Syllabus for English 131
Rhetoric and Composition
Section 053: The Individual and Society

Semester: Fall 2011
Course number/section: ENG -131 - 053
Meeting place: Ferguson 376
Meeting time: TTH 9:30 – 10:45 p.m.
Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Tasker
email: taskerea@sfasu.edu
Office: 260 Liberal Arts North, phone: 468-2487
Office hours: MTWTh 11:00– 12:00,  W 1:30-2:30

Description
In English 131, students study and practice the writing process and the skills of writing with a focus on analytical reading and writing. Students read and write a range of essay types, including expressive, explicatory, analytical, and persuasive. Essay assignments address rhetorical analysis and critical responses to close readings of text. Students in English 131 are required to write a minimum of four formal essays (totaling at least 20 pages) and at least one in-class timed essay. English 131 is a requirement for all students who do not qualify for ENG133H or 235H.

This section of ENG 131 (section 053) focuses on the theme of the individual’s relationship to society and how individuals participate in cultural practices. With this theme guiding us, we will complete five units of study with each unit considering a different aspect of culture. Unit 1 focuses on literacy, which in this course refers to reading, writing, and technology skills. Unit 2 looks at editorials and other forums through which individuals express their views. Unit 3 analyzes rhetorical situations. Unit 4 considers customs of dress and adornment. Finally, Unit 5 studies current problems with higher education in America. Throughout this course of study, you will write five major essays. At the end of the semester, you will create a portfolio of your three best essays, along with introductory quotes, images, and a dedication. It is my hope that you will keep your portfolio as a writing sample and as a personal artifact of college memorabilia that you will look back at it from time to time.

Prerequisites
Pass or exemption from THEA or a C in English 099. Students must earn a grade of C or higher in English 131 to be admitted to English 132.

Required Texts
What It Takes, Behrens ISBN: 9780205647828
Prentice Hall Reference Guide edited by Muriel Harris (preferably the 8th edition)
Lumberjacks Write fourth edition
Course Outcomes
ENG 131 learning outcomes are the goals that students must meet as part of the Freshman Composition core curriculum requirements, which include:

1. Ability to apply and independently use all phases of the writing process, including invention, drafting, revising and editing, and producing and presenting formal expressive, explicatory, analytical, and persuasive essays and other non-fiction prose genres.

2. Ability to identify the elements of the rhetorical situation inherent in the arguments and research of others, including the purpose of the speaker, the needs of the audience(s), and the content and the context of the argument or research itself.

3. Ability to analyze the rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos) and the rhetorical fallacies related to the different types of rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos) in a given text or work.

4. Ability to identify, judge, and manage the rhetorical situations of their own compositions, including their own constraints as speakers, the needs of their audience(s), the most effective rhetorical appeals for their arguments, and the contextual limitations and opportunities impacting their work.

5. Ability to work effectively in teams on projects involving critical-thinking and problem-solving and to collaborate and report on solutions.

6. Skill and increased sophistication in explaining and developing topics at the paragraph and sentence level; the goal is continued improvement in writing complete, unified, clear, and coherent paragraphs composed of grammatically correct sentences.

7. Ability to independently apply critical thinking, composition, and document design skills to arguments and other persuasive genres of writing across a range of disciplines.

Texas Exemplary Educational Objectives for English 131
The English 131 learning outcomes meet the following Texas Exemplary Educational Objectives (EEOs):

- Communication EEO 1: To understand and demonstrate writing and speaking processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, and presentation.
- Communication EEO 2: To understand the importance of specifying audience and purpose and to select appropriate communication choices.
- Communication EEO 3: To understand and appropriately apply modes of expression, i.e., descriptive, expositive, narrative, scientific, and self-expressive, in written, visual, and oral communication.
- Communication EEO 4: To participate effectively in groups with emphasis on listening, critical and reflective thinking, and responding.
- Communication EEO 5: To understand and apply basic principles of critical thinking, problem solving, and technical proficiency in the development of exposition and argument.

Assignments
The assignments and grades for this course will be weighted as follows:

- Personal Narrative (2-3 pages) 10%
- Summary (2-3 pages) 10%
- Rhetorical Analysis (3-4 pages) 15%
- Synthesis (Group project, 3-4 pages per person) 15%
- Proposal (6-7 pages) 25%
- Daily work (homework, quizzes, timed writings) 20%
- Final portfolio and reflection essay 10%
I will provide detailed descriptions of each assignment; for now, here are some general notes:

- All final drafts of your writing for this course should adhere to the rules of standard written English grammar, punctuation, and spelling (American).
- Failing to meet the minimum page count for any draft will have a significant negative impact on your grade for that assignment.
- All drafts and final papers must be submitted through TurnItIn. Papers are due by the time class starts. Any papers received after that time are considered late.
- Except for your final portfolio, all major assignments will be submitted electronically. Daily work, homework, and timed writings will be submitted on paper.
- I generally grade and return major assignments within two weeks after they have been submitted.
- PROOF OF MATERIALS BONUS POINTS – If you bring a printed copy of your syllabus and your books to class by Thursday, Sept 1, I will add one point to your final average at the end of the semester.
- SPECIAL EVENTS BONUS POINTS – You can earn up to two bonus points by attending and writing a one-page review of any lecture, literary reading, or exhibit that I announce over the semester. Each review is worth one bonus point. You can do two.

Attendance & Punctuality
Class attendance is required. You are allowed four absences with no penalty. **Missing more than four classes can result in your final grade being dropped ten points for every day that you are absent.** For example, if your GPA for the class is 86, and you miss six classes without documented excuses, your final grade will be reduced by 20 points to a 66.

Note that excused absences require official documentation. See university policy on guidelines for excused absences.

Occasional lateness a few times throughout the semester is understandable, but habitual lateness is unacceptable and will affect your grade. If you come in after I take role, be sure to see me immediately after class. Continued lateness will start to count as absences.

Missed Class and Late Work
I will not repeat information given in class to those who were late or absent without a valid excuse. You cannot make up missed in-class activities unless you have a documented, excused absence. See SFA policy for what constitutes an excused absence.

Regarding assignments, if you are unable to turn in a major paper or project on time, you must make arrangements with me in advance of the class meeting in which the assignment is due and have what I view as a compelling reason to be granted an extension. Otherwise, late work will be accepted for up to one week after the due date, but I will deduct 5 points for every day it is late. No work will be accepted after August 13 unless, due to unusual extenuating circumstances, I have agreed to give you an incomplete (WH) for the course.

Grading
For each assignment, I calculate grades on a numeric scale first: I use a 100 point scale for formal papers and a 10 point scale for drafts and in-class work. Each assignment will also receive a letter grade, based on an A-F scale that uses plus and minus distinctions. According to university policy, your final grade for the course will consist of a letter grade only (no plus or minus). Here is a general description of my letter grades:
A – 90-100% - This grade denotes superior composition, content, style, and mechanics; thoughtfulness, originality, and excellence in topic development, including vividly concrete details, insightful examples, and sophisticated analysis and synthesis of subject matter. Writing is mechanically pristine with only the smallest grammatical defects present (such as a missing comma or a single typo).

B – 80-89% - This grade denotes very good composition, content, style, and mechanics; thoughtful and adequate topic development; clear and complete details and examples; and consistency in style. Slight problems may be present in one or two areas, but the paper shows strength in others. The paper is not heavily impacted by mechanical errors.

C – 70-79% - This grade denotes acceptable content, but style, organization and mechanics are uneven and need revision, OR the composition is lacking in content and does not sufficiently consider the subject matter as evidenced by inadequate topic development and lack of concrete details, AND/OR the ethos of the writer is damaged by mechanical errors.

D – 60-69% - This grade represents below average, unsatisfactory work. On essays and written responses, the paper (whether through lack of effort, revision, editing, or some other reason) is not clear or focused. The paper is very uneven in its content, organization, and style. The meaning of the paper is obscured by mechanical errors.

F – Below 60%- The student did not do the work assigned. See me as soon as possible.

NOTE: If your grade is borderline (within 1.5 points of another letter grade), class participation, professionalism, and punctuality can raise your final grade whereas lack of participation, disrespectfulness, and tardiness can lower your final grade.

Withheld Grades - Semester Grades Policy (A-54)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Formatting Guidelines
Unless an assignment specifies otherwise, these are the general formatting guidelines for papers produced for this class. All papers must be
- **Typed**, using a standard, readable font, such as Times or Ariel, size 11 or 12
- **Double-spaced.**
- **Formatted according to MLA style.**

Note-taking
You should always take notes in class. This gives you a record of what occurred that day, helps you internalize the material, and provides you information that you may be able to use in your papers.

Other Classroom Policies
The number one rule in my classroom is to treat others respectfully. The number two rule is to enjoy what we are doing. This means I welcome lively conversation, but I do not welcome rudeness.
Please turn off cell phones upon entering class unless you have a critical life situation that could require your immediate attention. In the event that you accidentally leave your cell phone on, and it rings, just turn it off. If you have an emergency, quietly exit the classroom to quickly take care of business.

If you finish an in-class activity quickly, do not just get up and leave. This will cause me to mark you as absent.

**Academic Integrity (A-9.1)**

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**DEFINITION OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

**Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**Acceptable Student Behavior**

As stated in Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1, “Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.”

**AARC**

Writing tutors are available in the Academic Assistance and Research Center on the first floor of the library. Drop-in tutoring is offered Mon.-Thurs from 1 to 8 p.m and on Sunday afternoons. You can also make an appt. by calling 468-4108.
# Class Schedule

Reading homework will be announced on a weekly basis. Changes may be necessary as the course proceeds. I will notify you of any change in writing. All assignments and PDF files will be posted in the Unit folders on our course Blackboard page.

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>T 8/30</td>
<td>Introduction; motives for writing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TH 9/1</td>
<td>UNIT 1 – Expressive Writing; read the Listening PDF file</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>T 9/6</td>
<td>Discussion of reading; writing personal narratives; methods of development.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>TH 9/8</td>
<td>Invention and Drafting.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>T 9/13</td>
<td><strong>Personal Narrative draft due.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>TH 9/15</td>
<td>Discussion of reading</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>T 9/20</td>
<td><strong>Personal Narrative Final due.</strong></td>
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<td>TH 9/22</td>
<td>UNIT 2 – Summary and Analysis - writing accurate summaries.</td>
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<td>Discuss article, “What Haiti Needs.”</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>T 9/27</td>
<td><strong>Summary draft due.</strong> Work-shopping.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>TH 9/29</td>
<td><strong>Summary final due.</strong> UNIT 3 – Rhetorical Analysis – introduction to rhetoric</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>T 10/4</td>
<td>Conducting rhetorical analyses.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>TH 10/6</td>
<td>Review Rhetorical Analysis examples Organizing a rhetorical analysis paper</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>T 10/11</td>
<td>Watch <em>John Adams</em></td>
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<td>TH 10/13</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>T 10/18</td>
<td><strong>Rhetorical Analysis draft due.</strong> Conferences</td>
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<td></td>
<td>TH 10/20</td>
<td>Conferences</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>T 10/25</td>
<td><strong>Rhetorical analysis final due.</strong> <strong>UNIT 4 – Synthesis</strong> – introduction, form groups</td>
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<td>TH 10/27</td>
<td>Information synthesis and argument synthesis</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>T 11/1</td>
<td>Using visuals in writing</td>
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<td>TH 11/3</td>
<td>Computer lab group work</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>T 11/8</td>
<td><strong>Synthesis Essay draft due.</strong></td>
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<td>TH 11/10</td>
<td>Group work</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>T 11/15</td>
<td><strong>Synthesis Essay final due with group presentation</strong></td>
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<td>TH 11/17</td>
<td><strong>UNIT 5 – Argument</strong> - introduction to argument; Introduce proposal project and readings</td>
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<td>TH 11/24</td>
<td>Thanksgiving</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>T 11/29</td>
<td>Thesis development, support. Proposal outlines</td>
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<td>TH 12/1</td>
<td><strong>Proposal drafts due.</strong></td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>T 12/6</td>
<td>Revision strategies.</td>
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<td>TH 12/8</td>
<td><strong>Proposal due.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>T 12/13</td>
<td>8:00 – 10:00 <strong>Final Portfolio and Reflection.</strong></td>
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