English 131: Composition & Rhetoric

Tanner O’Neal – Instructor
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Office: Ferguson 282
Office Hours: Thursday 2:00 PM-3:30 PM
Class Times: TR 8:00 AM-9:15 AM

Course Description:
Study and application of the writing process and the skills of writing with a focus on analytical reading and writing. Essay assignments address rhetorical analysis and evaluation and critical responses to close readings of texts. Required of all students who do not qualify for English 133H. Prerequisite: acceptable THEA score or at least a C in English 099. Must earn a grade of C or higher to be admitted to English 132.

Required Materials:
- Lumberjacks Write (provided by Department of English and Creative Writing)
- In Our Time by Ernest Hemingway (can be found at the bookstore on-campus or Amazon (go with Amazon))
- Other readings and handouts will be provided as needed
- A spiral or journal for daily journal entries that I will collect periodically throughout the semester
- A separate way to take notes (whether this be a laptop, tablet, or pen/paper)
- Access to a word-processing software (preferably Microsoft Word, as it is provided through MySFA)

Course Policies:

Attendance:
Class attendance is mandatory. You are allowed a maximum of four absences, which equates to roughly a week and a half of coursework. You are still expected to do any work required for a given class period. Exceptions may be made depending on the circumstances, but we will talk outside of class to arrange that. Every absence after your first four will result in your total grade being dropped by half a letter (so a low A would drop into high B territory).

I will begin class as promptly as possible, but understand that I am also a human being and may have extenuating circumstances that make me late. Assume that I will always be there on time and the lecture will begin as soon as class starts. If you show up to class after the lecture begins, you will be counted late. Two late arrivals equates to one absence.

A number of situations will cause me to consider you absent even if you are physically present. Sleeping, using your phone without permission, working on assignments for other courses, or listening to music through headphones will result in you being marked absent. I won’t make a scene about it, I will just mark you down. There will be times I
will give you permission to use your phone or listen to music. Work with me. Respect my time and I will respect yours.

**Respect:**
Discussion is a crucial element of this course, and you are expected to contribute. It is okay to disagree with each other (and I expect this to occur), but you must respect everyone’s else’s opinion. Treat your classmates with kindness and they will be expected to return the favor. If anyone disrespects or insults another member of the class, they will be reprimanded appropriately.

When contacting me, try to uphold a degree of professionalism. Include an appropriate subject in your email and be as clear as possible with your questions or concerns so that I can help you to the best of my ability. Feel free to contact me at any hour, but don’t expect me to respond immediately if you email me in the middle of the night. I will do my best to respond to all emails within 24 hours of receiving them.

Food and drink are okay in class as long as you don’t disturb the lecture or your other classmates. Your food can be smelly if you prefer—but don’t blame your classmates if they hate you because of it.

**Grading:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical Value</th>
<th>Final Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-59</td>
<td>F</td>
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Late grades will be an option for major assignments, although not one I would recommend. After grading your assignment, I will drop it one full letter grade for every full day it is late. For example, if you turn your paper in one day late and I give it a B after looking it over, I will drop that grade down to a C for grading purposes. Late grades will not be given for daily assignments—if you don’t turn it in, it is a 0. If you miss a class, contact me or a classmate and I will tell you the assignment and expect it by the next time you attend class. Keep in mind that I will not recap a lecture for you—your attendance is your responsibility.

Each of your four major assignments will make up 20% of your final grade, resulting in a total of 80%. Your daily work together will comprise 10%, and your final exam will make up the other 10%. It’ll work out as displayed below:

- 20% - Personal Narrative Essay
- 20% - Rhetorical Analysis Essay
- 20% - Literary Analysis Essay
- 20% - Argumentative Essay
10% - Daily Work
10% - Final Exam

**Daily Work:**
We will begin each class with a personal journal assignment, usually a reflection on previously assigned reading or thoughts on feedback received on a previous assignment.

There will be other small assignments handed out in class throughout the semester that will be included in the daily work portion of your final grade.

**Course Schedule:**

**Week 1**
**Tuesday**
- Syllabus Day
  - Homework: Read “How to Write with Style” by Kurt Vonnegut
**Thursday**
- Introduce the idea of Personal Narratives
  - Homework: Read George Orwell’s “Shooting an Elephant”

**Week 2**
**Tuesday**
- Introduce the Personal Narrative assignment, discuss narrative structure.
**Thursday**
- Discuss previous readings, correlate them with Personal Narrative. Discuss Narrative structure.
  - Homework: Read previous student examples of the essay, finish writing personal narrative rough draft.

**Week 3**
**Tuesday**
- Exchange essays for peer review, discuss peer review, work on review in class.
  - Homework: Revise final draft.
**Thursday**
- Final Drafts of Personal Narrative due
  - Homework: Begin reading Hemingway’s *In Our Time*.

**Week 4**
**Tuesday**
- Introduce literary analysis assignment, discuss first few stories in *In Our Time*.
  - Homework: Continue reading *In Our Time*.
**Thursday**
- Discuss next few stories in *In Our Time*. 
Homework: Finish *In Our Time*.

**Week 5**

**Tuesday**
- Discuss entirety of *In Our Time*.
  - Homework: Read James Salter’s *Bangkok*.

**Thursday**
- Discuss *Bangkok* and literary analysis.
  - Homework: F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *Babylon Revisited*.

**Week 6**

**Tuesday**
- Discuss *Babylon Revisited* and literary elements, look at student examples of analyses.
  - Homework: Begin literary analysis paper.

**Thursday**
- Revisit *In Our Time* and the literary analysis assignment,
  - Homework: Finish literary analysis paper.

**Week 7**

**Tuesday**
- Exchange literary analysis essays for peer review, discuss peer review.
  - Homework: Revise final drafts.

**Thursday**
- Discuss essays, commonalities between the two assignments.
  - Homework: None.

**Week 8**

**Tuesday**
- Discuss rhetoric, pathos, discuss examples.
  - Homework: None.

**Thursday**
- Discuss logos and ethos, discuss examples.
  - Homework: None.

**Week 9**

**Tuesday**
- Discuss rhetorical devices.
  - Homework: Watch assigned video, read assigned speech.

**Thursday**
- Discuss homework video and speech, analyze rhetorical devices.
  - Homework: Read assigned presidential speech.

**Week 10**

**Tuesday**
- Discuss rhetorical analysis essay assignment.
  - Homework: Begin writing rhetorical analysis.

**Thursday**
• MLA discussion.
  o Homework: Finish writing rhetorical analysis.

Week 11
Tuesday
• Bring rough draft rhetorical analyses. Exchange for peer review.
  o Homework: Finish final draft of rhetorical analysis.
Thursday
• Final Drafts of rhetorical analysis due
  o Homework: None.

Week 12
Tuesday
• Introduce final persuasive essay assignment, review guidelines for writing effective essays.
  o Homework: Research for final essay.
Thursday
• Continue discussing tips for effective essays, discuss how student papers are coming.
  o Homework: Finish writing final argumentative essay.

Week 13
Fall Break

Week 14
Individual Conferences (will schedule specifics in class)

Week 15
Tuesday
• Exchange essays for peer review, discuss peer review
  o Homework: Finish final drafts
Thursday
• Final Drafts of argumentative paper due
  o Homework: None.

Week 16
Final Exam

Student Learning Outcomes for ENG 131:
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).

English Program Learning Outcomes
This is a general education core curriculum course and no specific program learning outcomes for this major are addressed in this course

Academic Integrity (A-9.1):
Academic integrity is the 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. 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/4.1-student-academic-dishonesty.pdf. I take plagiarism very seriously. Don’t do it. A plagiarized assignment will receive zero points. A second instance of plagiarism will result in a failing course grade, and I will also contact the appropriate dean’s office, which may result in the guilty student’s dismissal from the university.

Withheld Grades Policy (A-54):
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. See the university’s complete course grade policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/5.5_course-grades.pdf.

**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 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/.