ENGLISH 131: RHETORIC & COMPOSITION

INSTRUCTOR: MRS. KAREN PERKINS

SPRING 2019 COURSE DESCRIPTION
ENGLISH 131.014 Meets 9 am M-W-F in Ferguson 381

To speak, read, write, interpret nonverbal cues, and respond to others requires a complex range of knowledge, skills, and strategies. Communication occurs continuously, and we often participate without thinking about the complex processes required. In this fundamental course, we will analyze (or break apart) communication, learning how “the wide array of communicative devices humans have at their disposal” (Nicotra 2) creates effects.

English 131 includes 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, 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
Instructor: Karen Perkins
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I am available to students in my office on Wednesdays, 10 am – 12:30 pm, 3 pm – 5:30 pm & other days and hours by appointment.

Rhetoric refers to the wide array of communicative devices humans have at their disposal to create effects on each other

Materials and Texts

We will use a required combination of loose-leaf printed text Becoming Rhetorical by Jodie Nicotra with digital study tools via MindTap. The least expensive version is Loose-leaf Bundle + 1 Term (6 mo.) MindTap Printed Access Card, available through the bookstore or directly from Cengage.

ISBN-9781337758871

Lumberjacks Write, provided by the University at no additional charge, is also required.

Course content will be accessed via D2L Brightspace, the school’s learning platform. Other tools, texts, and handouts as provided by instructor will be utilized, and students need pen, paper and computer access daily.
Student Learning Outcomes for English 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).

General Education Core Curriculum

ENG 131 is part of Stephen F. Austin State University’s core curriculum. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified objectives for all core courses: Critical Thinking 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 objectives.

This is a general education, core-curriculum course.

Program-specific learning outcomes for the English major are not addressed in the course.

Commitment

It is your personal responsibility to attend class and complete assigned tasks during and between classes. This course requires a focused time commitment: two or three times the number of credit hours (3 credits x 2 or 3 = 6-9 hours) immersed in learning activities. Successful completion requires access to the course text and digital learning materials in Brightspace D2L and MindTap, as well as the development of disciplined study skills. I will not lecture on material in the text, so students MUST read the text outside of class time. Failure to do so generally results in failure of the course.
GRADING: PROCESS VS. PRODUCT

Your grade in this class depends not on my subjective analysis of writing quality, but instead on quantitative assessment of your immersion in the subject matter (demonstrated by time spent online and cogent participation in class), attention to assignment specifications, and timely completion of assigned tasks. Because we are studying the rhetorical process, I assign process more value than product in my grading—although you cannot pass the course without composing products. The final exam will be the composition of a persuasive, tri-fold brochure.

Grade Calculations

- Class attendance and activities: 30%
- Homework from Cengage MindTap via Brightspace D2L: 30%
- Four original compositions, averaged: 25%
- Open-book content quizzes: 10%
- Final exam – Tri-fold brochure: 5%

Course Requirements

- Each class meeting I will take attendance (number present/number of class meetings expressed as a percentage). I will also note your engagement and participation during class activities and may request items generated by various activities in and outside of class (number of items presented that match specifications/number of items requested expressed as a percentage). These figures together represent 30 percent of the final grade.

- We will also have homework activities such as reading, watching, and listening; practice exercises; writing assignments; quizzes; and culmination tasks to review and reflect. Averaged grades for the homework series make 30 percent of the final grade.

- The four averaged original composition grades represent 25 percent of your final grade. These assignments are as follows: Essay #1, Rhetorical Analysis of Self-Presentation Choices; Essay #2, Visual Text Comparison of Texts with Similar Purposes but Different Formats; Essay #3, Academic Summary Essay; Essay #4, Rhetorical Analysis of a Multi-modal Video.

  - Open-book exams will test concepts and vocabulary fundamentals from the text Becoming Rhetorical and, averaged, accounts for 10 percent of your final grade. The final exam, a persuasive, tri-fold brochure will count for 5 percent of the final grade.

Attendance

Do not miss more than two (2) classes. If you plan to miss class for University-approved purposes, inform me in writing beforehand. Contact me in writing after an absence due to emergency or unexpected event. Absences are unexcused until the instructor receives written documentation of treatment of illness, religious observation, family emergency, and/or participation in certain SFASU-sponsored events. You are responsible for homework on D2L, however graded in-class activities cannot be made up without prior arrangement. Communication matters. Tardies may accrue to become absences (3 tardy = 1 absence). Any student who is unprepared for in-class activities, does not participate, and/or ignores guidelines may be asked to leave and counted absent for that day. More than six unexcused absences may constitute failure in the course.
UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity

Adhering to academic integrity standards at all times by producing your own work and successfully attributing others' ideas to them is a necessary aspect of university communication. 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) falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assignment; 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 include, but are not limited to: (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 the Internet or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author due credit.

Any appeals on academic integrity cases must be made within thirty days after the first class day of the next long semester. Students should appeal to the instructor first then to the chair if the situation is not resolved. Further appeals can be made to the dean and provost if necessary.

Please read the complete policies at:
http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp and
http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-appeals-by-students.pdf
Withheld Grades (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.

Accessibility and Accommodation

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 your instructors and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations, and no accommodations can be made except through the ODS. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservice](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservice).

The Academic Assistance and Resource Center (AARC)

The **AARC** offers free writing tutoring, which is available on a walk-in and appointment basis. They also offer online writing tutoring services and workshops about writing-related topics. For more information, go to [http://library.sfasu.edu/aarc/](http://library.sfasu.edu/aarc/), visit them on the first floor of the Steen Library, or call them at 936-468-4108.