ENGLISH 131
RHETORIC AND
COMPOSITION

SECTION 035, MWF 10 A.M. STEM BUILDING 318

For this section of English 131 we will explore the university and our place in it. While the main goal of the course is to study college-level writing, the topics we will use to practice writing will help you connect to our SFA campus community and understand your place in higher education in general. This course provides the opportunity to learn more about the ongoing debates in higher education, explore Stephen F. Austin, and form opinions about your experiences and goals all while reviewing, learning, and practicing college-level communication skills.

GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION, CREDIT HOUR JUSTIFICATION, AND GENERAL EDUCATION CORE CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES

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.

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.

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.

Assessment of these objectives at SFA will be based on student work from all core curriculum courses. This student work will be collected in D2L through LiveText, the assessment management system selected by SFA to collect student work for core assessment. LiveText accounts will be provided to all students enrolled in core courses through the university technology fee. You will be required to register your LiveText account, and you will be notified how to register your account through your SFA e-mail account. If you forward your SFA e-mail to another account and do not receive an e-mail concerning LiveText registration, please be sure to check your junk mail folder and your spam filter for these e-mails. If you have questions about LiveText call Ext. 1267 or e-mail SFALiveText@sfasu.edu.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the assignment(s) that will be used to assess the objectives in this course and uploaded to LiveText this semester, and the date the assignment(s) should be uploaded to LiveText. Not every assignment will be collected for assessment every semester. Your instructor will notify you which assignment(s) must be submitted for assessment in LiveText this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in LiveText</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**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 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).

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

*Lumberjacks Write.* Eds. Elizabeth Tasker Davis and Nancy J. Fox.
The most recent edition will be provided to you by the English Department.

Access to SFA websites and applications including D2L Brightspace, the library, email, SFA 360, etc.

**If the class is not held in a lab** – students must maintain access to readings posted on D2L through a personal laptop or handheld device or by printing out texts.

**ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT**

Stephen F. Austin provides students reasonable accessibility accommodation to participate in educational programs, activities or services. Students requiring accommodation to participate in class activities or meet course requirements should
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 Dr. Parks and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided.

The full policy is available at:

http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/

**BRIGHTSPACE BY D2L COURSE WEBSITE**

SFA uses Brightspace by D2L as its virtual course management system. You can locate our course website at https://d2l.sfasu.edu.

Class handouts, reading links, assignment sheets, and important documents such as this syllabus will be posted on D2L Brightspace in the content tab.

We will use the discussion board and other D2L features.

Assignments will be submitted electronically. Look in the assessments tab for submission folders.

Locate the site's gradebook. You are in charge of checking the gradebook for errors throughout the semester.

Please opt in to receiving emails from D2L so that Dr. Parks can communicate with you outside of class.

**ATTENDANCE AND LATE WORK**

English 131 is a discussion-intensive class. If you miss class meetings you will miss important information, group work, and practice tasks.

Please contact Dr. Parks in advance or as soon as possible after you have an extraordinary circumstance occur that affects your performance in this class.

There are no extra penalties for missing class beyond the natural consequences of missing instruction and in-class assignments. However, these natural consequences add up quickly. Most students who miss class find they cannot pass the class with
higher than a C after 6 absences (MWF) and most students who miss 9 classes (MWF) drop or fail.

**ONLINE AVAILABILITY**

Dr. Parks’ office hours are held during the day – which means some students may not be able to attend office hours. If this is the case, you may request to meet outside of these hours. Online Zoom meetings are an acceptable substitute for face-to-face office hours. Dr. Parks will send you a link if you request this.

Dr. Parks is usually very quick to respond to email if you have a relatively simple question. Feel free to email her at any time at Sara.Parks@sfasu.edu.

**GRADES**

Remember: Your most important grades are the four major papers. However, missing small assignments and participation can still potentially cause you to fail the course.

5% - Other Participation (including discussion boards, in-class discussion, teamwork, etc.)

30% - Small Assignments (including in-class assignments, writing process checks, small reading quizzes, etc.)

65% - Four Major Papers

  - Personal Narrative – 15%
  - Visual Analysis - 15%
  - Summaries and Synthesis – 15%
  - Capstone Persuasive Paper – 20%

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Work for any course should be newly generated by you or your assigned team for each assignment.

Plagiarism involves using another’s work, words, or ideas without correctly giving credit to the author. It is just as serious to plagiarize the work of another student as it is to plagiarize the work of a published author.

Use a standard documentation style to credit your source. If you have questions about correct documentation, please ask!
In a collaborative class such as this, you may not always fully understand what is and is not plagiarism or what type of collaboration outside of class is and is not allowed. If you have questions, please ask!

**General Policy**

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.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

**WITHHELD GRADES**

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.

**OTHER UNIVERSITY POLICIES APPLY**

See these links for some other university-wide policies and explanations:

- Student athletes and representatives in sponsored events.
- What University letter grades mean.
What University credit hours mean.
How to appeal a grade.
How to request a medical withdrawal.
What happens when you don’t follow the SFA rules.

**GENERAL SCHEDULE**

Please refer to the D2L content for a full schedule. This is just the required outline.

Every date indicates a class meeting.

**Week Theme – Introduction to the University**
August 26
August 28 – tomorrow is last day for schedule changes other than dropping courses
August 30

**Week Theme – Introduction to Writing**
September 2
September 4
September 6

**Week Theme – Thinking Critically about your place in the University**
September 9
September 11
September 13

**Week Theme – Writing Personal Narratives**
September 16
September 18
September 20 – Personal Narrative Due

**Week Theme – Exploring the University**
September 23
September 25
September 27

**Week Theme – Reading about Universities and Education**
September 30
October 2
October 4

**Week Theme – Introduction to Visual Analysis**
October 7
October 9
October 11

Week Theme – Writing and Revising Visual Analysis

October 14
October 16 – mid semester
October 18 – Visual Analysis Due

The second half of class is dedicated to research and persuasive writing.

Week Theme – Choosing a Topic

October 21
October 23 – last day to drop courses
October 25

Week Theme - Finding Sources

October 28
October 30
November 1 – daylight savings this weekend

Week Theme – Reading for Comprehension

November 4
November 6
November 8

Week Theme – Writing Summaries and Synthesis

November 11
November 13
November 15 – Summaries and Synthesis due

Week Theme – Logical Arguments

November 18
November 20
November 22

Thanksgiving Break Week

Week Theme – Drafting and Revising

December 2
December 4
December 6 – Final Persuasive Paper due

Exam Week – Meet on designated exam day to write Course Reflection Paper
Wednesday, December 11 - 10:30 a.m. at our regular classroom.
December 18 – grades due to university