Myths about Freshman Composition and College Writing
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1. The instructor wants me to “dumb down” my writing. I just write over his head, so he gives me a bad grade.
2. The instructor is so obsessed with grammar that she doesn’t grade me on the content of my writing. I’ll bet she spends all her time reading style manuals and grammar handbooks. What a weirdo!
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3. I’ve been out of school for a long time. There’s no way I can catch up with the rest of the class. This is going to be horrible.
4. It’s hard to write long papers. There’s no way I’m going to be able to fill all this empty space.
5. Only English majors are good at writing. There’s some trick to this that they get and the rest of us don’t understand.
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6. You will fail a paper if you screw up just one citation. I do my own work, but I’ll probably fail due to an honest mistake.
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7. I suck at writing. I’m a math/science/art/mechanical person.
8. The instructor won’t let me base my persuasive essay solely on the Bible/Koran because she’s an atheist and has something against Christians/Muslims/Jews.
9. Spelling and grammar don’t matter in the *real* world. I have a blog with thousands of readers, and nobody corrects my spelling on that.
10. This is college, and I pay for the class, so I should be able to come when I please. As long as I pass the assignments, I should pass the class.

That’s how they do it in universities.
11. I went to a crappy high school, and I never learned much about writing. There’s no way I’ll ever be good at it.
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12. As long as I get a “C” for this class, I’ll pass. There’s no reason to try any harder than that because it doesn’t matter.
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13. If I come to class regularly and complete all of the assignments, I should pass the class. I don’t understand why some students have to fail just because they have a hard time with writing.
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14. The instructor gets off on failing students because of his ego.
15. The instructor doesn’t realize I have other classes, a family, and a job in addition to this class. It’s not fair to ask us to do reading and writing outside of class. She doesn’t understand what it’s like to be a student.
16. Peer review is stupid. The people in the class don’t know any more about writing than I do. What can they tell me about my writing that I don’t already know?
17. The teacher barely looks at the papers before he grades them. He just throws them down the stairwell and gives grades based on where they land.

Grading essays is completely subjective.
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18. I got “A’s” on my papers in high school, so I’ll get “A’s” on papers in this class if I do the same level of work.
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19. I already know how to write, so this course is a waste of my time.
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20. There’s nothing wrong with starting a paper with a question or a dictionary definition.
21. I’m majoring in a science-related field. There’s no reason for me to have to learn writing.
22. I get a “D” on the paper, and all the teacher marked wrong is grammar and spelling. He didn’t even pay attention to what I had to say.
23. So what if I write like I talk. That’s just my style.
24. People who are good at writing can sit down and write something wonderful on the first try. They don’t have to go through all these drafts like I do.

It’s just not fair that they have it so easy and I have such a hard time.