

COURSE SYLLABUS

Composition I

Course code: COM 102/1

Term and year: Fall 2025

Day and time: Mon 15:00-16:45

Instructor: Dr. Badr Tachouche

Instructor contact: badr.tachouche@aauni.edu

Consultation hours: Mondays 17:00-17:30, or by appointment

Credits US/ECTS	3/6	Level	Intermediate
Length	15 weeks	Pre-requisite	Composition I
Contact hours	42 hours	Course type	Bachelor General Education Course

1. Course Description

COM 102 develops the writing skills taught in COM 101: It hones the student's ability to think critically and originally, consolidates their ability to make appropriate stylistic choices with regard to specific purpose, register and genre, and it reiterates the stages of the writing process. Moreover, COM 102 concentrates on developing the skills required to produce a substantial academic research paper. These include: critical reading and research, formulating and supporting a thesis, incorporating credible sources and properly employing citation and bibliographic techniques.

1. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will have written a research paper with structure, content and style appropriate to a formal academic context. Specifically, they should be able to demonstrate:

- an understanding of how to engage in the processes of writing a research paper, including: determining purpose defining a topic, formulating a clear thesis supported by sound reasoning and research;
- an ability to distinguish and use primary, secondary and tertiary sources;
- a facility in finding, evaluating, and incorporating sources via paraphrase and summary;
- the ability to produce a well-structured, coherent and cohesive academic essay;
- a facility in producing content which exhibits critical thinking, originality, and inquisitive and logical analyses;
- a grasp of how to make stylistic and lexical choices appropriate to an academic audience and specific genres;
- a firm grasp of English grammar, usage and mechanics;
- a competence in employing citation and bibliographic format accurately;
- an ability to recognize and avoid *all* forms of plagiarism.

3. Reading Material

Required Materials

- Kirsznner, G. L., & Mandell, R. S. Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide (12th Ed). Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012.
- Bailey, Stephen. Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students (3rd Ed.). Routledge, 2003.
- Murphy, Raymond. English Grammar in Use (5th Ed). Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Ruskiewicz, J. J., & Dolmage, J. How to Write Anything: A Guide and Reference with Readings, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010.

Recommended Materials

- Corbett, P.J. Edward. Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student (2nd Ed). New York Oxford University Press, 1966.
- Ramage. D. J., Bean.C. J. & Johnson. J. Writing Arguments: A Rhetoric with Readings (11th Ed). Pearson, 2019.
- Open University. Thinking Critically, Open University Press, 2008.
- Booth, W. C., Colomb, G.G., Williams, J.M. The Craft of Research (2nd Ed), University of Chicago, 2003.

Required reading material, other material, notes and activities will be posted on NEO.

4. Teaching Methodology

- To explain the academic methodology and terminology, the course will be taught with lectures, brainstorming, readings and assignments.
- To engage in the process of writing, the course will use analytical readings of different materials including students' writings, presentations and regular evaluation.
- To engage students' talents in the content and promote creativity, the course will use a combination of video screenings, illustrated materials, presentation skills, debates, teamwork/collaborative learning, and student-centered discussions.

5. Course Schedule

27 October: Mid Term Break

November 17: No class: Holiday – Struggle for Freedom and Democracy Day and International Students' Day

Date	Class Agenda
September 1	<p>Topic: Introduction</p> <p>Description: Icebreaking. Syllabus overview.</p> <p>Description of course purposes, structure, assessment, and expectations ▪ Course Key</p> <p>Terms and FAQs</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p> <p>Review course reading material (NEO)</p>

September 8	<p>Topic: Origins and Future of Academic Writing</p> <p>Description: Rhetoric, purpose, importance and modern applications.</p> <p>Reading: Corbett, pp. 29 – 33 & Booth, pp. 9 – 15.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Assignment #1: Create a visual + written project that traces the intellectual lineage of academic writing from classical rhetoric to its modern applications.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Visual Component (Infographic, Concept Map, or Timeline): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show how rhetorical traditions connect to modern academic practices (thesis development, citation, peer review, knowledge dissemination). Highlight at least three key moments of transformation Written Component (750–1,000 words): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain your choices in the visual representation. Discuss how the evolution of rhetoric shapes what counts as credible academic writing today. Reflect briefly on how this historical awareness changes the way you approach your own research writing. <p>Deliverables:</p> <p>750–1,000 word explanatory essay + 1 digital visual (infographic, concept map, or timeline).</p> <p>Presentation: On Sep. 15, deliver a 5-minute presentation without reading from your essay — you should demonstrate deeper knowledge than what’s on the page.</p> <p>Given: Sep. 8 Due: Sep. 14, 23:00, NEO</p>
September 15	<p>Topic: Analytical Reading</p> <p>Description: Text analysis. Reading methods.</p> <p>Reading: Kirsznier pp. 13 – 20 + Exercise 1, Ruszkiewicz, pp. 317 – 324 and Booth, pp 106 – 107.</p> <p>In-class writing exercise: Read <i>The Many Sides of Knowledge</i> by Sarah Barnette. Write a 500–600 word response that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzes how Barnette presents knowledge from perspectives different from the reader’s own.

	<p>2. Examines rhetorical strategies in her writing.</p> <p>3. Reflects on what this teaches about reading critically and engaging respectfully with viewpoints unlike your own.</p> <p>Time: 50–60 minutes in class Deliverables: Submit at the end of the session.</p>
September 22	<p>Topic: Critical Thinking</p> <p>Description: Definition. Importance. Methods. Application in writing. Debate 1.</p> <p>Reading: Ruskiewicz, pp. 420 – 423, Open University, pp. 7 – 11, Bailey, pp. 27 – 29. Booth, pp. 56 – 70.</p>
September 29	<p>Topic: Writing Techniques</p> <p>Description: Outlining. Summarizing. Paraphrasing. Citations... and a Grammar reminder.</p> <p>Reading: Kirsznner pp. 81 – 88, Ruskiewicz, pp. 324 – 353, Bailey, pp. 44 – 69.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Draft#1: In one (1) page, describe your topic proposal and create an outline.</p> <p>Given: 29. Sep Printed for Oct. 6</p>
October 6	<p>Topic: The Structure</p> <p>Description: Importance of structure. Simple and complex. Transitional sections/signs. Sentence. Paragraph. Introduction. Conclusion.</p> <p>Reading: Bailey, pp. 77 - 81. Ruskiewicz, pp. 354 – 361.</p> <p>Screening and In-class writing exercise:</p> <p>The Future of Fashion – Made from Mushrooms Dr. Dan Widmaier TED https://youtu.be/OcdumFcGdfU</p>

October 13	<p>Topic: Arguments</p> <p>Description: Historical overview. Principles of argument. Reasoning. Evidence. Building and discussing arguments in academic writing.</p> <p>Reading: Ramage, pp. 17 – 21, & 32 – 41, Booth, pp. 114 – 123. Bailey, pp. 101 – 117. Open University, pp. 12 – 18.</p> <p>Screening: Monty Python’s Argument https://youtu.be/xpAvcGcEc0k?si=_qW-x3U0hoqIYOWW</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Assignment #2: Choose a history article written in English, published in 2024 or 2025. Write a 750–1,000 word essay that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifies the author’s main claim and supporting evidence. 2. Breaks down the argument into premises and conclusions. 3. Evaluates the evidence and reasoning. 4. Constructs a reasoned response, refuting weaknesses or extending strengths. <p>Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include the link to your chosen article. <p>Given: Oct. 13 Due Oct. 20, 23:00, NEO</p>
October 20	<p>Topic: References</p> <p>Description: Finding sources. Bibliography. Online sources.</p> <p>Reading: Ruskiewicz, pp. 435 – 473, Bailey, pp. 15 – 17, & 62 – 71 + Exercise.</p> <p>In-class writing exercise: TBA</p>
November 3	<p>Topic: A Sense of Style</p> <p>Description: Conventional VS Creative. Voice. Stylistic choices... but with Grammar and Vocabulary!</p> <p>Reading: Kirsznar, pp. 89 – 90, Birkenstein, 117 – 130.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Draft #2: Extend your draft (topic proposal) to 5-7 pages including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Past readings on your topic - Paragraphs including arguments and citations - List of new sources - MLA 9th ed. format <p>Printed. For Nov.5</p>

October 27	MID TERM BREAK
November 10	<p>Topic: Plagiarism Description: Definition. Types (and syllabus overview). Ethical or Legal? Alternatives. Reading: Booth, pp. 201 – 207. Bailey, pp. 30 – 35. Screening and In-class writing exercise: TBA</p>
November 24	<p>Topic: Editing and Formatting Description: Revising the frame. Coherence check. Grammar reminder. Arguments revision. Citations and sources check. Reading: Kirsznner, p.168. Booth, pp. 208 – 2018. Birkenstein, pp. 309 – 327.</p>
November 17	No class: Holiday – Struggle for Freedom and Democracy Day and International Students´ Day
December 1	<p>Topic: Ethics of Research Description: Honesty. Objectivity. Humbleness... and again, Plagiarism. Reading: Corbett, pp. 277 – 282, & 302 – 312, Booth, pp. 285 – 288 + in class writing exercise + debate</p>
December 8	<p>Topic: Final Draft and Peer Review Description: Share your essay draft, read a peer's work, give feedback, receive comments, revise your writing.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Draft#3: Prepare the last version of your paper (7 pages minimum, 10 pages maximum):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply the studied rules of editing and formatting to your Draft - Write your introduction and conclusion - The list of references MLA 9th ed. format <p>Given: Nov. 26 Due Dec. 9, 23:00, NEO</p> <p>Peer Review</p>

December 15	Topic: Last Preparations Description: Class discussion and preparation for the next week. Assignments/deadlines: Prepare a PP presentation of your final paper. Screening (To be announced)
December 22	Topic: Presentations Description: Presentation and Defense of Research Papers.

6. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Assignment	Workload (hours)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes	Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes*
Class Participation	42	30%	Debate, present their projects, contribute constructively to academic discussions and provide respectful criticism.	1,2,3
Writing Exercises	30	25%	Understand the conventions of academic writing through the conceptual triangle: What, Why and How, i.e. understanding: The purpose, structure, analysis, references, sentences, grammar, and vocabulary of academic writing. Distinguish, read and incorporate relevant sources. Ability to engage in the writing process resulting in cohesive, coherent writing with appropriate structure, style and support, showing evidence of critical thinking, originality and proper citation. Display a firm grasp of English grammar. Employ citation and bibliographic. Format accurately. Make stylistic and lexical choices appropriate to an academic audience and specific genres. Recognize and avoid plagiarism.	1, 3
Readings &	23	15%	Comprehension of course	3

Exercises			material, and key concepts and their application in writing. Produce work in a timely manner.	
Debate	25	10%	Display critical thinking, ethics of research, originality, and inquisitive and logical analyses, and constructively respond to questioning and feedback.	1, 2, 3
Final Essay	30	20%	Understand the conventions of academic writing through the conceptual triangle: What, Why and How, i.e. understanding: The purpose, structure, analysis, references, sentences, grammar, and vocabulary of academic writing. Distinguish, read and incorporate relevant sources. Comprehension of course material, and key concepts. Ability to engage in the writing process resulting in cohesive, coherent writing with appropriate structure and showing evidence of critical thinking, objectivity, originality and proper citation. Produce work in a timely manner. Display a firm grasp of English grammar. Make stylistic and lexical choices appropriate to an academic audience and specific genres. Recognize and avoid plagiarism.	1, 2, 3
TOTAL	150	100%		

*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

7. Detailed description of the assignments

Class Participation

Students are expected to be present, timely, and contribute constructively to discussions.

Assessed area	Percentage
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Organization, timeliness and positive behavior	50%
Constructive contribution to discussions	50%

Writing Exercise 1:

Assignments/deadlines: Assignment #1: Create a **visual + written project** that traces the intellectual lineage of academic writing from classical rhetoric to its modern applications.

1. **Visual Component (Infographic, Concept Map, or Timeline):**
 - Show how rhetorical traditions connect to modern academic practices (thesis development, citation, peer review, knowledge dissemination).
 - Highlight at least **three key moments of transformation**
2. **Written Component (750–1,000 words):**
 - Explain your choices in the visual representation.
 - Discuss how the evolution of rhetoric shapes what counts as credible academic writing today.
 - Reflect briefly on how this historical awareness changes the way you approach your own research writing.

Deliverables:

750–1,000 word explanatory essay + 1 digital visual (infographic, concept map, or timeline).

Presentation: On Sep. 15, deliver a **5-minute presentation without reading from your essay** — you should demonstrate deeper knowledge than what’s on the page.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Structure & Clarity: Organization of essay and visual; adherence to academic conventions.	20%
Critical Engagement: Depth of analysis in connecting rhetorical origins to modern academic practices.	30%
Research & Presentation Ethics: Use of credible sources, oral delivery without reading, respectful peer engagement.	30%
Visual & Rhetorical Communication: Effectiveness of digital visual in illustrating rhetorical lineage and ideas.	20%

Writing Exercise 2:

Choose a history article written in English, published in 2024 or 2025. Write a **750–1,000 word essay** that:

1. Identifies the author’s main claim and supporting evidence.
2. Breaks down the argument into premises and conclusions.
3. Evaluates the evidence and reasoning.
4. Constructs a reasoned response, refuting weaknesses or extending strengths.

Requirements:

- Include the **link to your chosen article**.

Assessed area	Percentage
Analytical Skills: Identifying, breaking down, and evaluating the argument.	50%
Critical Response & Communication: Constructing a reasoned refutation/extension, clarity, structure, and proper citation.	50%

Readings & exercises

- Selected readings from Required and Recommended Materials

In-class writing exercise: Read *The Many Sides of Knowledge* by Sarah Barnette. Write a **500–600 word response** that:

1. **Analyzes** how Barnette presents knowledge from perspectives different from the reader’s own.
2. **Examines rhetorical strategies** in her writing.
3. **Reflects** on what this teaches about reading critically and engaging respectfully with viewpoints unlike your own.

- In-class writing exercise: The Future of Fashion – Made from Mushrooms | Dr. Dan Widmaier | TED (screening)

- In-class writing exercise
- In-class writing exercise

Assessed area	Percentage
Comprehension and application of course material	50%
Completion and comprehension of assignments	50%

Debate

- Constructive contribution to discussions.
- Screening and Debate (TBA)

Assessed area	Percentage
Positive interaction with peers and response to feedback	50%
Demonstrating critical thinking and analytical approach	50%

Final Essay

In five (5) steps:

1. Draft #1: In one (1) page, describe your topic proposal and create an outline.
(themes to be announced on NEO)

2. Draft #2: Extend your draft (topic proposal) to 5-7 pages including:

- Past readings on your topic
- Paragraphs including arguments and citations
- List of new sources
- MLA 9th ed. Format

3. Draft #3: Prepare the last version of your paper (7 pages minimum, 10 pages maximum):

- Apply the studied rules of editing and formatting to your draft
- Write your introduction and conclusion
- The list of references
- MLA 9th ed. format

4. Prepare a PP presentation of your final paper.

5. Presentation and Defense of Research Papers.

Assessed area	Percentage
Draft development through 3 drafts.	25%
Structure: paragraph organization, unity and cohesion	15%
Spelling, grammar, and punctuation	15%
Coherence, originality, style (Creativity, voice) and critical thinking	20%
Incorporation of sources: citation format and bibliographic technique	15%
Presentation skills and manners	10%

8. General Requirements and School Policies

General requirements

All coursework is governed by AAU's academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules in the Academic Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work. Please see the AAU intranet for a summary of key policies regarding coursework.

Course specific requirements

No late submissions will be accepted – please follow the deadlines.

No electronic devices may be used during class unless required by the instructor.