English 131-003
Rhetoric and Composition

Instructor: Jessi Randall
Department: English
Class Time: Tuesday/Thursday 8-9:15am
Classroom: Ferguson 171
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Office: LAN 242
Office Phone: 936-468-2043
Office Hours: M/W 8-10 & 11-12
T/TH 10-11 & F 9-10

Catalog Description: 131 Rhetoric and Composition (ENGL 1301) – 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 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 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 response to close textual readings. Students in English 131 write a minimum of four formal essays (totaling at least 15-18 pages) and at least one in-class timed essay. English 131 is a requirement for all students who do not qualify for ENG133H.

In English 131, the emphasis is on the development of critical thinking, reading, and holistic academic writing skills.

Required texts: Spiral Bound or Composition Notebook for in class work
Handouts as made available on D2L and in class
Binder or other means of organizing printed essays for class
A folder for turning in essay packets

There will be frequent handouts or readings on D2L, please have these available. You will occasionally be asked to turn in your journal with classroom activities so it is important not to lose this journal. If you do not turn in your journal when asked, you will receive 0% participation for that day.

General Education Core Curriculum Objectives:
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.

Core Objectives:
1. Critical Thinking Skills – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
2. Communication Skills – to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
3. Teamwork – to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.
4. Personal Responsibility – to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

English 131 Student 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 Reasonability);
- 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.)

ENGL 1301 “Rhetoric and Composition” (3 credits) typically meets three times each week in 50-minute segments or twice each week in 75-minute segments for 15 weeks, and also meets for a 2-hour final examination. Students have weekly topical, non-fiction reading assignments of 25 pages or more and are expected to write/provide response to these readings; in addition, student will write five essays in various genres (for a total of 25 or more written pages per semester) which engage the topics of the readings. They will also present to the class a final project which includes a written paper and a visual component; this project integrates at least five of the
readings of the semester and three more sources which they will have gathered through research. These activities average at a minimum 6 hours of work each week to prepare outside of classroom hours.

**Grades:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing History</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Narrative</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Analysis</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation Essay</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive Essay</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Work</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection Essay</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
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This makes a total of 1000 points for the class.

**Grading Scale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-90</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-80</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79-70</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69-60</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59-0</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
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**Assignments:**

I will provide detailed descriptions for each assignment well before it is due. However, here are some general rules of thumb for this class:

- All final drafts should adhere to the rules of standard written English grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- All essays must be in MLA format.
- Essays which fail to meet the page count requirements will automatically lose 10% of the points assigned to them. A page count of 3-4 pages mean 3 full pages.
- I will do my best to return graded assignments within one week. However, this may not always be possible. All assignments will be returned before the next assignment is due.
- All major assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade for this class. Late assignments will receive a point deduction of 10% for each day they are late.
- Rough drafts must be brought to class in order to accomplish peer review. Final drafts will be turned in the D2L, with printed copies being handed in at the beginning of class.
- If you need some direction on an essay, please come see me during regular office hours. I will not, however, discuss essays that have not been started the day before they are due.
- I am happy to discuss graded essays with you during regular office hours, too. However, please come prepared with concrete reasons why you believe your grade is inaccurate.

**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)

Course Policies:

In my classroom, I function on a policy of honesty and respect. I will be upfront with you and show you respect as individuals and as a class. I expect to be treated in kind. As long as that is happening, we will have a great semester.

If at some point, I perceive your behavior or language as being dishonest or disrespectful to myself or your classmates, I will ask you to stop. If it continues, I will ask you to leave class and come to our next meeting prepared to show everyone in our classroom the same courtesies I extend to you.

Grades:

Grades will be kept updated throughout the semester on D2L. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to come see me. If you are not achieving the grade that is your goal for the semester, the time to talk to me is midterm – not at the end of the semester. Everyone will have the opportunities to make revisions – although revisions do not immediately mean you will earn a better grade: in order for revisions to result in a better grade, they will need to be careful and thorough revisions. Emails sent at the end of the semester requesting extra work, bonus points or other revisions will be ignored. All revisions will be due by the date on the syllabus and will not be accepted afterwards.

Late Work:

Essays are due on D2L by the end of the day on the date they are due. I do not accept late assignments. However, if an issue arises, contact me in advance of the due date and – at my discretion - I will offer a one time, 48 hour extension. Daily work – that is, work that is completed in class and part of your daily work grade – will be exempt from this policy. If you have an excused absence, get with me before the class you are going to miss and we can discuss alternate assignments.

Office Hours:

I am in my office during all my posted office hours and happy to help you with any questions you have. Office hours are your time, so please utilize them if you are struggling, but also feel free to just stop in and say hello.
**Acceptable Student Behavior:**

As stated in Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1, “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. 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.”

**Attendance and Absences:**

Attendance in this class is a prerequisite to a passing grade. If you are not in class, you will miss daily work (deliverables) as well as instruction. I recommend you make at least one friend in the class to get this information from – if after getting notes from your classmate, you still have questions, feel free to email me. As per university policy: Students are only allowed six unexcused absences and three excused absences (no more than nine classes total may be missed). Any additional absences will result in automatic failure of the course. Valid excuses are limited to health, religious observation, family emergencies, and participation in certain SFASU-sponsored events. Students must provide written documentation from which a decision will be made regarding the absence. Without written documentation, the absence will automatically be considered unexcused. Whether an absence is excused or unexcused, students are still responsible for all course content and assignments.

**Participation:**

This class will revolve around group discussion and group work and – as such – your participation is required. I expect cell phones to be silenced. I expect everyone to come to class ready to be engaged, having read the assigned materials and with at least one constructive addition. In order to help ensure that this happens, there will be occasional quizzes over the material.

**Email:**

Please include this courses information in the subject line of your emails – otherwise I will not receive them. I can be expected to answer emails received before 2pm, and while I may occasionally respond to emails outside that time frame – such as on weekends – please be patient.

**Plagiarism:**
My goal in this class is to teach you how to be part of the conversation relating to ideas that interest you – and for anyone to be a constructive part of the conversation, they have to first give credit to other authors as it is due. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, or fear you may not have properly cited something, please talk to me immediately. As such, I will have a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism. SFA’s policy follows:

*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. If a student paper is found to have plagiarized passages, the case will be investigated, and a suitable course of action will be taken, which may include an un-revisable 0 on the paper, an F in the course, and an Academic Dishonesty Form filed with the Dean of the plagiarizing student’s college.*

**Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment. Repeated instances of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the class.**

**AARC:**
Visit the SFA Academic Assistance and Resource Center (AARC)!
The AARC provides a variety of free academic support programs for students at SFA. Our services include 1:1 appointments, walk-in tables (3-7pm M-Th in library, 12-3pm M-TH in Ferguson 279), online tutoring (through Zoom), learning teams, and SI. We also provide academic skills workshops upon request.

**Contact information:**
Phone: 936-468-4108
Email: aarc@sfasu.edu
In-person: Monday-Thursday 8 a.m.-7 p.m. First floor Ralph W. Steen Library
For more information about the services provided, visit us on the web: sfasu.edu/aarc

**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/).
Tentative Schedule

Week 1: (C.O. 1, 2, 3)
Jan 16: Getting to Know One Another
        Group Activity / Journal Writing

Week 2: (C.O. 1, 2, 4)
Jan 21: Discuss Writing History and why we write
        HW: Writing History due Thursday, Read Anne Lamott’s “Shitty First
        Drafts” and Vonnegut’s “How to Write with Style”
Jan 23: Writing History Due
        Discuss essays and grammar presentations
        HW: Read “How to Mark a Book”

Week 3: (C.O. 1, 2, 3, 4)
Jan 28: Narrative Essay Intro and Assignment
        MLA format
        HW: Read “In Case You Ever Want to Go Home Again”
Jan 30: Group Activity based on Kingsolver essay
        HW: Read “Indian Education” and “Fish Cheeks”

Week 4: (C.O. 1, 2, 3, 4)
Feb 4: 1st Grammar Presentation
        Example Narrative Essays in class
        In class brainstorming and outlining
        HW: work on draft of narrative essay
Feb 6: Essay Introductions
        HW: rough draft of personal narrative and read “The Art of Revision”

Week 5: (C.O. 1, 2, 4)
Feb 11: 2nd Grammar Presentation
        Rough Draft of Personal Narrative Due
        Discuss Revision strategies and writing time
        HW: Final draft of personal narrative
Feb 13: Final Draft of Personal Narrative due
        What is Rhetoric?
        Watch “How to Use Rhetoric to Get What You Want”

Week 6: (C.O. 1, 2, 3, 4)
Feb 18: 3rd Grammar Presentation
        Rhetorical Analysis Introduction
        HW: Read “Living in Fiction”
        Decide what topic you’ll use for your visual analysis, watch and take notes
Feb 20: Watch music videos: “Take Me to Church” and “Pumped up Kicks”
        Discuss video’s arguments
        HW: Develop your thesis statement for visual analysis

Week 7: (C.O. 1, 2, 3, 4)
Feb 25: 4th Grammar Presentation
        Watch slam poetry and discuss arguments
        Paragraph Development
HW: rough draft of visual analysis

Feb 27: Catch Up Day

**Week 8:** (C.O. 1, 2, 3, 4)
March 3: **5th Grammar Presentation**
          Peer Review
March 5: **Final Draft of Visual Essay due**
          Evaluation Essay Assignment and Discussion of Criteria for Review
          HW: Item for review essay due after Spring Break

**Week 9:** Spring Break
**Week 10:** (C.O. 1, 3, 4)
March 17: **6th Grammar Presentation**
          Criteria for Evaluation Essay
          Examples of Professional and Student reviews
          HW: Decide criteria for your evaluation essay
March 19: In class writing time & individual conferences

**Week 11:** (C.O. 1, 2, 3, 4)
March 24: **7th Grammar Presentation**
          Final Draft of Evaluation Essay due
          Peer Review Day
March 26: **8th Grammar Presentation**
          Persuasive essay intro / in class topic brainstorm
          HW: Decide on topic for your essay

**Week 12:** (C.O. 3, 4)
March 31: **9th Grammar Presentation**
          How to find and evaluation sources
          HW: Find 2-3 sources for Persuasive Essay
April 2: In class activity with source summary
          HW: write short summaries and analysis of each of your sources

**Week 13:** (C.O. 1, 2, 3, 4)
April 7: Opinion vs. Analysis
          HW: thesis statement and outline for persuasive essay
April 9: **Easter Holiday**

**Week 14:** (C.O. 1, 2, 4)
April 14:
April 16: In class writing time / make up day
          HW: Rough draft due in Dropbox by 10pm

**Week 15:** (C.O. 2, 4)
April 21: **Final Day to turn in Revised Essays**
          Conferences
April 23: Conferences

**Week 16:** (C.O. 2, 3, 4)
April 28: In class work day / peer review
April 30: **Final Draft of Persuasive Essay due**
Group activity

Week 17: Finals Schedule TBD