ENGLISH 131: Rhetoric & Composition – Spring 2019

Instructor: Ms. Jerri Bourrous  
Office: FERG 178  
ENG 131.002  
Office hours: 11:00-12:00 TR  
Ferguson 181 MW @ 2:30  
12:30-2:00 MW  
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COURSE 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 to 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 OUTCOMES
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.

ENGLISH PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES
This is a general education core curriculum course and no specific program learning outcomes for this major are addressed in the course.

ENGLISH 131 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, 6th edition, edited by Courtney Adams Wooten (will be provided).

GRADES AND EVALUATION

Assignments – each assignment is due at the beginning of class. You must turn in a hard copy at the beginning of class AND submit all major essays online to D2L. Your assignments will not be graded until it is turned in both places. There will be a separate Dropbox folder in D2L for each major essay assignment. Instructions will be given for the process if needed and not knowing how to submit to D2L Dropbox WILL NOT serve as an acceptable excuse for not turning in these assignments.

Personal Narrative essay – this will be a creative, nontypical essay. You will choose 8-10 songs that have specific meaning to you or express a part of yourself so that I may learn more about you. You can make a playlist on Spotify or YouTube, as long as it is shareable so that I can find them without having to look up each song when I’m reading your work. For each song, you will include a paragraph, 100-150 words, that explains why you chose the song you did. Although the assignment is slightly informal, please use professional language. More details and my expectations for the assignment will be made available separately at a later date. Due date: Wednesday, February 6.

Literary Analysis essay – this essay will focus on Bird Box. You will write an analysis, or explication, of the novel as a standalone or in junction with the film, which we will watch in class. The purpose of this essay is for you to be able to read a text closely, derive meaning from it, and be able to express your thoughts and ideas in an eloquent manner. This essay will be 1200-1500 words in length. More details and my expectations for the assignment will be made available separately at a later date. Wednesday, March 6.

Rhetorical Analysis essay – the purpose of this essay, like the literary analysis essay, is for you to be able to read and explicate a text while being able to recognize and use the rhetorical process. This essay will be 1300-1500 words in length. More details and my
expectations for the assignment will be made available separately at a later date. **Due date: Monday, April 8.**

**Persuasive essay** – choose any topic you’d like and craft an argument. The purpose of this is for you to be able to build a strong argument using the skills you have acquired over the course of the semester in order to persuade your target audience. You will be required to use secondary sources for this essay and it will be 1500-1800 words in length. More details and my expectations for the assignment will be made available separately at a later date. **Due date: Wednesday, May 8.**

**Peer Reviews** – Peer review is an important asset that should be taken advantage of in this course. There will be two peer review days, listed on the course calendar, that are **mandatory.** Although peer reviews count only as a daily grade, you will receive a zero if you fail to participate or turn in your comments.

**Conferences** – Students will meet with me for at least one **mandatory** conference that will take place near the end of the semester. If you fail to appear for your conference, you will be counted absent. Details will be provided as the dates approach.

**Quizzes** – You will sometimes receive quizzes over assigned readings and class discussions. At the end of the semester, your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

**Final Exam** – Using the skills you’ve acquired over the course of the semester, you will write an essay during the scheduled final exam period. Details and materials will be discussed as the date approaches.

**Extra Credit** – A substantial visit to the AARC will award you five extra points to one major essay grade. Utilization of the resources available to you are an important part of your education. Throughout the semester, there will be other opportunities to gain extra credit.

**Breakdown of Grades:**
- Attendance – 5%
- Quizzes – 5%
- Daily Work – 5%
- Personal Narrative – 10%
- Literary Analysis – 15%
- Rhetorical Analysis – 20%
- Persuasive Essay – 25%
- Final Exam – 15%

**ALL ASSIGNMENTS** must adhere to MLA guidelines, meaning 1-inch margins on all sides, appropriate headers, double-spaced, written in 12-point Times New Roman, with Works Cited (if required) attached. Each assignment must meet the assignment requirements for page length and source requirement. Failing to do so will result in a **SIGNIFICANT** drop in your grade. Individual assignment sheets will be provided with further details.
According to university policy, your final grade for the course will consist of a letter grade only. Here is a general description of each letter grade:

**A** – Student meets and exceeds the expectations for the assignment. Writing demonstrates an understanding of all the key concepts needed to effectively complete the essay. Few, if any, grammatical and/or syntactical errors.

**B** – Student meets the expectations for the assignment. Writing demonstrates an understanding of most of the key concepts needed to effectively complete the essay. Few grammatical and/or syntactical errors.

**C** – Student meets the expectations for the assignment. Writing demonstrates a basic understanding of some of the key concepts needed to effectively complete the essay. Several grammatical and/or syntactical errors.

**D** – Student does not meet at least one expectation for the assignment. Writing demonstrates little understanding of the key concepts needed to effectively complete the essay. Many grammatical and/or syntactical errors.

**F** – Student does not meet most or all expectations for the assignment. Writing demonstrates little to no understanding of most of the key concepts needed to effectively complete the essay. Pages are missing or plagiarism may have occurred. Writing is incomprehensible with many grammatical and/or syntactical errors.

Grade evaluation may be discussed 48 hours after essays have been returned. I will not discuss it with you until the two-day window has passed.

**ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is mandatory. In order to be successful, you will need to attend class regularly, arrive prepared and on time, and stay for the duration. Three (3) tardies will count as one absence. You will not be counted tardy until after I have checked attendance. Sleeping in class is unacceptable. If caught sleeping, you will receive one warning; afterward, you will be counted absent. You are allowed five (5) excused and/or unexcused absences before your grade is affected. After the sixth absence, you will be docked one final letter grade. Students with more than seven (7) absences, whether excused or unexcused, who fail to drop the course will receive a final grade of F. Excused absences include family emergencies, university sanctioned events, and extreme medical emergencies, such as hospitalization. All excused absences must have proper documentation (e-mails do not count). Missing class for any reason will not excuse you from homework and/or major assignment deadlines. You must return to class prepared for that day’s discussion. Please keep track of your tardies and absences.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Late work is accepted only for major essay assignments and only when documentation has been provided. One letter grade will be docked for each day the assignment is late.
University policy excuses students for serious personal illness requiring hospitalization and family emergencies such as a death in the immediate family. You will be responsible for providing satisfactory documentation for such situations. Extensions for major assignments will be left to my discretion, but you must see me prior to the due date with proper documentation.

**USING AN OOPS** – For one assignment only, daily or major, you will be allowed a one-week extension with no penalty. In order to take advantage of this, write OOPS! at the top of the assignment when it is turned in.

**WITHHELD GRADES – SEMESTER 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.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**
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.

**ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR**
A recent policy from the Provost’s Office states, “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 (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). 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.”

**Individual classroom policies:**

- **Electronics are permitted in class as long as they do not become a problem.** If you are using it excessively, disrupting the class, or causing a distraction to any of your fellow classmates, I will ask you to put it away. Laptops should be used only for class purposes. Do not use social media in the classroom. Earbuds/headphones are not allowed. If you need to answer an emergency phone call, please step out of the classroom so as not to disturb or disrespect your classmates. If you are expecting an important phone call or if there is an extenuating circumstance, such as sick children, and need to leave your phone on your desk, please speak with me before class.
- **Do not bring noisy or smelly snacks to class.** Please be mindful and respectful to your fellow classmates. You may bring drinks to class, but keep in mind that you will have to clean it up if you spill it. Be sure to bring drinks with some sort of lid on the cup or bottle.
- **Please don't interrupt me or your classmates.** It is rude to do so. If you'd like to add to the conversation, please raise your hand.
- **Sleeping, daydreaming, doing homework for another class, talking to classmates about something unrelated to the classroom conversation, and not paying attention are not allowed.** I will warn you once, but afterward you will be marked tardy without any notice.
- **If you need to contact me by e-mail, please put ENG 131 and your section number in the subject line.** I **DO NOT** accept assignments by e-mail unless I specifically give you permission to do so. Please be professional. I will not respond to e-mails that are written poorly and/or written disrespectfully. **DO NOT** e-mail me through D2L because I may not check it.

**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.
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/.

AARC
Writing tutors are available in the Academic Assistance and Research Center on the first floor of the library. Drop-in tutoring is offered as well. You can also make an appt. by calling 468-4108. To schedule a weekly appointment, visit sfasu.edu/aarc and sign up ASAP.
**COURSE SCHEDULE**
This schedule is tentative and I reserve the right to change it at any time. Any changes will be posted to D2L.

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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| **Wednesday, January 23** | Introduction to class and syllabus  
HW: Post on D2L discussion board “Introductions” |
| **Monday, January 28** | Personal narrative essay assignment  
Grammar review  
Thesis statements/crafting  
HW: Read handout for quiz |
| **Wednesday, January 30** | Quiz over grammar and thesis statements  
Introductions and conclusions  
HW: Work on personal narrative |
| **Monday, February 4** | Scholarly vs. credible sources  
Summary vs. analysis  
HW: Finish personal narrative |
| **Wednesday, February 6** | **Personal narrative due**  
Literary analysis assignment  
Introduction to *Bird Box*  
HW: Read chapters 1-12 of *Bird Box* |
| **Monday, February 11** | Group discussions  
HW: Read chapters 13-23 of *Bird Box* |
| **Wednesday, February 13** | Group discussions  
HW: Read chapters 24-35 of *Bird Box* |
| **Monday, February 18** | Group discussions  
Literary analysis/devices  
HW: Read chapters 36-42 of *Bird Box* |
| **Wednesday, February 20** | Quiz over literary devices  
Group discussions  
Begin watching *Bird Box*  
HW: Finish *Bird Box* |
| **Monday, February 25** | Quiz  
Finish watching *Bird Box*  
HW: Post on D2L discussion board your rough thesis statement |
| **Wednesday, February 27** | Meet in library for research lesson  
HW: Find at least two scholarly sources for next class |
| **Monday, March 4** | Quiz over library information  
Citation information/practice  
HW: Work on essay |
| **Wednesday, March 6** | **Literary analysis due**  
Rhetorical analysis assignment  
What is rhetoric?  
HW: Read handout |
<p>| <strong>Monday</strong> | Quiz on rhetoric |</p>
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| March 11             | Sign up for presentations  
|                      | Song comparisons  
|                      | HW: Finish in-class writing assignment                                    |
| Wednesday, March 13  | Meet in library lab  
|                      | HW: Work on essays/presentations                                           |
| Monday, March 18     | Spring break                                                            |
| Wednesday, March 20  | Spring break                                                            |
| Monday, March 25     | Conferences                                                             |
| Wednesday, March 27  | Conferences                                                             |
| Monday, April 1      | Presentations                                                           |
| Wednesday, April 3   | Presentations                                                           |
| Monday, April 8      | Meet in library lab  
|                      | HW: Finish rhetorical analysis                                             |
| Wednesday, April 10  | **Rhetorical analysis due**  
|                      | Persuasive essay assignment  
|                      | Choose partners/topic  
|                      | HW: Meet with partner                                                     |
| Monday, April 15     | Good debate techniques  
|                      | How to persuade                                                         |
|                      | HW: Work on essay                                                       |
| Wednesday, April 17  | Meet in library for writing/research                                      |
| Monday, April 22     | Meet in library for writing/research                                      |
| Wednesday, April 24  | Peer review/practice debates  
|                      | HW: Write small review of peer debates                                    |
| Monday, April 29     | In-class prep with partner                                               |
| Wednesday, May 1     | Debates                                                                  |
| Monday, May 6        | Debates                                                                  |
| Wednesday, May 8     | **Persuasive essay due**  
|                      | Discuss final                                                           |
| May 13-17            | Final Exams (time & date TBD)                                             |