What We Will Be Doing:

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, which can include expressive, explicatory, analytical, and persuasive texts. Essay assignments address rhetorical analysis and critical responses to close textual readings as well as persuasive essays. Students in English 131 write a minimum of four formal essays (totaling at least 15 pages). ENG 131 is a requirement for all students who do not qualify for ENG 133H. Prerequisite: Pass or exemption from THEA or a C in IRW 099. Students must earn a grade of C or higher to be admitted to ENG 132.

What We Will Read – Bring the books with which we are currently working to class EVERY time we meet!


Other Necessary Resources:

You need to have access to d2l.sfasu.edu in order to access course materials, submit assignments, and take reading quizzes. Please make sure to configure your d2l account as soon as possible. I will accept no excuses for missing assignments, etc. You also need to revise settings so that d2l emails you anytime I make an announcement.

Some of Our Goals:

*General Education Core Curriculum Objectives* As part of the communication component area, in any given semester one or more of the following Core Curriculum Objectives for English 131 may be assessed:
1. Critical Thinking: creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
2. Communication: effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through
written, oral, and visual communication.
3. Teamwork: the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.
4. Personal Responsibility: the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

_English 131 Learning Outcomes_

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:
• Identify and analyze texts with the goal of examining the rhetorical structure, veracity of claims, sufficient use of accurate and credible evidence, as well as possible use in creative, analytical, and persuasive components (Critical Thinking);
• Participate in productive class and group discussion and examination of texts, in order to analyze and synthesize a variety of texts, via a multi-step drafting process (Critical Thinking);
• Understand the role of personal responsibility in the inevitable choices involved in the composition process, in the evaluation of one’s own writing and the writing of other students, in the ethical use of ideas and information, and in the critical evaluation of all assigned texts (Personal Responsibility);
• Recognize the collaborative and social aspects of the writing process by producing collaborative work and/or feedback for peers and selectively using peer feedback in their own work (Teamwork);
• Demonstrate knowledge of organizational and linguistic structures – including grammar, punctuation, and spelling – through practice in composing and revising (Communication);
• Compose texts in response to a variety of situations and contexts calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure (Communication).

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six core learning objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

By enrolling in ENG 131 you are also enrolling in a **Core Curriculum Course** that fulfills the Written Communication Skills requirement. You will see this course on your D2L list.

At the end of the semester you will complete the Persuasive Essay, which fulfills both the requirements of this course and the needs of Stephen F. Austin State University's Core Curriculum Assessment Plan with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. When you complete this one assignment, you need to upload the assignment to both your standard course dropbox determined by your Instructor and the “Core Curriculum” dropbox. The Core Curriculum dropbox will be identified by the Objective for which work is being collected. Please note that this only applies to the Persuasive Essay. All other assignments should be submitted according to regular class operations.
If you have any questions, please see your instructor or contact the Institutional Effectiveness Office at (936) 468-1130.

Crucial Course Objective:

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics. I encourage your suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity in this course. This course meets the following standards for diversity content and instruction in the following way(s):

1. Course content that includes readings and other materials that address various categories of social difference (gender, nationality, religion, ethnicity, race, age, sexuality, political affiliation, socio-economic status, ability, linguistic background, etc.) on the course topic.

2. Tying current events and local histories centered on the production of social difference into classroom activities.

Course Policies:

1. **Communication with your professor:** If you send an email I will answer it that same day if the email was sent between 8am-3pm on weekdays. If your email was sent after those specified times, I will reply the next morning, or after the weekend. Additionally, when you email follow proper email etiquette. I do not check d2l email, so only send emails to this address: lameborsel@sfasu.edu
   
   **Note:** I will not reply to any questions the answer to which can be found by carefully reading the syllabus or the assignment prompts.

2. **Class Environment:** Be considerate and professional to your peers and your professor. Rude behavior in class is unacceptable, and I will ask you to leave class if you are impolite. Some examples of such behavior are: sleeping, private conversations that are distracting to the tasks in class, doing homework for other classes, texting, taking a phone call, reading websites or other irrelevant materials during class, showing up late. This is a professional environment and I expect all of you to behave professionally.

3. **Use of Electronics:** Silence your phones and put them away in your backpacks. Silence all other devices and put them away. Remove headphones, etc. while you are in the classroom. You can only take notes by hand – no note taking on computers or tablets allowed. The only exception to this rule is if Disability Services has indicated otherwise.
4. **Books and Class Materials**: You must bring to class your books every time. I will not loan my book to anyone who has come to class unprepared.

5. All Writing Projects **must be typed** and turned in on d2l on the due date and time. I will not accept hand-written projects. No make-up work is allowed on major assignments. All **Homework** must be typed and turned in on d2l on the due date and time. I will not accept hand-written homework. No make-up work is allowed on homework announced at the beginning of the semester. **Late work** will not be accepted unless an exception is approved in advance.

6. **Peer Review**: You cannot participate in peer review unless you have a finished, **typed, and printed** draft. You may not participate if your draft is on your laptop or tablet. I will ask you to leave if you do not have a physical draft with which to work.

7. **Attendance** is required in this course. After three absences, your grade will be reduced by one complete percentage point for each class period you miss, whether those are excused absences or not. If you accumulate six absences or more (excused or unexcused) you automatically fail the course.

8. I will only accept documented excuses for any in-class make-up work: family emergencies, university sanctioned events, and extreme medical issues (hospitalization); I need to be presented with documentation upon your first day of return to the classroom, or within a week of the absence.

9. **An excused absence** does not also excuse major essay deadlines, since these deadlines are given weeks in advance. You must turn in major assignments and homework on time regardless of the excuse, since these due dates are announced at the very beginning of the semester.

10. If you miss any in-class writing, you cannot make it up unless you have a documented excuse for your absence. You need to make this up on your own initiative upon your return to class. If more than a week has passed, then you can no longer make up this work.

11. **Tardiness**: If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you will automatically be counted absent. If you are not present when attendance is taken at the beginning of class, it is your responsibility to notify me at the end of class that you are present; otherwise you will be counted absent. If you fail to notify me at the end of class and instead claim attendance later in the semester, I will not change the record unless you have documented proof of attendance (peer testimony does not count). If you are consistently late to class, your participation grade will drop.

12. **Classroom Conduct**: If you are disrespectful, rude, or inconsiderate to me or anyone else in the class, you will be asked to leave for the day and you will be counted absent. If you continually disrupt class, you will be asked to leave and will be counted absent. **Use of laptops or tablets will not be allowed during class,**
unless I have otherwise specified. Turn off your cellphones, take off headphones, and be respectful of everyone’s time.

13. **Plagiarism**, or turning in work that is not one’s own, runs counter to the most basic purposes and presumptions of higher education. The minimum penalty for plagiarism will be failure of the assignment. In repeated cases, the penalty is failure of the course and filing paperwork with the academic dean. See SFA policy regarding plagiarism.

14. All work needs to adhere to **MLA format** with appropriate documentation – The Little Seagull Handbook has MLA documentation guidelines.

15. You may not use essays or assignments you have previously written.

16. I will not accept emailed assignments.

17. All students will be graded on their ability to: 1. Achieve the goal of the specific assignment 2. Efficiently and effectively communicate through writing 3. Properly format the work and 4. Avoid stigmatized grammatical and syntactical errors. Each assignment will vary, but these four factors will always determine part, or all, of your grade.

18. I reserve the right to ask you to leave the classroom should you disregard any of these policies, or if I deem that you are being disrespectful to our safe and intellectual learning environment.

**How Your Grade Will Be Calculated:**
The grading standards presented here are general to all the assignments; however, more specific standards (of which you will be made aware) will be attached to each individual assignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing Project #1 – Analytical Response Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Project #2 – Critical Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Project #3 – Persuasive Essay</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Class/Written Homework/Quizzes</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Reviews</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total: 100%</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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**What is Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to:
- using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam;
- falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment;
- helping or attempting to help other student(s) in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is
presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- submitting an assignment as one's own work when it is at least partly the work of another person;
- submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source;
- incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author credit.

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy:

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. **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 the SFA website.

**AARC:** The Academic Assistance Resource Center offers a free tutoring/writing assistance service to all students at SFASU. You are encouraged to seek help from this center throughout the semester.

**AARC Basic Grammar and Punctuation Guide:** [libguides.sfasu.edu/aarc/basicgram](http://libguides.sfasu.edu/aarc/basicgram)

**Discrimination/Harassment Policy:**
No one will be discriminated against or harassed on the basis of gender, age, size, ethnicity/race, religion, disability, or any other categories. If discrimination/harassment takes place (either reported or observed) involved students will be required to conference with me prior to returning to class. More information on this topic can be found here on the SFA website.

**MySFA:** Per SFASU policy your SFASU-assigned e-mail address is considered an official method of communication from faculty to students. Thus, it is your responsibility to check, on a regular and frequent basis, for any e-mail messages that I may have need to send regarding this course. Such messages may direct you to the mySFA/Blackboard area of this course for additional materials or instructions. Often, I will post schedule updates or announcements on d2l.sfasu.edu as well. Make sure you check frequently.