English 132.500: Argument and Research
Spring 2020

Instructor: Ms. Rhanda McGee
Department: English and Creative Writing
Office: LAN 257
Contact: E-mail: mcgeer@sfasu.edu or through D2L
Office Hours: MW: 10:00 – 1:00
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Course Description:

ENGL 1302 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.

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. English 132 requires students to write a minimum of four formal essays in a range of forms, from analytic to persuasive, or three formal essays and an annotated bibliography with a total page count of at least 18 pages of final draft quality writing. The final essay for the class is a research paper.
Written argument will be the central focus of the course. Arguments pervade every aspect of our society from the personal to a global scale.

- What do you associate with the word argument—screaming matches, rational discussions, or perhaps an attempt to reach a compromise?
- What is your personal style of argument?
- What makes a good argument?

These are just a few questions we will explore and answer throughout the semester, with an emphasis on current social issues. We will complete four modules of study with each module focusing on socio-cultural or current issues that will provide you with different perspectives on arguments.

**Module One**: Students will write a visual rhetorical analysis essay on a contemporary issue.

**Module Two**: Students will analyze issues from opposing viewpoints in order to write an argument synthesis.

**Module Three**: Students will research a contemporary, controversial issue in order to complete a written explanatory proposal and then provide an oral presentation of said proposal.

**Module Four**: Your proposal topic will serve as a guiding framework. Students will continue to develop and extend their proposals through further in-depth research in order to compose a well-developed research paper.

**Prerequisite:**
Students must earn a grade of C or higher in English 131 to be admitted to English 132. Must earn a C or higher to be admitted to any English 200 level course.

**Student Learning Outcomes for ENG 132:**
ENG 132 learning outcomes are the goals that students must meet as part of the Freshman Composition core curriculum requirements, which include:

- 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);

4. 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);

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:

  - I will post the first two week’s chapter readings

Assumptions for English 132:

Students entering 132 should:

- Be able to formulate a thesis statement.
- Understand the meaning and relationship of claim, evidence, and analysis.
- Know and apply the concepts of the rhetorical situation (speaker, audience, purpose,
  message, context) and the rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos).
- Understand what makes a unified and coherent paragraph and be able to write one.
- Produce mechanically sound essays with only minor grammatical, punctuation, and
  spelling errors.
- Understand what constitutes plagiarism
- Be proficient in MLA basics: page formatting, quotation, citation, and Works Cited lists.

Communication: D2L and Turnitin
The two overarching principles for the course are that adults make arrangements and that poor preparation on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part. These two principles are reflected in all the following policies:

1. As an online course, you are required to have reliable access to the Internet and D2L. If you experience any problems with D2L, you need to 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.

2. The best way to get in touch with me is email; as an online course, you need to use the email system in D2L to contact me. When you email me, remember to be clear, concise, and specific with your questions so that I can best answer you. During the week, I will do my best to answer your email within 24 hours. If you do not receive an answer in 24 hours during the week, please re-send the email.

3. You are responsible for checking D2L every course day. D2L is the only way I have of contacting you or making course announcements.

4. Any work you turn in throughout the course must follow all posted and/or discussed guidelines for the assignment, which will be posted on D2L.

5. You are expected to keep track of your own grades, which will be posted on D2L. The grades in D2L are the current grades. If you have a question about a grade on a particular assignment, please first read my comments on the assignment before contacting me with specific questions.

6. You must submit your work before the posted deadlines. The posted deadline is the exact time the dropbox will close on D2L (e.g., if the deadline is 11:59 p.m., the dropbox will close as soon as the D2L clock hits 11:59 p.m. on the dot). All deadlines listed are in CST and follow the D2L clock. The D2L clock may not be the same as your personal clock, so you need to take that into account when completing and submitting work. Furthermore, computers can be slow in the uploading process; you should begin uploading work that is due at least an hour before the posted deadline.

7. All uploaded assignments (i.e., assignments that require a document submission) must be submitted as Microsoft Word documents (the file extension needs to be .doc or .docx). Only Microsoft Word documents will be graded.
8. All work for this course must be your own work and unique to this course; you may not reuse or recycle any past work you’ve done for any course. Reusing your old work is a form of plagiarism, called auto-plagiarism, and will be treated as any other case of plagiarism.

9. As in any relationship, the student/professor relationship is strengthened by strong communication. If I send something out, pay attention to it. If you have a question/concern/emergency, communicate that to me immediately via D2L email.

10. Office hours can be conducted through email or in my office on campus. Please schedule a specific time in advance on the days office hours are held if you want to have a personal chat. I am available to chat outside those hours but you will need to schedule a time with me in advance.

Course Assignments
Throughout the course, you will complete four formal essays worth varying amounts of points and with different guidelines. I will provide you with the guidelines for each essay in the accompanying module. All essays must be typed, MLA formatted, and include all required components for them to be graded. You will have a rubric for each essay to understand what you are being graded on.

GRADES:
This course will be graded on a point scale. There will be a total of 900 points possible. The assignments and grades for this course will be as follows:

- Visual Rhetorical Analysis (2-3 pages) 100 points
- Argument Synthesis (4-5 pages) 150 points
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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explanatory Proposal (2-3 pages)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Proposal Presentation</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper (7-9 pages)</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam/Multimodal</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Posts</td>
<td>200     (8 points per discussion)</td>
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**Final Grade**

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<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>900-810</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>809-720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>719-630</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>629-540</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-539</td>
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**Grade Criteria:**

- To figure your grade out at any point in the semester, simply add up the number of points that you have and divide that by the number of points possible. This will give you an overall percentage.
- If you fail a paper, do not lose hope, or think it is personal. You are here to learn, and often we learn best through our failures. Any comments I make are meant to help you. You will be allowed to revise one paper – unless you didn’t turn one in – and as a requirement for a revision, you must consult with me first to discuss your paper.
- I define letter grades as follows: A: Earning an A indicates that you mastered all the necessary concepts for the course. B: Earning a B indicates that you did well with all the necessary concepts and mastered some of them. C: Earning a C indicates that you did well with some of the concepts and not as well with other concepts. In other words, a C is the average grade. D: Earning a D indicates that you did not do well with a majority of the concepts. F: Earning an F indicates that you did not do the required work or meet the minimum requirements.
- Final grades are final. I do not offer extra credit, and I do not bump up grades at the end of a course. Grades do not reflect my personal feelings about students, so I do not
change grades just because I like a student or feel badly about a student’s situation. Instead, grades solely reflect students’ mastery of the concepts introduced in class. Mastery and hard work do not necessarily mean the same thing; I appreciate and expect hard work, but you should not attempt to get a higher grade by outlining all the struggles you’ve had during the course and how you’ve overcome them.

Revisions
You will be allowed one revision this semester from either the first or second paper. 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 email me within 24 hours 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 who does not email and confer with me, yet submits a revision, will not be graded.
  
  • All revisions will be due by April 12 in the Revisions Dropbox
  • The revision must be submitted online through D2L. There will be a separate dropbox for revisions. Again, if it is not turned in online by the time the revision is due, I will not accept it.

Academic Integrity:
Documented proof of cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade (of zero) on the assignment, AND possibly 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

Do not be tempted to go to Wikipedia, Yahoo Answers, or one of the many free essay sites on the Internet. Do not be tempted to have other people “help” you write your papers. As students in this course, you will provide me a considerable amount of in-class writing, and I will get to know your writing style and voice. Departures from your normal style send up red flags. Do your own work. I will catch you, and you will fail the paper and very well the class. You are only hurting yourself. If you have difficulty engaging with a reading or understanding a paper assignment, please contact me. I am always happy to help.

**Participation:**

An important part of the education process is learning to discuss material with your peers. I don’t believe in a “right” answer, and more often than not, you will see something in a manner I have not considered before. It is important that you share your ideas with the class via the discussion board. If you are a quiet student, that is fine, but how do you know your ideas or questions are not similar to another student’s in the class who is afraid to ask? If you don’t understand something or are unsure of something, ask. Participation will be graded through your D2L Discussion board posts.

Here are the criteria on which I grade participation:

- Ability to discuss material covered in class and readings
• Ability to ask intelligent, thoughtful questions. If you don’t understand something, by all means ask. You probably are not the only one who doesn’t understand.

• Reading the material. If you haven’t read, your writing assignments will reflect it, and your participation grade will go down.

• Showing respect for your classmates, yourself, and me. Do not engage in side conversations. Listen actively. You don’t have to agree or even like what we read or are discussing, but you will need to act as an adult and treat your peers well.

Course Citizenship:

• 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.

Course Policies: Assignments

• Assignments in each module are always due by 11:59pm on the date listed

• 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, you need to contact me. I will decide if there should be an extension, though if accepted late, there will be a grade penalty.

• Failing to meet the minimum page count for any draft may result in a ZERO for that assignment. If the assignment is 3-4 pages long, the paper must be at least 3 full pages, formatted correctly.
• Unless you and I have come to an agreement, assume the following: I do not accept late work. I do not accept emailed work. I expect the work I have asked you to do to be done when I have asked for it to be done, and turned in at the time I ask you to turn it in. Straying from these assumptions will result in negative consequences.

• Discussions:
  • You are required to participate in weekly discussions on D2L. The Discussion area is our “classroom” where we talk about the readings. 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.

Essay Requirements:
  • ALL essays must:
    • Meet the guidelines given on the prompt.
    • Meet minimum page length
    • Be in essay format
    • Be typed, double-spaced in MLA format using 12 pt. Times New Roman
    • Have appropriate headings and 1” margins
    • Have an original title. DO NOT use the title of another work as your title
    • If the assignment requires quotes or sources, use appropriate attribution.
    • Be submitted electronically through Turnitin.

• I will fail papers for the following:
- Does not meet page length. If the assignment requires a minimum of 3 pages, the paper needs to be three full pages with correct formatting.
- Does not follow proper format or does not follow prompt guidelines.
- Has an abundance of spelling/grammar errors
- Is plagiarized
- Is not submitted online through D2L. Emailing me your paper does not constitute an online submission.

**Withheld 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.

**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/.

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 be made except through ODS.