# **ENG 110 Course Policies to Include in Your Syllabus**

Every syllabus should include the class policies and course details provided in this booklet. We have provided the policies in the order in which you should place them in your syllabus, and you can also review how they are incorporated in the [sample syllabi](http://teachingwriting.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/syllabi/) available on the *Teaching English 110* website.

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## Course Overview Examples

At the beginning of each syllabus, just after your instructor contact information, you should include a brief overview of the course and its goals. The following is an exemplary example. Additional examples are available on the [Sample Syllabi](http://teachingwriting.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/syllabi/) page of the *Teaching English 110* website.

### Course Overview for Creativity Topic

In English 110, which fulfills the College Writing 1 requirement, you will write extensively to explore questions about creativity. What is creativity? What does it mean to be creative? Where do new ideas come from, or is there even such a thing as a new idea? In addition to the arts, creativity is now considered a vital component of many areas or domains, including business, technology, science and medicine. Through a selection of readings, writing assignments and class discussions, you will address and debate the nature of creativity in a variety of contexts. You will write in response to the material you read, and, so that you can discover useful strategies and express your thoughts clearly and effectively, your writing practice will include various exercises, essay drafts, revisions, and homework responses, with an emphasis on a set of skills that will both strengthen your writing and also increase your awareness of the choices you make when you write. Along with helping you produce clear and effective writing, these practices will give you the opportunity to pay close attention to what you read, develop your ideas, analyze the ideas of others, and evaluate your own creative potential. Altogether, in this course you will develop the critical thinking and writing skills that you will need in college and beyond, and gain confidence as a writer and reader who will be able to:

* Use writing techniques to respond to readings and to discover your own ideas on assigned topics.
* Practice some conventional forms of essay writing that support a thesis and reflect the logical organization of paragraphs.
* Develop close reading and analysis skills in response to assigned texts.
* Develop an awareness of audience through peer response to essay drafts.
* Distinguish between primary and secondary sources and integrate sources in an essay by paraphrase, summary and quotation and by documenting sources in MLA documentation style.
* Develop editing skills that focus on correct grammar and punctuation.

Additionally, as you assess ideas about creativity through a variety of readings, writing assignments and class discussions, you will:

* Gain knowledge of a variety of perspectives about creativity as they have developed over time.
* Strengthen your ability to make connections among ideas and readings as they relate to creativity.

## Statement of Learning Goals on the Syllabus

All 110 syllabi should include learning goals/outcomes that concisely reflect the above five categories. Here is an example of a list that you are welcome to use in your own syllabi:

Students will:

1. Produce writing that **responds** appropriately to a **variety of rhetorical situations**with a particular focus on academic argumentation.
2. Learn reading strategies to **summarize, synthesize, analyze, and critique other people’s arguments and ideas fairly**.
3. Learn **research practices** that will help strengthen their writing and thinking.
4. **Produce writing that shows how writers may navigate the diverse processes of composing** including revision and collaboration.
5. Produce writing that strategically employs **appropriate language conventions** in different writing situations.
6. **Take ownership of their work** and gain an understanding of their own voice, style, and strengths.

## Policy on Office Hours

Research shows that students typically enhance their learning from **meeting one-on-one with their instructors**. So it is no surprise that conferencing with students is, and has long been, a staple of composition and writing courses. At QC, ENG 110 instructors are required to offer **one office hour per course** each week and **must clearly specify a time**. This may be done:

* as **open office hours** at a set weekly time i.e. students “walk in” without having to schedule a meeting.
* **by appointment** i.e. students schedule to meet with instructors at a set date and time.
* as **a combination of open office hours and conferences by appointment** e.g.
  + students schedule in advance to meet during a set weekly office hour
  + students have the option to “walk in” during a set open office hour or arrange to meet with instructors at a different time.

Many instructors also find it useful to conference individually (or in small groups) with all their students at some point in the semester. This might occur:

* within the first few weeks of school in order to get to know students and discuss personalized goals for the semester.
* in the middle or end of the semester to check in with students regarding their growth and evolving learning goals.
* before major assignments to provide individualized, face-to-face feedback on student proposals or projects.

Instructors have the option **once or twice a semester** to hold such mandatory conferences in lieu of a typical class session.

**Your office hours must be clearly indicated on the first page of your syllabus.** Examples can be seen in these [model syllabi](http://teachingwriting.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/syllabi/) on the *Teaching English 110* website. As in the following example, you might also include a section in your syllabus that describes **how your office hours and conferences function**:

#### OFFICE HOURS & CONFERENCES

You will have at least one 15-minute conference with me during the semester, although I may require more. These conferences give you the opportunity to discuss your ideas, to work through your drafts, to prepare for presentations, or to revise your essays. Your conference with me will be held in lieu of class, so missing your scheduled conference is equivalent to missing class.

My guidelines for office hours are as follows:

* You are welcome to see me without an appointment in office hours if you would like extra help. These meetings give you the chance to discuss your ideas, review feedback you’ve receive, develop your drafts, prepare for presentations, or to revise specific aspects of your essays.
* You are guaranteed 15 minutes of one-on-one time with me during office hours. This allows me to productively meet with as many students as possible during this time.
* I do not "read through" or "go over" entire essays during office hours; that happens when I provide feedback on first drafts and grade final drafts. Instead, you will gain the most from our meeting if you come with a specific question about a particular part or aspect of your draft.
* I will not provide grade estimations on ungraded work (e.g. “I’d give this a B grade.”) during office hours (or at any other time).

#### *Important Notes about Office Hours*

* You are **not required** to meet with every student each week.
* Open office hours are typically “first come, first-served.”
* Conferencing should **always be conducted on campus**. Instructors typically meet with students in their assigned office spaces (or classrooms, if available).
* If offering office hours “by appointment,” it is advised to **give students a deadline** for arranging meetings. For example, you might ask students to contact you no less than 48 hours in advance to schedule a one-on-one conference.
* We **strongly encourage meeting individually and in person with your students at least once during the semester**; however, great options for virtual or online meetings exist and should be considered when necessary.

## Policy on Course Expectations

When we articulate our **course expectations** in our syllabi, we clarify the specific tasks our students must complete **at minimum** in order to receive a passing grade in the course, so they must be explicitly stated.

Another student-centered reason for including course expectation is that our students are learning and navigatingnumerous academic expectations and standards that can differ from class to class and from institution to institution. Therefore, we empower them to make sound, strategic decisions with respect to managing their workloads when we state in **unambiguous language** what they must do in this course to have a chance at passing.

A common expectation across all ENG 110 courses is that students complete three (3) essays, as detailed on the [Course Goals](http://teachingwriting.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/coursegoals/) page. Therefore, **a policy statement** in your syllabus regarding course expectations could look like this:

### COURSE EXPECTATIONS

To receive a passing grade in this course, students must at minimum:

* Submit a final draft of the three essays ranging from 750 – 2200 words, each accompanied by at least one formal draft. **NB** **Students must submit all three final essays in order to pass the class.**
* Participate in classes and conferences.
* Prepare reading and writing exercises as assigned.
* Submit all of your writing assignments on Blackboard.

#### *An Important Note about Course Expectations*

Your policy on grading should elaborate on how these various factors contribute to the final course grade.

## Policy on Participation/Attendance

The complete policy information on participation and attendance is outlined on the [*Teaching English 110*](http://teachingwriting.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/policies/participation-attendance/) website.

## Policy on Grades

In an ideal world, grades work **like a language** for communicating the expectations of the scholarly community. To achieve that level of clarity you will need to define the terms you use: What does “A” mean, for example, or “B,” or “C’? You can refer to **a rubric** to answer those questions in detail over the course of the semester.

Note that **clarity about grades is crucial:**

* **Pedagogically,** to articulate the intellectual goals of the class; and
* **Institutionally,** to communicate evaluative criteria and standards in a transparent way (which also helps avoid grade disputes that follow from the absence of transparency).

You can achieve those effects by including **a policy statement** in your syllabus that tells your students how you calculate their grades. It could look something like this:

### GRADES AND ASSIGNMENTS

You have three major assignments this semester plus a portfolio that includes them all, but you should note that each of those assignments is broken into a series of much smaller assignments, so **the consistency of your work is crucial to your success in this class.**

Your grade for each of the major assignments depends on your completion of the smaller assignments they contain, including in-class writing; annotation assignments; and blog posts.  **You will receive regular feedback but not letter grades on those smaller assignments, because they will be factored into your final grade on each large assignment.**

With that in mind, I will assess your grade in the end by this formula:

Essay 1: 15%

Essay 2: 20%

Essay 3: 20%

Blackboard assignments: 15%

In-class writing and participation: 15%

Essay drafts: 15%

#### Important Notes about Grading

* **Drafts are never graded.** Like other low-stakes assignments, drafts are factored into the final grade and/or the participation grade.
* **The participation grade requires further elaboration**: What does a student need to do to get an A on participation?
* **The grade breakdown rewards continuity.** To succeed in ENG 110, a student needs to engage in a scholarly conversation over the course of the semester.

## Policy on Late and Missed Assignments

A core goal of ENG 110 is to introduce students to writing as a **recursive and reflective process**. Students practice writing as a process primarily by **revising drafts** **of their graded essays in light of peer and instructor feedback**. Therefore, when students fail to submit assignments or submit them past stated deadlines, they forego opportunities to reflect on and revise their work meaningfully, which often affect their performance on the final essay. At the same time, when students fail to submit or submit assignments late, they can disrupt planned class activities (like peer workshops) and often place unfair demands on their instructors who themselves might have to amend already busy schedules to respond to students’ late drafts.

Therefore, **a policy statement** within your syllabus should clearly articulate the consequences of late and missed ungraded and graded assignments to incentivize on-time submission and disincentivize late or non-submission. An example of such a statement follows.

#### Late and Missed Homework Exercises, Drafts, and Final Essays

Submitting work late and failing to submit work at all make it much harder for you to do well on your essays since you miss the opportunity to receive timely feedback that can guide your revisions. In the spirit of fairness and professionalism:

* Late homework exercises and formal drafts will not receive written feedback. However, you are welcome to come visit me in office hours to discuss your work.
* If you do not hand in a preliminary draft at least 48 hours before the deadline for the final draft, your final essay grade will be lowered by one whole grade (e.g. from a B to a C).
* For late final drafts, your grade will be lowered by 1/3 (e.g. from a B- to a C+) beginning the minute after the deadline. The grade will continue to go down by a third of a letter grade every 24 hours until the essay is submitted.
* All work must be submitted to Blackboard by the deadline in order to be considered “on time.”
* I do not typically give extensions for problems such as computer and printer crashes, conflicts with other course assignments or extracurricular activities, oversleeping or other personal difficulties. I strongly advise you to keep backups of your works-in-progress.

Keep in mind that **you must complete all graded assignments in order to pass the class.**

#### *Important Notes about Late and Missed Assignments*

* You are **not required to provide written feedback on work that has been submitted late in the absence of a valid excuse** e.g. a medical emergency, or without prior agreement e.g. a scheduled religious observance.
* In the absence of a valid excuse or prior agreement, a grade penalty should be levied for late final drafts. This penalty attempts to account for the additional time that the student had (relative to their peers) to continue working on the draft.
* In your syllabus, you can offer your entire class late passes for one-time use as in the following examples.

#### ONE-TIME NO-QUESTIONS-ASKED PASS

This is an official, one-time, no-questions-asked pass that allows me to submit the **FORMAL** draft for one essay up to 24 hours late and still receive written feedback.

#### ONE-TIME NO-QUESTIONS-ASKED PASS

This is an official, one-time, no-questions-asked pass that allows me to submit the **FINAL** draft for one essay up to 24 hours late without grade penalty.

## Policy on the “Conference Hour”

At QC, ENG 110 classes meet twice a week for one hour and fifty minutes each class session. However, Pathways at CUNY mandates that the last thirty minutes of every class serve as a “recitation hour.” In other words, **after one hour and twenty minutes, the class session technically ends**; instructors then use the following 30 minutes to work with designated students individually and in small groups, allowing other students to leave. In ENG 110, we call this the **conference hour**. An important CUNY requirement is that **the entire class cannot stay for the conference hour each time**. Instructors are responsible for working out some sort of rotating schedule.

A **policy statement**, like the model below, should detail how the conference hour will be configured and managed in your course. Three possible configurations are described in the section [“How Will the Recitation Hour Work?”](http://handbook.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/how-will-the-recitation-hour-work/) in *Beyond the Desk*, our online handbook for writing instructors at QC.

A schedule should be provided on the syllabus Course Calendar using one of the templates provided in the sample syllabi on the [Teaching English 110 website](http://teachingwriting.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/syllabi/).

#### CONFERENCE HOUR

In addition to the hour and 15 minutes of class time, you will also participate in regular group conferences. Group conferences will take place for 30 minutes after the end of class. Your individual conference groups will meet every fourth class. You will receive your conference group assignments in the first week of class.

#### *Important Notes about the Conference Hour*

* **The conference hour does not replace office hours.** Instructors are still required to offer one office hour per week per course.
* It is advised that you **use the first class to assign a short piece of writing for diagnostic purposes, which can help you to arrange students into groups according to shared needs, goals, etc.**

## Policy on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

As is standard in institutions of higher learning, we treat plagiarism, whether intentional or otherwise, very seriously, and we want our students to do the same. However, rather than taking a primarily reactive – and punitive – approach, we envision ENG 110 as providing our students opportunities to learn, practice, and internalize the ethical and professional standards of the wider academic community. Hence, in our classes, we do not simply wait to catch instances of plagiarism, which we then use to weed out “problem students”; instead, **we aim to proactively teach students the source use practices that would help them not only avoid plagiarism but also participate credibly, ethically, and authoritatively in the intellectual conversations they enter via their essays**.

A **policy statement**, like the following sample,should aim to emphasize the course’s proactive and preventative approach to **learning source use practices** while at the same time articulating the **consequences of plagiarism** in student essays. A link to the [CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity](https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-resources/academic-integrity-policy/) should also be provided.

#### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

College Writing will provide you with strategies for working ethically and accurately with the texts you engage. We will discuss source use practices that prevent plagiarism, a serious academic offense that runs counter to our academic community’s core values of honesty and respect for others. According to the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity (<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-resources/academic-integrity-policy/>):

Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person’s ideas, research or writings as your own. The following are some examples of plagiarism, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:

* Copying another person’s actual words without the use of quotation marks and footnotes attributing the words to their source.
* Presenting another person’s ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging the source.
* Using information that is not common knowledge without acknowledging the source.
* Failing to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignments.

Internet plagiarism includes submitting downloaded term papers or parts of term papers, paraphrasing or copying information from the internet without citing the source, and “cutting & pasting” from various sources without proper attribution.

Final drafts that contain plagiarism will receive a zero, may result in failure of the course, and the case will be reported to the University.

#### *Important Notes about Academic Integrity*

* **CUNY’s policy is that instances of plagiarized must be reported to the University.** The form can be accessed at this link: <http://www.qc.cuny.edu/StudentLife/services/studev/Documents/AcademicIntegrityViolationForm2.pdf>. Reported cases of plagiarism are documented and handled by the [Office of Student Conduct](http://www.qc.cuny.edu/StudentLife/services/studev/Pages/default.aspx) located in Student Union, Room 327 (718-997-3970).
* **Contact any of the FYW Directors if you suspect or encounter instances of plagiarism and are unsure how to address it.** Even if you feel confident in addressing the instance of plagiarism, it is still advised that you inform FYW.
* A good rule of thumb is to **treat a first, minor instance of plagiarism as a teachable moment**. This might require inviting the student to meet with you to discuss the instance of plagiarism, review source use practices, and emphasize consequences if plagiarism is discovered in future submissions.
* **Instructors have the discretion** to determine in-course consequences for plagiarism based on the extent and nature of the plagiarism.

## Policy on Accessibility Statement

It is important to begin class from the outset creating a welcoming environment for all of our students, which includes the very language we use in our syllabi.

Additional information on how to ensure that your syllabus and course materials accessible is available at: <http://disability.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/practice/language-for-syllabi/>.

#### ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have or develop any condition that might require accommodation in this class—for example, a medical condition—you should immediately contact the Office of Special Services (OSS) at [qc.spsv@qc.cuny.edu](mailto:qc.spsv@qc.cuny.edu). Information is available on their website: <https://www.qc.cuny.edu/studentlife/services/specialserv/Pages/default.aspx>. OSS will ensure you receive any additional support needed to fully participate in and succeed at QC. You are welcome to inform me if you are comfortable doing so. We all have different ways of learning. Please communicate with me as soon as you can about your individual learning needs and how this course can best accommodate them.

## Policy on Harassment

We take student harassment very seriously, and we want to ensure that they not only know their rights, but also that we are available to help them. We encourage you to include the following statement in your syllabi.

#### TITLE IX/CLERY ACT NOTIFICATION

Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any other nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sex discrimination violate University policies. Know your rights, and please refer to this link for more information, and/or seek assistance: <http://www1.cuny.edu/sites/title-ix/?post_type=campus_profile&p=154>.

Also, please know that disclosure to University faculty or instructors of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on campus, in a University-  
sponsored program, or involving a campus visitor or University student or employee (whether current or former) is not confidential under Title IX. Faculty and instructors must forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the University’s Title IX officer.

## Policies for Teaching Online

### Sample Statement on Technology

#### SYNCHRONOUS/ASYNCHRONOUS WORK

This class is scheduled to meet on M/W from 10:00-11:55 a.m. We’ll meet synchronously on Zoom during that time, but the class period will be broken up into at least two segments, with breaks in the middle. Some portion of every class period will be devoted to in-class writing and group work.

Your participation grade requires your presence in synchronous and asynchronous meetings. My grading policies are formulated to allow you to miss some portion of those meetings without penalty (see the grading policies for more detail), because everybody misses a class for a good reason now and then. You don’t have to explain those. **If you have to miss more classes than the policies allow, get in touch with me, and we’ll figure out the best course for you.**

This class works as a community, so we’ll have to find ways to be present for each other even though we’re not all in the same room.

This course is hosted on Academic Commons, and students will also need to set up free accounts on Slack and Zoom. Weekly responses will be done asynchronously on Slack.

All formal assignments should be submitted as Word documents in our course Dropbox folder.

You will also need to check your email regularly. If you don’t use your QC email address as a primary address, that’s fine, but make sure to give me another address that I can use to contact you if necessary.

### Sample Statement on Collegiality and Availability

#### AVAILABILITY

One of the primary goals of this class is to help you to engage meaningfully with other scholars at Queens College and beyond. As a full participant in that scholarly community, you should raise questions whenever you have questions in mind and raise doubts whenever you have them, too. We all want to hear what you think, and we want you to listen well when others speak.

We’ll do a lot of our work for this class asynchronously, which is not to say that your colleagues or I are available all the time. I am generally on email and Slack during the week, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. I’m also in meetings and teaching other classes during those hours, so I may need some hours to get back to you. I will always get back to you, and I assume that you will get back to me when I write to you, too.

My policy is to respond to messages within twenty-four hours. I try to respond faster than that, and occasionally I respond more slowly. If you don’t hear from me within forty-eight hours, that means I am truly behind schedule or I missed something, so I invite you to prompt me and let me know.

## Campus Writing Resources

A central goal of First Year Writing at QC is to help students understand and practice writing not as a solitary act but as one deeply informed by conversations with and feedback from one’s intellectual community. To this end, we introduce students to and encourage them to utilize **the various resources on campus that can help them reflect on and revise their writing practices and writing products**.

**Students can be encouraged, but not mandated, to utilize these resources.**

A **policy statement** on such campus writing resources might look like this:

#### WRITING RESOURCES

If you need additional help with your writing beyond our class or my office hours, you are encouraged to utilize any of the following writing resources:

* + **The Writing Center** provides free writing support services to all enrolled Queens College students and is a helpful resource for writers at any level. It is located in Kiely Hall, Room 229. Visit the website to make an appointment: <https://sites.google.com/qc.cuny.edu/qcwritingcenter/home>.
  + **The Queens College Benjamin S. Rosenthal Library** provides students with remote access to its database and electronic collection from anywhere, using their QC ID or login credentials. Library help is available, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for questions, locating materials, research, and citation:<https://library.qc.cuny.edu/>.
  + ***Writing at Queens***in Queens Hall 330A (phone: 718-997-4695) provides free support for digital writing including Qwriting. <http://writingatqueens.qc.cuny.edu/>