Course 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 textual readings. Students in English 131 write a minimum of four formal essays (totaling 15 pages of final draft quality writing). English 131 is a requirement for all students who do not qualify for ENG133H. 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.**
Although writing is the primary focus of the class, we also review key concepts of grammar, sentence construction, and paragraph construction. Students also define, identify, analyze, and use key rhetorical concepts and skills such as the three rhetorical appeals and the elements of the rhetorical triangle. They are introduced to the basics of MLA documentation and apply that knowledge in preliminary research using primary sources. They also participate in one group project which includes an oral presentation.

This section of ENG 131 focuses on the theme and power of language awareness as it may be expressed in our culture through communicative modes of voice, communities, writings, propaganda, gender, stereotyping, and conflict. Throughout the semester, we will be asking questions to help us understand the power of language such as:

- Where is my voice?
- How can language change the world?
- How and why do we write?
- How does language manipulate and/or encourage discrimination and stereotypes?
- How is language abused? If so, what tools/techniques/strategies does the media and our culture use to influence us through language?
- What are the current trends in language use today?

With this theme guiding us, we will complete four units of study:

**Unit One** will focus on a personal literacy narrative, reflecting specifically on your experience(s) with reading, writing, or some type of technological literacy. By the end of the unit, you will turn in a personal expressive essay that will recognize conflicting reactions, emotions, responses, or outcomes to a certain complex experience/event/occurrence. Furthermore, you will explore how conflicting emotions/responses changed or influenced how you defined the event.

**Unit Two** will emphasize the ability to succinctly summarize various sources in a focused, third-person, objective academic voice. We will focus on learning and applying
the techniques necessary to writing an organized, unified and objective extended case study summary of a current issue.

**Unit Three** will have students analyzing rhetorical situations with an emphasis on advertising and propaganda. This unit will include a Compare/Contrast Rhetorical Analysis essay of two advertisements as well as an Ethos, Pathos, Logos Group Project and presentation.

**Unit Four** will focus on students writing a persuasive synthesis essay by combining and synthesizing 2-4 credible primary and secondary sources with a particular audience and context in mind as well as a clear sense of purpose to persuade the audience to think, act, etc. in a particular way about a subject. This essay will also include a Works Cited page with source citations in MLA format.

**Student Learning Outcomes for ENG 131:**

ENG 131 learning outcomes are the goals that students must meet as part of the Freshman Composition requirements, which include:

1. 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);

2. 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);

3. 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);
4. Recognize the collaborative and social aspects of the writing process by producing collaborative work and/or feedback for peer and selectively using peer feedback in their own work (Teamwork);

5. Demonstrate knowledge of organizational and linguistic structures—including grammar, punctuation, and spelling—through the practice in composing and revising (Communication);

6. 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).

**Required Texts and Materials:**

  *This text will be issued by your instructor
- Notebook/1 subject spiral will be needed for journaling, notes, pre-writing, etc.
- Folder labeled with name, course, and section number
*There will also be various handouts/readings distributed by or posted on D2L by the instructor at certain times in the semester. These will be supplements to your textbooks and will need to be brought to class if instructed to do so. **DO NOT LOSE THEM.**

**Formatting, Length, and Inclusion Guidelines:**

- All papers assigned to be finished outside of class must be **typed** according to MLA format.
  - Do not include a cover sheet.
- Include your section number with your course number (ENG 131.013, for example).
- **Staple** all pages together before coming to class.
- Unless otherwise indicated, you must turn in all stages of the writing process in a **folder** when final drafts are due. This includes:
  - prewriting (such as outlines, fastwrites, etc.)
  - first (rough) draft
  - peer review
  - final draft
- You should have papers organized, placed in a folder, and ready to turn in on the due date.
- In this class, you must adhere to specified page lengths or face an **automatic grade penalty**. Since you are using MLA format, you will not be able to vary font, font size, margins, etc. to make your paper meet length requirements. For example, if a 4 – 5 page paper is assigned, it must be at least 4 full pages, going to the last line of page 4. If a 3 page paper is turned in for this assignment, its grade will begin as a 75.

**Communication, D2L, and Turnitin:**

**D2L:** I will communicate with the class via D2L and/or sfasu email. You are responsible for checking our class page (especially for announcements, updates, and weekly homework assignments) and your D2L email **daily** and for being aware of any information there. Grades are also posted online periodically. Please let me know immediately if you see any errors in your recorded grades.

Absent students should refer to our class web page and contact class members to find out what they miss when absent and what has been assigned. “I was not here” is not an acceptable excuse for not coming prepared to the next class, getting class notes, or being aware of deadlines, etc. **You may contact me for any missed work only if you have documentation that excuses your absence.**
**Turnitin:** To guard against plagiarism, major papers must be submitted to Turnitin.com, which will compare your essay to millions of essays previously submitted to the program, current and archived instances of the Internet, and commercial databases or journals and periodicals. Turnitin will generate an originality report for each essay detailing its degree of similarity to other works. **You must submit an electronic copy of your final draft to the D2L dropbox before you give me your hard copy of the paper.**

To submit to Turnitin, click on the drop box icon in D2L, then click on the name of the assignment. **Putting your paper in the drop box automatically submits it to Turnitin.** Failure to turn the paper in to the D2L dropbox, even if you turn in a hard copy, will result in a grade of zero. If a paper is submitted past the deadline to Turnitin, there will be a grade penalty applied.

For help with D2L, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/sfaonline/ and look for the link to D2L Support and Tutorials o the left-hand side. Or you can email d2l@sfasu.edu. You can also get assistance with any university technology by calling 468-1919

**Grades**

This course will be graded on a point scale. There will be a total of 1000 points possible. The assignments and grades for this course will be as follows:

- **Diagnostic Essay (2-3 pages)**
  - 50 points

- **Essay 1: Literacy Narrative (2-3 Pages)**
  - 100 points

- **Essay 2: Case Study Summary (2-3 Pages)**
  - 100 points

- **Essay 3: Rhetorical Analysis Essay (3-4 Pages)**
  - 100 points

- **Ethos, Pathos, Logos Group Project and Presentation**
  - 100 points

- **Essay 4: Persuasive Synthesis Essay (6-7 pages)**
  - 150 points

- **In-class Final Exam**
  - 100 points
Portfolio 100 points

Daily Work (attendance, homework, journals, etc.) 100 points (25 points per unit)

Quizzes 100 points (10 points/quiz)

Final Grade
- 900-1000 A
- 800-899 B
- 700-799 C
- 600-699 D
- 0-599 F

Grade Criteria:
- To figure your grade out at any point in the semester, simply add up the number of points that you have accrued and divide that by the total number of points possible. This will give you an overall percentage.
- 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.
- If you fail a paper, do not lose hope, or think it is personal. You are here to learn, and often we learn best through our failures. Any comments I make are meant to help you. You will be allowed to revise one paper – unless you didn’t turn one in – and as a requirement for a revision, you must meet with me to discuss your paper.

Revisions
You will be allowed one revision this semester from either the first or second paper. Revisions offer you a chance to recover from a possibly grade damaging paper. Revisions will only be allowed for papers that receive a C or below. For your revision to count it must do several things:
- Make corrections beyond just those marked on the original paper. What this means is you sat down, read my comments, looked at what was marked, reread
your paper, and understood what the errors were and how to fix them. Any paper that just “fixes” the areas I marked will not be given full credit for a rewrite.

- Because this is a revision, there should not be an abundance of grammar, spelling, or formatting errors. Any revisions that still contain these types of errors will not improve your grade, but will burn your revision opportunity. Make the revision worth your time and mine.

- You will need to see me within one week of receiving the original graded paper to inform me of your plans to revise, as well as confer with me on ways to improve your paper. This is not optional. Any student that does not meet with me within the week deadline, yet hands me a revision, will have it handed right back to them.

- You will need to go to the AARC at least once to have a tutor look at your revision. It would be in your best interest to go with specific questions and concerns. If you do not understand why you got the grade you did, the AARC is not going to help you in that way. You need to be cognizant of your writing abilities and be able to see what you are doing and not doing to make the visit to the AARC effective. If you go with generalities, the tutors will focus on the areas they think needs the most work, which may not be what you are looking for. The AARC visit is not optional.

- The original graded copy and rubric must be turned in with the revision. If I do not receive this copy, I will not grade the revision

- The revision must be submitted online through D2L. There will be a separate link for revisions. Again, if it is not turned in online by the time the revision is due, I will not accept it.

Extra Credit Opportunities:
Extra credit opportunities will be announced throughout the semester. Extra credit assignments will not be accepted late, or given to those who were absent the day they were announced. Please do not ask for personal extra credit.
Course Policies: Attendance

As this syllabus is a contract between the instructor and students, I greatly encourage you to keep it in a safe place and refer to it frequently throughout the semester. If, for any reason, any scheduling, reading assignments, or due dates change, an updated syllabus will be distributed.

- I require regular attendance from my students. To perform well in this course, you need to be here! You are expected to come to class fully prepared having done the assigned work and being ready to respond to the required readings.
- I will allow 4 excused and/or unexcused absences (basically freebies)
- I will have your daily work grade dropped by 10 points per absence starting with the 5th.
- Students with more than 6 absences (excused and/or unexcused) who fail to drop the course will receive an F for the semester.
- The absences that count as excused will be documented family emergencies, university sanctioned events, and extreme medical issues (hospitalization). All excused absences must have proper documentation (i.e. a doctor’s excuse, documentation from coach on SFA letterhead, etc.).
- Regardless of the reason for your absence, you are responsible for all information and work covered in class. If you missed deadlines or in-class work during an excused absence, it is your responsibility to find out what you’ve missed and arrange with me to make it up.
- In class assignments and activities cannot be made up unless you have a documented, excused absence. That said, the assignments/activities must be turned in by the following class meeting after the documented absence.
- Having 3 tardies will constitute one full absence. You will be considered tardy:
  - If you arrive to class after I have taken role or leave class early unless you have informed me before class begins.
  - 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. 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.

- If you are more than 10 minutes late to class, you will automatically be counted absent.
- If you are consistently late to class, your daily work grade will drop.

**Course Policies: Assignments**

- Note regarding make-up and late work: Make-up tests and quizzes (which will be given only in the case of excused absences) must be taken during my office hours on your own initiative within one week of the absence.

- **Late essays will lose one letter grade (10 points) per day of lateness. For example, if an essay that was due on Monday is turned in on Wednesday, the grade will be dropped to a C before I even began grading it. I will not accept the submission of material via e-mail without prior approval.**

- Plagiarism is not tolerated. **Students caught plagiarizing may fail the course and may be subject to being reported to the academic dean!** Plagiarism can include: directly copying, paraphrasing or rephrasing another author’s ideas without giving credit to the original author(s). Additionally, a purchased essay is plagiarism, and an essay written in part or whole by anyone other than you is plagiarism. If you are not sure, please come talk to me.

- Assignments, essays, and any other work that is given a due date should be turned in on time. If there is an emergency or situation that will prevent you from turning your work in on time, please come speak to me. I will decide if there should be an extension, though if accepted late, there may be a loss of a letter grade per day.

- **When major essay grades are given back, I require that you wait at least 24 hours before discussing your grade with me.**

- **Students are expected to have read any required material on the schedule before class, as there will likely be quizzes and/or group work that will involve said readings. You are required to own or have exclusive access to the textbooks or handouts for the duration of the class.**
• Essay requirements will be given to you as a separate handout. These requirements are non-negotiable.

• For one of your papers, we will meet together one-on-one and discuss your writing strategies and revise your first draft together. All individual or group conferences scheduled with me are mandatory. Conferences are a benefit to you, as you will receive personalized attention on your writing. Absence from a conference will count as missing a regularly scheduled week of classes.

• Bookmark the Purdue OWL website as it will be the perfect reference for grammar, formatting, and MLA questions: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

Academic Integrity: Documented proof of cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade (of zero) on the assignment, AND a failing grade in the course. You will not be permitted to rewrite the assignment; you will not be given a second chance.

According to university and departmental policy, I must report the cheating to the dean of your college. In part, the following is taken from the University Policy and Procedures Manual (online), Section A-9.1 of Academic Affairs:

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 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 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

Class Conduct and Citizenship:

• Student participation is encouraged during class. Participation not only includes asking questions and being a part of discussions, but also includes being polite and respectful to those around you, including myself. If I consider your behavior
to be offensive, you will be given a warning. If the behavior continues, you will be removed from the class.

- **Cell phones.** Turn them off and put them away before you come into class. Not to vibrate, not to silence, but OFF. If your phone rings or if you are texting throughout class, you will receive an "academic" absence which is the same as a regular absence. If the problem still continues, you will be asked to leave class, or points will be deducted from your daily works grade.

- We may discuss sensitive or controversial topics as part of class. Disagreement is expected and vital to learning how to express one’s position in a convincing way. That said, we must cooperate to avoid showing disrespect toward others in class and/or their ideas, beliefs, or position, and to avoid any type of hate speech. If you choose to engage in any distracting or disrespectful behavior within a single class meeting (or, for that matter, across multiple meetings), you will be asked to leave the class and counted absent.

*Acceptable Student Behavior:* 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 (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). 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 available to help SFA students succeed.

**Withheld Grades Policy (A-54):**

The following is taken from SFASU’s Policy Manual (2012), “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.

**Inclusive Learning:**

- Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we’ll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

- I encourage you to visit the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to determine how you could improve your learning as well. If you need official accommodations, you have a right to have these met.

- ODS is available at Human Services Building, Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) or [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

- Once verified, ODS will notify your instructors and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations, and no accommodations can be made except through the ODS.