ENG 131.040 – Rhetoric and Composition

Instructor: Andrew Markus
Time: 12:30-1:45 T/TR
Room: Ferguson 184
Email: markusaj@jacks.sfasu.edu (I do not rely on D2L email and it is not an effective way to contact me. I read and respond to emails within the business week, M-F 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.)
Office: Ferguson 283 (in the aisle of offices)
Office Hours: 2:00-4:00 T/TR or by appointment via email

Required Texts
Lumberjacks Write (to be provided by the English Department)
All other course materials will be provided through D2L

Catalog 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 ENG 133H. Must earn a grade of C or higher to be admitted to ENG 132. Course fee $10. (ENGL 1301)
Prerequisite(s): acceptable THEA score or at least a C in IRW 099

Course 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.

Disclaimer
The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus, assignments, policies, and schedules described herein.

Course Description
Welcome to ENG 131! This class is designed to facilitate your development as writers in a professional and academic setting. Your skill as a reader, a writer, and a critic will be challenged to prepare you for the coursework you are likely to face in all your classes, regardless of
discipline. The goal is to help you understand how to communicate effectively with proper grammar, consideration for your audience, and a thorough understanding of the material you work with.

This is a writing intensive class. All the PowerPoints in the world do nothing if you don’t actively engage with the material and practice the skills. To this end, you will be doing a significant amount of writing in class. Some of this will be practicing the material you learn in your reading, and other in class writing will be you drafting your major assignments so that I can help you along with immediate assistance.

It’s important to remember that, while the particular skills may be new to you, you come equipped with much of what you need for success. Every time you dismiss a YouTube comment for being illogical or talk about why you enjoyed an episode of Game of Thrones you are critically engaging a text and evaluating it. The biggest issue some of you may face is the paralysis that comes with feeling overwhelmed. The answer is to write. It won’t come out perfect, but the act of revising and editing lets you improve the paper and your skills much more quickly than you’d expect.

**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.

**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).

**Grades**

- **A paper**: This paper meets all the requirements of the assignment, is professional and largely clear of grammatical errors. The organization is clear and logical, the thesis is apparent and reasonable, and the evidence supporting the claims is well chosen. This paper is smooth, engaging, and insightful about its subject.
- **B paper**: This paper meets all the requirements of the assignment, is fairly professional and is mostly clear of grammatical errors. This paper is not as sophisticated as an A paper but makes its point clearly and well with useful evidence.
- **C paper**: This paper is average. It demonstrates a clear attempt to complete the assignment and meets most of the requirements. The thesis is difficult to find or understand, but it is still there. The evidence relates to your claims but is not the best or is misused. There are unprofessional issues (like missing MLA or avoidable typos) and several grammatical issues.
- **D paper**: This paper fails to meet many of the requirements of the assignment, has poor organization, careless errors, and shows a lack of effort. The thesis is underdeveloped or absent, and the evidence is poor or irrelevant. It has glaring and recurrent grammatical errors.
- **F paper**: This paper does not follow the assignment guidelines, does not meet the word count, or is illegible. This paper may lack a thesis or make claims that it does not support with evidence. It is grammatically unsound.

**Assignments**

**Major Assignments**: There are four major assignments in this class, each with a rough draft and final draft. Each assignment is worth a total of 15% of your grade (5% from each rough draft and 10% from each final draft), meaning a total of 60% of your class grade is dependent on how you perform on these assignments.

- **Summary**: You will read a provided article and write a 1-2 page summary describing the thesis and main points of the piece. Remember that your summary should not have any of your opinion, and your analysis should always be supported by pulling quotes and evidence from the text.
- **Website Review**: The first assignment requires you to select a website you enjoy working with (with my approval) and conduct an in-depth review of how effectively it engages its audience. You will evaluate professionalism, organization, style, and credibility while citing specific examples to support your findings.
- **Annotated Bibliography**: The last half of the course emphasizes your ability to build an argument. This assignment will be the foundation for your last major assignment, so it is important to do your best now. You will annotate a set of 5 scholarly sources and find
one additional academic source related to the material. Each annotation should include a correct MLA citation, a summary of the source, an analysis of its credibility and potential use in your research paper, and 2 interesting, useful quotes.

- **Persuasive Essay**: This is the longest assignment of the class at 6-7 pages, but do not be daunted. You should be well versed in your subject by the time you start this, so now you need to take a stance on your issue and form a thesis asserting or cautioning against a course of action. Your essay will need you to address several key points supporting your stance, and each of these points must be supported by secondary sources (ideally the same sources you annotated but look for others when your sources aren’t helping you make your case). You should have at least on paragraph synthesizing the relationship and implications of your arguments, another paragraph addressing the counterargument (this means fairly portraying and then disagreeing with a different viewpoint, and, of course and intro and conclusion.

**Other Assignments**: This comprises the work we will be doing in and out of class to develop your writing skills, your involvement in the class, and your development of useful notes.

- **Final (5%)**: You will reflect on the impact of the reading and writing assignments in this class to both your world view and your approach to writing. I will elaborate further in class as finals approach.
- **Daily Work (10%)**: This can vary from class to class, but may include such things as class annotations, short writing assignments, group work, or online discussion posts.
- **Notes (15%)**: This is a writing and reading intensive class. To ensure you have familiarized yourself thoroughly with the reading materials assigned, you will be required to take thorough notes over the reading materials and submit them periodically for grading through D2L. I will accept pictures of handwritten notes, though the picture must be legible. We will discuss the degree of notetaking expected of you in class.
- **Participation (5%)**: You essentially start off with these points. Disruptions, noncompliance, and poor behavior deduct from this over time. Missing peer review workshops automatically deducts 20% of your participation grade (or 1% of your class grade) unless you have alerted me in advance (and only if the absence is excused).
- **Attendance (5%)**: Further described in the attendance section below.

**Attendance**

I fully recognize all students have a life beyond class. There are responsibilities, stressors, and events that will occupy your time, and, realistically, this class cannot always be your first priority. You have three excused absences for which there will be no penalty against you. On your fourth absence, you will be docked 1/3 of the 5% of your grade dependent on attendance (roughly 1.66%). You will be docked an additional 1/3 for each of the next two absences. If you miss a seventh class your will receive an automatic F for the course per university policy. If you are aware that you will need to miss class at some point, please let me know. University sponsored events that will require you to miss should be addressed with me well in advance. If there are complicated circumstances, it is in your interest to meet with me and discuss them so
we can devise a game plan. You are responsible for all work/notes you miss. I will not give a private lecture. In-class assignments cannot be made up. All major assignments are due on the assigned day regardless of your attendance unless we have made prior arrangements.

**Preparedness**
This is critical. We will be working on a lot of the material in class and you must be able to participate. This means reading and writing based on the major assignment. For those with computers, this may mean typing up your document in Word and reading articles online (meaning you must make sure you have **internet connection** and make sure **your computer is charged**). For those not relying on computers, you will need to bring pens/pencils, paper, and printed copies of articles or assignments to class. Additionally, keeping and referring to handouts will serve you well. Personally, I recommend keeping a binder with such materials, but your method of organization is up to you.

**Behavior**
More than any individual skill you might learn in this class, learning how to treat your peers with respect and successfully navigate the academic environment is a crucial development. I want to encourage you to befriend one another, share notes, proofread each other’s papers, and establish healthy, professional relationships with the people around you. This is especially useful when you need to speak with your professors or get help from them.

Every student should be comfortable speaking and expressing their ideas in the classroom setting. You do not have to agree with them, but you do have to treat them with respect.

**In-class Policies:**
- No phones out unless expressly permitted
- Food and drink are allowed so long as you are not noisy and do not make a mess
- Do not sleep in class
- Do not chat during lecture (that doesn’t mean don’t ask questions)
- Do not mock, bad mouth, provoke, or harass other students
- Do not belittle others because of different stances

This is just a general guideline for student behavior. You are adults. I know you know what is and isn’t appropriate for class. If you are disruptive, I will give you a warning, and if you continue, I will ask you to leave (which is an absence). Persistent disruption will be met with disciplinary action.

**Outside of Class:** Being rude doesn’t help you and doesn’t help me. I will treat you with courtesy and I expect the same. If you email me, please send a polite, formal email as described in this link: [https://medium.com/@lportwoodstacer/how-to-email-your-professor-without-beingannoying-af-cf64ae0e4087](https://medium.com/@lportwoodstacer/how-to-email-your-professor-without-beingannoying-af-cf64ae0e4087). Please be punctual to the agreed upon meeting time. Consider
how it reflects on you to submit work late, to turn in material you are aware is underdeveloped, or to deal discourteously with me or others. You will find your experience much more pleasant if you put your best foot forward. Also, make sure to spell names correctly. It’s an act of courtesy that will carry you far.

I check and respond to emails within the business week (Mon – Fri, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.), so I strongly advise emailing me any questions you have well in advance.

**Submission Policy**
Discussion posts, major assignments, and other graded works in a digital medium are due in D2L before class starts. 5% will be deducted if you turn it in later that day. If you submit it the next day, it becomes a 10% penalty and every additional day late adds another 10% penalty. This means if you turn a paper in 5 days late you will be starting with an automatic 50% penalty. Any work not submitted will receive an automatic 0% as its grade.

All submitted assignments:
- Should be in MLA format
- Submitted to the assigned D2L dropbox
- Should not be sent through email
- Should not be delivered in print
- Will be counted late if they are submitted anywhere but the assigned dropbox

All assignments should be in proper MLA format (12 pt. Times New Roman, double spaced lines, no extra spacing between lines, page numbers in top right-hand corner, the MLA header, a title, 1-inch margins, works cited if necessary) and should demonstrate care in producing them. This means being free of typos, poor organization, or anything that is blatantly incorrect when looking through it.

**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.

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism**
This class aims to prepare you for any future writing you might face. For this reason, plagiarism of any sort is a disservice to yourself. If you have concerns about an assignment, please come speak with me during office hours.
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. If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing in my class, my findings will be discussed with you to determine punishment, which might be giving you a failing grade.

To clarify, 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.

**Discrimination/Sexual Harassment**
At Stephen F. Austin State University, no faculty, staff, or student may discriminate against another on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability or disabled veteran status, and such acts will not be permitted in this class. For additional information, consult Human Resources for Policy E-46.

**Resources:**
- SFA Counseling Services
  Phone: (936) 468-2401, Email: counseling@sfasu.edu, SFACounselingClinic@sfasu.edu
- SFA Student Health Clinic
  Phone: (936) 468-4008 Email: healthservices@sfasu.edu
- Office of Violence Against Women Phone: (936) 468-2133
- Family Crisis Center of East Texas – Campus Office Phone: (936) 468-7233, (800) 828-7233 (24-hour crisis line)

**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/. Phone: (936) 468-3004, Hours: Mon – Fri, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

**Mental Health**

Taking care of your mental health is an important part of succeeding in college. Seriously, take the time to get some sleep, eat a nice meal, and take some personal time. Budget time for work and play, and when you are feeling overwhelmed you can talk to professionals on campus. The SFA Counseling Clinic is at your disposal and your tuition has already covered it. Phone: 936-468-2401, Location: Rusk Building 3rd Floor, Email: counseling@sfasu.edu Office Hours: M-F 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Appointments: http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/104.asp

**Learning Resources**

There are a variety of services available to students to make your work more navigable.

- **AARC**: The Academic Assistance and Research Center in the library provides tutoring in a wide variety of subjects, including English. They can help you work through issues in your paper and develop specific skills you need to hone. Please remember they are there to help you, not do your work for you. Treat them with respect.
  
  Phone: 936-468-4108, Location: Ralph W. Steen Library 1st Floor, Email: aarc@sfasu.edu

  They offer:
  
  - Walk in tutoring for students looking for quick help
  - Digital services through the Online Writing Lab (check D2L)
  - 1:1 Appointments (online and in-person)
    winfieldkl@sfasu.edu.
  - Grammar Guide:

- **OWL**: An extension of the AARC, the Online Writing Lab is designed to give you feedback on your papers. Many students find it highly advantageous to have another set of eyes on their paper. This has the added benefit of not requiring you to set up an appointment or travel from your residence.

- **Grammarly**: Though it is by no means infallible, Grammarly is sometimes helpful in spotting errors in our papers that we simply skip over. This also helps for things like sending emails, making thoughtful comments online, or any other digital writing.

- **Microsoft Word**: Make sure you pay attention when Word is underlining any of your writing. Use its feedback. It isn’t always right, but make sure before you ignore any suggestions.
Purdue Owl: It is impossible to overstress the usefulness of Purdue Owl. From figuring out what you need to do in a writing assignment, to MLA guidelines, to grammatical help, Purdue is a very useful tool to quickly search out a solution to your problems.

Schedule
STUDENTS: Your reading materials for the next class will be listed on the previous day’s D2L entry. You must complete all readings before the class where they will be discussed.

Please look ahead to the upcoming day and make sure you have all the materials you will need to participate in class (Pens, pencils, notebook paper). This means having printed copies of articles and materials we will be working on. Alternatively, you may use your laptop if you have one. For the Website Review, I recommend bringing printed screenshots if you will not be using a device to access your site in class.

Tentative Schedule

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Major Assignments</th>
<th>Class Work</th>
<th>Major Deadlines</th>
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<td>Aug 26, 2019 - Dec 13, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/27</td>
<td>SYLLABUS</td>
<td>Review of the syllabus, Navigating D2L</td>
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<td>8/29</td>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>Annotation &amp; Summary, Class Annotation, Introducing the Summary Assignment</td>
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<td>9/3</td>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>MLA Style &amp; Template, Class Article Summarizing, Summary Rough Drafting</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/5</td>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>Effective Writing Habits, Summary Rough Drafting</td>
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<td>9/10</td>
<td>SUMMARY, WEBSITE REVIEW</td>
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<td>Summary Rough Drafts</td>
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<td>9/12</td>
<td>SUMMARY, WEBSITE REVIEW</td>
<td>Summary Final Drafting</td>
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<td>9/17</td>
<td>SUMMARY, WEBSITE REVIEW</td>
<td>Constructing an Essay, Class Annotation of an Essay, Summary Final Drafting</td>
<td>Before Class: Website Selection Post</td>
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<td>9/19</td>
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<td>What to Look for in a Website, Website Review Drafting</td>
<td>Summary Final Drafts</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>WEBSITE REVIEW</td>
<td>How to Peer Review, Website Review Drafting</td>
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<td>9/26</td>
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<td>10/1</td>
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<td>Fallacies, Class Annotation of a Fallacious Article</td>
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<td>10/3</td>
<td>WEBSITE REVIEW</td>
<td>Removing Fallacies, Peer Review</td>
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<td>10/8</td>
<td>WEBSITE REVIEW</td>
<td>Website Review Final Drafting</td>
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<td>10/10</td>
<td>WEBSITE REVIEW</td>
<td>Getting in the Conversation, Website Review Final Drafting</td>
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<td>10/15</td>
<td>ANNOTATED BIB.</td>
<td>Introducing the Annotated Bibliography, Writing Useful Annotations, Annotated Bib. Rough Drafting</td>
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<td>10/17</td>
<td>ANNOTATED BIB.</td>
<td>Introducing MLA (Print), Class Citation Exercise, Annotated Bib. Rough Drafting</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/22</td>
<td>ANNOTATED BIB.</td>
<td>Continuing MLA (Digital), Class Citation Exercise, Annotated Bib. Rough Drafting</td>
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<td>10/24</td>
<td>ANNOTATED BIB.</td>
<td>Deciding Your Stance, In-text Citations, Peer Review</td>
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<td>10/29</td>
<td>ANNOTATED BIB.</td>
<td>Learning EBSCO, How to Find a Source</td>
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<td>10/31</td>
<td>ANNOTATED BIB.</td>
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<td>11/5</td>
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<td>Reviewing Researched Sources, Annotated Bib. Final Drafting</td>
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<td>11/7</td>
<td>PERSUASIVE</td>
<td>Introducing the Persuasive Essay, Developing a Thesis</td>
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<td>11/12</td>
<td>PERSUASIVE</td>
<td>Supporting the Thesis, Persuasive Essay Rough Drafting (Focusing on Introductions)</td>
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<td>11/14</td>
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<td>Incorporating Evidence, Quoting, Persuasive Essay Rough Drafting</td>
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<td>11/19</td>
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<td>Dealing with Counterclaims, Persuasive Essay Rough Drafting</td>
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<td>12/3</td>
<td>PERSUASIVE</td>
<td>Continue Drafting</td>
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<td>12/10</td>
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<td>12/12</td>
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