



ONLINE English 124-Advanced Composition: Critical Reasoning & Writing

Instructor:

Sydney Brown
Professor of English

Contact:

Please use the Canvas Inbox.

I typically respond within a few hours, between 9:00am and 5:00pm, M-F. Sometimes I am up late, but rarely as late as my students! I occasionally check email on the weekend, but please do not depend on it.

My campus phone number is 619.644.7523, but I do not check it often during the summer. If you are having trouble with canvas, you may of course use my email: sydney.brown@gcccd.edu

It is best to start each module by previewing the assignments for the week to anticipate questions and to never wait to the last minute to tackle them. I look forward to working with you!

And don't forget to consult the information I sent you in the welcome letter and never hesitate to call the 24-hour Canvas hotline—they are extremely helpful!

1-844-600-4953

Course Description

English 124-Advanced Composition: Critical Reasoning and Writing is designed to deeply develop college-level thinking, reading, and writing skills. To be more specific, the course is an intellectual adventure providing instruction and practice in rhetoric, informal logic fallacies, and the analysis and evaluation of complex texts. You will also construct your own arguments. Authors make choices, and it will be our job to understand and identify those choices so that we can become more sophisticated and effective readers and communicators, and ultimately, more culturally savvy and engaged citizens.

As in the prerequisites, there will be continued attention to voice and style, research strategies, information literacy, and appropriate documentation. Furthermore, films, readings, quizzes, discussion forums, and other assignments are selected and designed to help you successfully comprehend and apply course content.

To make the most of our time together, be prepared to think critically, *and most importantly, to think critically for yourself.*

3 units, Satisfies General Education for: Grossmont College A1; CSU A3; IGETC 1B Transfers to: CSU, UC



Prerequisites

Prerequisites: A "C" grade or higher or "Pass" in English 120 or equivalent.

It is assumed that you have written essays, including those which incorporate research and demonstrate effective and accurate integration and documentation of a variety of sources. It is also assumed that you have a solid understanding of the Modern Language Association's (MLA) guidelines for style and format prior to enrolling in English

124. Furthermore, your command of English grammar and punctuation should be at college level. While there may be some discussion of these matters in class, we will primarily focus on the challenges of writing *strategy* rather than the problems of writing *mechanics*. It will be left largely to you to take responsibility for any gaps in your mechanical or basic research skills, or knowledge of MLA.

This is a Zero Cost Textbook (ZCT) Course, but You will Need the Following:

- [Canvas Student Guide](#) (links to external site)
- [Current MLA Guide](#) (available online free)
- Computer and Internet access (available on campus)
- Email account (through Canvas)

In addition, it is assumed that you have written college-level essays in MLA format & style prior to enrolling in English 124.. **It is also assumed that your command of English grammar and punctuation is at college level. Because this course moves at an accelerated pace (8-week rather than a 16-week semester), it is vital that you have a solid grasp of the English language to be successful.** While issues related to the English language at the sentence level will occasionally be addressed in Announcements or in the feedback you receive from me, we will focus more on the challenges of writing strategy than to problems of writing mechanics. It will be left largely to you to take responsibility for any gaps in your mechanical skills.

If you need more help in these areas, please take advantage of these excellent resources:

- OWL: [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) (links to external site)
- [Dr. Grammar Frequently Asked Questions](#) (links to external site)
- [Grammar Girl](#) (links to external site)
- [Grossmont College English Writing Center](#) (links to external site)
- [Grossmont College Tutoring Center](#) (links to external site)

Computer Skills:

Students must have the following basic computer skills for this online course:

- using a web browser
- sending and receiving email
- using a word-processing program, including ability to cut, copy, and paste
- sending attachments via email (in Word or other formats)
- downloading software and/or documents
- using the Canvas manual

If you need more help in this area, check out these sites:

- [Grossmont College Online Learning Success](#) (links to external site)
- [5 Ways to Develop Your Digital Literacy Skills](#) (links to external site)
- Film: [Canvas Overview for Students](#) (links to external site)

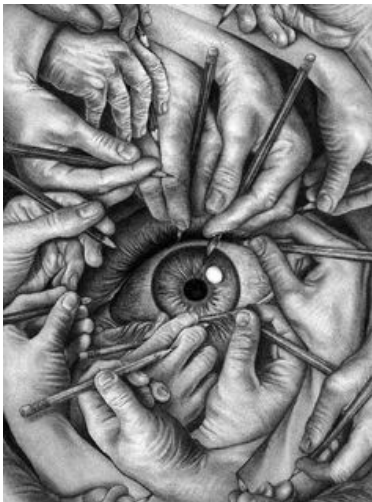
Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

A Student Learning Outcome (SLO) is a statement that describes the knowledge, skills, attitudes, or abilities that a student can demonstrate at the end of a course. SLOs generally relate to broad overarching goals and require higher thinking abilities. It is my hope that you perceive them here as not only an introduction to the goals of this course, but a contract between you and me.

By the end of the course, students will:

1. analyze and evaluate rhetorical choices in complex traditional and non-traditional texts such as essays, films, graphic novels, social media, and other innovative and culturally-relevant forms;
2. recognize and avoid problems in logic, especially through an understanding of fallacies, and employ rhetorical appeals, inductive and deductive reasoning, and models such as Toulmin's and Rogers';
3. construct an original, nuanced argument that synthesizes sources representing multiple perspectives.

COURSE CONTENT



Readings

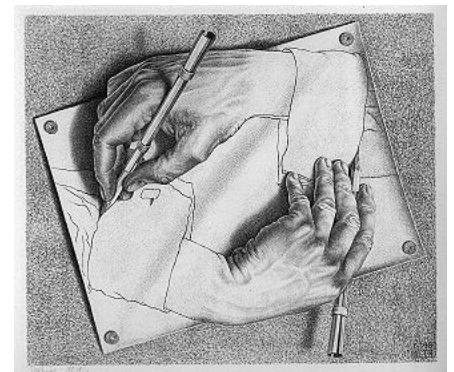
We will be actively reading a variety of complex texts. By “actively,” I mean the opposite of the type of reading where one gets to the end and asks, “What did I just read?” We will avoid this in two ways. First, I will work very hard to assign texts that are not only challenging, but also interesting. And second, you should approach each reading as a challenge.

Consider not only WHAT the text is about but HOW the text is written. Just like in the Land of OZ, someone behind the curtain is making it all happen. What is the writer's goal? For whom is s/he writing? What bias might they have? What assumptions are made about the content or audience? What is their agenda? Take notes, underline words (and look up the ones you don't know!) and passages, mark shifts in focus, circle recurring words or phrases, and jot down questions. If you don't understand something you read, try to formulate a specific question about it. If you don't like or

even find yourself disturbed by something you read, try to analyze why. Confusion and irritation are legitimate responses to a first encounter with any art form (yes, writing is an art form—“rhetoric” means the art of persuasion!), but they are useless responses if you don't search for their sources in the art and in yourself.

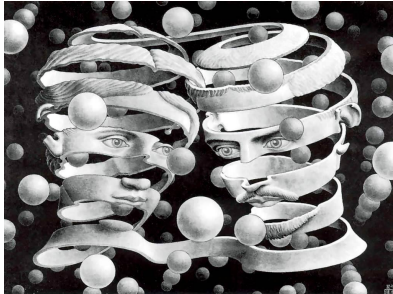
Short Writing Assignments and Essays

You will be required to construct a variety of short writing assignments and essays varying in length and source requirement. **Some short writing assignments and all essays should be typed, double-spaced, and in MLA format, including a Works Cited page.** Essays, or *advanced compositions*, will be generated from stimulating class readings, discussions, and research; you will receive detailed prompts for each of these assignments.



Quizzes

You will take quizzes designed to evaluate your retention of course content. They will give you a chance to confirm comprehension and/or identify which content pages and/or readings, films, or videos you need to return to and study before moving forward with the next assignment. The quizzes will help you determine what questions you may need to ask me.



Discussion Forums

In this course, you will find that active participation in discussion forums is vital to your understanding of course content. Forum structure includes, but is not limited to, discussion essays and responses, practice of reading and writing strategies, and critical work with assigned readings.

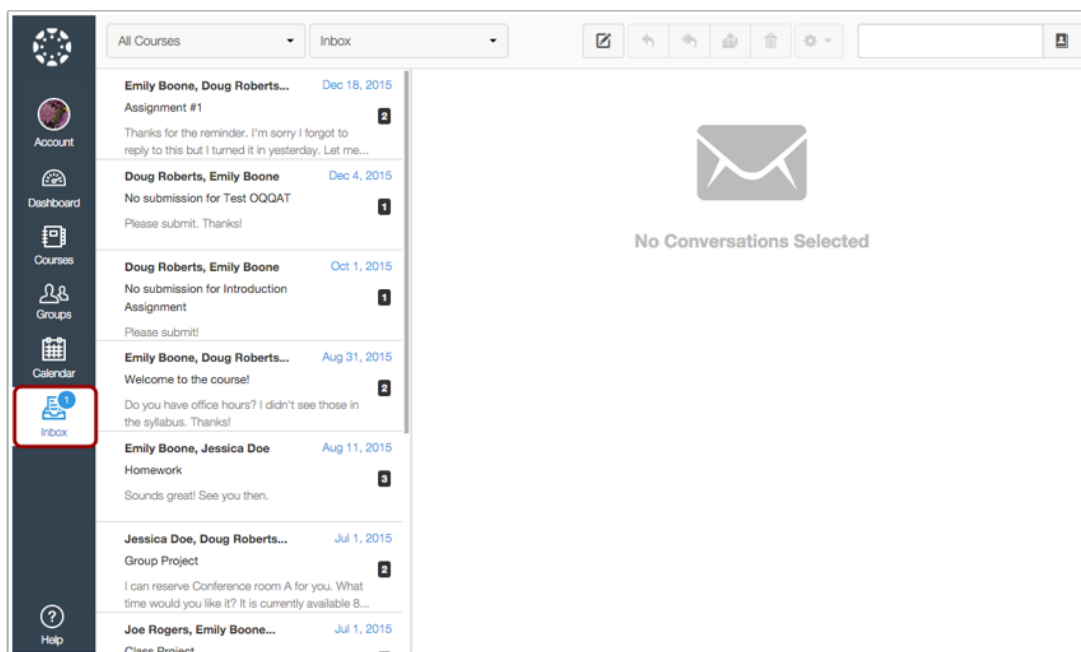
COURSE POLICIES:

“Only mediocrity can be trusted to be
always at its best.”
—Max Beerbohm



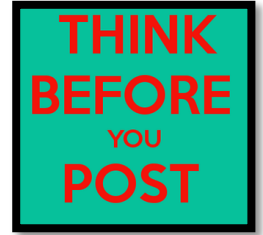
Canvas Inbox

Again, the best way to contact me with a personal question is to use the conversations tool within Canvas, which is accessible via the “Inbox,” found in the Global Navigation column at the left of the Canvas user interface (UI).



Netiquette

There will be more on this in the first module, but for now, it is important to recognize that the online classroom is in fact a classroom, and certain behaviors are expected when you communicate with both your peers and me. The guidelines for online behavior and interaction are known as netiquette.



General Online Behavior:

1. Remember the human. Even though in cyberspace, our online community is a classroom, so treat your peers and me with respect in email and other online communication; if a problem arises, contact me first.
2. Use clear and concise language and follow standard rules of capitalization.
3. Remember that all college-level communication should have correct spelling and grammar.
4. Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "LOL" and **"u" instead of "you" or "i" instead of "I."**
5. Use standard font in CANVAS.
6. Do not use exclamation points or the caps lock feature AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETTED AS YELLING!
7. Avoid the use of emoticons and emojis, though sometimes I just have to indulge.
8. Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or offensive.
9. Be careful with personal information (both yours and other's).
10. Always avoid the Ad Hominem fallacy (*against person* in Latin), which is an argument directed at the person rather than the position they are maintaining.

Email

When you send an email to your instructor (*aka, me*) or classmates, you should:

1. Use the subject line and create a clear, descriptive subject (an email is an extension of you, so represent yourself well).
2. Clarify which course you are taking, as instructors often have more than one course and many students.
3. Be brief and remember to use standard spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
4. Avoid attachments unless you are sure your recipients can open them.
5. Sign your message with your name and return email address.
6. Think before you send.
7. Think before you send the email to more than one person. Does everyone really need to see your message? Be sure you really want everyone to receive your response when you click, "reply all."
8. Be sure that the message author intended for the information to be passed along or ask permission before you click the "forward."
9. Please do not share personal information unless it is specifically asked of you or relevant to your ability to succeed in the course.
10. Please do not share reasons/excuses as to why you have missed assignments or fallen behind, unless I ask for them. But if you fall behind, do not hesitate to contact me!

Discussion Posts

When posting on the Discussion Board, you should:

1. **Follow directions. Read all directions before you ask questions. Ask questions if directions are not clear.**
2. Respond directly to the assignment and make posts that are on-topic and within the scope of the course material. Be thorough.
3. It is an excellent habit to paraphrase (put in your own words) what you think someone has said before you respond, such as "Maria argues that morality is relative; however, I believe it is absolute because..." That way you can be sure you are on the same page.
4. Take your posts seriously and review and edit your posts before sending.
5. Thank peers for thoughtful responses.
6. Be as brief as possible while still making a thorough comment and/or meeting the word count requirement.
7. Always give proper credit when referencing or quoting another source.
8. Be sure to read all messages in a thread before replying.
9. Don't repeat someone else's post without adding something of your own to it.
10. Be attentive and avoid short, generic replies such as, "I agree" and "I like..." You should include why you agree or add to the previous point.
11. Always be respectful of others' opinions even when they differ from your own.
12. When you disagree with someone, you should express your differing opinion in a respectful, non-critical way.
13. Do not make personal or insulting remarks (avoid the dreaded Ad Hominem fallacy).
14. Be open-minded.
15. Enjoy the discourse!



Security

Remember that your password is the only thing protecting you from pranks or more serious harm.

- ✓ Don't share your password with anyone.
- ✓ Change your password if you think someone else might know it.
- ✓ Always log-out when you are finished using the system.

Drop Policy

First and foremost: email me if you are considering dropping, as often I can help you catch up. If you are feeling overwhelmed, share it with me, as I was once a student too!

1. All students are expected to log in on the first day of class and to complete their bio, including a photograph or representative image.
2. **Students who do not complete the quiz and discussion forum in week one will be dropped.**
3. Students who miss two assignments in a row may be dropped; each module is 2-3 weeks' worth of material, so missing this much work is a serious issue.
4. Students are responsible for dropping themselves after the first week of class. While the instructor may drop a student, do not count on that happening.
5. Classes can be dropped through WebAdvisor (www.grossmont.edu) prior to the drop deadline for your class. It is the student's responsibility to officially drop courses they are no longer attending. If a course is not officially dropped, you may receive an "F" for the course.

Evaluation

Because this is a pilot course, modules will only be released once a week; however, **I do not use the plus/minus system for grading.**

Late Work Policy

This course moves quickly, so I do not accept late work, though emergencies will be handled on a one-on-one basis (I am human first/teacher second). Discussion Forums and posts can never be turned in late or made up—they are “real time” assignments.



HARRIET WAS STILL IN THE
MIDDLE OF HER ESSAY.

Additional Accommodations

Students with disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact Disabled Student Programs & Services (DSPS) in the first week so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented as soon as possible. Students may contact DSPS in person in room 60-120 or by phone (619) 644-7112 (voice). Video Phone for the Deaf [(619) 567-7712] or TTY users can call the DSPS voice number through California Relay Services.
<http://www.grossmont.edu/dsps/>

Course Repetition

The California Community College Board of Governors recently passed revisions to Title 5 regarding course repetition that will take effect during the 2012 summer semester. Students will only be allowed to enroll in a course three times if they received a substandard grade (D, F, NP or NC) or withdrew from the class with a “W.” Students with extenuating circumstances may seek approval to enroll in a course for the fourth time through the petition process. These changes do not contain a grandfather clause so any student that has already taken a course the maximum number of times will no longer be able to take the same class within the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District.

Grossmont Cares!



Students facing food or housing insecurity are encouraged to contact a Grossmont College Basic Needs Liaison (their names are listed in the web link provided below) or you can send an email to Grossmont.BasicNeeds@gcccd.edu to request information or assistance. I also encourage you to speak with me, if you feel comfortable doing so, so that I may provide additional support to ensure your success in this course.

Additional information on basic needs resources, including Gizmo's Kitchen Grossmont College's food pantry) is available at:
<https://www.grossmont.edu/student-services/offices-and-services/basic-needs>.

Statement on Academic Integrity and Academic Fraud

Any cheating or plagiarism in high school or college could have a devastating effect on a student's reputation, now and in the future. It could also cause problems when you enter your profession. The faculty, administration, and staff of Grossmont College, in creating a culture of academic excellence, value honesty and integrity in all aspects of learning, working, and participating in the college community. Moreover, we believe that those who value learning would never view **cheating** (copying or otherwise presenting work that is not one's own) and **plagiarism** (presenting another writer's ideas, materials, images, or words as one's own without proper citation) as viable choices within an academic environment. It is incumbent on faculty, in particular, to communicate expectations to students with regard to academic honesty in each class, and it is the responsibility of each student to understand the actions and behaviors that constitute cheating or academic dishonesty within each class as well as in other venues on campus. Students are encouraged to ask questions of their instructors.

Penalties for actions inconsistent with classroom, library, and college expectations for academic integrity range from a failing grade on an assignment, exam, or project (which may lead to a failing grade in the course) to, under certain conditions, suspension, or expulsion from a class, program, or the college. For more information, please consult with your instructor or contact the office of the Associate Dean of Student Affairs.

The college is an academic community with high standards, and its teaching, learning and service purposes are seriously disrupted and subverted by academic fraud.

All students at Grossmont College are expected to comply with the institution's high standards of academic integrity and avoid instances of dishonesty at all times. Such acts of dishonesty include cheating, plagiarism, fraud, false citations or data, and the fraudulent use of Internet resources.

Students are not to commit academic fraud, which is a form of cheating, lying and stealing. It is a serious violation of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the catalog. The intent of this document is to increase student awareness as to what academic fraud is, to provide strategies to avoid the situations, and to explain the consequences of committing academic fraud. The faculty and administration expect students to have a responsible and sincere commitment to academic integrity during the performance of their instructional activities and completion of assignments or requirements. You are responsible for your academic conduct.

In most cases, students who commit intentional or unintentional academic fraud will be reported to the administration, and this may result in a zero on the assignment, an F in the course, or expulsion from the college.

Academic fraud includes, but is not limited to, the following situations:

Plagiarism: Using someone else's ideas or work without proper or complete acknowledgement. Plagiarism encompasses many things and is by far the most common manifestation of academic fraud. You can be guilty of plagiarism even if you cite your sources but do not paraphrase well. If you do not know how to paraphrase, be sure to review it on Purdue's Online Writing Lab. For example, copying a passage straight from a book into a paper without quoting or explicitly citing the source is plagiarism. In addition, completely rewording someone else's work or ideas and using it as one's own

is also plagiarism. It is very important that students properly acknowledge all ideas, work, and even distinctive wording that are not their own.

Cheating: Copying of any test or quiz question or problem, or work done in a class that is not the student's own work. It also includes giving or receiving unauthorized assistance during an examination whether it was intentional or not. Obtaining or distributing unauthorized information about an exam before it is given is also cheating, as is using inappropriate or unallowable sources of information during an exam.

Multiple Submission: Use of work previously submitted at this or any other institution to fulfill academic requirements in another class. For example, using a paper from an English 126 Creative Writing class for a Sociology 138 Social Psychology class is academic fraud. Slightly altered work that has been resubmitted is also considered to be fraudulent. With prior permission, some professors may allow students to complete one assignment for two classes. In this case, prior permission from both instructors is absolutely necessary.

False Citation: Falsely citing a source or attributing work to a source from which the referenced material was not obtained. A simple example of this would be footnoting a paragraph and citing a work that was never utilized.

False Data: Fabrication or alteration of data to deliberately mislead. For example, changing data to get better experiment results is academic fraud. Instructors and tutors in lab classes will often have strict guidelines for the completion of labs and assignments. Whenever in doubt about what may be considered academic fraud, students should immediately consult with the instructor.

Plagiarism via the Internet: Occurring with more and more frequency and taking a number of different forms. As should be obvious, purchasing research papers on the Internet and submitting them as a student's own work constitutes plagiarism. Cutting and pasting from a website without putting the text being used in quotation marks and/or without properly citing the source also constitutes plagiarism. Posting quiz information online and/or accessing such information is cheating, even if you do not post the answers. Also, students should be aware that while many websites provide reliable information, others may not include well-documented research. Students should be sure to check facts using a variety of different types of resources in order to ensure accuracy. In addition, if an assignment does not indicate that you may use any other sources other than those specified, it would be academically dishonest to use a website to get ideas or help.

Collusion: Working with someone else to commit academic fraud. If you pay someone to take a course for you, it is the most despicable type of cheating, and karma will find its way to you. Ignoring cheating by another student carries the same consequences as actually "doing" the cheating. Allowing someone to use your work to finish theirs if they don't copy word for word is not okay. If someone in this course or another section of it asks you about a quiz, it is not okay to share questions or answers. Using in an essay long sections that have been rewritten by a friend or a tutor constitutes academic fraud. However, if a friend gets behind in this course and asks you for your notes and help with understanding course concepts: this is not academic dishonesty.

Intentional Deception: Submission of false documentation (absence excuse, proof of attendance, extra credit, etc.) for falsifying any official college record. A student who misrepresents facts in order to obtain exemptions from course requirements has committed an act of intentional deception and may also be subject to the consequences listed below. It is best for a student to do the work as required in a course or speak to the instructor about circumstances that may cause problems in

completing forms correctly or honestly.

Students who engage in academic fraud will be subject to authorized penalties at the discretion of the instructor of record in the class. Such penalties may range from a failing grade on an assignment, exam, or project (which may lead to a failing grade in the course) to, under certain conditions, suspension, or expulsion from a class, program, or the college. For more information contact the office of the Associate Dean of Student Affairs or the Vice President of Student Services.

It is worthwhile to note the California Education Code Section 76224(a) states:

"When grades are given for any course of instruction taught in a community college district, the grade given to each student shall be the grade determined by the faculty member of the course and the determination of the student's grade by the instructor, in the absence of mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetency, shall be final."

The foregoing language indicates that the instructor has sole and final authority in awarding grades based on his/her determination of the quality of the student's work in the course.

Faculty are strongly encouraged to directly report all students found to be in violation of the college standards for academic integrity to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs.

For further clarification and information regarding academic integrity, please contact Student Affairs at (619) 644-7600.

How to Avoid Academic Fraud

Using MLA correctly and consistently is a great way to avoid academic fraud. However, the Modern Language Association's (MLA) official format and style will not be taught or introduced in this advanced course; it is considered a prerequisite. Any gaps in your knowledge of MLA must be taken up on your own. There are many great videos on YouTube and OWL is terrific. Not adhering to MLA could severely lower your grade in this course.

Let me also state that if you ever get to the point that you feel you have to borrow or purchase someone else's ideas or paper, please email me and we'll work something out. **With that said, at the very minimum, plagiarism will result in an automatic F (zero points) for the assignment.** However, if you keep the following guidelines in mind, you will be able to avoid jeopardizing your academic career.

- **Use your own words and ideas.**

Practice is essential to learning. Making mistakes is essential to learning. Each time you choose your words, order your thoughts, and convey your ideas, you can improve your writing. When you plagiarize or when others edit your work for you, you are not learning.

- **Give credit for copied, adapted, or paraphrased material.**

If you repeat another's exact words, you **MUST** use quotation marks and cite the source. If you adapt a chart or paraphrase a sentence, you must still cite. Paraphrase means that you restate the author's ideas, meaning, and information in your own words.

- **Avoid using others' work with minor "cosmetic" changes.**

Examples: using "less" for "fuller," or reversing the order of a sentence.

- **There are no “FREEBIES.”**

ALWAYS cite words, information, and ideas you use if they are new to you (learned in your research). No matter where you find it—encyclopedia or on the Internet—you cite it!

- **Beware of “common knowledge.”**

You don't have to cite “common knowledge,” BUT the fact must really be commonly known. That Abraham Lincoln was the U.S. President during the Civil War is common knowledge; that over 51,000 Union and Confederate soldiers died in the Battle of Gettysburg is not.

- **When in doubt, cite.**

Remember, through discussion posts and writing assignments your instructor knows your writing level and style. Don't fool yourself into thinking you can pass off someone else's work as your own. Also, do not use URLs to cite a source.

- **BE UP FRONT WITH YOUR SOURCES.**

Introduce the sources you are using and establish their credibility with your author. It will strengthen your credibility as the author.

- **Examples of ethical scholarship:**

In describing the role of the Los Angeles Times in the conflicts and events surrounding the diversion of water from the Owens Valley, many rely upon the factual account given in Thinking Big: The Story of the Los Angeles Times. For example...

In her 2017 article “Morality and the Future,” published in the New York Times, Carmen Diaz, a Professor of Sociology at UCLA, argues that “Social media has more influence over teens than their parents” (5).



All major assignments for this course are run through VeriCite. The program ensures originality by comparing submissions to billions of sources of academic content, publisher's content, and against your own submissions—far beyond just Grossmont and Cuyamaca. Papers receiving a VeriCite score over 15% may result in a zero on the assignment and/or academic probation from the college. A VeriCite report on an essay below 20% is usually acceptable. A high plagiarism percentage on VeriCite is typically over 25% (yellow, orange or red), and it almost always represents academic fraud.

For more on Grossmont's Academic Fraud Policy:

<http://www.grossmont.edu/campus-life/student-affairs/academic-integrity.aspx>

Any questions? Just ask!

*This course adheres to the policies outlined in the Grossmont College Catalog.
For further information, consult “Academic Policies” in the catalog.*