English 1301.018: Rhetoric and Composition: Behavior and Self-Discovery
Fall 2020

Instructor: Ms. Rhanda McGee
Department: English and Creative Writing
Office: LAN 257
Contact: E-mail: mcgeer@sfasu.edu; 468-2187 (during office hours)
Office Hours: MWF: 11:00 – 12:00
MW: 2:00 – 3:00
(through Zoom, Email, Phone, or F2F) *For a F2F meeting, you will need to schedule a time in advance and (per university’s policy) wear a mask.

Class Time: MWF 1:00-1:50

COVID-19 MASK POLICY
Masks (cloth face coverings) must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times in this class and appropriate physical distancing must be observed. Students not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be asked to leave the class. All incidents of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students
who are reported for multiple infractions of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing may be subject to disciplinary actions.

Course Description:

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, including expressive, explicatory, analytical, and persuasive. Essay assignments address rhetorical analysis and critical responses to close textual readings. Students in English 131 write a minimum of four formal essays (totaling 15 pages of final draft quality writing). English 131 is a requirement for all students who do not qualify for ENG133H. 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.

This unique section of ENG 131 focuses on the theme and power of behavior and self-discovery as it may be expressed in our culture through reading, writing, and collaboration. While lecture-based at times, most learning will be conducted through discussions and teamwork. Students will be introduced to an abundance of contemporary essays anchored in themes related to deeper understandings of not only one’s self and the framework that underlies and defines one’s actions and choices, but to society as a whole in its multiple and diverse interpretations of self.

We will complete four units of study:

Unit One: Personal Narrative

Learning Objectives:

- Recognize elements essential to narration
- Select appropriate details for a narrative
- Create an effective structural order for those details
- Write dialogue to make the narrative more vivid and interesting
- Revise the narrative to make it more effective
- Analyze and discuss readings that use narration
- Compose a Personal Narrative essay and a visual multimodal that depicts each step in your story.

Unit Two: Summary/Response

Learning Objectives:

- Apply the techniques of active reading to essays you read
- Summarize any essay
- Analyze critically how any essay is constructed
• Recognize when an essay needs revision
• Plan a revision strategy for your essay
• Use the revision advice that other readers suggest
• Practice proofreading skills
• Compose a Summary/Response essay

Unit Three – Visual Rhetorical Analysis

Learning Objectives:

• Identify the five elements of the Rhetorical Situation and the Rhetorical appeals, and use these elements and appeals to analyze written and visual arguments
• Understand and analyze visual arguments
• Describe the different types of audiences
• Work collaboratively in teams to create an Ad campaign and collaboratively compose a rhetorical analysis essay that focuses on influencing one’s behavior to act, think, or believe differently.

Unit Four – Definition Argument Synthesis

Learning Objectives:

• Distinguish between denotation and connotation in writing a definition
• Select appropriate details to include in a definition
• Assess and adjust to an audience’s previous knowledge of the subject
• Analyze readings that use definition
• Distinguish between argument and persuasion
• Link your thesis and evidence logically
• Recognize and reply to your opposition
• Analyze readings that use argument and persuasion
• Compose a Definition Argument Synthesis essay using multiple sources.
• Compose a Works Cited page

Student Learning Outcomes for ENG 131:

ENG 131 learning outcomes are the goals that students must meet as part of the Freshman Composition requirements, which include:

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

5. Demonstrate knowledge of organizational and linguistic structures—including grammar, punctuation, and spelling—through the 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).

**Required Texts and Materials:**

**ALL REQUIRED READINGS WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE INSTRUCTOR AND POSTED ON D2L!**

- Reference guide of your choice
- Notebook/1 subject spiral will be needed for journaling, notes, pre-writing, etc.

*There will also be various handouts distributed by or posted on D2L by the instructor at certain times in the semester. These will be supplements to your required readings and will need to be brought to class if instructed to do so. **DO NOT LOSE THEM.**

**Grades**

This course will be graded on a point scale. There will be a total of 1000 points possible. The assignments and grades for this course will be as follows:

- Essay 1: Personal Narrative (2-3 pages) 100 points
- Personal Narrative Multimodal 50 points
- Essay 2: Summary/Response (3-4 pages) 100 points
- Essay 3: Rhetorical Analysis Essay (3-4 Pages) 150 points
Ad Campaign Project and Presentation 150 points

Essay 4: Definition Persuasive Synthesis (7-9 pages) 200 points

Final Exam: Definition Multimodal 100 points

Discussions (20) 150 points (7.5 each)

Final Grade
900-1000 A
800-899 B
700-799 C
600-699 D
0-590 F

Revisions
You will be allowed one revision this semester from either the first or second paper—unless you did not turn one in. Revisions offer you a chance to recover from a possibly grade damaging paper. **Revisions will only be allowed for papers that receive a C or below.** For your revision to count it must do several things:

- **Make corrections beyond just those marked on the original paper.** What this means is you sat down, read my comments, looked at what was marked, reread your paper, and understood what the errors were and how to fix them. Any paper that just “fixes” the areas I marked will not be given full credit for a rewrite.
- **Because this is a revision, there should not be an abundance of grammar, spelling, or formatting errors.** Any revisions that still contain these types of errors will not improve your grade, but will burn your revision opportunity. Make the revision worth your time and mine.
- **You will need to see me within one week of receiving the original graded paper to inform me of your plans to revise,** as well as confer with me on ways to improve your paper. This is not optional. Any student that does not meet with me within the week deadline, yet hands me a revision, will have it handed right back to them.
➢ You will need to go to the AARC at least once to have a tutor look at your revision. It would be in your best interest to go with specific questions and concerns. If you do not understand why you got the grade you did, the AARC is not going to help you in that way. You need to be cognizant of your writing abilities and be able to see what you are doing and not doing to make the visit to the AARC effective. If you go with generalities, the tutors will focus on the areas they think need the most work, which may not be what you are looking for. The AARC visit is not optional.

➢ The original graded copy and rubric must be turned in with the revision. If I do not receive this copy, I will not grade the revision

➢ The revision must be submitted online through D2L. There will be a separate link for revisions. Again, if it is not turned in online by the time the revision is due, I will not accept it.

COURSE POLICIES

Assignments:

- All papers assigned to be finished outside of class must be typed according to MLA format:
  - 12 point Times New Roman font
  - 1” margins
  - Correct header
  - Double-spaced
  (See Sample MLA essay on D2L)

- Do not include a cover sheet.

- Include your section number with your course number (ENG 1301.018, for example).

- You must submit an electronic copy of your final draft to the D2L dropbox before it can be graded.
  - To submit, click on the dropbox icon in D2L, then click on the name of the assignment. Putting your paper in the drop box automatically submits it to Turnitin. Failure to turn the paper in to the D2L dropbox, even if you turn in a hard copy, will result in a grade of zero. If a paper is submitted past the deadline to Turnitin, there will be a grade penalty applied.

- Unless otherwise indicated, you will submit rough drafts and final drafts to the D2L Dropbox before class begins on the days they are due.
  - Late essays will lose one letter grade (10 points) per day of lateness. For example, if an essay that was due on Monday is
turned in on Wednesday, the grade will be dropped to a C before I even began grading it. I will not accept the submission of material via e-mail without prior approval.

- Assignments, essays, and any other work that is given a due date should be turned in on time. If there is an emergency or situation that will prevent you from turning your work in on time, please come speak to me. I will decide if there should be an extension, though if accepted late, there may be a loss of a letter grade per day.

- In this class, you must adhere to specified page and/or paragraph lengths or face an automatic grade penalty. Since you are using MLA format, you will not be able to vary font, font size, margins, etc. to make your paper meet length requirements. For example, if a 4 – 5 page paper is assigned, it must be at least 4 full pages, going to the last line of page 4. If a 3 page paper is turned in for this assignment, the grade will begin as a 75.

- All homework assignments will be typed and completed on the D2L Discussion board. You will not turn in homework in class unless otherwise indicated.

- Plagiarism is not tolerated. Students caught plagiarizing will be given a 0 for the assignment, may fail the course and may be subject to being reported to the academic dean! Plagiarism can include: directly copying, paraphrasing or rephrasing another author’s ideas without giving credit to the original author(s). Additionally, a purchased essay is plagiarism, and an essay written in part or whole by anyone other than you is plagiarism. If you are not sure, please come talk to me.

- When major essay grades are given back, I require that you wait at least 24 hours before discussing your grade with me.

- Essay requirements will be given to you as a separate handout. These requirements are non-negotiable.

- For one of your papers, we will meet together one-on-one and discuss your writing strategies and revise your first draft together. All individual or group conferences scheduled with me are mandatory. Conferences are a benefit to you, as you will receive personalized attention on your writing. Absence from a conference will count as missing a regularly scheduled week of classes.

- Bookmark the Purdue OWL website as it will be the perfect reference for grammar, formatting, and MLA questions: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/
Communication:

D2L: I will communicate with the class via D2L. You are responsible for checking our class page (especially for announcements, updates, and weekly homework assignments) and your D2L email daily and for being aware of any information there.

- Demonstrate proper email etiquette when communicating with me and identify yourself by name and class/section. Excluding weekends, I usually respond within 24 hours. However, if you have failed to receive a response within that timeframe, re-send the email.
- For help with D2L, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/sfaonline/ and look for the link to D2L Support and Tutorials on the left-hand side. Or you can email d2l@sfasu.edu. You can also get assistance with any university technology by calling 468-1919.
- Grades are posted online frequently and periodically. Please let me know immediately if you see any errors in your recorded grades.
- Absent students should refer to our class web page, schedule, and/or contact class members to find out what they miss when absent and what has been assigned. (“I was not here” is not an acceptable excuse for not coming prepared to the next class, getting class notes, or being unaware of deadlines, etc.)
- You may contact me for any missed work only if you have documentation that excuses your absence.

Attendance

- I require regular attendance from my students. To perform well in this course, you need to be here! You are expected to come to class fully prepared having done the assigned work and being ready to respond to the required readings.
- I will allow 5 excused and/or unexcused absences (basically freebies)
  - Every absence after your fifth will result in your final letter grade being dropped by 10 points.
    - For instance, if you end the semester with a letter grade of 78, but have accrued 6 absences (excused and/or unexcused), your final letter grade will be dropped to a 68.
- The absences that count as excused will be documented family emergencies, university sanctioned events, and extreme medical issues (hospitalization). All excused absences must have proper documentation (i.e. a doctor’s excuse, documentation from coach on SFA letterhead, etc.).
- Regardless of the reason for your absence, you are responsible for all information and work covered in class. If you missed deadlines or in-class
work during an **excused** absence, it is your responsibility to find out what you’ve missed and arrange with me to make it up.

- **In class assignments and activities cannot be made up unless you have a documented, excused absence.**

- **Having 3 tardies will constitute one full absence.** You will be considered tardy:
  - If you arrive to class after I have taken role or leave class early unless you have informed me before class begins.
  - 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. 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.
  - If you are more than 10 minutes late to class, you will automatically be counted absent.

**Class Conduct and Citizenship:**

- **Student participation is encouraged during class.** Participation not only includes asking questions and being a part of discussions, but also includes being polite and respectful to those around you, including myself. If I consider your behavior to be offensive, you will be given a warning. If the behavior continues, you will be removed from the class.

- **Cell phones.** Turn them off and put them away before you come into class. Not to vibrate, not to silence, but OFF. If your phone rings or if you are texting throughout class, you will receive an **“academic” absence** which is the same as a regular absence. If the problem still continues, you will be asked to leave class, or points will be deducted from your daily works grade.

- We may discuss sensitive or controversial topics as part of class. Disagreement is expected and vital to learning how to express one’s position in a convincing way. That said, we must cooperate to avoid showing disrespect toward others in class and/or their ideas, beliefs, or position, and to avoid any type of hate speech. If you choose to engage in any distracting or disrespectful behavior within a single class meeting (or, for that matter, across multiple meetings), you will be asked to leave the class and counted absent.

- **Discussions:**
  - You are required to participate in weekly discussions on D2L. The Discussion area is our additional “classroom” where we talk about the chapter readings and assignments and complete homework. In your discussions, you are required to articulate detailed responses. Each
Discussion will include multiple questions and will contain other instructions, such as requirements for including quotes, meeting a particular length of paragraphs, and sometimes including visual images.

- The writing style for the discussions is less formal, more conversational, than an essay, but discussion posts should be written in complete sentences without spelling errors. Strive for clarity, detail, and insightfulness. Note that you can edit a discussion post even after you have posted it.

- For each discussion, you will start your own thread in which you compose and post a response directly to the discussion topic. If the discussion topic contains multiple questions, you should number your answers within your post. In addition to your own post, you are often required to write at least one reply to a post from one of your peers. Both your threads and your replies should demonstrate that you have read the text closely and thoughtfully.

**Acceptable Student Behavior:** 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 available to help SFA students succeed.

**Withheld Grades Policy (A-54):**

The following is taken from SFASU’s Policy Manual (2012), “Semester Grades Policy” (A-54). 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:**

Documented proof of cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade (of zero) on the assignment, AND a failing grade in the course. You will not be permitted to rewrite the assignment; you will not be given a second chance.

According to university and departmental policy, I must report the cheating to the dean of your college. In part, the following is taken from the University Policy and Procedures Manual (online), Section A-9.1 of Academic Affairs:

> 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 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 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](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

**Inclusive Learning:**

- Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we’ll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.
- I encourage you to visit the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to determine how you could improve your learning as well. If you need official accommodations, you have a right to have these met.
- ODS is available at Human Services Building, Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) or [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).
- 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 made except through the ODS.

As this syllabus is a contract between the instructor and students, I greatly encourage you to keep it in a safe place and refer to it frequently throughout the
semester. If, for any reason, any scheduling, reading assignments, or due dates change, an updated syllabus will be distributed.