

English 1A The Examined Life: Reading and Writing about Education and the Pursuit of Happiness

And I submit that this is what the real, no-shit value of your liberal arts education is supposed to be about: How to keep from going through your comfortable, prosperous, respectable adult life dead, unconscious, a slave to your head and to your natural default setting of being uniquely, completely, imperially alone, day in and day out. ~ David Foster Wallace "This is Water"

I want to extend a warm hello to all of you who signed up for this online section of EWRT 1A. My name is Rebecca Board Liljenstolpe, and I have been teaching fulltime at De Anza since 1998. I look forward to getting to know each of you and facilitating our online learning community.

EWRT 1A is designed to give you an introduction to college-level reading and writing, and toward that end, we will be reviewing the elements of expository and argumentative writing and reading essays and other media designed to stimulate your thinking and generate topics for your papers. The title of my course comes from Socrates, who famously said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." For each learning module, we will begin with a YouTube video from a six part series on philosophy presented by popular British philosopher Alain de Botton, featuring six thinkers who have influenced history, and their ideas about the pursuit of the happy life. I will pair these videos with links to diverse thematic readings (poems, essays, short stories) and as we discuss their ideas, you will be prompted to think about your education, about what you want to get out of college and take with you into your life. Your thinking will coalesce into a ONE PAGE reflection paper for each unit, and in a FIVE PAGE term paper due the last week of class. Through my course design and facilitation, students will meet the general English Department Student Learning Outcomes stated below:

- **Student Learning Outcome:** Practice writing as a multi-step process including planning and revising with attention to varying purposes, audiences, and rhetorical strategies.
- **Student Learning Outcome:** Read and analyze rhetorically and culturally diverse narrative and expository texts from a variety of perspectives.

I hope you find this course interesting and fun -- You will certainly have many opportunities to read, discuss, and write about enduring ideas that continue to shape our consciousness. Welcome to the class!

Course Requirements

WRITING: 225 points You will be turning in 5 one page reflection papers and 1 five page term paper to CANVAS. Reflection paper drafts are due before noon on Wednesdays of even-numbered weeks and final drafts by 11:59 PM that same week; the Term Paper is due Wednesday of Finals Week by 11:59 PM. **Late penalties: 5 points per day late and returned without comments. Papers that have not been spellchecked are considered late with penalties.**

QUIZZES: 50 points We will have bi-weekly skills checks (5 total) to insure you are doing the reading in the *Online Guide to Grammar and Writing*. These writing quizzes are each worth 10 points and will be due no later than Saturday at 11:59 PM each week they are assigned. The due dates are intended to motivate your study and insure you are doing the reading in advance of your essay's due date. **NOTE:** There will also be a forum devoted to *The Online Guide to Writing and Grammar*, so if you have any questions about this work or about writing in general, post them here.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: 90 points We will be building our online community in the CANVAS forums, where we will hold class discussion of the course material every week. You'll be given discussion topics related to the readings and writing assignments, and you will be expected to post your thoughts, read the comments of others to demonstrate your active engagement in the class. If you post 1-2 original comments and reply to 2-3 posts, you will earn 100% or all 90 points!! (3+ posts per week.) You will also participate in peer review during the essay writing process.

Grading Scale Percentages (you do the rest of the math)

93-100	= A
90-92.99	= A-
87-89.99	= B+
83-86.99	= B
80-82.99	= B-
77-79.99	= C+
70-76.99	= C
67-69.99	= D+
60-66.99	= D
59	= F

Contacting the Instructor

Contact me any time via email. I do have scheduled on campus office hours, so check your course homepage or my faculty website for current times I am available to meet with you in person. I can also meet you by appointment if necessary. It is often beneficial to review a writing assignment before you turn it in for a grade, so consider sending me drafts for comment. I am really friendly and want to help you!

My Online Work Hours: I check my email in the mornings, throughout the day when possible, and in the evenings after 9 PM. I can not guarantee I will respond to emails over the weekend, but you can be assured that I will respond to you within 24 hours during the week. If you do not hear from me, it is because your email went into my spam folder. My De Anza email address is boardrebecca@fhda.edu, but sometimes messages sent there end up in my spam folder. If you need immediate assistance you can also use email me at rebeccaliljenstolpe@gmail.com

Plagiarism Policy

Because I respect the opinions and ideas of others, I am strongly against cheating and stealing and will uphold a strict plagiarism policy. **PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT VERY CAREFULLY:**

Students who submit the work of others in whole or in part will receive a zero and may fail the course if the plagiarism continues. It is the student's responsibility to cite sources and avoid sloppy research. Do not use phrases and sentences that you did not create unless you place them in quotation marks and attribute them to their author. Not one sentence, not one paragraph, nothing! Think carefully. Resist the temptation to pillage the web for content to fill your papers because plagiarism is easy to spot, especially for a writing teacher, and I unfortunately encounter it every quarter. Don't be next!

If you feel you need to do some research but are not sure how to quote an author or document your sources, ASK FOR HELP. There are also several useful resources on the web. You can start by checking out [Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing](#) from The Online Writing Lab at Purdue or [The Bedford Guide](#)

Course Outline

Week 1 **Socrates on Self-Confidence**

Week 2 Reflection #1 | Quiz #1

Week 3 **Epicurus on Happiness**

Week 4 Reflection #2 | Quiz #2

Weeks 5 **Seneca on Anger**

Week 6 Reflection #3 | Quiz #3

Week 7 **Nietzsche on Hardship**

Week 8 Reflection #4 | Quiz #4

Week 9 **Lao Tzu and David Foster Wallace on Compassion**

Week 10 Reflection #5 | Quiz #5

Week 11 **Living a Compassionate Life with Passion and Purpose**

Week 12 Final Term Paper (due Wednesday by 11:59 PM)