
Calumet College



of Saint Joseph

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Calumet College of St. Joseph is a Catholic institution of higher learning dedicated to the academic, spiritual and ethical development of undergraduate and graduate students. Informed by the values of its founding religious community, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood (C.P.P.S.), the College promotes the inherent dignity of all people, social justice, an ethic of service, student empowerment, opportunity, and lifelong learning.

We are committed to the Five Pillars of a CCSJ Education: The CCSJ graduate will be Open to Growth, Intellectually Competent, Religious, Loving, and Committed to Doing Justice. This class, as outlined below, will help you to achieve those goals.

Course Inquiry Question: What does it mean to be an educated person?

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

– Nelson Mandela, “Speech at University of Witwatersrand” (2003).

“It is clear that education must be one and the same for everyone.”

– Aristotle, *Politics 8* (1337a)

“The highest result of education is tolerance.”

– Helen Keller, “My Key of Life” (1926)

“Who can see the barely perceptible line between the man who cannot read at all and the man who does not read at all? The literate who can, but does not, read, and the illiterate who neither does nor can?”

– “The Southern Workman” (1910)

COURSE SYLLABUS, Spring 2020 (2019-2)

Course: EWPC 103A, English Composition

Instructor Name	Mark Cassello
Office Number:	Room 180
Phone Number:	(219) 473-4322
Email:	mcassello@ccsj.edu
Hours Available:	Monday-Thursday 12:00-2:00 p.m., or by appointment.

Instructor Background: Like many students at CCSJ, I am a first-generation college student that hails from a working-class family. My mother emigrated from Norway after the Nazi invasion of Oslo during World War II. My father dropped out of high school and earned his G.E.D. in the army where he served in Korea shortly after the Korean War. Later, he worked for CTA in Chicago as a laborer and foreman with the South Shops. As for me, I attended Indiana University Northwest for my undergraduate degree while I worked full-time. Buckling under the pressure of juggling work and school, I left college for a decade to pursue a career in retail management for Wal-Mart and Office Depot. Unhappy, I returned to college, taking classes in the evening until I completed my bachelor's degree in English. Soon after, I earned a master's degree in American Literature with a minor in American Studies from Indiana University in Bloomington. I live in the historic Pullman neighborhood on Chicago's far South Side, which President Barack Obama declared a national monument in 2015. I am passionate about social justice, politics, and cultural heritage preservation.

Course Information:

Course Time: Monday/Wednesday, 10:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Classroom: 260

Prerequisites: None

Required Books & Materials: Austin, Michael, editor. *Reading the World: Ideas that Matter*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2015.

Strauss, Jane, Lester Kaufman and Tom Stern. *The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation*. 11th Edition. Jossey-Bass, 2014.

Learning Outcomes / Competencies:

This course meets the following objectives:

Students in this course will...

- write a variety of clear, grammatically correct sentences.
- actively read and annotate a variety of texts across the curriculum.
- understand and gain greater control over all the phases of the writing process: prewriting, writing, revising, and editing.
- write organized and well-developed familiar, expository, and persuasive essays.
- understand the elements of rhetorical situations in both reading and writing.

The course also introduces the following General Education Program objectives:

Students in this course will...

- read analytically, synthetically, and critically in a variety of genres.
- write in a variety of forms using valid logic, persuasive rhetoric, and correct grammar, usage, and punctuation.
- orally deliver a presentation with a clear central idea that is logically developed, supported by convincing evidence and valid reasoning, and expressed using language and delivery choices thoughtfully adapted to the audience.
- appreciate, create, and critique the persuasive power of art and media.
- apply ethical standards to social issues and analyze their own core beliefs and the origin of these beliefs.

This course meets Calumet College of St. Joseph's Signature Assignment requirement to demonstrate fundamental competency in written and/or oral communications.

Course Description:

In this course students learn the concepts and skills needed to write an effective, college-level expository essay. Through both traditional and workshop methods, students gain greater control over the writing process, essay organization, paragraph construction, and sentence grammar. Before successfully completing the course, students must demonstrate basic competency in a portfolio of semester writing. (*This course is a CCSJ General Education requirement*).

Learning Strategies:

Direct instruction with PowerPoint and other visual aids will be used to provide and reinforce required course content. Students are expected to prepare handwritten notes during periods of direct instruction, including during class discussions. Students' notes should include the day/date of the class session. They should also include a list of unfamiliar vocabulary encountered during direct instruction and class discussions. These notes should be assembled into a chronological archive and stored in a notebook, a folder, or on a digital platform. Student notes may be reviewed and/or collected periodically gauge student participation.

Reading is essential to mastering the learning objectives of this course. Students should be prepared to read, re-read, annotate, summarize, discuss, and analyze texts selected from a wide variety of genres, which may include textbooks, essays, scholarly articles, reportage, editorials, and literary texts. Reading regularly will also help expand students' vocabulary and strengthen their ability to "decode" the meaning, structure, and rhetorical situation of different kinds of texts.

Writing is essential to mastering the learning objectives of this course. Students should be prepared to pre-write (list, brainstorm, freewrite), write (draft), re-write (revise), edit, and publish (print/post) a variety of writing assignments. Students will prepare a mixture of explanatory summaries, elementary academic essays, exploratory and expressive writing assignments (e.g., online discussion forum posts, freewriting, journals, reader response). Students will assemble a portfolio of writing to demonstrate attainment of basic competency in writing for the General Education Program.

Oral Communication is essential to mastering the learning objectives of this course. Students should be prepared to formulate their ideas orally during full-class or small-group discussions. Students may also be asked to deliver oral presentations related to course reading and writing assignments.

Individualized Instruction will be provided at various times during the course, particularly to assist students in the writing process. These interactions (e.g., informal paper conferences) provide an opportunity for students to ask questions, respond to instructor feedback, and gain greater control over their personal writing process.

Online Instruction will be incorporated throughout the course. This will include regular use of Blackboard and may include assigned online grammar, vocabulary, reading, and writing exercises and assessments.

Experiential Learning Opportunities:

-NA

Assessments:
The Proficiency Portfolio:

Because English 103 is a competency-based course, the final portfolio demonstrates your proficiency in reading and writing and shows your readiness for English 204 and for college-level writing in general. In order to submit a final portfolio, students need to be passing the course at the time portfolios are collected. All work in the final portfolio (other than the cover letter) must have

The Proficiency Portfolio (cont.):

been read by the instructor prior to portfolio submission. During finals week, portfolios will be read by committees of CCSJ writing faculty, who will use the CCSJ Rubric for Written Communications to evaluate the portfolios. **Students whose portfolios do not pass the portfolio evaluation will receive an F for the course regardless of the grade they were earning before they submitted the portfolio because they have failed to meet a minimal competency in college-level composition.**

The following are required materials for the portfolio:

- An introductory cover letter (1-1.5 pages) which describes the contents of the portfolio and uses the contents as evidence in a discussion of the students' understanding of their writing (including but not limited to the final products, their process, and their strengths and weaknesses as readers and writers)
- The Persuasive Essay or the Expository Essay (3-5 pages) plus one rough draft, including comments from the instructor
- At least one objective summary (1 page)
- An in-class competency essay (2-3 pages) administered toward the end of the semester based on a writing prompt common to all English 103 sections

Students also have the option of including other written work, perhaps from another class at CCSJ. This is completely optional.

Students will be preparing all semester for the final portfolio and will have the option of revising all of their work except for the in-class essay and the cover letter. **If a student's portfolio fails to meet minimal competencies, that student will receive a final grade of F for the course and will need to repeat it.** If a student's portfolio is deemed *exemplary*, that student may become eligible for the St. Gaspar's Honors Learning Community.

Major Assignments:

Student performance in this course will be evaluated using the weighted grading system described herein. Students can track their current grade in Blackboard by viewing the "Weighted Grade" column in the course gradebook. Students' final grade will be determined based on their performance in six different areas , weighted as follows:	Weight
<u>1. Participation Assignments:</u> <i>Students will complete a variety of short homework and in-class assignments. Some will assess if students have completed the assigned readings, understood vocabulary, and can articulate key concepts. Others will provide opportunities for students to express their thoughts about class readings or ideas presented in class to an audience that includes the instructor and/or their peers. Still others may be self-reflective assignments to help students formulate their thoughts.</i>	30%
<u>2. Summaries:</u> <i>Students will write one or more, 250-word summaries of course texts.</i>	10%
<u>3. Personal Essay:</u> <i>Students will write a 750-1,000 word essay that responds to an assigned prompt. This essay will give students the opportunity to formulate a response to the course inquiry question at the beginning and the end of the semester..</i>	10%

<p><u>4. Expository Essay:</u> In this essay of no fewer than 1,000 words, students will explain how the assigned texts respond to our course inquiry question. The paper should include an introduction that ends with a clear thesis, well-developed supporting body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Supporting material in the body paragraphs must include carefully selected quotations, examples, or facts drawn from our source texts.</p>	15%
<p><u>5. Persuasive Essay:</u> In this essay of no fewer than 1,250-words, students will respond to commonly held beliefs related to our inquiry question. Using a combination of rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos, pathos) convince your readers that these widely held beliefs are more complicated than they may appear.</p>	20%
<p><u>6. Attendance:</u> Regular attendance is required to succeed in this course. Students are expected to arrive on time, attend the entire class, and participate during class and through regular online activity. Each absence will reduce students' attendance grade by 10%. Students who miss more than six hours of class will receive a zero (0) for the attendance portion of their final grade. (Be sure to review the complete English Program attendance policy below under "Responsibilities").</p> <p><i>NOTE: University policy permits absences for athletic competition (i.e., not practice, meetings, etc.) provided that 48 hours advance notice is provided in writing (e.g., by email) to the instructor. Absences for any other reasons will not be excused.</i></p> <p><u>Independent Reading (Extra Credit):</u> Students are encouraged to read other essays in our course textbook, in addition to those that have been assigned. At the end of the semester, students can meet with me one-on-one to discuss some of the essays they have read. If students are conversant with the readings, they will receive up to 20 points of credit toward missing or low-scoring "Participation" assignments.</p>	15%
Total:	100%

Assessments:*Formative Assessments:*

- Participation Assignments
 - Reading and vocabulary quizzes
 - Review of class notes and reading annotations
 - In-class and online discussion
 - Review of writing assignment drafts

Summative Assessments:

- Final drafts of writing assignments
- Proficiency Portfolio

Grading Scale:	100% – 92%: A	91% – 90%: A-	
	89% – 88%: B+	87% – 82%: B	81% – 80%: B-
	79% – 78%: C+	77% – 72%: C	71% – 70%: C-
	69% – 68%: D+	67% – 62%: D	61% – 60%: D-
	59% and below:	F	

Course Schedule:

I reserve the right to change this schedule to meet the needs of the class.

Understanding the Schedule of Assignments:

RTW = Reading the World Textbook

BB = The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation

Online = Reading/Video located on Blackboard (listed by week number – 01, 02, etc.)

BOLD ITEMS = Homework to be turned in or important information

[] = Planned in-class activities

Week One

Unit 1: How Does Learning Change Us?

Mon 1/13 [Today's Topic(s): Syllabus; Course Inquiry Question; View *Finding the Gold Within* (2014)]

Wed 1/15 **DUE: PERSONAL ESSAY (ROUGH DRAFT)**
 READ: *RTW*, Frederick Douglas, "Learning to Read" (24)
 Online, Malcolm X, "Learning to Read"
RTW, "Identifying Patterns" (612-14)
 [Today's Topic(s): Discuss readings (which pattern?); Annotating; View *Finding the Gold Within* (2014)]

Week Two

Mon 1/20 **NO CLASS – DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY**

Wed 1/22 READ: *RTW*, Hsün Tzu, "Encouraging Learning" (5)
 (Review) *RTW*, "Identifying Patterns" (612-14)
 VIEW: Online, Xunzi on Human Nature (Video)
 [Today's Topic(s): Discuss reading; View *The Class* (2008)]

Week Three

Mon 1/27 **SUMMARY #1 (Rough Draft)**
 READ: *RTW*, "Understand the Assignment" (622-24)
BB, "Effective Writing" (20-23)
 Online, Chapter 4, "Summary"
 [Today's Topic(s): Intro to Explanatory Summary (CABIN); Summary workshop;
 View *The Class* (2008)]

Wed 1/29 [Today's Topic(s): Finish viewing *The Class* (2008); Unit 1 Personal Reflection]

LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITHOUT INSTRUCTOR APPROVAL (2/5)

Week Four

Unit 2: What is a “Liberal” Education?

Mon 2/3**DUE: SUMMARY #1 (Final Draft)**

READ: RTW, Seneca, “On Liberal and Vocational Studies” (13)

[Today’s Topic(s): Discuss reading; View *The Address* (2014)]**Wed 2/5****DUE: EXPOSITORY ESSAY (BODY PARAGRAPH)**

READ: “Compare/contrast” (623)

“Supporting Claims with Evidence” (650-51)

[Today’s Topic(s): Discuss reading; Writing from sources (paraphrase & quotation)]

Week Five

Mon 2/10

READ: RTW, Newman, “Knowledge Its Own End” (31)

[Today’s Topic(s): Discuss reading; View *The Address* (2014)]**Wed 2/12****DUE: EXPOSITORY ESSAY (BODY PARAGRAPH)**

[Today’s Topic(s): Discuss reading; In-class work day on Expository Essay]

Week Six

Mon 2/17

READ: RTW, Nussbaum, “Education for Profit, Education for Democracy” (61)

[Today’s Topic(s): Discuss reading]

Wed 2/19**DUE: EXPOSITORY ESSAY (ROUGH DRAFT)**

READ: RTW, “Introductions” (638-41) and “Conclusions” (646-48)

RTW, “Transitions” (642)

[Today’s Topic(s): Writing Introductions & Conclusions]

MIDTERM GRADESWeek Seven

Mon 2/24

[Today’s Topic(s): Paper Conferences and/or Visit Tutoring Center]

Wed 2/26**DUE: EXPOSITORY ESSAY (FINAL DRAFT)**

[Today’s Topic(s): Unit 2 Personal Reflection]

NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK (MARCH 2-6)Week Eight

Unit 3: How Can Education Be Improved?**Mon 3/9**

READ: RTW, Rabindranath Tagore, “To Teachers” (40)

RTW, Laurentius de Voltolina (C-1) (Artwork)

Online, “Image 3.8, Laurentius De Voltolina, Medieval University Lecture”

[Today’s Topic(s): Discuss reading and artwork; View *Stand and Deliver* (1988)]**Wed 3/11**[Today’s Topic(s): View *Stand and Deliver* (1988); Overview of Persuasive Essay]

Week Nine

Mon 3/16 READ: RTW, Richard Feynman, "O Americano Outra Vez" (40)
[*Today's Topic(s)*: Discuss reading; View *Not One Less* (1999)]

Wed 3/18 [*Today's Topic(s)*: View *Not One Less* (1999)]

Week Ten

Mon 3/23 READ: RTW, "Logos" (652), "Pathos" (661), "Ethos" (663),
RTW, "Logical Fallacies" (659), "Counterarguments" (666)
[*Today's Topic(s)*: Intro to Persuasion; View *Waiting for Superman* (2010)]

Wed 3/25 **DUE: THESIS STATEMENT FOR PERSUASIVE ESSAY**
READ: RTW, "Thesis Statements" (634-37)
[*Today's Topic(s)*: Thesis Statement workshop; View *Waiting for Superman* (2010)]

Week Eleven

Mon 3/30 [*Today's Topic(s)*: In-class workday on Persuasive Essay]

Wed 4/1 **DUE: PERSUASIVE ESSAY (ROUGH DRAFT)**
[*Today's Topic(s)*: In-class debate – What's the Problem with Education?]

Week Twelve

Mon 4/6 [*Today's Topic(s)*: Paper Conferences and/or Visit Tutoring Center]

Wed 4/8 **DUE: PERSUASIVE ESSAY (FINAL DRAFT)**
[*Today's Topic(s)*: Unit 4 Personal Reflection]

Week Thirteen **Unit 4: Final Portfolio and Course Reflection**

Mon 4/13 [*Today's Topic(s)*: Final portfolio instructions and work day]

Wed 4/15 [*Today's Topic(s)*: **In-class timed essay for Final Portfolio**]

Week Fourteen

Mon 4/20 [*Today's Topic(s)*: In-class work day on portfolio and cover letter]

Wed 4/22 **DUE: FINAL PORTFOLIO**
[*Today's Topic(s)*: In-class work day on portfolio and cover letter]

LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH INSTRUCTOR APPROVAL (4/24)

Week Fifteen

Mon 4/27 **DUE: PERSONAL ESSAY (FINAL DRAFT)**
[*Today's Topic(s)*: IDEA Course Evaluations]

Wed 4/29 **DUE: INDEPENDENT READING CONFERENCES (EXTRA CREDIT)**

Responsibilities

Attending Class: You cannot succeed in this class if you do not attend. We believe that intellectual growth and success in higher education occur through interaction in the classroom and laboratories. Being absent doesn't excuse you from doing class work; you have **more** responsibilities to keep up and meet the objectives of this course.

Students who miss more than **SIX (6) hours of class** will receive a zero (0) for the attendance portion of their final grade.

In accordance with the English Program attendance policy, any student missing more than **NINE (9) hours of class** will receive an **F** (a failing grade) for the course.

Turning in Your Work :

You cannot succeed in this class if you do not turn in all your work on the day it is due.

To pass the course, you must complete and turn in all required assignments. Work is to be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date listed on the course syllabus or stated by the instructor in-class or online. All written work must be typed and stapled (unless otherwise instructed).

Late Work: You will not receive credit for any late assignment unless you have made formal, written arrangements with the instructor via email prior to the next scheduled class session. Any work submitted more than **five days late** will receive a zero. Contact me at mcassello@ccsj.edu to determine how/where you should submit any late work. In other words, do not show up to class a week after an assignment is due, hand in your work, and expect to receive credit for it.

Missed In-class Work: Except under dire circumstances (e.g., serious bodily injury requiring hospitalization or prolonged illness) in-class activities such as worksheets, journals, quizzes, review of notes/annotations, presentations, performances, group work, etc. cannot be made up if you are absent on the day the assignment is due.

Meeting Standards for Classroom Behavior:

- **Use all the class time.** Come to class on time and stay in class until the end. Coming late, leaving early, and getting up during class disrupts the class and disrespects others.
- **Come prepared.** Bring your texts, be prepared to take notes, and be able to demonstrate that you have completed the assignments for the day through your participation in class.
- **Respect others.** Listen when your classmates and the instructor are speaking. Think about their contributions. Respond appropriately.
- **Use electronic devices only for class purposes.** Engage with your classmates and the instructor without technological distractions.
- **Eat before or after class.** Consume meals, snacks, and other food items outside of the classroom. Eating during class detracts from the learning environment. Drinks, cough drops, hard candy, etc. are permitted, so long as they do not become a distraction.

CCSJ Student Honor Code:

This course asks students to reaffirm the CCSJ Student Honor Code:

I, as a student member of the Calumet College academic community, in accordance with the college's mission and in a spirit of mutual respect, pledge to:

- Continuously embrace **honesty and curiosity** in the pursuit of my educational goals;
- Avoid all behaviors that could impede or distract from the academic progress of myself or other members of my **community**;
- Do my own work with **integrity** at all times, in accordance with syllabi, and without giving or receiving inappropriate aid;
- Do my utmost to act with commitment, inside and outside of class, to the goals and **mission** of Calumet College of St. Joseph.

Doing Your Own Work:

If you turn in work that is not your own, you will be subject to judicial review by the Faculty-Student Grievance Committee. These procedures can be found in the Student Planner. The maximum penalty for any form of academic dishonesty is dismissal from the College.

Using standard citation guidelines to document sources avoids plagiarism. You'll find guides to the major citation methods at the CCSJ Specker Library Web page at

PLEASE NOTE: All papers may be electronically checked for plagiarism.

Sharing Your Class Experience:

Your voice matters! At the end of the term, you will have the opportunity to evaluate your classroom experience. These confidential surveys are essential to our ongoing efforts to ensure that you have a great experience that leaves you well prepared for your future. Take the time to complete your course evaluations – we value your feedback!

Withdrawing from Class:

After the last day established for class changes has passed (see the College calendar in the CCSJ Course Catalog), you may withdraw from a course by following the policy outlined in the Course Catalog.

Communicating with your Professor:

Blackboard: Blackboard will be used to distribute readings, handouts, and announcements. Your grades will also be recorded regularly in Blackboard. It is essential that you log into Blackboard regularly to ensure that you stay informed about the course. If the campus is closed or class cancelled due to bad weather, alternative assignments will be distributed via Blackboard and must be completed on time.

Office Hours: Students are encouraged to use office hours for assistance and clarification. Office hours are an excellent forum to discuss individual questions which are not appropriate during class (a question about your particular assignment, a question about the English Program, your attendance, etc.). Appointments are not necessary, but they help me to prepare for your visit and ensure that I will not be out of the office. My office hours are specified on the first page of the syllabus.

Email: I will use CCSJ's email to send urgent announcements about class or assignments. You should use CCSJ's email to communicate about absences and to ask small but important questions (e.g. clarification about an assignment).

Don't use email to request information or materials readily available elsewhere (e.g. due dates ← listed on the syllabus, handouts ← available on Blackboard). I generally respond to emails within 24-48 hours with the exception of breaks/holidays when I may be unavailable until the next scheduled business day.

Phone Calls: Reserve phone calls for urgent communications. For example, call if you have a flat tire and will be unable to make it to class or if you have been snowed in. My office phone number is (219) 473-4322.

In all instances (Blackboard, office hours, email, phone), remember that communication with college instructors should *always* maintain standards of professionalism and formality.

Resources

CCSJ Book Rental Program:	The CCSJ Book Program ensures that everyone has the right course materials on the first day of class to be successful. You pay a book rental fee each semester, and in return, receive all the materials for all your classes prior to the beginning of classes. At the end of the semester, simply return the books. For traditional students, the Book Rental Program is conveniently located in the library, where students can pick up and return their books. For students in accelerated programs and graduate programs, books will be delivered to their homes and they can return them by mail. For more information, see http://www.ccsj.edu/bookstore . All books must be returned at the end of the semester or you will incur additional fees, which will be charged to your student account.
Student Success Center:	The Student Success Center provides faculty tutors at all levels to help you master specific subjects and develop effective learning skills. It is open to all students at no charge. You can contact the Student Success Center at 219 473-4287 or stop by the Library.
Disability Services:	Disability Services strives to meet the needs of all students by providing academic services in accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. If you believe that you need a "reasonable accommodation" because of a disability, contact the Disability Services Coordinator at 219-473-4349.
Student Assistance Program:	Through a partnership with Crown Counseling , Calumet College of St. Joseph provides a free Student Assistance Program (SAP) to current students. The SAP is a confidential counseling service provided to students for personal and school concerns which may be interfering with academic performance and/or quality of life. The SAP counselor is available on campus once a week and off-site at the Crown Counseling offices in Crown Point or Hammond. For more information, contact Kerry Knowles SAP Counselor , at 219-663-6353 (office), 219-413-3702 (cell), or kerryk@crowncounseling.org .
CCSJ Alerts:	Calumet College of St. Joseph's emergency communications system will tell you about emergencies, weather-related closings, or other incidents via text, email, or voice messages. Please sign up for this important service annually on the College's website at: http://www.ccsj.edu/alerts/index.html .

Mr. Cassello's Proofreading Symbols:

- ¶ Paragraph. Either your paragraph is too long and needs to be split and reorganized, or it is too short and needs to be lengthened.
- | Indent Needed
- AWK Awkward wording. The sentence uses words imprecisely or incorrectly or the sentence is generally confusing.
- G Grammar. There is something grammatically wrong with the sentence. The problem may be punctuation, spelling, syntax, or other problems which impact readability.
- INF Informal. The words or phrase are too casual for college prose. Remember, no contractions (can't, don't, didn't) in formal prose.
- W Wordy / Verbose. State more concisely. Avoid passive voice and "there is/are" sentence structures.
- WW Wrong Word. The word you are using here conveys either a confusing or incorrect meaning. Action: look up the word you used in a dictionary so you fully understand its meaning.
- TS Topic Sentence. Your paragraph either completely lacks a topic sentence, or the topic sentence you have constructed is too vague, broad, or unclear.
- DS Doublespace. Either your line spacing is too large or too small.
- E Evidence/example needed. You make a claim or statement but give no textual information to back it up.
- AB Metaphor/Abstract/Cliché. Formal writing is concrete and detailed. Avoid metaphors and clichés ("right off the bat," "not out of the woods," "clear as mud,"). Instead, state in detail what these statements literally mean (i.e., "immediately," "the problem will persist," "unclear").
- I Independence. Reader needs more background/context to understand your discussion. Be sure you have answered who, what, when, where, why about the source texts or topics you are discussing. For example: Who wrote it? When did they write it? Where was it published? What is it about overall? Why did they write it?
- SP Spelling
- TR Transition word needed. Tell the reader what function your sentence or paragraph is performing. Remember, is it more of the same type of information (in addition, similarly), is it contrary information (by contrast, on the other hand), is it clarifying, concluding, or solidifying a logical connection you are making (thus, therefore, as a result, hence).
- V Vague. The words being used to express your idea are simply too broad or vague.
- Link Cohesion. Sentences or paragraphs need to be connected more logically. There should be a clear logical path from sentence-to-sentence and paragraph-to-paragraph with no abrupt leaps. You can achieve cohesion by using signal phrases, repeating key phrases, etc.