English 131-003
Rhetoric and Composition

Instructor: Jessi Randall
Department: English
Class Time: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 8-8:50
Classroom: Ferguson 292
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Office: LAN 272
Office Phone: 936-468-2043
Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 11-12
Tuesday/Thursday 9:30 – 10:45

Catalog Description: 131 Rhetoric and Composition (ENGL 1301) – 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 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 response to close textual readings. Students in English 131 write a minimum of four formal essays (totaling at least 15-18 pages) and at least one in-class timed essay. English 131 is a requirement for all students who do not qualify for ENG133H.

In English 131, the emphasis is on the development of critical thinking, reading, and holistic academic writing skills.

Required texts: Notebook for in class work
Handouts as made available on D2L and in class.

There will be frequent handouts or readings on D2L, please have these available. You will occasionally be asked to turn in your journal with classroom activities so it is important not to lose this journal. If you do not turn in your journal when asked, you will receive 0% participation for that day.

General Education Core Curriculum Objectives:
This course has been selected to be part of Stephen F Austin State University’s core curriculum. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six objectives for all core courses: 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/
Core Objectives:
1. Critical Thinking Skills – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
2. Communication Skills – to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
3. Teamwork – to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.
4. Personal Responsibility – to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

English 131 Student 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 Reasonability);
- 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).

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.
**Grades:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Essay 2</td>
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<td>Essay 3</td>
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<td>Essay 4</td>
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<td>Essay 5</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>In class assignments</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
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**Grading Scale:**

- 100-90 A
- 89-80 B
- 79-70 C
- 69-60 D
- 59-0 F

**Assignments:**

I will provide detailed descriptions for each assignment well before it is due. However, here are some general rules of thumb for this class:

- All final drafts should adhere to the rules of standard written English grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- All essays must be in MLA format.
- Essays which fail to meet the page count requirements will automatically lose 10% of the points assigned to them. A page count of 3-4 pages mean 3 full pages.
- I will do my best to return graded assignments within one week. However, this may not always be possible. All assignments will be returned before the next assignment is due.
- All major assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade for this class. Late assignments will receive a point deduction of 10% for each day they are late.
- Rough drafts must be brought to class in order to accomplish peer review. Final drafts will be turned in the D2L, with printed copies being handed in at the beginning of class.
- If you need some direction on an essay, please come see me during regular office hours. I will not, however, discuss essays that have not been started the day before they are due.
- I am happy to discuss graded essays with you during regular office hours, too. However, please come prepared with concrete reasons why you believe your grade is inaccurate.

**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.
Course Policies:

Acceptable Student Behavior:

As stated in Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1, “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. 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 that is available to help SFA students succeed.”

Additionally, I expect any use of technology to be classroom related. Sleeping and texting will be dealt with accordingly. If a student is a persistent disruption to the classroom during a particular class session, they will be asked to leave and will receive an absence for that day.

Attendance and Absences:

Students are only allowed six unexcused absences and three excused absences (no more than nine classes total may be missed). Any additional absences will result in automatic failure of the course. Valid excuses are limited to health, religious observation, family emergencies, and participation in certain SFASU-sponsored events. Students must provide written documentation from which a decision will be made regarding the absence. Without written documentation, the absence will automatically be considered unexcused. Whether an absence is excused or unexcused, students are still responsible for all course content and assignments. Note also that you must complete all major assignments on time in order to pass the course.

I take attendance at the beginning of class; arriving more than seven minutes after class begins will result in your being marked absent.

Participation:

This class will revolve around group discussion, frequent group work and – as such – your participation is required. I expect cell phones to be silenced. I expect everyone to come to class ready to be engaged, having read the assigned materials and with at least one constructive addition. If it comes to my attention that the majority of the class is not prepared, there will be pop quizzes over the material.

Email:
Please include this courses information in the subject line of your emails – otherwise I will not receive them. I can be expected to answer emails before 2pm, and while I may occasionally respond to emails outside that time frame – such as on weekends – please be patient.

**Plagiarism:**

My goal in this class is to teach you how to be part of the conversation relating to ideas that interest you – and for anyone to be a constructive part of the conversation, they have to first give credit to other authors as it is due. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, or fear you may not have properly cited something, please talk to me immediately. As such, I will have a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism. SFA’s policy follows:

*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/academic_integrity.asp. If a student paper is found to have plagiarized passages, the case will be investigated, and a suitable course of action will be taken, which may include an un-revisable 0 on the paper, an F in the course, and an Academic Dishonesty Form filed with the Dean of the plagiarizing student’s college.*

**AARC:**

Writing tutors are available in the Academic Assistance and Research Center on the first floor of the Steen library. Writing Center offers Open lab from Monday through Thursday 3-7. Ask a tutor is available on Sundays, through Zoom, from 3-7pm. And there is an online tutor assistance, however there is a 48 hour turnaround for that, so you have to submit your papers before they are due to me.

**Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, you must contact Disability Services as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, Disability Services will notify me 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/)
Tentative Schedule

**Week 1:**
August 26: Getting to Know One Another & Syllabus
Group Activity/Journal Writing
HW: Anne Lamott’s “S***y 1
st
Drafts” and Vonnegut’s “How to Write with Style”
August 28: Why Write?
HW: Writing History due Friday
August 30: **Writing History due**
Discuss drafts and uses
HW: Ch. 13 Revision Strategies (handout)

**Week 2:**
September 2: Grammar & Revision
September 4: Narrative Essay Intro & Assignment
HW: Read “In Case You Ever Want to Go Home Again”
September 6: Group Activity based on Kingsolver essay

**Week 3:**
September 9: Brainstorm topics for narrative essay
HW: topic due on Monday
September 11: Opinion vs. Summary
September 13: Analysis vs. Argument
HW: rough draft due Monday

**Week 4:**
September 16: Mock Peer Review
September 18: Rough draft due / Peer Review
HW: Final draft of essay
September 20:

**Week 5:**
September 23: **Final draft due / Complaint letter intro**
HW: work on letter draft
September 25: Rhetorical Triangle
September 27: Appeals
HW: complaint letter final draft due

**Week 6:**
September 30: Review Examples and Intro
October 2: Watch “How to Use Rhetoric to Get What You Want”
In class: rough draft of review
HW: final draft of review
October 4: **Final Draft of review due**
Catch up day / In class activity

**Week 7:**
October 7: Literary Analysis intro
HW: Read David Foster Wallace “Incarnations of Burned Children”
October 9: Discuss story and literary devices
HW: read Sherwood Anderson’s “Hands”
October 11: Discuss story
HW: Read “Stories Strangely Told”

Week 8:
October 14: Literary analysis examples
HW: Rough draft of literary analysis
October 16: Peer Review of literary analysis
October 18: Catch up day / in class activity

Week 9:
October 21: Final draft due
Persuasive essay intro / in class topic brainstorm
HW: Topic due next class
October 23: Introductions
October 25: Conclusions

Week 10:
October 28: Logical Fallacies
HW: read “The Argument for Tuition-Free College”
October 30: “What to Avoid in an Argument”
November 1: Discuss sources
HW: two sources for persuasive essay

Week 11:
November 4: In class source activity
November 6: Creating body paragraphs w/ at least one source
November 8: Peer review of paragraphs

Week 12:
November 11: Conferences
November 13: Conferences
November 15: Conferences

Week 13:
November 18: In class essay prep
November 20: Discuss presentations.
November 22: Final draft due.

Week 14:
Thanksgiving holiday!

Week 15:
December 2: TBD/Presentations
December 4: TBD/Presentations
December 6: TBD/Presentations

Week 16:
December 9-13: Final exam December 11, 8-10:30