

# Family Dysfunction

ENGL1102: English Composition II



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## COURSE INFORMATION

**Course Title:** English 1102 – English Composition II

**Sections:** E1, G1, and M1

**Credits:** 3 credits

**Semester and Academic Year:** Fall 2026

## INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Dr. Blake Beaver

**Email:** [bbeaver6@gatech.edu](mailto:bbeaver6@gatech.edu)

## **CORE IMPACTS STATEMENT**

### **ENGL 1102 ENGL COMPOSITION II**

**This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Writing area.**

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I write effectively in different contexts?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcomes:

- Students will communicate effectively in writing, demonstrating clear organization and structure, using appropriate grammar and writing conventions.
- Students will appropriately acknowledge the use of materials from original sources.
- Students will adapt their written communications to purpose and audience.
- Students will analyze and draw informed inferences from written texts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Critical Thinking
- Information Literacy
- Persuasion

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A composition course that develops writing skills beyond the levels of proficiency required by ENGL 1101, that emphasizes interpretation and evaluation, and that incorporates a variety of more advanced research methods. Develops communication skills in networked electronic environments, emphasizes interpretation and evaluation of cultural texts, and incorporates research methods in print and on the Internet.

## **COURSE THEME/TOPIC DESCRIPTION**

In this section of the course, you will investigate the representation of dysfunctional families in contemporary American television. You will employ written, oral, visual, electronic, and nonverbal communication to create projects about this theme across a

range of purposes (e.g., analyze, inform, entertain, and persuade) and genres. These genres include:

- multimodal television analyses
- interactive fan fiction stories and artist statements
- research-driven video essays

In the course, you will focus on *Six Feet Under* (HBO, 2001–2005). You will also have the opportunity to focus on another streaming series about a dysfunctional family, such as *Ozark*, *Bloodline*, *The Haunting of Hill House*, and *The Bear*.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

<p><b>Rhetorical Knowledge</b></p> <p>Rhetorical knowledge focuses on the available means of persuasion, considering factors such as context, audience, purpose, genre, medium, and conventions.</p>	<p>Use with purpose key rhetorical concepts through analyzing and composing a variety of multimodal (written, oral, visual, electronic, and nonverbal—WOVEN) artifacts. These concepts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhetorical situation: purpose, audience, context</li> <li>• Argumentation in multiple modes</li> <li>• Genre</li> <li>• Affordances of mode, medium, technology</li> <li>• Multimodal synergy</li> </ul> <p>Gain experience reading/viewing/listening and composing in several genres to understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers'/users' and writers'/designers' practices and purposes</p> <p>Develop facility in responding to a variety of situations and contexts calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure</p> <p>Understand the social contexts of multimodal communication</p>
<p><b>Critical Thinking, Writing, and Composing</b></p> <p>Critical thinking is the ability to analyze, synthesize, interpret, and evaluate ideas, information, sources, situations, and texts.</p>	<p>Use composing and reading/viewing/listening for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communicating in various rhetorical contexts</p> <p>Interpret a diverse range of multimodal artifacts, attending especially to relationships between assertion and evidence, to patterns of organization, to the interplay among multimodal elements, and to how these features function for different audiences and situations</p> <p>Conduct primary and secondary research, integrating expert sources and data into multimodal projects</p>

	<p>Locate and evaluate (for credibility, sufficiency, accuracy, timeliness, bias and so on) primary and secondary research materials, including journal articles and essays, books, scholarly and professionally established and maintained databases or archives, and informal electronic networks and internet sources</p>
<p><b>Processes</b></p> <p>Writers use multiple strategies, or composing processes, to conceptualize, develop, finalize, and distribute projects. Composing processes are recursive and adaptable in relation to different rhetorical situations.</p>	<p>Understand that multimodal composition is a process</p> <p>Develop a multimodal project through multiple stages</p> <p>Develop flexible strategies for multimodal composition, reviewing, collaborating, revising, production, and dissemination</p> <p>Use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas</p> <p>Experience the collaborative and social aspects of multimodal composition processes</p> <p>Learn to give and to act on productive feedback to works in progress</p> <p>Reflect on the development of composing practices and how those practices influence the work students produce</p>
<p><b>Modes, Media, and Technology</b></p> <p>Composition occurs in multiple modes: Written, Oral, Visual, Electronic, and Nonverbal (WOVEN). Likewise, composition uses a range of technologies and media to develop and disseminate its messages.</p>	<p>Match the affordances of different modes and media to varying rhetorical situations</p> <p>Adapt composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities</p> <p>Understand and use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences</p>
<p><b>Knowledge of Conventions</b></p> <p>Conventions are the formal rules and informal guidelines that define genres, and in so doing, shape readers' and writers' perceptions of correctness or appropriateness.</p>	<p>Understand why genre conventions for structure, design, tone, and mechanics vary</p> <p>Gain experience negotiating variations in genre conventions</p> <p>Learn common formats and/or design features for different genres of multimodal artifacts</p> <p>Practice applying citation conventions systematically in their own work</p>

## REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

*The WOVENText Open Educational Resource* (free online through [this link](#))

*Writer/Designer: A Guide to Making Multimodal Projects*. Through [The Bedford Bookshelf \(1-Term Online\)](#). ISBN: 9781319530297.

**HBO, *Six Feet Under, Season 1*** (2001). Subscribe to HBO Max (approx. \$10.99/month) or purchase the first season on [Amazon Prime Video](#), [Apple TV](#), or [Google Play](#). (approx. \$9.99–\$19.99)

You will also need access to **the first season of another series for your TV Observation Logs and Artifact 3** by subscribing to a platform where the series is available or by purchasing the season on Amazon Prime Video, Apple TV, Google Play, or another online store.

## GRADING POLICY

In this course, Dr. Beaver will utilize two grading methods:

- **Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U):** For the TV observation logs, process documents, drafts, peer reviews, reflections, and team performance evaluations, Dr. Beaver will use a satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading system. In this system, assignments are assessed based on a combination of completion, effort, and responsiveness to the assignment goals. If you receive an unsatisfactory score, you may submit a revision to receive credit.
  - **Satisfactory (S):** The assignment is complete, shows good-faith effort, and meaningfully engages with the task. Receives full points.
  - **Unsatisfactory (U):** The assignment is incomplete, rushed, plagiarized, misuses generative AI per the course policy, or does not engage with the task in a meaningful way. Receives no points.
- **Rubric-Based Grading:** For participation and the revised versions of Artifacts 0–4, Dr. Beaver will assign you a grade based on rubric criteria, with points for how effectively you meet them. Dr. Beaver will also provide feedback on these revised artifacts.

## DESCRIPTION OF GRADED COMPONENTS

### Artifacts

#### *Artifact 0. Common First Week Video – 5% of Final Grade*

In this assignment, you will create a 60–90-second video to introduce yourself, identify the course you are taking, and articulate a challenge you anticipate facing in the coming semester of ENGL 1102—specifically, a challenge relating to one of the modes (written, oral, visual, electronic, or nonverbal communication) that you'll be engaging with in class projects this semester. You will use specific examples from your personal, professional, or academic communication experience to support your message. Additionally, you will articulate your multimodal communication goal(s) for the semester and connect them to the challenge above.

***Artifact 1. Multimodal Television Analysis – 16% of Final Grade***

In this assignment, you will write an analysis of episodes from the first season of HBO's *Six Feet Under*, geared toward an academic audience. In the analysis, you will examine how scenes and sequences from *Six Feet Under* employ multimodal communication—including dialogue, music, sound effects, production design, cinematography, editing, performance, and more—to convey themes and messages. The goal of this assignment is to think critically not just about *what* television series communicate, but *how* they communicate it through various modes.

***Artifact 2. Interactive Fan Fiction Story & Artist Statement – 19% of Final Grade***

In this assignment, you will work in teams to write an Interactive Fan Fiction Story focused on *Six Feet Under*, interpreting, appropriating, and reconstructing the series. You will utilize Twine, a free interactive storytelling platform, to design your story. In addition to the interactive fan fiction story, your team will write a collective Artist Statement. In the statement, you will convey to the reader the intentions behind your story and the message of your story. Additionally, you will describe what storytelling and design strategies you adopted to convey this message, the rationale for why you chose those strategies, and how you implemented those strategies.

***Artifact 3. Argumentative Video Essay – 19% of Final Grade***

In teams, you will collaborate to produce a video essay that makes an original, research-based, analytical argument about a thematic dimension of the first season of a contemporary American television series about a dysfunctional family. The video essay will utilize all WOVEN modes to communicate its argument, not only through orally communicated text (voiceover) but also through:

- written communication (overlaid captions and quotes)
- visual communication (shots, clips, graphics, and editing)
- electronic communication (digital video editing, effects, and distribution)
- nonverbal communication (paralanguage, such as pitch, volume, and rate)

In addition to an argument about the primary source (the dysfunctional family television series), conveyed through multimodal communication, students will incorporate secondary source research (scholarship, journalism, and promotional materials for the series) to support their arguments.

***Artifact 4. Reflective Portfolio – 15% of Final Grade***

For this final assignment in English 1102, you will craft a multimodal reflective portfolio. Throughout the semester, you will compose reflections on Artifacts 0–3, and you will revise those artifact reflections for the final portfolio. Additionally, in an essay of 1,000 words, you will reflect on your progress as a writer and multimodal communicator throughout the semester and highlight how you will transfer these skills to future coursework and your professional objectives. In the portfolio, you will also formulate an argument about your progress as a writer and communicator, utilizing evidence from the artifacts you crafted to support your claim. The reflective essay and the four artifact reflections will each have a dedicated page on the Canvas site. For more information about the portfolio, please visit [this link](#).

## **Other Assessments**

### ***Participation – 20% of Final Grade***

Preparation and participation are central to first-year writing courses, where we actively discuss, brainstorm, plan, outline, write, design, workshop, and peer-review in class. See the participation rubric below for more information on how your participation will be assessed.

### ***TV Observation Logs – 6% of Final Grade***

Throughout the semester, you will watch the first season of *Six Feet Under*, which will be the focus of Artifacts 1 and 2, and the first season of another streaming television series about a dysfunctional family, which will be the focus of Artifact 3. You will write six observation logs, focusing on formal elements, such as framing, sound, camera movement, blocking, set design, and editing, that stand out to you in your screenings of the episodes. You will describe what you notice, jot down questions you have about those formal elements, and account for any patterns you notice. For each episode, you need to log 3+ formal elements. The observation logs have two objectives: first, to demonstrate that you have watched the episodes; and second, to generate ideas and data for Artifacts 1–3.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Attendance**

Attendance and participation are essential to success in courses in the Writing and Communication Program. Accordingly, you are expected to attend class in person. Not attending a scheduled class session in person results in an absence. There may be times when you cannot or should not attend class, such as when you are ill, have an interview, or have family responsibilities. Therefore, this course allows a specified number of absences without penalty, regardless of reason. After that, penalties accrue. Exceptions are permitted for institute-approved absences (e.g., those documented by the Registrar) and situations such as hospitalization or family emergencies (documented by the Office of the Dean of Students). You may miss a total of four (4) classes over the course of the semester without penalty. Each additional absence beyond the allotted number will reduce your final grade by 2%. If you are absent, please get in touch with Dr. Beaver to arrange making up any missed work.

### **Tardiness**

Arriving late to class will result in a partial absence: 20% or more, depending on the time of arrival. For example, your attendance score will decrease from 1.0 to 0.8 or lower, depending on how late you arrive. To avoid penalties for tardiness, inform Dr. Beaver of your late arrival and the reason for it in advance of class.

### **Preparation and Participation**

#### ***Preparation***

To respect each other and the course goals, you will arrive at class on time, having viewed, read, and prepared to discuss the day's materials. Beyond this, Dr. Beaver encourages you to

take notes on course viewings and readings (Dr. Beaver will surely do so), make connections across the various weeks' viewings and readings, and compose clarifying questions and productive observations for class discussion.

### ***Participation***

Dr. Beaver recognizes that each student differs in level of comfort when speaking during class discussions. His goal is to facilitate an environment where everyone can contribute ideas, ask questions, and feel affirmed in their input. However, if you believe this environment is still challenging for you to contribute to class discussions, please proactively schedule a meeting with Dr. Beaver to discuss alternative avenues of participation and ensure a higher grade.

### ***Participation Rubric***

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Quality of Participation</b>
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comes to class prepared, having reviewed all materials assigned for that day.</li> <li>• Arrives to class early or on time.</li> <li>• Regularly contributes to large-group discussion.</li> <li>• Always participates actively in small-group work and individual learning activities.</li> <li>• Contributions to large-group, small-group, and individual activities are sophisticated, complex, and carefully considered.</li> <li>• Never uses devices problematically in class.</li> <li>• Always shows they are paying attention through nonverbal communication.</li> <li>• Never talks while the instructor or other students are speaking.</li> </ul>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comes to class prepared, having reviewed all materials assigned for that day.</li> <li>• Almost always arrives to class early or on time.</li> <li>• Occasionally contributes to large-group discussion.</li> <li>• Almost always participates actively in small-group work and individual learning activities.</li> <li>• Contributions to large-group, small-group, and individual activities are always constructive, developed, and complete.</li> <li>• Rarely uses devices problematically in class.</li> <li>• Almost always shows they are paying attention through nonverbal communication.</li> <li>• Rarely talks while the instructor or other students are speaking.</li> </ul>
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comes to class prepared, having reviewed all materials assigned for that day.</li> <li>• Usually arrives to class early or on time.</li> <li>• Rarely contributes to large-group discussion. Makes constructive contributions to large-group discussion when called upon.</li> <li>• Usually participates actively in small-group work and individual learning activities.</li> <li>• Contributions to small-group work and individual activities are usually constructive, developed, and complete.</li> <li>• Sometimes uses devices problematically in class.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes shows they are paying attention through nonverbal communication; other times shows they are <i>not</i> paying attention through nonverbal communication.</li> <li>• Sometimes talks while the instructor or other students are speaking.</li> </ul>
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually comes to class prepared, having reviewed all materials assigned for that day.</li> <li>• Sometimes arrives to class early or on time.</li> <li>• (Almost) never contributes to large-group discussion. Or contributes, but in an excessive, distracting, or problematic way.</li> <li>• Rarely participates actively in small-group work and individual learning activities; <i>or</i> participates more frequently, but contributions are problematic, distracting, underdeveloped, or incomplete.</li> <li>• Contributions to small-group work and individual activities are usually constructive, developed, and complete.</li> <li>• More frequently uses devices problematically in class.</li> <li>• More often shows they are <i>not</i> paying attention through nonverbal communication.</li> <li>• More frequently talks while the instructor or other students are speaking.</li> </ul>
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly comes to class unprepared.</li> <li>• Regularly arrives late to class.</li> <li>• Never contributes to large-group discussion.</li> <li>• Never participates in small-group and individual learning activities.</li> <li>• Regularly uses devices problematically in class.</li> <li>• Regularly shows they are <i>not</i> paying attention through nonverbal communication.</li> <li>• Regularly talks while the instructor or other students are speaking.</li> </ul>

### **Academic Integrity**

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review [Georgia Tech's Honor Code](#) and the student [Code of Conduct](#).

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

## **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also email me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

## **Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement**

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. The Student-Faculty Expectations articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

## **AI Policy**

This course is about growing in your ability to write, communicate, and think critically. Generative AI agents such as ChatGPT, DALL-E 2, and others present great opportunities for learning and for communicating. However, **AI cannot learn or communicate for you**, and so cannot meet the course requirements for you.

In this course, using generative AI tools in the work of the course (including assignments, discussions, ungraded work, etc.) is allowed **only in instances specified by your instructor**.

As with any technology, generative AI tools need to be used critically and according to academic and professional expectations. Thus, in instances in which your instructor allows generative AI tool use, you are expected to adhere to these principles:

**Responsibility:** You are responsible for the work you submit. In instances in which your instructor allows generative AI tool use, this means that any work you submit should be your own, with any AI assistance appropriately disclosed (see “Transparency” below) and any AI-generated content appropriately cited (see “Documentation” below). This also means you must ensure that any factual statements produced by a generative AI tool are true and that any references or citations produced by the AI tool are correct.

**Transparency:** Any generative AI tools you use in the work of the course should be clearly acknowledged, as indicated by Dr. Beaver. This work includes not only when you use content directly produced by a generative AI tool but also when you use a generative AI tool in the process of composition (for example, for brainstorming, outlining, or translation purposes).

**Documentation:** You should cite any content generated by an AI tool as you would when quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing ideas, text, images, or other content made by other people.

Using generative AI tools at times not permitted by Dr. Beaver will be considered an infraction of the Georgia Tech Honor Code and is subject to investigation by the Office of Student Integrity. Likewise, using generative AI tools in the course without adhering to these principles will be

considered an infraction of the Georgia Tech Honor Code and is subject to investigation by the Office of Student Integrity.

### ***Additional AI Policies***

Using any AI tool, such as Grammarly, for purposes beyond checking spelling and grammar, including rewriting phrases and sentences, will also be considered an inappropriate use of AI.

Dr. Beaver will utilize AI detection tools throughout the semester. He will follow a **two-strike policy**. At the first offense, Dr. Beaver will meet with you to discuss the problematic AI use, discuss the repercussions for your assignment grade, and provide a warning. At the second offense, Dr. Beaver will report the problematic AI use to the Office of Student Integrity.

### **Course Completion**

Failure to complete any component of the course, including projects, assignments, and stages of projects or assignments, may result in failure of the course, as determined by the instructor of the course in consultation with the Director of the Writing and Communication Program.

### **Syllabus Modifications**

This syllabus may be modified as the semester progresses to meet course outcomes and address the needs of members of the class.

### **Other Course Specific Policies**

#### **Submitting Work**

Please submit all assignments through Canvas. Dr. Beaver will provide assignment-specific instructions in the assignment prompts.

#### **Extensions and Late Work**

Late assignments are strongly discouraged and will decrease in grade by 5% for every day (every 24 hours, including weekends) that an assignment is overdue, starting the minute after the due date and time (i.e., after the first 24 hours, the late penalty will increase from 5% to 10%). If a situation prohibits you from completing an assignment on time, a request for an extension must be made at least 24 hours before the due date. Approved extensions will not affect your grade. In an emergency, a late assignment may be accepted without penalty at Dr. Beaver's discretion. However, you must alert Dr. Beaver to the crisis within a reasonable period and negotiate a new due date with Dr. Beaver for any late penalty to be waived.

#### **Missing Class and Making Up Work**

When you are absent from class, you are responsible for reaching out to Dr. Beaver and asking for instructions on how to make up work. Failure to make up in-class activities will result in penalties to your participation score.

## **Device Use Policy**

Because we write and create in every class, you must bring a computer or tablet to each class session. Smartphone use is prohibited in class, unless there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., you forgot your computer/tablet, or you receive an emergency call). Problematic use of any digital device (using your device to do work for other classes, texting, sending emails, playing games, shopping, or doing anything else unrelated to what we are working on during the class session) will result in penalties to your participation score.