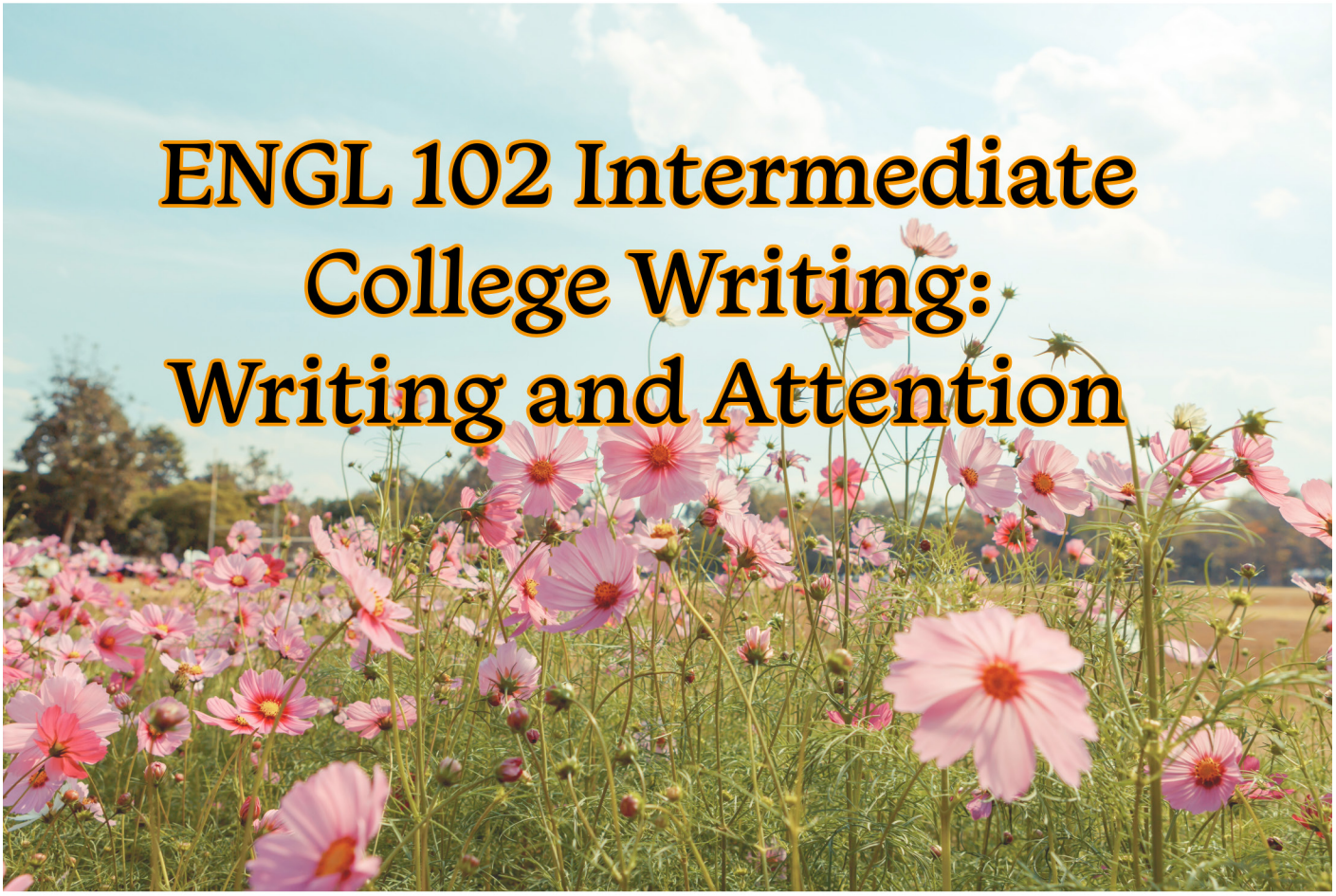


ENGL 102 Intermediate College Writing: Writing and Attention

Spring 2025-2026 **ENGL 102-56** (3 credit hours)

Time & Place

Tue & Thur
1:00 - 2:15 PM
Humanities 217

Instructor Contact Info

Yuan Zhao (he/him)
y0zhao23@louisville.edu

Office Hours

Humanities 333
Tue 2:30 - 4: 30 PM
And by Appointment



Course **Description.**

Introduction

Generally, English 102 focuses on creating and answering questions through research and writing using academic sources, both primary and secondary. A student in English 102 should expect to: develop and answer research questions; articulate a position relative to others on a topic; address audiences inside and outside the academic community; and compose, revise, and edit multiple assignments equaling about 20 to 25 pages of text, including at least one extended research project.

Specifically, our English 102 will be organized centered at a theme—attention. The rise of the social media, live streaming, and short videos give rise to a crisis discourse about attention economy. Either if you suffer from short spans of attention and feel difficult to concentrate, or if you are interested in this social concern and want to know more, you are at the right place.

Technical communication scholars identify two sets of literacy skills—functional literacy and critical literacy—and students need both of them. To put them in plain language and relate them to our course, functional literacy responds to writing skills (or how to write), and critical literacy concerns critical thinking (or what to write). We will train these two skills by reading two books and completing various writing assignments.

Plan & Goals.

Rhetorical Knowledge

Students will produce writing that responds appropriately to a variety of rhetorical situations. Their writing should:

- Articulate a purpose for research and their own position relative to the positions of others
- Analyze the needs of an audience and the requirements of the assignment or task
- Adapt an argument to a variety of genres and media to suit different audiences and purposes
- Use evidence appropriate to audience and purpose

Critical Thinking and Reading

Students will produce writing that abstracts, synthesizes, and represents the ideas of others fairly. Their writing should:

- Use evidence that responsibly represents other research and communities in and beyond the classroom
- Demonstrate an understanding of a text as existing within a broader context, with a distinct audience and purpose
- Represent and respond to multiple points of view in research and across community and cultural issues
- Select academic and nonacademic sources with discernment

Community Issues and Cultural Diversity

Students will produce writing that communicates an understanding of how communities and cultural categories are constructed. Their writing should:

- Demonstrate awareness of multiple points of view
- Question existing assumptions about culture and community
- Describe actions being taken to address cultural and community issues
- Address concerns of diverse audiences

Processes

Students will produce writing reflective of a multi-stage composing and revising process. Their writing should:
Use sources to discover and develop research questions and/or projects

- Reflect recursive composing processes and strategies across multiple drafts and research assignments
- Show evidence of research development through peer review and collaboration
- Evaluate the credibility and relevance of both print and digital sources

Conventions

Students will produce writing that strategically employs appropriate conventions in different writing situations. Their writing should:

- Use structural conventions such as organization, formatting, paragraphing, and tone
- Demonstrate control of surface features such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling
- Provide an understanding of the conventions of multimodal composition (in print and/or digital media) that comprise developing communication in the 21st century
- Cite the work of others appropriately

Course Information.

Course Prerequisite

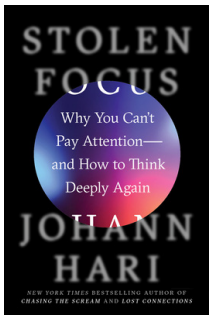
English 101 or equivalent.

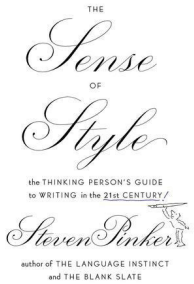
Cardinal Core Statement

This course fulfills a Cardinal Core Written Communication Requirement.

Texts and materials:

- Hari, Johann. **Stolen focus: Why you can't pay attention--and how to think deeply again**. Crown, 2022.
- Pinker, Steven. **The sense of style: The thinking person's guide to writing in the 21st century.** Penguin Books, 2015.
- Other reading materials will be provided electronically.





In Class Participation

For the first few weeks, you will be guided to be familiar with the class routine. Every class consists of: (1) a last lesson recap, (2) discussions about assigned readings, (3) free writing practice based on discussions, (4) assignment announcements. The interdependency between you and the instructor weighs a lot to the final success of this course. Thus, your contributions to discussions are much appreciated. It means, to guarantee the effectiveness of class, please make sure you read assigned readings and follow the instructions to think about the corresponding questions before coming to the class. Get prepared for the class and share your insights, thoughts and questions. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Sometimes, we are not looking for a resolution, and for humanities, not every question can get a perfect answer. Don't skip class even if you cannot finish reading the assigned texts.

Attendance

According to our grading contract, everyone can have up to 4 excused absences.
If you will miss class, I recommend doing three things:

- email me about your absence
- submitting any homework on time
- asking your peers what you missed so you can get caught up



Grading Policy.

Labor-Based Grading Contract

- A labor-based grading contract is offered to explain in detail how I assess your performance and how you can get letter grades. Please read the contract. The default grade for this course is A.
- By staying in this course and attending class, you accept this contract and agree to abide by it, in effect "signing" it.

You are guaranteed a course grade of "A" (4.00) if you meet all of the following conditions.

- Participation in good faith. Your job is to participate as fully as possible and meet our course goals and your personal learning goals. You cannot miss more than 3 class sessions. Any absence due to a university-sponsored group activity (e.g., sporting event, band, another class field trip, etc.), military-related absences (e.g., deployment, work, duty, etc.), or documented illness will be considered independently of the above attendance policy, as long as the student has FIRST provided written documentation as soon as they are aware of the days they will be absent.
- Avoid turning in late or incomplete work. You agree to turn in properly and on time all work and assignments expected of you in the spirit they are assigned. During the semester, you may, however, turn in a few assignments late. The exact number of those late assignments is stipulated in the table. **Late work** is defined as any work or document due that is turned in AFTER the due date/time BUT within 72 hours of the deadline. After 72 hours, the work will be considered as **missed**. **Incomplete work** is defined as any assignment submitted before the due date/time but fails to meet all of the labor expectations.
- Do not miss work. You agree not to miss any work expected of you. If you turn in late work AFTER the 72 hours stipulated in Late/Incomplete Work, then it will be considered "**missed work**," which is a more serious mark against your grading contract. Complete all work in the spirit it is assigned, on time, and in good faith. You agree to turn in on time and in the appropriate manner all the labor assigned in the spirit it is assigned.

Knowing Where You Stand

- To know about any late or missed assignments I have recorded that may lower your final grade, you agree to check your Blackboard grade book frequently.
- In the grade book, I will mark complete work with 1 point, late/incomplete work with 0.5 point, and missed work with 0 point.

	# of non-participation days	# of Late/Incomplete Assignments	# of Missed Assignments
A (4.0)	4	3	0
B (3.0)	5	4	0
C (2.0)	6	5	1
D (1.0)	7	6	2
E (0)	8	7	3

Description of Assignments.

All individual writing assignments should be submitted in .docx or .pdf format via Blackboard. No URLs to online documents will be accepted. Your submissions should follow MLA or APA format.

Major Project 1: Literacy Narrative

Offer your story, concepts, and standards on good writing for over 800 words.

Major Project 2: Wikipedia Editing

We will create a Wikipedia article based on Johann Hari's Stolen Focus. You will work with your peers to learn basics of Wikipedia editing.
To conclude the project, you will compose a reflective statement over 1000 words, discussing the learning curves of Wikipedia editing, audience awareness, citation, problem-solving, and revision.



Major Project 3: Book Review

You will compose a book review based on your readings of Johann Hari's Stolen Focus. You will demonstrate your close reading of the text, share with potential readers with what are your takeaways from the book, and how they can benefit from reading it.
You will submit two complete drafts of the book review assignment—the first draft (over 1000 words) and the revised draft (at least 1500 words).

Major Project 4: Op-ed—a Public Writing Project about Attention

You will compose an op-ed for the public audience about the topic of attention, based on your opinions/experiences and what we read in our course. Op-ed is a genre published in newspapers for reader-writers to offer a unique and expert viewpoint on a timely issue. Some venues for your consideration include The Louisville Cardinal (UofL's student newspaper), Courier Journal. Your op-ed article should be over 1000 words.

Course Schedule.

I reserve the right to make changes to the reading schedule below, to facilitate learning in this course.

All assginments are due by 11:00 am of the assigned dates.

Week 01			**Jan 8**	**Thursday**
Readings	**Syllabus, grading contracts**			
Assignments	**Prepare for books, Wikipedia section, Meetings sign-up**			

Week 02	**Jan 13**	**Tuesday**	**Jan 15**	**Thursday**
Readings	**Sense of Style: Prologue & Chapter 1**			
Assignment	**Project 1 Literacy Narrative Due by Jan 20**			

Week 03	**Jan 20**	**Tuesday**	**Jan 22**	**Thursday**
Readings	**Stolen Focus: Introduction + Wikipedia Basics**			

Week 04	**Jan 27**	**Tuesday**	**Jan 29**	**Thursday**
Readings	**Stolen Focus: Chapters 1 + 2**			

Week 05	**Feb 3**	**Tuesday**	**Feb 5**	**Thursday**
Readings	**Stolen Focus: Chapters 3 + 4 + 5**			
Assignments	**Project 2 Wikipedia Article + Reflective Paper, due by Feb 10**			

Week 06	**Feb 10**	**Tuesday**	**Feb 12**	**Thursday**
Readings	**Sense of Style: Chapter 2**			

Week 07	**Feb 17**	**Tuesday**	**Feb 19**	**Thursday**
Readings	**Stolen Focus: Chapters 6 + 7**			

Week 08	**Feb 24**	**Tuesday**	**Feb 26**	**Thursday**
Readings	**Stolen Focus: Chapters 8 + 9 +10**			

Week 09	**Asynchronous Class**
Readings	**Stolen Focus: Chapters 11 + 12**
Assignment	**Project 3-1: Book Review due by March 8**

Week 10	**Mar 10**	**Tuesday**	**Mar 12**	**Thursday**
Spring Break	**No class**			

Week 11	**Mar 17**	**Tuesday**	**Mar 19**	**Thursday**
Readings	**Stolen Focus: Conclusion**			

Week 12	**Mar 24**	**Tuesday**	**Mar 26**	**Thursday**
Readings	**Sense of Style: Chapter 3**			
Assignments Due	**Project 3-2: Book Review Revision due by March 31**			

Week 13	**Mar 31**	**Tuesday**	**Apr 2**	**Thursday**
Readings	**Stolen Focus: Chapters 13 +14**			

Week 14	**Apr 7**	**Tuesday**	**Apr 9**	**Thursday**
Readings	**Sense of Style: Chapter 5**			

Week 15	**Apr 14**	**Tuesday**	**Apr 16**	**Thursday**
Conference Days				

Week 16	**Apr 21**	**Tuesday**
No Class		
Assignment	**Project 4 Op-ed due by April 24**	

Other Important Days

Jan 13	**Last day to drop/add with 100% tuition credit**
Jan 28	**Last day to withdraw with 50% tuition credit**
Feb 4	**Last day to withdraw with 25% tuition credit**
Mar 6	**Last day to withdraw**
Apr 22	**Last day of classes**
Apr 24-30	**Final Exams**

Course Policies A-Z.

"Andy's Coming!" Challenge

Our class discusses attention, so when you feel you are about to lose your attention, please shout out "Andy's Coming!" Everyone in the class should imitate Toy Story--freeze and pretend to be inanimate toys because our owner, Andy, is approaching. I hope this embodied interactivity can entertain you and interfere when you are about to lose your attention. "Andy's Coming" challenge can be played three times maximum in one class.

Artificial Intelligence and Student Writing

Plagiarism, or "representing the words or ideas of someone else as one's own," is prohibited at UofL ("Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities"). In the Composition Program, plagiarism includes the use of AI-generated text without proper citation or credit. That is, students should not use AI tools to generate any body of text (sentences, paragraphs, etc.) and then pass that generated text off as their own work. Any inclusion of AI-generated text must be properly cited and acknowledged as AI-written. Students who wish to cite AI-generated text should consult the resources developed by APA, MLA, the Chicago Manual of Style, or their style manual of choice.

You will sign a "Declaration of the Use of Generative AI" for every major assignment indicating your use of AI.

Basic Needs Support:

Doing well in classes (and in life, for that matter) means getting a good night's sleep, having enough to eat, and being able to get to where you need to go. If you are having any difficulties with these necessities, remember that UofL has resources to assist you. Please reach out to one of these great resources if you find yourself in need at any time during this course or after.

- Food (fresh and non-perishable), household and toiletry items: Cardinal Cupboard (SAC W312)
- Clothing, shoes, household items and office/art supplies: UofL Free Store (SAC W303C)
- If you're experiencing any academic, financial, or personal difficulties, a Student Success Coordinator in our Student Success Center can work with you individually to provide guidance and support and connect you to resources. For first-generation college students, Student Success Center is highly recommended to you.
- The UofL Concern Center can help you find and connect with relevant resources: https://louisville.concerncenter.com/.

Cardinal Core Outcomes

Written Communication (WC)

Written Communication is the ability to develop and express ideas, opinions, and information in appropriate forms. To fulfill this requirement, students will complete, revise, and share a substantial amount of

writing in multiple genres or media. Students who satisfy this requirement will:

1. Produce writing that reflects a multi-stage composing and revising process and that illustrates multiple strategies of invention, drafting, and revision.
2. Select and/or use appropriate genres for a variety of purposes, situations, and audiences.
3. Apply academic conventions in different writing situations; employ structural conventions such as organization, formatting, paragraphing, and tone; and use appropriate surface features such as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
4. Employ critical thinking processes to create an understanding of knowledge as existing within a broader context and to incorporate an awareness of multiple points of view.
5. Select, evaluate, and integrate material from a variety of sources into their writing and use citation appropriate to the discipline.

Modes of assessment:

1. Students will produce at least two drafts of each major assignment and will receive credit for engaging in various stages of the writing process (e.g., brainstorming, peer feedback).
2. Students will write in multiple genres and address at least two different audiences over the course of the semester. Their written reflections will address how their audience and purpose shaped their research and writing choices.
3. Students' writing will be graded, in part, on awareness and use of textual conventions.
4. Students' writing will be graded, in part, on students' ability to think critically about their sources.
5. Students' writing will be graded, in part, on students' ability to integrate a variety of sources in their writing.

Cell Phones and Laptops: see Tech Policy

Counseling Center

If you are having a difficult time or generally feel stuck, it may be helpful to work with a trained therapist at the Counseling Center in an individual or group setting. People come into the Counseling Center to discuss a range of topics, including relationships, family, identities, grief and loss, depression, stress, and many more experiences and concerns. The Counseling Center provides short term individual, group, and couples counseling, crisis intervention, and psychological testing. Clients seek services for a variety of areas of concern, including psychological, personal/social, academic, and career issues. To schedule an appointment, please contact the Counseling Center at 502-852-6585 or stop by the office in the Student Activities Center Room W-204. More info: http://louisville.edu/counseling.

Additional Counseling Resources:

- 24/7 Adult Crisis Line: 502-589-4313 or 800-221-0446 (available 24/7)
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) (available 24/7)
- Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741 (available 24/7)
- The Trevor Project: 1-866-488-7386 (available 24/7 for individuals ages 13-24 who identify as LGBTQ)

Email

Please check your UofL email account regularly for any class-related messages from me. Also, make sure to check the Blackboard site for questions and other study materials. I welcome your e-mails and will try to respond to them promptly. If you do not hear from me after two days, please send me a quick reminder to make sure I did not forget about your email.

Grade Disputes

If you have questions or concerns about your progress in this course, please do not hesitate to discuss any issue with me during my office hours. If you wish to dispute a grade, I will be happy to meet with you, but I will first ask you to carefully explain your justification in writing. In most cases, I will offer you the chance to revise and resubmit your assignment.

Right to make changes statement

The instructor has the right to make changes to the course schedule/syllabus if necessary.

Tech policy

I understand that many of you will choose to write with your laptops and tablets throughout the semester, which is great, but that technology can also easily distract us. When using your laptops and tablets, please stay focused on classwork and don't have distracting material on your screen.

If, for whatever reason, you do not have access to the Internet or to various technologies, books, etc., please let me know privately. We can come up with an alternative plan; I am happy to provide assistance so that all students have access to required materials. While I expect everyone to submit their own work, I strongly encourage groups to help each other with technology or other questions. If you need to borrow laptops, you can contact Ekstrom Library for help (https://library.louisville.edu/ekstrom/aus/equipment).

Title IX/Clery Act

Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any other nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sex discrimination violate University policies. Students experiencing such behavior may obtain confidential support from the PEACC Program (852-2663), Counseling Center (852-6585), and Campus Health Services (852-6479). To report sexual misconduct or sex discrimination, contact the Dean of Students (852-5787) or University of Louisville Police (852-6111).

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.

For more information, see the Sexual Misconduct Resource Guide.

Veteran Services

There is a range of resources for UofL veterans, including the Office of Military and Veteran Student Services (Houchens LL08). This office serves as a resource for any issues you may be encountering. I recognize that calls to active duty, problems with GI Bill disbursements, and other issues might affect your ability to complete assignments. If any problems arise, feel free to keep me in the loop, and I will do what I can to help. See also louisville.edu/admissions/apply/transfer/veterans/campus-resource-team.

Writing Center

The Writing Center (http://louisville.edu/writingcenter) is a free service for all undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff. Highly trained consultants will meet with you for 50 minutes to discuss any stage of the writing process—brainstorming, organizing your essay, refining your argument, identifying patterns of error, etc. To make an appointment, go to their website or call 852-2173.