The Basics

**ENG 131: Rhetoric & Composition**
- 009: MWF 9-9:50, Ferguson 381
- 013: MWF 12-12:50, Ferguson 176
- 047: MW 1-2:15, Ferguson 271

Dr. Meta Henty, hentym@sfasu.edu

**Office & Office Hours:** Liberal Arts North 245 (Wonder Woman on door)
- MWF 10-11, TR 11-12
- & by appointment

**Required:** *The Little Seagull Handbook*, 3rd ed. ISBN: 9780393602630, paper, $$ for printing, 3-ring binder, computer/internet access

You will learn 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- Demonstrate knowledge of organizational and linguistic structures – including grammar, punctuation, and spelling – through practice in composing and revising
- 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

Course Description

In this class, we will practice reading and writing in a variety of genres. We will engage in critical thinking and dialogue to respond to writing and create our own. This course emphasizes the writing process; class discussion, peer review, drafting, and revision are integral to the course and your success in it.

Official 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.

COURSE/COLLEGE HACKS

1. Take ownership of your learning, and do your own work.
2. Come to class. Find a buddy you can contact for information when you are absent.
3. Read/complete required material (and take notes) and assignments before coming to class.
4. In class: pay attention, listen, have your materials, participate, ask questions, take notes
5. Take peer review (and my feedback) and revision seriously.
6. Submit SOMETHING for every single assignment.
7. Come to office hours for help.
8. Communicate with me if you are struggling.
9. Take risks. Challenge yourself and your ideas. Don’t avoid difficult topics and questions. Write about things that interest you, and try to have fun.
10. Think about how this class can help you be a better writer, arguer, and communicator—and how that will help you in your other classes, career, or personal life—as opposed to simply considering it a requirement on the checklist.
Credit Hour Justification

ENG 131 “Rhetoric and Composition” (3 credits) meets three times each week in fifty-minute segments or twice each week in seventy-five-minute segments for fifteen weeks, and meets during finals week according to the final exam schedule. Students complete weekly topical readings as well as writing and discussion activities related to those readings. Students write a minimum of four essays with a total page count of at least fifteen pages of finished writing. Emphasis is placed on writing processes, including multiple drafts and short assignments that require generating, revising and editing writing. Final exams typically include presentations of student writing. These activities average six hours of work outside of classroom hours.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

Attendance and active participation in this course are necessary. Poor attendance will hurt your participation/daily work grade. If you miss more than four weeks of class, you automatically fail the course. Please do not be late for class. One or two late arrivals are excusable; consistent tardiness is rude and will affect your grade. Similarly, repeatedly being off task (talking, cellphones, social media, etc.) may result in you being asked to leave the class and counted absent for the day.

Being absent is not an excuse for missed information or assignments. Please contact a classmate or visit office hours to find out what you missed. If you will be missing class for a university-excused activity, please contact me BEFORE the missed class date. Extenuating circumstances should be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and me as soon as possible.

Binder and Printing

Please obtain a three-ring binder (1-2") for this class. In addition to purchasing your handbook, you are required to print five readings, the syllabus, and drafts. The binder with a printed syllabus and the five printed readings is due the second week of class (see schedule). You will also need notebook paper in the binder for in-class writing; some writing will stay in the binder, and other items will be submitted then returned. Bring your binder and handbook daily.

Drafts/Peer Review/Author’s Notes

For each major writing assignment, you will be asked to submit preliminary and revised drafts to be workshopped in small groups, by the whole class, and/or by me.

Each draft should include an author’s note explaining to readers:

1) The history of your draft (first draft, third, wrote it in 5 minutes at 3 am, etc.)
2) What you think is going well
3) What you are having trouble with or would like advice on

Save all drafts from workshops. When the essay is complete, you will submit all drafts. Not completing drafts or missing workshop and/or failing to provide adequate feedback will affect your final grade on the essay.

If you must miss a workshop due to being ill or other unavoidable circumstances, you may workshop with a peer outside of class or visit the AARC with your draft and provide proof of this. The draft must be reviewed BEFORE the final draft is due. Your participation is necessary in this class.
**Submitting Work**

Unless otherwise specified or approved, all major assignments (including drafts) should be submitted to D2L Dropbox AND printed and brought to class. For rough drafts, you will often be asked to bring more than one copy—please see the schedule. When “final” drafts are submitted to me, please attach all rough drafts with comments. Always submit to D2L.

Students are allowed one free extension during the semester. You may extend any one due date 72 hours (3 days); you must email me PRIOR to the due date to notify me of the extension. Outside of this one extension, I do not accept any late work.

Technology issues (your own laptop, D2L, etc.) are NOT an excuse for late work. You are encouraged to back up your work via multiple methods and check for a D2L submission receipt. If you are ever unable to submit an assignment via D2L, you should email it to me prior to the due date instead.

**Office Hours**

During my office hours, I will be at my desk and available to talk with you about any questions, comments, or concerns you have about the course or specific readings or assignments. Please stop by and see me during these hours—that time is yours. If the hours don’t work for you, please make an appointment. If you find yourself struggling in the course for any reason, please contact me as soon as possible. I am happy to work with and help you, but you have to contact me.

**Disability Policy**

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/).

**Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism**

When writers use materials from other sources, they must acknowledge these sources. So, just to remind you, claiming something as your original work when someone else wrote it is called PLAGIARISM, which means using without credit the ideas or expressions of another. Self-Plagiarism consists of submitting previously submitted work again. If you want to revise an existing paper or write on similar topics for two classes, come speak to me (and any other professors involved). Penalties for plagiarism vary from failure of the plagiarized assignment to failure for the course. In all cases, it includes notification of the Dean’s office.

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. [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)
**Grade Breakdown**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation/Daily Work</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary &amp; Response Papers (5 @ 5% each)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhetorical Analysis</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Synthesis Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal (15%) and Presentation (5%)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**Participation/Daily Work 10%**

Many days, we will begin class with a writing activity or a reading quiz; other times, you will be required to do process work (write your thesis, make an outline, etc.). This “daily work” is designed to keep you on track with your reading, generate ideas for your writing, or guide you through the writing process. Come to class prepared and ready to engage (speak, ask questions, take notes, etc.). Not having read, not bringing your book, and not paying attention and participating in discussion will hurt your grade. If you are terrified of speaking in class, please let me know sooner rather than later, and we can work something out. Keep all daily and in-class writing in your binder. In-class activities cannot be made up.

**Grammar Presentation 10%**

Once during the semester, you will be responsible for teaching (with a partner) a grammar issue/rule to the class in the form of a mini lesson. You will be graded on accuracy, time management, and engagement. You will receive a detailed assignment sheet.

**Summary & Response Papers 25%**

For five readings, you will be asked to complete a summary and response paper of about 500-900 words. These papers will be due on the day we discuss the reading. Students will engage critically with the texts through writing and practice paraphrasing, summarizing, and using quotes. Unlike the other three “major” assignments, these papers will not be revised unless otherwise specified.

**Rhetorical Analysis 15%**

You will choose one reading to rhetorically analyze in a 800-1200 word essay. You may use your summary & response as a beginning, but the rhetorical analysis essay will be longer and more formal. You will receive a detailed assignment sheet.

**Synthesis Essay 20%**

For the synthesis essay, you will combine at least three previous readings from the class to make one cohesive argument of 1400-1800 words. Here, you will be combining your various analysis skills in order to put the texts in conversation with one another. You will receive a detailed assignment sheet.

**Proposal/Persuasive Essay 20%**

For your final major assignment, you will work in groups to propose a creative campus program or event that will enhance SFA and contribute to SFA’s mission statement. You will work to persuade the SFA’s alumni organization that your proposal is the best. The written proposal will be worth 15%. The other 5% will come from the
presentation that your group must create and present during the final exam time. You will receive a detailed assignment sheet.

**General Letter Grade Guidelines**

**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 small grammatical issues.

**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.