Syllabus for English 132: Research and Argument

Instructor: Billy Longino
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Office Hours:
Mon., Wed., & Fri.: 8:00 – 9:00 a.m; 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.;
Tues.: 9:15 – 11:00 a.m.; 12:15 – 12:30 p.m.

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.

ENGL 132 “Research and Argumentation” (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 will read and study the principles of argumentation (both classical and contemporary), practice analysis of published arguments, and then apply these principles to their own individual arguments that grow out of their career fields and interests. In addition, students will learn best practices for research in order to inform themselves about the arguments they engage, and they will learn how to incorporate the needed evidence to support their claims/positions. The third component of the course requires students to understand that there are various methods of source documentation; in this course, they will engage the MLA documentation method and observe it in their written productions. Students will practice and (to some extent) master the writing process, producing multiple drafts of a summary analysis, annotated bibliography, a synthesis analysis and an extended argument of their own. These activities average at a minimum 6-8 hours of work outside class each week to prepare for and participate in this course.

Required Texts
Perfect English Grammar by Grant Barrett
Watchmen by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons
Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi
Understanding Comics by Scott McCloud
Additional materials will be provided in pdf format and links to free web content through the class D2L site.

Recommended Texts
They Say / I Say by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein
**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 (20 points)**
You will be given between 10 and 20 quizzes over the course of the semester to assess your knowledge of grammatical rules and from readings. Each quiz will be worth a percentage 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 and reading quizzes are treated as “pop quizzes” that could be given at any point a reading has been assigned.
Summary/Adaptation Synthesis (20 points)
In this 6-page essay, you will discuss the adaptation of Marjane Satrapi’s graphic novel *Persepolis* into the 2007 animated film of the same name, directed by Satrapi and Vincent Paronnaud. Your focus will be on synthesizing the original work, its function as a comic through Scott McCloud’s *Understanding Comics*, with the film in order to explore what is gained or lost, thematically, between the original work and the film.

Visual Analysis/Synthesis (20 points)
In this 6-page essay, you will analyze *Watchmen* by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons using Scott McCloud’s *Understanding Comics* as a guide, as well as two additional sources. Your goal in this essay is to examine the technical and aesthetic choices Moore and Gibbons made in order to tell their story through a visual medium.

Research Proposal (10 points)
Within this 750-word document, you will propose a 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 argue for 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 in this 8 to 10-page essay based upon your independent research.

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 first or second 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](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
to university policy regarding Academic Dishonesty for more information: (http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/4.1-student-academic-dishonesty.pdf)

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. Readings from Perfect English Grammar and They Say/I Say will be assigned as needed throughout the semester.

Thursday, Jan 16 – Class introduction, syllabus overview.
   Homework: Read “Keynote Address from the 2002 ‘Will Eisner Symposium’” by Will Eisner and chapters 1 and 2 of Understanding Comics by Scott McCloud.

Tuesday, Jan 21 – In-class discussion of comics.
   Homework: Read chapters 3 and 4 of Understanding Comics by Scott McCloud.

Thursday, Jan 23 – In-class discussion of comics.
   Homework: Complete reading of Understanding Comics by Scott McCloud.

Tuesday, Jan 28 – Discussion of Essay 1 prompt. In-class reading of “The Veil” by Marjane Satrapi from Persepolis.
   Homework: Continue reading Persepolis. Listen to “How the CIA Overthrew Iran’s Democracy in 4 Days” episode of the Throughline podcast.

Thursday, Jan 30 – In-class discussion of Persepolis and podcast.
   Homework: Continue reading Persepolis. Listen to “The Iranian Revolution” episode of The History Hour podcast.

Tuesday, Feb 4 – Discussion of Persepolis and podcast.
   Homework: Complete reading of Persepolis.

Thursday, Feb 6 – Discussion of Persepolis.
   Homework: Watch the 2007 film adaptation of Persepolis; create outline of similarities/differences between the graphic novel and the film versions.
Tuesday, Feb 11 – Discussion of film and effect of adaptation.  
**Homework:** Work on Essay 1.

**Thursday, Feb 13** – In-class work on Essay 1.  
**Homework:** Complete Essay 1.

**Tuesday, Feb 18 – Essay 1 due.** Discussion of Essay 2 prompt.  
**Homework:** Read chapters I and II of *Watchmen.*

**Thursday, Feb 20** – Discussion of reading.  
**Homework:** Read chapters III, IV, and V of *Watchmen.*

**Tuesday, Feb 25** – Discussion of reading.  
**Homework:** Read chapters VI and VII of *Watchmen.*

**Thursday, Feb 27** – Discussion of reading.  
**Homework:** Complete reading of *Watchmen.*

**Tuesday, March 3** – Discussion of *Watchmen* as a whole.  
**Homework:** Organize response to *Watchmen.*

**Thursday, March 5** – In-class work on Essay 2.  
**Homework:** Complete drafts of Essay 2.

**Tuesday, March 10 – Spring Break. No class.**

**Thursday, March 12 – Spring Break. No class.**

**Tuesday, March 17** – In-class work on Essay 2.  
**Homework:** Complete final drafts of Essay 2.

**Thursday, March 19 – Essay 2 due.** Discussions of topics for Research/Argumentative Essay.  
**Homework:** Bring at least five ideas for research topic.

**Tuesday, March 24** – Beginning research.

**Thursday, March 26** – Writing proposals exercise.

**Tuesday, March 31** – Conferences. **Research proposals due.**

**Thursday, April 2** – Conferences. **Research proposals due.**

**Tuesday, April 7** – In-class research.

**Thursday, April 9** – In-class research.
Tuesday, April 14 – In-class work on Annotated Bibliographies.

Thursday, April 16 – In-class work on Annotated Bibliographies.

Tuesday, April 21 – Annotated Bibliographies due. Discussion of Essay 3 prompt.

Thursday, April 23 – In-class work on Essay 3.

Tuesday, April 28 – In-class work on Essay 3.

Thursday, April 30 – In-class work on Essay 3.

Finals Week – Essay 3 due.