What We Will Be Doing:

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, which can include expressive, explicatory, analytical, and persuasive texts. Essay assignments address rhetorical analysis and critical responses to close textual readings as well as persuasive essays. Students in English 131 write a minimum of four formal essays (totaling at least 15 pages). ENG 131 is a requirement for all students who do not qualify for ENG 133H.

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.

Prerequisite: Pass or exemption from THEA or a C in IRW 099. Students must earn a grade of C or higher to be admitted to ENG 132.

What We Will Read – Bring the books/article printouts with which we are currently working to class EVERY time we meet!

1. Article selections – PDF copies will be distributed during the previous class. Any extra copies will be placed in the box by my office door. If you aren’t present when the readings are distributed in class, go and get a copy of the reading in the box by my office door at any time.


Other Necessary Resources: You need to have access to d2l.sfasu.edu in order to access course materials, submit assignments, and take reading quizzes. Please make sure to configure your d2l account as soon as possible. I will accept no excuses for missing assignments, etc. You also need to revise settings so that d2l emails you anytime I make an announcement.

Some of Our Goals:
General Education Core Curriculum Objectives

As part of the communication component area, in any given semester one or more of the following Core Curriculum Objectives for English 131 may be assessed:

1. Critical Thinking: creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.

2. Communication: effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.

3. Teamwork: the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.

4. Personal Responsibility: the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

English 131 Learning Outcomes

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

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 peers and selectively using peer feedback in their own work (Teamwork);

5. Demonstrate knowledge of organizational and linguistic structures – including grammar, punctuation, and spelling – through 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). The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six core learning objectives: 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.
Crucial Course Objective:

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics. I encourage your suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity in this course. This course meets the following standards for diversity content and instruction in the following way(s):

- Course content that includes readings and other materials that address various categories of social difference (gender, nationality, religion, ethnicity, race, age, sexuality, political affiliation, socio-economic status, ability, linguistic background, etc.) on the course topic.

- Tying current events and local histories centered on the production of social difference into classroom activities.

Course Policies:

1. **Communication with your professor:** If you send an email I will answer it that same day if the email was sent between 8am-3pm on weekdays. If your email was sent after those specified times, I will reply the next morning, or after the weekend – I do not check the work email over the weekend and will not respond to your email until Monday. Additionally, when you email follow proper email etiquette: Dear Dr. Lameborshi → body of email → Sincerely, Your name. **Note:** I will not reply to any questions the answer to which can be found by carefully reading the syllabus or the assignment prompts.

2. **Class Environment:** Be considerate and professional to your peers and your professor. Rude behavior in class is unacceptable, and I will ask you to leave class if you are impolite. Some examples of such behavior are: sleeping, private conversations that are distracting to the tasks in class, doing homework for other classes, texting, taking a phone call, reading websites or other irrelevant materials during class, showing up late. This is a professional environment and I expect all of you to behave professionally.

3. **Use of Electronics:** Silence your phones and put them away in your backpacks. Silence all other devices and put them away. Remove headphones, etc. while you are in the classroom. You can only take notes by hand – no note taking on computers or tablets allowed. The only exception to this rule is if Disability Services has indicated otherwise.

4. **Books and Class Materials:** You must bring to class your books every time. I will not loan my book to anyone who has come to class unprepared.

5. All Writing Projects **must be typed** and turned in on d2l on the due date and time. I will not accept hand-written projects. No make-up work is allowed on major assignments. All **Homework** must be typed and turned in on d2l on the due date and time. I will not accept hand-written homework. No make-up work is allowed on homework announced at the beginning of the
semester. **Late work** will not be accepted unless an exception is approved in advance.

6. **Peer Review**: You cannot participate in peer review unless you have a finished, **typed, and printed** draft that adheres to the length specified by your instructor. You may not participate if your draft is on your laptop or tablet. I will ask you to leave if you do not have a physical draft with which to work.

7. **Attendance** is required in this course. After three absences, your grade will be reduced by one complete percentage point for each class period you miss, **whether those are excused absences or not**. If you accumulate seven absences or more (excused or unexcused) you automatically fail the course.

8. I will only accept documented excuses for any in-class make-up work: family emergencies, university sanctioned events, and extreme medical issues (hospitalization); I need to be presented with documentation upon your first day of return to the classroom, or within a week of the absence. I will not accept late essay submissions, since those dates are announced at the beginning of the semester. It is in your best interest to plan ahead to turn in your major assignments on time.

9. An **excused absence** does not also excuse major essay deadlines, since these deadlines are given weeks in advance. You must turn in major assignments and homework on time regardless of the excuse, since these due dates are announced at the very beginning of the semester.

10. If you miss any in-class writing, you cannot make it up unless you have a documented excuse for your absence. You need to make this up on your own initiative upon your return to class. If more than a week has passed, then you can no longer make up this work.

11. **Tardiness**: If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you will automatically be counted absent. 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; otherwise you will be counted absent. 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 (peer testimony does not count). If you are consistently late to class, your participation grade will drop.

12. **Classroom Conduct**: If you are disrespectful, rude, or inconsiderate to me or anyone else in the class, you will be asked to leave for the day and you will be counted absent. If you continually disrupt class, you will be asked to leave and will be counted absent. **Use of laptops or tablets will not be allowed during class, unless I have otherwise specified.** Turn off your cellphones, take off headphones, and be respectful of everyone’s time.

13. **Plagiarism**, or turning in work that is not one’s own, runs counter to the most basic purposes and presumptions of higher education. The minimum penalty for plagiarism will be failure of the assignment. In repeated cases, the penalty is failure of the course and filing paperwork with the academic dean. See SFA policy regarding plagiarism.

14. All work needs to adhere to **MLA format** with appropriate documentation – The Little Seagull Handbook has MLA documentation guidelines.

15. You may not use essays or assignments you have previously written.
16. I will not accept emailed assignments.

17. All students will be graded on their ability to: 1. Achieve the goal of the specific assignment 2. Efficiently and effectively communicate through writing 3. Properly format the work and 4. Avoid stigmatized grammatical and syntactical errors. Each assignment will vary, but these four factors will always determine part, or all, of your grade.

18. I reserve the right to ask you to leave the classroom should you disregard any of these policies, or if I deem that you are being disrespectful to our safe and intellectual learning environment.

**How Your Grade Will Be Calculated:**

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<tr>
<td>Writing Project #1</td>
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<td>Writing Project #2</td>
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<td>Writing Project #3</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Class/Written Quizzes/Homework</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer Reviews</td>
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<td>Participation and Attendance</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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The grading standards presented here are general to all the assignments; however, more specific standards (of which you will be made aware) will be attached to each individual assignment.

**What is Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam;
- falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment; 
- helping or attempting to help other student(s) in an act of cheating or plagiarism.

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one’s own.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- submitting an assignment as one's own work when it is at least partly the work of another person;
- submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source;
- incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author credit.
Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy: 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. A withheld grade does not mean that the student will receive one-on-one distance instruction from the professor, but the student herself/himself is responsible for completing the work on his or her own initiative and effort.

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 the SFA website.

AARC: The Academic Assistance and Resource Center is an award-winning program that provides free peer tutoring for many entry-level courses. The AARC transforms the way students learn through online resources, on-call tutoring at walk-in tables, 1:1 appointments, online writing lab, and student instructor reviews and learning teams both led by students who have successfully completed the course.

Hours of Operation:
  • 1:1 appointments: Sign up during the AARC’s open enrollment periods. (September 18 & 19)
  • Ask a Tutor / Zoom: An AARC tutor is available to chat through a Zoom online meeting room from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday. Visit the Online Resources page for more information.
  • Walk-In Tables: Available 3 to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, writing walk-in tables are an "open lab" format. AARC laptops may be checked out or bring your own.

Discrimination/Harassment Policy: No one will be discriminated against or harassed on the basis of gender, age, size, ethnicity/race, religion, disability, or any other categories. If discrimination/harassment takes place (either reported or observed) involved students will be required to conference with me prior to returning to class. More information on this topic can be found here on the SFA website.

Counseling Services: Counseling is a free service for all students at SFA. Mental health and safety is crucial to everyone’s well-being and success, and if you are having issues with stress, anxiety, panic, lack of focus, or any other issues due to life events, etc., please do not hesitate to contact the counseling office. Below you will find all the pertinent information on where the
office is located, how, and when to contact them:

Location: 3rd floor of the Rusk Building
Phone: 936-468-2401
counseling@sfasu.edu
Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 am-5:00 pm

**MySFA:** Per SFASU policy your SFASU-assigned e-mail address is considered an official method of communication from faculty to students. Thus, it is your responsibility to check, on a regular and frequent basis, for any e-mail messages that I may have need to send regarding this course. Such messages may direct you to the mySFA/Blackboard area of this course for additional materials or instructions. Often, I will post schedule updates or announcements on d2l.sfasu.edu as well. Make sure you check frequently.

**Tentative Calendar** – Subject to change at instructor’s discretion

Monday, August 26: Introduction to the course and syllabus.
Wednesday, August 28: Introduction to Rhetoric; Introduction to Writing Project #1
   **Homework:** Christopher Hitchens’ “Topic of Cancer”
Friday, August 30: Discuss reading.
   **Homework:** Richard Selzer’s “The Masked Marvel’s Last Toehold”

Monday, September 2: Discuss reading; Discuss narrative; brainstorm for WP #1
   **Homework:** Martha Mendoza’s “Between a Woman and Her Doctor”
Wednesday, September 4: Discuss Reading.
   **Homework:** Stephen Jay Gould’s “The Terrifying Normalcy of AIDS”
Friday, September 6: Discuss reading

Monday, September 9:
   **Homework:** Prepare, print, and bring to class your 3 full-page draft for peer review.
Wednesday, September 11: **Peer Review #1**: Bring to class a printed, 3 full page paper; If you don’t have your project printed, and if you don’t have 3 FULL pages, you will not participate in this graded activity.
Friday, September 13: Essay Revision Workshop – Meet at library, room 107 AA

Monday, September 16: Discuss development of narrative analysis. Final revisions.
Wednesday, September 18: **Writing Project #1 Due!** Submit on D2L by 11:30 pm.
Friday, September 20: Discuss Writing Project #2

Monday, September 23:
Wednesday, September 25: **Class Cancelled:** Dr. Lameborshi is attending/presenting at the 25th Associazione Italiana di Studi Nord Americani (Italian Association for North American Studies, AISNA) Biennial Conference.
Friday, September 27: **Class Cancelled:** Dr. Lameborshi is attending/presenting at the 25th Associazione Italiana di Studi Nord Americani (Italian Association for North American Studies, AISNA) Biennial Conference.
Monday, September 30: **Class Cancelled:** Dr. Lameborshi is attending/presenting at the 25th Associazione Italiana di Studi Nord Americani (Italian Association for North American Studies, AISNA) Biennial Conference

**Homework:** Read Chief Seattle’s “Letter to President Pierce, 1855”; Barry Lopez’s “Children in the Woods”

Wednesday, October 2: Discuss Reading.

**Homework:** Joy Horowitz’s “Parkinson’s Alley”

Friday, October 4: Discuss reading.

**Homework:** Bill McKibben’s “The Environmental Issue from Hell”

Monday, October 7: Discuss reading.

**Homework:** Rachel Carson’s “The Obligation to Endure”

Wednesday, October 9: Discuss reading.

**Homework:** Jared Diamond’s “The Last Americans: Environmental Collapse and the End of Civilization”

Friday, October 11: Discuss reading.

**Homework:** Prepare, print, and bring to class your 3 full page draft for peer review.

Monday, October 14: **Peer Review #2:** Bring to class a printed, 3 full page paper; If you don’t have your project printed, and if you don’t have 3 FULL pages, you will not participate in this graded activity.

Wednesday, October 16: Essay Revision Workshop – Meet at library, room 107 AA

Friday, October 18: Finalize essay draft.

Monday, October 21: **Writing Project #2 Due!** Submit on D2L by 11:30 pm.

**Homework:** Read Charles Darwin’s “Natural Selection”

Wednesday, October 23: Discuss Reading. Discuss Writing Project #3.

**Homework:** Read Verlyn Klinkenborg’s “Darwin at 200: the Ongoing Force of His Unconventional Idea”

Friday, October 25: Discuss reading.

**Homework:** read Diane Ackerman’s “Planets in the Sky with Diamonds”

Monday, October 28: Discuss Reading

**Homework:** David Sedaris’ “Nutcacker.com”

Wednesday, October 30: Discuss Reading

**Homework:** Read Sherry Turkle’s “How Computers Change the Way We Think”

Friday, November 1: **Discuss Reading**

**Homework:** Carl Sagan’s “Can We Know the Universe? Reflections on a Grain of Sand”

Monday, November 4: Discuss Reading

**Homework:** Oliver Sacks’ “Anybody Out There?”

Wednesday, November 6: Discuss reading.

Friday, November 8: Meet at library for research.
Monday, November 11: Work on Essay outline.
Wednesday, November 13: Work on Essay introductions.

**Homework:** Prepare, print, and bring to class your 6-8 full page draft for peer review.
Friday, November 15: **Peer Review #3:** Bring to class a printed, 6-8 full page paper; If you don’t have your project printed, and if you don’t have 3 FULL pages, you will not participate in this graded activity

Monday, November 18: Essay Revision Workshop – Meet at library, room 107 AA
Wednesday, November 20: Essay Revision Workshop – Meet at library, room 107 AA
Friday, November 22: Discuss conclusions.

Monday, November 25: Thanksgiving Break.
Wednesday, November 27: Thanksgiving Break.
Friday, November 29: Thanksgiving Break.

Monday, December 2: Reverse outline.
Wednesday, December 4: Essay Revision Workshop – Meet at library, room 107 AA
Friday, December 6: **Writing Project #3 Due!** Submit on D2L by 11:30 pm.

December 9: Final Examination, 8:00-10:30 am