

Dear Student,

Whether you are a student new to HCC or to the English/World Languages area, or a returning student continuing your education, we welcome you to your course and to the Duncan Hall building this semester.

English/World Languages division courses are taught by an innovative, diverse group of instructors who are committed to learning, to doing our part to make our classrooms positive and productive spaces. Our personalities and teaching styles vary widely, but as a faculty, we all support certain standards of conduct and fairness in order to promote behavior that we know helps lead to your success. We invite you to join us in this commitment.

The division endorses the rules of conduct, courtesy, and responsibility contained in the HCC Student Handbook; any additional policies of individual instructors will be clearly stated in their respective course syllabi. If you remain in a class past the drop/add period, you have implicitly agreed to respect those policies and can expect the instructor to respect them as well. In these ways, you can look to your syllabus for assurance of clear standards, equal treatment, and a positive learning environment. Students and instructors share the responsibility to maintain that positive environment with courteous, cooperative, and professional behavior.

When you study reading, writing, literature, learning strategies, and languages, your attendance and participation in your class help create the learning experience for yourself and others. When you miss class, you are missing vital parts of that experience. Other students miss opportunities to hear how you, as a unique individual with your own network of experiences and ideas, interpret, question, and synthesize the course material. Your instructor misses opportunities to evaluate your progress towards the course objectives.

Enrolling in a class brings responsibilities to contribute in positive ways to that class, to help create it. Therefore, students who do not miss more than a week's worth of classes a semester, who arrive promptly and remain for the entire class session, have the best opportunities to earn the highest grades in our courses, which value participation and active learning. Your instructor might stipulate that, in order to pass the course, you must be present for 75% of the class sessions, and therefore, students who for any reason miss more than 25% of the class sessions might not pass the course. Read your syllabus carefully at the beginning of the semester and ask your instructor any questions you may have. In one way or another, missed classes will have an impact on final grades and may jeopardize credit for the course. Examine each individual instructor's attendance policy. If an illness or emergency occurs during the semester that leads to a late arrival or an absence, it is usually your responsibility to make arrangements with classmates or study groups to complete any missed work. If a situation arises that interferes with regular class attendance over an extended period of time (for example, prolonged illness, personal or work problems), you may need to drop the course or see an advisor about withdrawal.

The most successful students see themselves and their instructors as partners in the learning process. Keep in mind that *instructors do not give grades, students earn them*. You will be evaluated for the quality of your work, for the extent to which you demonstrate mastery of the course objectives, and not for good intentions or for perceived effort. In this way, you can be assured that all students are evaluated by recognized standards. Our goals are yours: to help you achieve excellence. Our division office staff in DH-239 is a remarkable group of professionals who are also committed to your success; they are there for you if you need contact information for your instructor, need to put something in your instructor's mailbox, or have questions about navigating Duncan Hall.

With best wishes for your success,

The English/World Languages Division faculty