**Research and Argument**

**English** 1302.013

**Time:** MWF 11:00 – 11:50

**Place:** Ferguson 483

**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

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

ENG 1302 – Research and Argument: “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 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.
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 focused, analytical reading, serious discussion, 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.

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. As noted, an important part of this process is reading, in a focused and critical manner, the best efforts of other writers and discussing what we find there. Therefore, this class will consist of equable amounts of reading, discussion, and writing. This course is not a literature class; however, analyzing the written arguments 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; art, however, requires the doing, the act; the only way to become a good writer is to write, write, and write! The nature of this class 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 passage, 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. No doubt 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 by 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 (hopefully) 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.**
A Good Grammar/Research Handbook
Computer or other Zoom-capable device
Tools for taking Notes

**Course Requirements**
In this class, you will be asked 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, a synthesis and critical analysis essay, wherein you summarize and analyze the argument of another; a persuasive essay, wherein you argue your own perspective on a relevant topic; and a final exam in the form of an in-class timed essay wherein you analyze and explain a piece of poetic text.

All papers composed outside of class require MLA format. No late work will be accepted. Students are required to submit an electronic copy, on time, 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. Again, no late work will be accepted.

**Course Calendar**
The class will be divided into four sections based on the three major paper assignments and the final exam. Each assignment will take approximately four weeks to complete. The film analysis will take slightly less time; the synthesis will take slightly longer. The general
schedule, however, will be one major paper due each month, along with the relevant daily work such as rough drafts, peer critiques, thesis submissions, et cetera.

**Grading Policy**
Semester grades will be the sum of the major paper grades, 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 (25) points; the final exam is worth a maximum of ten (10) points, and each daily grade is worth a maximum of one (1) point – for a total of one hundred (100) possible points. After your semester grade is determined, attendance points will be deducted or added. Feel free to see me about your writing, your grade, or for any other reason, during office hours.

**Attendance**
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 or engage in non-class-related activities, 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 you will have the opportunity to make up any daily work missed due to absence. You have three absences before your grade begins to suffer; use them how you wish. Because, however, group discussion is such an important element of this class, excessive absences will adversely affect your grade. One point will be deducted from your semester grade for each absence after the third. 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.

**English 132 Student 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).

**Core Curriculum Objectives**

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

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. 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. 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. Objective will be addressed by activities and discussions that teach the ethics of rhetoric and research.

**Students with Disabilities**
(Students with special needs should conference with the instructor ASAP.)

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 7