ENG 131: Rhetoric and Composition

Professor Rachel Bollinger  Classroom: FERG 183
rach.bollin@gmail.com  Days: MWF
Office: FERG 278  Time: 9-9:50am
Office Hours: MW 12pm-1:30pm, F by appointment

Department of English and Creative Writing

Lumberjacks Write
Provided by the English department.

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 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 “Rhetoric and Composition” (3 credits) meets three times each week in fifty-minute segments or twice each week in seventy-five-minute segments for fifteen weeks, and meets during finals week according to the final exam schedule. Students complete weekly topical readings as well as writing and discussion activities related to those readings. Students write a minimum of four essays with a total page count of at least fifteen pages of finished writing. Emphasis is placed on writing processes, including multiple drafts and short assignments that require generating, revising and editing writing. Final exams typically include presentations of student writing. These activities average six hours of work outside of classroom hours.

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 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).

CREDIT HOUR JUSTIFICATION
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, students 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.

OPTIONAL TEXTS
The Norton Field Guide to Writing, with readings and handbook
By Richard H. Bullock

GRADERS
Grading in this course will be based on a points system. The total amount of potential points is 500pts.

\[
\begin{align*}
A &= 450pts \text{ to } 500pts \\
B &= 400 \text{ pts to } 449ps \\
C &= 350pts \text{ to } 399pts \\
D &= 300pts \text{ to } 349pts \\
F &= 250pts \text{ to } 299pts
\end{align*}
\]

Assignments: by points

- Daily Ten-Minutes Free Writes - 40pts
- In-Class Mini-Essays - 70pts
- Group Assignments - 70pts
- Personal Narrative - 60pts
- Proposal - 70pts
- Annotated Bibliography - 90pts
- Persuasive Paper - 100 pts

COURSE CALENDAR

Week 1: The Basics of Writing

January 15th, Wednesday

January 17th, Friday

Week 2: Composing an Essay

January 20th, Monday - Martin Luther King Jr. Day.
January 22th, Wednesday

January 24st, Friday

Week 3: MLA Format and Citations

January 27th, Monday
January 29th, Wednesday
January 31st, Friday

Week 4: Personal Narrative

February 3rd, Monday
February 5th, Wednesday
February 7th, Friday

Week 5: Writing a Personal Narrative

February 10th, Monday - **Personal Narrative Rough Draft due in class.**

February 12th, Wednesday

February 14th, Friday - **Personal Narrative due, in dropbox by 11:59 pm.**

Week 6: Rhetoric

February 17th, Monday
February 19th, Wednesday
February 21st, Friday

Week 7: Rhetorical Devices

February 24th, Monday
February 26th, Wednesday
February 28th, Friday
Week 8: Proposal

March 2nd, Monday

March 4th, Wednesday

March 6th, Friday - **Proposal Rough Draft due in class.**

Week 9: Writing a Proposal

March 9th, Monday - **Spring break**

March 11th, Wednesday - **Spring break**

March 13th, Friday - **Spring break**

Week 10: Annotated Bibliography

March 16th, Monday - **Proposal due, in dropbox by 11:59 pm.**

March 18th, Wednesday

March 20th, Friday

Week 11: Writing an Annotated Bibliography

March 23rd, Monday

March 25th, Wednesday

March 27th, Friday

Week 12: Writing an Annotated Bibliography

March 30th, Monday - **Annotated Bibliography Rough Draft due in class.**

April 1st, Wednesday

April 3rd, Friday - **Annotated Bibliography due, in dropbox by 11:59 pm.**

Week 13: Persuasive Paper

April 6th, Monday
April 8th, Wednesday

April 10th, Friday - Easter Holiday

Week 14: Writing a Persuasive Paper

April 13th, Monday

April 15th, Wednesday

April 17th, Friday

Week 15: Writing a Persuasive Paper

April 20th, Monday

April 22nd, Wednesday - Persuasive Paper Rough Draft due in class.

April 24th, Friday

Week 16: Writing a Persuasive Paper

April 27th, Monday

April 29th, Wednesday

May 1st, Friday

Week 17: Presenting a Persuasive Paper

May 4th, Monday

May 6th, Wednesday - Persuasive Paper due, in dropbox by 8am.

8am - 10:30am Final Paper Presentations, in class.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Daily Ten-Minutes Free Writes (40pts)

Every day at the beginning of class you will free-write for ten minutes. A prompt will be available to you but you are allowed to write about anything you want, so long as you are writing for the full ten minutes.
The point of this daily exercise is to get you writing. Writing can be both a personal and academic activity. Throughout the course, the various activities you do will point back to the functions of writing in both of these areas.

**In-Class Mini-Essays (70pts)**

1.5-3 pages, hand-written.

You will be given a prompt on the day of the mini-essay. The prompt will be related to the material covered in class that week. You have the entire period to complete your essay.

You will write a structured essay with the following parts: introduction, thesis statement, at least one body paragraph, transitional sentences, and a conclusion.

You do not have to include a works cited page. You do not have to cite any sources, but you can.

**At the end of the period, you will hand in your essay.**

**Essay Requirements**

- 1.5-3 pages, handwritten or typed.
- If typed, use Times New Roman, 12pt font.
- Introductory sentence(s).
- A Thesis statement.
- At least 1 body paragraph.
- Transitional sentences between paragraphs.
- A conclusion.

**Advice**

This assignment is an opportunity for you to practice essay-writing and to practice the material we’ve covered in class. Don’t focus on writing the “perfect” essay, instead focus on exploring the ideas covered in class and the structure of the essay itself.

You will receive a grade on your mini-essay. However, there’s no need to worry or stress about your grade. If you are sincere in your attempt to write the essay and incorporate class material in it, then you will receive a good score. The grade of your mini-essay is not as important as the feedback you receive and give about the writing process.

**If you are concerned that you won’t finish the essay in time**, write out an outline with all the “parts” of the essay and your general ideas. Then, fill in the outline as much as you can. I will count this as including all the necessary requirements.
**Group Assignments (70pts)**

In class, you will be doing a variety of informal group activities. Each activity will include specific instructions, such as writing group answers on a sheet of paper or formulating group answers to share with the class. Within groups, each member will have their own individual responsibilities. A student’s grade for a group activity will be decided based on their participation and completion of their individual task.

**Personal Narrative (60pts)**

Once you select your topic you will write a narrative essay that tells about your personal experience with that topic. A personal narrative is a story. It should include a beginning, middle, and end, specific descriptions, and a distinct voice.

Topic No-Nos:

- Unnecessarily graphic violence.
- Sexual encounters/exploits.
- Self-harm.

You do not have to include a works cited page. You do not have to cite any sources in this essay.

**Essay Requirements**

- 3 pages, typed 12pt font, Time New Roman, MLA format.
- 3-4 pages.
- A distinguishable plot with a beginning, middle, and end.
- A consistent narrative point of view, e.g. first person, second person, third person.
- Descriptive imagery and specific details.
- Distinct characters.

**Proposal (70pts)**

You will pick and begin researching the topic you want to write on for your final persuasive essay. Each assignment you do from now on will be leading up to the persuasive essay. The topic you pick should be an issue with many potential opinions and/or courses of action. I encourage you to pick a topic that interests you because you will be working on this topic for the rest of the semester.

**Instructions:**

A proposal is a document that outlines the main argument of a larger paper. The proposal briefly touches on the big ideas and initial research. The proposal is not for in-depth analysis or heavy citing.
In your proposal, answer these questions about your topic:

- What is your topic and why does it interest you?
- What is your persuasive strategy and what points do you plan to make?
- How are you using the rhetorical triangle (audience, speaker, message) to persuade your reader?
- What rebuttals might you face in your research and your writing?

The paper is to be typed in MLA format, 12-pt. Font, Times New Roman, double-spaced. You will need a work cited page if you use in-text citations.

Essay Requirements:

1. Answer the four questions about your topic (above).
2. Typed in MLA format.
3. 1-2 pages.
4. Includes a Works Cited page if any sources are cited.

Annotated Bibliography (90pts)

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to sources used in a paper. Each citation is followed by a short (4 to 6 sentences) descriptive paragraph, called an annotation. The annotation tells the reader why a source is relevant to the paper.

Annotation for a cited source answers these questions:

- What is the main point of the article, book, document?
- Is it relevant to the paper you are writing?
- What was unique or particularly helpful about the source?

Essay Requirements:

1. 8-10 Annotations (about 4-5 pages).
2. MLA format, typed 12pt font, Times New Roman
3. Correctly cites all sources in MLA format.
4. Each annotation should answer the above question.

Persuasive Essay (100pts)

The persuasive essay is the culmination of the entire semester. A persuasive essay is essentially an argument taking a clear stance on a topic or issue and, using rhetorical devices, persuades the reader to view the topic a certain way.

Essay Requirements:
1. Typed, 12pt font, Times New Roman, MLA format
2. 4-6 pages.
4. In-text citations.
6. A conclusion.
7. A counter-argument.
8. Clear use of at least 3 different rhetorical devices.

ATTENDANCE
Attendance is mandatory. You are tardy if you arrive after I’ve counted attendance. Three (3) tardies will count as one absence. Sleeping in class will be counted as an absence. You are allowed five (5) excused and/or unexcused absences without penalty to your grade. 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.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS
Assignments turned in late will be docked five points. You have a 1 week from the due date to turn in the assignment for a late grade. After 1 week from the due date, each additional day delay will cost half a point on the grade of the assignment. If the assignment is never turned in it will be given a grade of zero.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

RULES:

- **Raise your hand to speak**, unless I specifically “open the floor for discussion or group work”.

  *This may seem elementary, but it isn’t. It is a technique that equalizes every voice in the classroom. Additionally, there will be open floor time almost every class. There will be plenty of discussion and conversation.*

- **Do not complain or make negative comments about this classroom or anyone in this classroom.** If you have a concern, I would love to speak with you about it after class or during my office hours.
This rule is about respect. Respecting me and respecting the other people in the classroom. I am willing to hear your concerns and adjust to your feedback but know that you can trust what I have planned for this class.

- **No phone use in class, period.**
  
  It’s simple and easy. Put your phone away in your bag during class. There will be a few occasions where we will do in-class activities that require phones, at which time you are more than welcome to have your phone out. Laptops are allowed at any time, but please don’t be a distraction or I’ll ask you to use a pen and paper.

- **Participate in class activities.**
  
  Participation is an essential part of learning in this class. Participating doesn’t always mean raising your hand to answer questions, but it does mean a readiness to answer, to work with others, and to complete assignments.

**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 the 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.

**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 accommodations 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.