Rhetoric and Composition  
English 1301.001  
Time: TR 9:30 – 10:45  
Place: Ferguson 476

**Professor:** James Couch  
**Office:** LAN 327  
**Office Hours:** MW: 12:00-1:00  
TR: 11:00-12:30  
and by appt. via Zoom

**Department:** English  
**Phone:** 468-2430  
**Email:** Via D2L

**ENGL 1301 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 ENGL 1303. Must earn a grade of C or higher to be admitted to ENGL 1302.” — SFA Bulletin

Prerequisite: INRW 0399 or acceptable THEA score.

ENG 1301 “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 three 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.

**About This Class**
You are attempting a daunting task. Along with all of the other facets of your busy lives, you have embarked upon a journey to transform yourselves into better writers – in less than four months.
Successfully navigating the path you have chosen will require certain deeds on your part. This goal may best be accomplished by activities such as examining, in a focused and critical manner, the arguments of others and discussing in a thoughtful manner what we find there; forming ideas that are well-considered; crafting arguments that are logical; and drafting, revising, and editing our work until it communicates coherently what we intend. Therefore, this class will consist of equable amounts of reading, discussion, and writing. This course is not a literature class; however, analyzing the written work of other writers can help us understand why we write and how to do so effectively.

Regarding the aspects of writing that can be taught, one-half is science, and the other is art. Although it takes application, the science can be learned from such sources as textbooks and your professor; the art, however, requires the doing, the act. This truth means that the only way to become a good writer is to write, write, and write some more. Writing is an active process. Despite the fact that we are often called upon to submit our best efforts to date, rarely is any piece of writing ever truly “finished.” Most, if not all, written work can be improved upon. The nature of this class, therefore, demands active participation, and you will see results if you put forth effort. When I ask you to create a draft - do it! When I ask you to critique or revise a selection, do it! No excuses. I say again, the art requires the doing. Those who do not accomplish the obvious and expected tasks associated with this process cannot truly claim to care about their writing or this class. Their grades will reflect this fact.

Occasionally I ask you to work collaboratively, with minimal supervision. If you do not make good use of these sessions, then you are hurting yourself.

I expect you to engage in the class discussions, which means asking questions and offering thoughtful comments relevant to the issue at hand, and to do so in a courteous manner. The nature of our endeavor makes rudeness or abusive language intolerable. That being said, you will have some interesting and spirited discussions with individuals from a variety of backgrounds, and you may hear
something you do not like. If you feel yourself getting offended, first remind yourself how fortunate you are to live in a country where people have the right to speak what they believe to be the truth, and then proceed to tell them exactly how they are wrong.

**Texts and Materials**
The Brief Penguin Handbook 5th Edition (Recommended)
Notetaking Tools (Required)
USB Drive or other external storage (Recommended)
Computer or other Word-Processing Device (Required)

All other necessary materials will be provided by the professor.

**Course Requirements**
In this class, you will be tasked to produce logical, thoughtful, well composed pieces of argument. These assignments are based on various topics that will emerge from the assigned readings and our in-class discussions.

These papers will include, but are not necessarily limited to, an *expressive essay*, wherein you analyze and relate a dramatic event from your life; a multi-modal *rhetorical analysis*, wherein you analyze a visual argument; a multi-modal *film analysis*, wherein you argue your analytical assessment of a work of motion picture art; and a *final exam* in the form of an in-class, timed essay wherein you analyze and explain a piece of text.

**All papers composed outside of class must be typed and require MLA format** (including an MLA heading, 12 pt type, 1” margins, double-spacing, Times New Roman font, indented paragraphs, etc.) and are due at the *beginning* of class on the dates indicated. Any work submitted after the call for papers will be politely refused. No late work will be accepted.

Students are required to submit, on time, electronic copies of their work through D2L to the *Turnitin* comprehensive plagiarism detector. Failure to do so will result in a failing grade (0 points) on the paper in question.
This is a web-enhanced class. You will need to visit BRIGHTSPACE by D2L regularly to keep up with assignments, contact the instructor, and receive supplemental information for your success in the course. Classroom activities, homework assignments, other instructional materials, and grades will all be posted in BRIGHTSPACE.

**Course Calendar**
The class will be divided into four sections based on the three major project assignments and the final exam. Each section will take approximately four weeks to complete. The general schedule, therefore, will be one major assignment due each month, along with the relevant daily work such as pre-writing, thesis submissions, rough drafts, peer critiques, *et cetera.*

**Grading Policy**
Semester grades will be the sum of the major paper grades, the corrections and revisions of the major papers, the daily grades, and the final exam. Each major paper will constitute one grade, with grammar, content, and style contributing equally to each grade. Each major paper is worth a maximum of twenty-five (25) points; the final exam is worth a maximum of ten (10) points, and each daily exercise is worth a maximum of one (1) points. **After your semester grade is determined, attendance points will be deducted or added.** Feel free to come and see me during office hours about your writing, your grade, or for any other reason.

**Attendance Policy**
Punctual attendance (physical and mental) is required, and roll will be checked at *the beginning* of the class. If you are not in class when roll is checked, expect to be counted absent. If you fall asleep in class, expect to be counted absent. If you text, make phone calls, do work for other classes, or engage in any non-class-related activity, expect to be counted absent. Notes from parents, grandparents, doctors, coaches, etc. are not required and will make no difference with regard to attendance. If you are not in class, then you are absent. I consider all absences to be “excused,” which means daily classwork missed due to absence can be submitted late if an appointment is made immediately upon return.
to class. Because, however, group discussion is such an important element of this class, *excessive* absences will adversely affect your grade. **You have two (2) absences before your grade is affected;** use them how you wish. **One and a half (1.5) points will be deducted from your semester grade for each absence after the third one.** Any student who misses more than three weeks of class will receive a failing grade for the course, as per the university attendance policy. **Students with perfect attendance will receive two (2) points toward their final grade.**

**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 that is available to help SFA students succeed.

**Academic Integrity**
The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that
are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

**Use of Generative AI**
While the use of AI as a plagiarism tool is unacceptable, it can be a valuable resource when used to enhance your learning experience.
If you decide to employ AI as a writing resource, remember the following: **Deceptive use of AI is considered cheating and will result in severe penalties. “Deceptive use” is defined as the utilization of AI to generate content and the claiming of such generated content as your own.**

**Withheld Grades 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.

**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 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/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/)

**Mental Health and Wellness**
SFA values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students' mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**
SFA Counseling Services
www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
Rusk Building, 3rd Floor
936.468.2401
SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
Human Services, Room 202
936.468.1041

**Crisis Resources:**
Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

**English 1301 Student Learning Outcomes**
Upon successful completion of this course, students will:
1. Demonstrate knowledge of individual and collaborative writing processes.
2. Develop ideas with appropriate support and attribution.
3. Write in a style appropriate to audience and purpose.
4. Read, reflect, and respond critically to a variety of texts.
5. Use Edited American English in academic essays.

**Core Curriculum Objectives**

**Critical Thinking Skills:** To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.

This objective will be addressed with active reading assignments, writing assignments that teach process, analysis, reflection, and working with sources, writing and reading assignments that teach rhetorical awareness, including writing for different purposes, audiences, and contexts.

**Communication Skills:** To include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.

This objective will be addressed with writing and reading assignments that teach rhetorical awareness, including writing for different purposes, audiences, and contexts.

**Teamwork:** To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared
purpose or goal. This objective will be addressed with peer writing groups and small-group work.

**Personal Responsibility:** To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making. This objective will be addressed by activities and discussions that teach the ethics of rhetoric and research.