Composition and Rhetoric  
English 131.045  
Department of English, SFASU

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Office: Ferguson 275  
Office Hours: MW 1:00 - 3:00 PM  
F 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Meeting Times and Location: TR 2:00 - 3:15 PM, Ferguson 271

**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.

**General Education Core Curriculum**  
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 English 131, you are also enrolling in a Core Curriculum Course that fulfills the Communication Skills—Written requirement. You will see this course on your D2L list. ONCE this semester, you will receive an assignment that 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 the “Core Curriculum” dropbox. The Core Curriculum dropbox will be identified by the Objective for which work is being collected. All other assignments should be submitted according to regular class operations. If you have any questions, please see me or the Office of Student Learning and Institutional Assessment.

Please note that this only applies to the specific assignment listed in the matrix below. All other assignments should be submitted according to regular class operations.
Communication Skills - Written
To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in D2L</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills - Written</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>Persuasive Essay</td>
<td>December 7, 2018</td>
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</table>

This is a writing-intensive course. There are a number of major written assignments through which you will produce a minimum of 15 pages of final-draft-quality writing.

**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.
Course Policies

Coursework and Evaluation

Major Assignments (Essays)

There are four major writing assignments for this class which make up the bulk (80%) of your grade.

Note: All major assignments will be described in depth in their corresponding modules on the course’s D2L/Brightspace page, including page lengths, source requirements, and proper submission procedures.

- Essay 1: Rhetorical Analysis (15%)
- Essay 2: Social Analysis (20%)
- Essay 3: Synthesis (20%)
- Essay 4: Persuasive Essay (25%)

Participation

Participation is 15% of your final course grade. It is assessed in a variety of ways: quizzes, short in-class writing assignments, contributions to discussions, etc.

Mandatory Conference

At some point between the beginning of Thanksgiving break and the assigning of Essay 4, you will need to schedule a time and come in for a short conference to discuss your progress at that point in the semester. This is 5% of your final grade.

Grade and Revision Policies

Your final letter grade will correspond to the following, conventional scale.

A: 90 - 100
B: 80 - 89
C: 70 - 79
D: 60 - 69
F: 0 - 59
In short, I don’t allow revisions. My hope is that students identify and eliminate mistakes in their writing before submitting the final draft of an essay by 1) being attentive in class 2) emailing me or coming to office hours and 3) forwarding early drafts of an essay for me to review and provide feedback on.

Attendance and Tardiness:

Regular attendance is expected and mandatory. You may have seven absences this semester, excused or unexcused; I do not distinguish between excused or unexcused absences. If you miss more than seven class meetings, you will automatically fail the class.

Students should be punctual. If you are more than five minutes late to class, I will count you as late. Two late arrivals to class equal an absence. So if you’re frequently late to class, it will adversely affect your final course grade.

Mental Absences

Simply being present in class does not prevent you from being marked as absent. I will mark you as absent should I observe any of the following behavior/actions.

- Sleeping during a class meeting.
- Doing work for another course.
- Violating the course technology policy (below).
- Leaving the classroom before I dismiss class.
- Failing to complete/perform assigned in-class work.
- Being generally disruptive and/or disrespectful.

Late Work:

I take off 10% for every day (not every class meeting) that an essay is past due, including weekends and holidays. Students who expect to miss class the day that an assignment is due should plan accordingly and submit the assignment ahead of time.

Technology Policy:

To put it bluntly, no phones, and please remove headphones and similar devices, unless you have my consent. When we do an in-class writing assignment, I am okay with people listening to music on their phones.

Feel free to use tablets and computers to take notes but be forewarned: I tend to wander through the aisles. If I discover that you are in fact looking at Facebook, shopping on Amazon, etc., I will
1) ask you to put away your device and 2) may permanently ban you from using that or any similar device for the rest of the semester.

**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.


The first instance of plagiarism I encounter will result in a zero grade on the assignment plagiarized. I make no distinction between “major” or “minor” plagiarism. For example, if any language, even a single clause in a sentence, is lifted from another source without proper attribution, that is plagiarism and the essay will be scored a “0.” **Do not plagiarize. I cannot emphasize it enough.**

The second instance of plagiarism will result in a **failing final course grade.**

Just to be clear, I have a duty to report any evidence of academic dishonesty and/or plagiarism. Any such report would be included in a student’s permanent record. I have no latitude in the matter, nor would I want any.

**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. [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/5.5_course-grades.pdf](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, 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/).

**Final Notes/Disclaimers**

I reserve the right to modify or add to any of the above, so long as it does not run counter to University or Departmental policies. You will be given ample forewarning of such changes, which will also be documented in an amended syllabus. Changes I have made in the past were made to better accommodate students.