Syllabus for English 132: Research and Argument

Section 027  Instructor: Billy Longino
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Ferguson 292  Office: LAN 258
Tues., Thurs., 9:30 -10:45  Office Hours: 12:00 – 2:00

Course Description
Continued study and application of the writing process and the skills of writing with a focus on the forms of argumentative writing and on research methods, such as gathering, evaluating, summarizing, synthesizing, and citing source information.

Prerequisite: C in English 131. Must earn a C or higher to be admitted to any English 200-level course.

In English 132, you will further develop skills learned English 131, such as drafting, revising, editing, research, and critical thinking, and apply these skills by examining multiple sources and synthesizing the ideas in these sources while also conducting your own research on specialized topics. English 132 emphasizes the development of the ability to critically analyze multiple sources and synthesizing this information into your own novel theses and arguments. In this course, you will complete two synthesis essays (a comparative and an argumentative), a research proposal, an annotated bibliography, and an argumentative research essay.

Required Texts
They Say / I Say by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein
Perfect English Grammar by Grant Barrett
Guards! Guards! by Terry Pratchett

Additional materials will be provided in pdf format and links to free web content through the class D2L site.

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.

English 132 Learning Outcomes
At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Locate, evaluate, and employ a variety of sources, accurately and ethically, in a multi-step, persuasive essay (Critical Thinking);
- Appraise and utilize a variety of standardized genre, discipline, medium, and occasion situation-specific
conventions (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).

Assignments

I have assigned the following assignment points to indicate their weight upon the final grade for this course so that they result in a total of 100 possible points for the course.

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**Quizzes (10 points)**

You will be given 10 quizzes over the course of the semester to assess your knowledge of grammatical rules and from readings. Each quiz will be worth 1/10th of the total points for this assignment. Unless you notify me of an absence prior to the day a quiz is to be taken or have a documented, university-approved absence, you will not be able to make up missed quizzes. Grammar quizzes are scheduled over the course of the semester while reading quizzes are treated as “pop quizzes” that could be given at any point an reading has been assigned.

**Comparative Synthesis (20 points)**

You will write a 6-page essay that synthesizes Terry Pratchett’s *Guards! Guards!* with excerpts from *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* by Joseph Campbell to discuss Pratchett’s modern application and subversion of the journey of the mythological “hero” found across cultures and history throughout the world.

**Argumentative Synthesis (20 points)**

In this 6-page essay, you will discuss the adaptation of the *Texas Monthly* article “Midnight in the Garden of East Texas” by Skip Hollandsworth in the film *Bernie*, directed by Richard Linklater. Your focus will be on
synthesizing original reporting, the film, and additional documentation discovered through independent research you will conduct.

**Research Proposal (10 points)**
Within this 750-word document, you will propose a topic to research for your annotated bibliography and final research/argument essay. As the topic you choose is subject to my approval, your goal in this document is to provide an overview of the topic and its importance.

**Annotated Bibliography (10 points)**
In your research on the topic approved in the research proposal, you will collect 8 sources, cite them according to MLA guidelines, and annotate the citations to provide information on how the source is relevant and useful in your research/argument essay.

**Research/Argument Essay (20 points)**
You will create an original argument based upon your independent research that presents a course of action that should be taken regarding the subject approved in your research proposal.

**Guidelines for Written Assignments**
The following guidelines must be met in all written work you turn in for this course without exception. Not following all the guidelines in each assignment will result in an automatic failing grade for the assignment. All essays must:

- Be written in essay form;
- Meet the required page length;
- Be typed in Times New Roman, double-spaced 12-point font with 1-inch margins and no extra spaces following paragraphs;
- Have appropriate and complete headings and page numbers;
- Have an *original* title that informs the reader as to the content of the essay;
- Be submitted online through Dropbox on D2L by the due date;
- Be printed, stapled, and turned at the beginning of class on the due date;
- Properly cite all sources.

**Revisions**
You can revise either the comparative synthesis essay or the argumentative synthesis essay but not both. You will not be able to revise the research/argument essay or annotated bibliography; however, revision is built into the research proposal assignment and works according to rules other than those discussed here. To revise an assignment, the essay must have received a grade of C or lower, and essays which contained evidence of plagiarism cannot be
revised. A revised essay may be awarded points to raise its grade by one letter, but only if it meets the following requirements:

- You must meet with me during office hours within one week of receiving your essay grade to request a revision for the assignment;
- All grammatical errors must be corrected, not only those I have indicated in my feedback;
- You must include a one-page summary of the changes you have made to the essay that includes an explanation of the mistakes in the original and how they were corrected in the revision;
- You must bring a draft of the revised essay to me before turning it in so that I may review it and discuss any further issues with you; I may require you to meet with multiple times during this process;
- Once final approval is received, you may upload the revised essay to D2L.

I will grade revised essays at the end of the semester.

**Attendance & Punctuality**

Attendance and prompt arrivals are required for this course. You are allowed three absences over the course of semester without penalty. After three absences, I will deduct points from your final grade according to the number of absences you’ve accumulated. Between four and six absences will result in a reduction of 5 points from your final grade while seven to nine absences will result in a reduction of 10 points. If you accumulate more than nine absences, you will fail the course.

If you have a documented excuse for an absence, I may disregard the absence from the total; however, other than absences for University-approved events, it is my discretion whether to "excuse" the absence or not.

Additionally, if you consistently arrive more than five minutes late to class or persistently arrive after the schedule start time for the class, the late arrivals will begin to count as absences for the class. You will be issued a verbal warning or one through email before this occurs.

**Late Work**

Unless you have a valid, university-approved excuse for an absence or have notified me at least two days prior, you will not be able to make up daily assignments due in class the day of your absence. Additionally, I will not review information with you, individually, unless you have provided a valid excuse and/or notified me beforehand.

If you are unable to turn in a major assignment, such as an essay, on the due date, you must notify at least two days before it is due to receive an extension. It is my discretion whether to allow extensions; otherwise, if you are aware you will be absent the day an assignment is due, you should turn in the assignment earlier. Major assignments will be accepted up to a week following the due date, after which they will receive a zero; however, for each day the assignment is late, it will receive a 10% reduction in points.
Grades

I will award points to each assignment according to its quality and how well it met the requirements of the prompt and/or rubric. From these points, I will calculate letter grades; some assignments will be worth 1 point, others 10 points or 20 points. Final grades for the course will consist of a letter grade calculated according to the total number of points awarded out of the available total of 100. A general description of my grading standards for written assignments follows; however, individual assignments will include more specific requirements:

A: The assignment met all requirements, did not contain systemic grammar or mechanical errors, and went beyond my expectations in terms of quality of style, originality of content, and comprehension of material.

B: The assignment met all requirements, did not contain systemic grammar or mechanical errors, and went beyond my expectations in terms of quality of style, originality of content, or comprehension of material.

C: The assignment met all requirements and did not contain systemic grammar or mechanical errors.

D: The assignment did not meet all requirements or contained systemic grammar or mechanical errors.

F: The assignment did not meet all requirements and contained systemic grammar and mechanical errors. The work, also, may have been incomplete.

Withheld Grades

“At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, 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, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.”

(http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/5.5_course-grades.pdf)

Academic Dishonesty (Plagiarism)

All work you complete in this course must be original and written specifically for this course. Any plagiarism of the work others, or auto-plagiarism (plagiarism of work you have written for other purposes), will result in a failure for the assignment. Remember that plagiarism is not simply the theft of others’ words but also their ideas. Please refer
Students with Disabilities
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, you must contact Disability Services as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, Disability Services will notify me 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/)

Course Calendar
The following schedule is tentative and subject to change at any time. No due dates for major assignments will be moved to an earlier date. I will attempt to keep changes to a minimum, but circumstances change often. Check the course D2L page often to check for notification of changes to the calendar.

Tuesday, Jan 22 – Class introduction.
    Homework: Read “This is Water” by David Foster Wallace and “Shitty First Drafts” by Anne Lamott.

Thursday, Jan 24 – Discussion of reading
    Homework: Read chapter 1 from They Say/I Say: “They Say: Starting with What Others Are Saying”

Tuesday, Jan 29 – Objectivity vs. Subjectivity lecture.

Thursday, Jan 31 – Discussion of reading and in-class summary exercise.
    Homework: Read “Midnight in the Garden of East Texas” by Skip Hollandsworth, chapter 3 of They Say/I Say: “As He Himself Puts It: The Art of Quoting,” and write 2-page summary of Hollandsworth’s article using quotes.

Tuesday, Feb 5 – Discussion of reading and essay 1 prompt.
    Homework: Read chapter 3 of Perfect English Grammar: “Parts of Speech Defined and Watch the film Bernie directed by Richard Linklater

Thursday, Feb 7 – Grammar Quiz 1. Discussion of film.
    Homework: Read chapter 8 from They Say/I Say: “As a Result: Connecting the Parts” and chapter 9 from They Say/I Say: “You Mean I Can Just Say It that Way?: Academic Writing Doesn’t Mean Setting Aside Your Own Voice.”

Tuesday, Feb 12 – Synthesis construction exercise.
    Homework: Read chapter 5 of Perfect English Grammar: “Sentence Structure.”
Thursday, Feb 14 – Grammar Quiz 2. Continue synthesis construction.

*Homework:* Complete rough drafts of Essay 1

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Tuesday, Feb 19 – Grammar lecture. Rough drafts due.

*Homework:* Revise essays and read chapter 6 of *Perfect English Grammar*: “Verbs”


*Homework:* Read “A Practical Guide [to the Hero’s Journey]” by Christopher Volger.

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Tuesday, Feb 26 – Discussion of the Hero’s Journey.


Thursday, Feb 28 – Discussion of readings.

*Homework:* Read “3. The Hero as Warrior,” “4. The Hero as Lover,” “5. The Hero as Emperor and as Tyrant,” and “6. The Hero as World Redeemer” by Joseph Campbell.

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Tuesday, March 5 – Discussion of readings.


Thursday, March 7 – Discussion of readings.

*Homework:* Begin reading *Guards! Guards!* by Terry Pratchett and read chapter 4 from *They Say/I Say*: “Yes/No/Okay, But: Three Ways to Respond.”

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Tuesday, March 12 – Discussion of reading.

*Homework:* Continue reading *Guards! Guards!* by Terry Pratchett

Thursday, March 14 – Discussion of reading.

*Homework:* Complete reading *Guards! Guards!* by Terry Pratchett.

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Spring Break - Complete reading of *Guards! Guards!* by Terry Pratchett.

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Tuesday, March 26 – Discussion of novel and hero’s journey.

*Homework:* Read chapter 15 from *They Say/I Say*: “On Closer Examination: Entering Conversations about Literature.”

Thursday, March 28 – Organizing argumentative synthesis responses and in-class synthesis exercises.

*Homework:* Read chapter 5 from *They Say/I Say*: “And Yet: Distinguishing What You Say from What They Say and read chapters 7 and 8 from *Perfect English Grammar*: “Determiners” and “Nouns.”

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Tuesday, April 2 – Grammar Quiz 4. In-class work on essays.
**Homework:** Read chapter 16 from *Perfect English Grammar*: “Punctuation” and complete rough drafts of Essay 2.

**Thursday, April 4** – Peer review. Rough drafts of Essay 2 due.

**Homework:** Revise Essay 2.

**Tuesday, April 9** – Discussion of topics for research essay. **Essay 2 due.**

**Thursday, April 11** – Proposal construction exercises.

**Tuesday, April 16** – Conferences. **Research Proposal due.**

**Thursday, April 18** – Easter holiday.

**Tuesday, April 23** – Research exercises.

**Tuesday, April 25** – Research exercises.

**Tuesday, April 30** – Argument forms exercises. **Annotated Bibliography due.**

**Thursday, May 2** – Logical fallacies exercise.

**Tuesday, May 7** – In-class work on essay 3.

**Thursday, May 10** – In-class work on essay 3.

**Thursday, May 16** - Final Exam, 8:00 a.m.