

**WAYLAND BAPTIST UNIVERSITY**  
**Virtual Campus**  
**School of Languages and Literature**

**Wayland Baptist University Mission Statement:** Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused and distinctively Christian environment for professional success, and service to God and humankind.

**Course Name:** ENGL 4314 VC01 – Usage and Style

**Term and Year:** Fall 2019

**Full Name of Instructor:** Dr. Laura Brandenburg

**Office Phone and Email:** Phone: 806-291-1109  
(If I don't answer, leave a message.)  
Email: LBrandenburg@wbu.edu

**Office Hours, Building, and Location:** Online, various times and by appointment  
*Skype:* Laura.Brandenburg

**Class Meeting Time and Location:** WBU's Virtual Campus: <http://wbu.blackboard.com>

**Catalog Description:** A practical study of present-day usage and style rules, stressing correctness, appropriateness, and clarity in writing, as well as attention to editing and proofreading.

**Prerequisite:** Advanced Standing

**Required Textbook and Resources:**

- Sabrin, William A. *The Gregg Reference Manual*. 11<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: McGraw Hill, 2011.
- Access to Blackboard and WBU email; access to computer with internet including jump drive or equivalent.

**Optional Materials:** None

**Course Outcome Competencies:** Upon the conclusion of this course, students actively engaged in learning will be able to:

1. Understand the latest rules and guidelines related to contemporary usage.
2. Demonstrate fundamental editing and proofreading skills.
3. Demonstrate the ability to communicate in various formats.
4. Select an appropriate writing style for the occasion.
5. Demonstrate improvement in written expression by successfully revising a previous work.

The more the student puts into the course, the higher his or her outcome competencies will be.

**Attendance Requirements:** As stated in the Wayland Catalog, students enrolled at one of the University's external campuses should make every effort to attend all class meetings. All absences must be explained to the instructor, who will then determine whether the omitted work may be made up. When a student reaches that number of absences considered by the instructor to be excessive, the instructor will so advise the student and file an unsatisfactory progress report with the campus executive director. Any student who misses 25 percent or more of the regularly scheduled class meetings may receive a grade of F in the course. Additional attendance policies for each course, as defined by the instructor in the course syllabus, are considered a part of the University's attendance policy.

*\*\* Because this is an online course and because we will not meet synchronously, your attendance for the course is largely dependent on your contribution to the discussion board's weekly topics and other participation grades. In keeping with the on-site attendance policy, failure to provide a full response for at least 75% of the discussion topics will result in an F for the course. \*\**

**Disability Statement:** "In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291- 3765. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations."

**Academic Honesty:** Wayland Baptist University observes a zero tolerance policy regarding academic dishonesty. Per university policy as described in the academic catalog, all cases of academic dishonesty will be reported and second offenses will result in suspension from the university.

Students are expected to submit original work in this class. Students should be responsible for their own knowledge and contribution for every answer on every exercise or homework. Cheating or copying another person's work, even on informal assignments, will not be accepted—and cheating on exams will not be allowed. Students who cheat, plagiarize, or recycle work in this class will receive a zero for the assignment and will be subject to university policies regarding academic dishonesty. (See full L&L Statement on Academic Dishonesty.)

**Due Dates and Late Penalties:** Assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. (Central Time Zone) on the date posted. Be sure that your clock matches the clock in WBU's Blackboard. All assignments must be submitted to the Blackboard site to receive a grade. These deadlines, like most deadlines in life, are not negotiable. *Any late assignment will receive a 20-point deduction per day late. Late assignments are not accepted after 5 days of the assignment's due date.*

If for any reason you have trouble submitting your assignment online, send me an email with the attached assignment (preferably in Microsoft Word) before the due date/time, with an explanation of the technical problem. I will note the submission time of the email in order to assess removing late penalties. You will be required to re-submit the assignment within 24 hours, or once the technical problem is resolved.

### **Expectations, Communication, & Other Information:**

While the nature of an online course allows students to work at their own pace, you are expected to keep up with the course materials weekly. *Please note: this is not a self-paced course.* This means that you should keep up with the readings and discussions posted each week and are responsible for turning in any assignments by the posted due date. Students who get behind in the weekly requirements will likely not do well in the course. Remember, also, that your attendance for the course is measured by your participation in the weekly discussions. Announcements and important information will be posted on the Blackboard site. Be sure to check the site often. Additional information may be sent to your WBU emails, so make sure you've set up a WBU email and are checking it often. Always feel free to email me or chat online anytime I'm signed on if you are concerned about the course or your progress. I am available to help you, provide resources, and give direction—but I cannot help you if I do not know you're struggling.

Students should contact me by using my wbu.edu email. I am also available on Skype (Laura.Brandenburg) throughout the day and by appointment. I have an office on the Plainview campus, as well, so Plainview campus students can set up an appointment to visit with me there. Please note that the phone number listed in this syllabus is my office number, which will be checked periodically throughout the week, but the best way to get in touch with me quickly is likely through email.

### **Course Requirements and Grading Criteria:**

**Worksheets Assignments (50%).** Students will be responsible for the reading and assigned worksheet material. The homework material will come from the textbook's worksheets. Each sections will have at least 1 – 3 worksheets associated with it. Each HW (10 total) is worth 5% of the student's grade.

**Discussion Posts (20%).** Students will write short, 300-word responses to various topics related to grammar, usage, and style.

**Final Exam: (30%)** The final exam will be in the same format as the worksheets and will include material from the entire semester.

Policy 9.4.1: “Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Executive Vice President/Provost to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation” \*Required by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

**Tentative Schedule:**

The schedule below is a tentative outline for the term. As such, it is subject to change, with notification of course. All readings ought to be completed *prior* to doing any assignments or posts in the discussion forum.

Topic	Reading	Discussion Topic	Assignments
Week 1 – Intro the Course		Aug 22: Introductions	Aug 25: Pre-test (diagnostic survey) (HW1)
Week 2 – Punctuation: Major Marks	Section 1	Aug 29: Response to “The Comma Trauma”	Sept 1: HW 2
Week 3 – Punctuation: Other Marks	Section 2	Sept 5: Response to “The Semicolon; And Other Myths”	Sept 8: HW 3
Week 4 – Capitalization & Numbers	Section 3 and 4	Sept 12: Response to “Mastering Number Styles”	Sept 15: HW 4
Week 5 – Abbreviations, Plurals, and Possessives	Section 5 and 6	Sept 19: Response to “A Fresh Look at Capitalization”	Sept 22: HW 5
Week 6 – Spelling, Compound Words, and Word Division	Sections 7, 8, and 9	Sept 26: Response to “The Plight of the Compound Adjective”	Sept 29: HW 6
Week 7 – Grammar	Section 10	Oct 3: Response to “Re: Abbrevs”	Oct 6: HW 7
Week 8 – Grammar, Cont.		Oct 10: Response: “Singular They”	Oct 13: HW 8
Week 9 – Usage	Section 11	Oct 17: Response: “Irregardless vs. Regardless”	Oct 20: HW 9
Week 10 – Usage, Cont.		Oct 24: Response: “Literally”	Oct 27: HW 10
Week 11 – Final Exam	None	None	<b>Nov 2: Final Exam</b>

**\*\*All assignments must be submitted in Blackboard\*\***