

from a Welcome Announcement

Welcome!

Thank you for choosing to participate in ENG 111 Writing & Inquiry. This course introduces you to strategies for reading critically, considering rhetorical situations, and writing in various genres.

That description may not excite some of you from the first read, but I am hopeful that you will find some of the readings, discussions, and assignments engaging, thought-provoking, and skill-building.

I look forward to this semester being a success, and I for one am glad you decided to take this online course! I think we might even have a little fun this semester...

from Announcements about Discussion Board Participation

1. All discussion board posts have been graded, and I have responded to your posts. You should be able to check out the grades and the responses at any time.

As generally regards the responses for the most recent forum about fear and writing, it seems that many of you are to some degree affected by fear when it comes to writing.

Whether this fear stems from anxiety about the actual writing process, insecurity about language mastery, or stress about deadlines, fear does appear to be something we are not strangers to when it comes to completing school work.

It is my earnest hope that through the material covered in this course and the personalized feedback provided for your written assignments, each of you will experience an increase in skill and a decrease in fear, enabling you to tackle future English courses with greater confidence and ease.

Please remember that I am here to help you and am happy to answer any questions you may have about grammar, writing, etc.

Thanks again for your hard work and dedication. As we move into more of the writing part of this course, you should start to be able to put into action some of the mechanics and punctuation concepts we have already read about in the texts.

Have a great week and happy writing!

2. Thank you so much for your participation in these forums. Not meeting in a face-to-face setting, these forums are the main way that we get a sense of each other. I appreciate your introductions and enjoy learning of your personal goals and how this course fits into the grander plan for each of your lives.

I have found the responses to "The Rules of Survival" essay to be especially interesting. Several of you shared personal stories of harrowing and stressful experiences, while others of you admitted to (thankfully) not being in a life-threatening situation but dealing with intense stressors nonetheless. Thank you sharing the strategies that help you "keep calm and carry on" through the big and the little things in life.

I also appreciate your willingness to share those very personal ways in which this reading resonated with you. So many of you had powerful anecdotes to share about your survival skills in stressful situations. I admire the tenacity and perseverance of each of you and am excited to read your future posts.

While much less intense than many of the stressful situations you posted about in last week's forum, taking this English course does seem to stress out some of you. I want to encourage you that you can do it and that every module we will be learning a few more skills and rules that will help make each new assignment a little more manageable.

Thanks for your hard work as we head into the semester.

3. Many of you pointed to issues very common to all writers: getting started, staying focused, using effective grammar. You should know that you are not alone! Most writers of any kind (students through professionals) struggle in these areas. However, keeping with the work and circling back to the guiding argument will help writers to finish the task, whether it is a homework assignment or a ground-breaking journal article. The process is the same--and the overwhelming majority of the work in the process is done in the editing and revising stage.

Many writers tend to feel discouraged if they are not able to create a polished, engaging draft when they first sit down to type/write. Please understand that most writing you read underwent many, many, many drafts. Rough drafts are just that: rough. Often even messy and incoherent. So do not be discouraged. You are right where you need to be. Once the main ideas are down on paper (or the screen), then you can begin the real work of refining your ideas and moving your sentences around to be in the right place, adding and omitting as needed to keep your point focused, your argument logical, and your writing engaging.

It may help to think of the writing process like putting together a puzzle: Only after you have all the pieces clearly in front of you can you see more clearly how they all fit together.