all cell phones and electronic gadgets off, so that there will be no interruptions or distractions from newspaper business and discussion. Distractions and disruptions (including repeated tardiness) will diminish the grade.

PARTICIPATION AT GENERAL STAFF MEETINGS (continued...)

Ideally, the final grade for 150 will be based on good, solid work for the newspaper, but the final grade will immediately drop per the following percentages if you miss meetings, no matter how much you have contributed or how good your work has proved.

ABSENT FOR ONE MEETING	=	15/16	=	93.75%	=	you can still earn an "A"
ABSENT FOR TWO MEETINGS	=	14/16	=	87.5%	=	you can only earn as high as a "B"
ABSENT FOR 3 MEETINGS	=	13/16	=	81.25%	=	you can only earn as high as a "B"
ABSENT FOR 4 MEETINGS	=	12/16	=	75%	=	you can only earn as high as a "C"
ABSENT FOR 5 MEETINGS	=	11/16	=	68.75%	=	automatic "D"
Etc.		etc.		etc.		etc.

(At the instructor's discretion, no more than two unexcused absences will be allowed, depending on consistent student contributions, proper communication about the absence, and the reason for absence.)

GRADING SCALE:

Exceptional work on Assignments #1-6 above	=	A
Good work on Assignments #1-6 above	=	B
Acceptable work on Assignments #1-6 above	=	C
Work on Assignments #1-6 that does not meet expectations and/or incomplete/late/missing work	=	D/F

GRADE APPEALS POLICY: A student who wishes to appeal a final grade must start this appeal within 30 calendar days after the student's final grade has been posted in the student system by submitting a Grade Appeal Form to the teacher with copies to the Communications Department chairperson. Forms are available in the Communications Department office in Room 2230. For more info, see the Student Policy Manual available on the Student Policies web page at <http://www.ccc.edu/menu/Pages/Policies.aspx>.

→ **Schedule**

See the semester agenda for a full schedule of weekly activities for every session of English 150.

→ **City Colleges "Active Pursuit" Policy**

In order for students to remain in English 150, they must actively pursue the objectives for this course. Prior to the Mid-Term date (on March 8, 2018), any student who does not meet the following criteria for active pursuit will display a lack of interest in successfully completing the course and will therefore have to be administratively withdrawn from this class.

- A student must complete Assignments #1, #2, #3, and #5 (listed above) at a grading-rate of at least "Acceptable," per deadlines.
- A student must actively Participate (per Assignment #6 above) and attend without too many absence/tardy penalties.

→ **City Colleges “Active Pursuit” Policy (continued)**

If any student fails to do the above, then it is his or her responsibility to contact the instructor prior to March 8, 2018, and indicate his or her serious intent to pursue the course by explaining any unusual circumstances. The teacher will then be able to determine whether the student can continue. Being issued an ADW will have consequences on your grades, financial aid, and other aspects of attending Truman. Simply attending but not producing work and/or participating do not constitute active pursuit.

→ **E-mail/Communications**

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student educational records: www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html. Faculty cannot reveal information about students or discuss student records over the phone or unsecure e-mail. CCC student e-mail meets FERPA requirements.

Given FERPA, all discussion of grades and earning credit in English 150 should go through official **ccc.edu** addresses, and the instructor can be reached at bortiz@ccc.edu for these issues. Expect prompt response to e-mail correspondence (within 24 hours).

Additionally, actual newspaper planning, logistics, and staff-work discussions can happen over private e-mail addresses (for private student planning, per the newspaper handbook and staffers’ First Amendment rights to produce content independently).

Staffers may also contact Professor Ortiz via mobile phone between the hours of 9 a.m. and 10 p.m. for immediate/urgent assistance on important newspaper business that requires timely help. (This does **not** include discussion of grades and graded assignments.)

NOTE ALSO: This course will *not* use Blackboard for assignments or communications.

→ **More Info on Truman College**

MISSION: Our Mission dedicates us to deliver high-quality, innovative, affordable, and accessible educational opportunities and services that prepare students for a rapidly changing and diverse global economy.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES:

See “Campus Resources” list, to be distributed separately but also part of the syllabus and your resources for success at Truman.

GradesFirst

GradesFirst is a student support system that will be used by faculty, advisors, and tutors to help students achieve success in their classes. Use GradesFirst to schedule tutoring or advising appointments, or to see communications about your course progress generated by me or your other professors. Log in to GradesFirst at ccc.gradesfirst.com using your CCC username and password. This is the same username and password you would use for Blackboard and email.