English 131
Rhetoric and Composition
Department of English, Stephen F. Austin State University

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Description:
In English 131, students study and practice the writing process and the skills of writing with a focus on analytical reading and writing. Students read and write a range of essay types, including expressive, explication, analytical, and persuasive. Essay assignments address rhetorical analysis and critical response to close textual readings. Students in English 131 write a minimum of four formal essays (totaling 18 pages) and at least one in-class timed essay. English 131 is a requirement for all students who do not qualify for ENG133H.

In English 131, the emphasis is on the development of critical thinking, reading, and holistic academic writing skills.

Prerequisite: Pass or exemption from THEA or a C in English 099. Students must earn a grade of C or higher in English 131 to be admitted to English 132.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in LiveText</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis,</td>
<td>Collaborative Case Study (only your analysis part)</td>
<td>March 2</td>
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<td>evaluation and synthesis of information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas</td>
<td>Collaborative Case Study (only your analysis part)</td>
<td>March 2</td>
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<td>through written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
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<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>To include the ability to consider different points of view and to</td>
<td>Collaborative Case Study (only your analysis part)</td>
<td>March 2</td>
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<td>work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to</td>
<td>Collaborative Case Study (only your analysis part)</td>
<td>March 2</td>
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<td>ethical decision-making.</td>
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English Program Learning Outcomes

This is a general education core curriculum course and no specific program learning outcomes for this major are addressed in the course.

Required Texts:
*Lumberjacks Write!* (Provided)

Handouts, essays, and short stories will be assigned by the instructor and should be saved by the student. Check D2L often and regularly.

English 131 Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of English 131, the student must attain the following outcomes:
1. Experience in all phases of the writing process, including invention, drafting, peer reviewing, revising, edition, proofreading, and a presentation.
2. Proficiency in identifying the rhetorical situation of another’s work; also the student’s ability to write and communicate appropriately based on the rhetorical situation.
3. Proficiency in analyzing the rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos) of another’s work; also the ability to use rhetorical appeals effectively in one’s own compositions.
4. Proficiency in critical thinking and analysis in reading demonstrated by the student’s ability to identify the purpose, tone, thesis, and supporting evidence in assigned texts, as well as the text’s effects, strengths, and weaknesses.
5. Proficiency in critical thinking and analysis in writing demonstrated by the student’s ability to develop topics and theses supported by textual evidence and his or her own analysis in conformity with the instructor’s requirements.
6. Ability to compose expressive, expository, analytical, and persuasive essays in response to specific requirements and/or situations and to use various forms (methods) of development, including narrative, classification, division, example, and comparison/contrast, in written, visual, and oral communication.
7. Ability to write unified and coherent paragraphs of grammatically correct sentences.
8. Proficiency in MLA basics. This includes 1) proper page formatting (heading, title, page numbering), 2) basic in-text citations (introductory phrase, quote or paraphrase, parenthetical citation, and explanation), 3) a properly formatted works cited page.
9. Experience in collaborative problem-solving, critical thinking, analysis, presentation, and written response within various group scenarios and projects.
10. Understanding of the different types and levels of plagiarism and how to avoid them.

Texas Exemplary Educational Objectives for English 131

The English 131 learning outcomes meet the following Texas Exemplary Educational Objectives (EEOs):

- Communication EEO 1: To understand and demonstrate writing and speaking processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, and presentation.
- Communication EEO 2: To understand the importance of specifying audience and purpose and to select appropriate communication choices.
- Communication EEO 3: To understand and appropriately apply modes of expression, i.e., descriptive, expository, narrative, scientific, and self-expressive, in written, visual, and oral communication.
- Communication EEO 4: To participate effectively in groups with emphasis on listening, critical and reflective thinking, and responding.
• Communication EEO 5: To understand and apply basic principles of critical thinking, problem solving, and technical proficiency in the development of exposition and argument.

**General Course Policies:**
The following are my personal pet peeves and do not extend beyond my classroom:

- No laptops, tablets, or iPods or anything that will be a disturbance. Few things irritate me more than when someone is texting while I’m talking, and it’s also disrespectful to your classmates.
- Refrain from eating noisy foods. This class is only 50 minutes long. If you must eat during class, choose something that won’t make noise. I do not, however, mind if you bring drinks into class.
- Be respectful. This is a discussion heavy course and we may enter into some controversial material. I will not tolerate anyone being disrespectful or rude. I do want you to be able to voice your opinion, but wait and listen to your classmates. If this class is going to be a success, we must maintain a mature atmosphere that encourages lively engagement.
- Above all, have fun. Writing is a fun skill to learn.

**Attendance & Punctuality**
Attendance is required for this class. You will not have the necessary information to successfully complete assignments in the class if you are not present. You are allowed 3 absences in this class without penalty. 5-6 absences will result in the loss of five points from your final grade. 7-8 absences will result in a deduction of ten points from your final grade. After 9 absences you will fail the course.

Being late to class will be taken seriously. Punctuality is a skill you must develop in order to be successful in life. Tardiness will be counted as ½ of an absence. But if something happened that made getting to class on time difficult, talk to me at the end of class. If you email me after class is over, I will not take your reason into consideration.

Whether an absence is excused or not, you are responsible for any coursework or content that was presented that day in class. Do not email me to ask what you missed. You should ask your classmates or check your syllabus.

**Participation**
Bring your relevant books, handouts, and assigned reading to each class. Turn off cell phones, iPods, and anything else that makes noise. If your behavior in class becomes disruptive, I will ask you to leave. This is a discussion heavy course. You will be required to participate in class discussion at least once a week. If I break you up to have group discussion, you are required to contribute to your group.

**Note-taking**
You should always take notes in class. This gives you a record of what occurred that day, helps you internalize the material, and provides you with information that you may be able to use in your papers.
**Late Work**

If you do not have a valid excuse for an absence, I will not repeat material that was gone over during the class which you missed. You cannot make up missed in-class activities unless you have a documented, excused absence. See SFA policy for what constitutes an excused absence.

You get 1 opportunity to turn in a daily homework assignment late (note: this does not include major papers). When you are turning in something late, you should turn it in with material for that day and I will grade the work as if it were turned in on time.

**You are ADULTS and ADULTS make arrangements.** If you are unable to turn in a major paper on time, you must make arrangements with me prior to the class meeting in which the paper is due, and I will determine that the excuse for not being able to do so is valid.

**Plagiarism and Cheating (JUST DON’T DO IT)**

I take plagiarism very seriously. According to SFASU Policies and Procedures:

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.

If a student paper is found to have plagiarized passages, I will meet with the student, investigate the case, and decide on a suitable course of action, which may include an un-revisable 0 on the paper, an F in the course, and an Academic Dishonesty Form filed with the Dean of the plagiarizing student’s college. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, or fear you may not have properly cited something, please talk to me.

**Grades**

For each assignment a grade will be calculated according to the number of points it is worth. For some papers I will use a 10 point scale while on others I will use a 20 point scale. According to university policy, your final grades for the course will be a flat letter grade (no plus or minus).

**A: 9.0 - 10/18.0 - 20.0** This grade signifies superior composition, content, style, and mechanics. The student will have written a thoughtful, original paper with excellent topic development and concrete details. The paper will have insightful examples, and the student will have executed a sophisticated analysis subject matter. The student’s writing is mechanically pristine with only the smallest grammatical errors (such as a missing comma or a single typo).

**B: 8.0 - 8.9/16.0 - 17.9** Good composition, content, style, and mechanics. The student has executed a thoughtful paper with adequate topic development. Clear and complete details and examples are
present. The paper is consistent in style. Slight problems may be present in one or two areas, but the paper shows strength in others. The paper is not heavily impacted by mechanical errors.

C: 7.0 - 7.9/14.0 - 15.9 Acceptable content, but style, organization and mechanics are uneven and need revision, OR the composition is lacking in content and does not sufficiently consider the subject matter as evidenced by inadequate topic development and lack of concrete details, AND/OR the ethos of the writer is damaged by mechanical errors.

D: 6.0 – 6.9/12.0 – 13.9 Below average, unsatisfactory work. On essays and written responses, the paper (whether through lack of effort, revision, editing, or some other reason) is not clear or focused. The paper is very uneven in its content, organization, and style. The meaning of the paper is obscured by mechanical errors.

F: Below 5.9/11.9 The student did not do the work assigned, did not follow directions, or did not meet the most basic requirements of the assignment. See me as soon as possible.

Assignments
Personal Narrative: 10%
Review 10%
Rhetorical Analysis: 20%
Presentation 10%
Analysis and Argument: 20%
Final Essay: 10%
Participation: 10%
Blogs: 10%

Personal Narrative (10pts. 3-5 pages)
We will read and study personal narratives by established writers. Then, I will assign you to write a personal narrative about a specific event in your life where a belief or truth you held closely changed.

Review (10pts. 3-5 pages)
Students will write a profile and review about a product. This can be anything from music to film to the latest Apple product you have enjoyed. This essay will be no longer than 5 pages and must clearly and concisely explain and review the product in an objective voice.

Rhetorical Analysis (20pts. 5-7 pages)
You will write an analysis about an essay we have read and studied during this unit. The tone of this essay should be professional. I want details and information about how the writer of the essay appealed to his audience and why the writer was successful in his essay. You should draw examples from the essay to support your claim. Through this assignment, you will learn critical thinking and close reading skills, then learn how to transfer those ideas into a concise and coherent essay.

Presentation (10pts)
In a group, you will build, write, and present an Ad campaign using the rhetorical appeals and skills you have learned in this unit. The objective of this assignment is for you to use these skills in a practical way. Meet with your group and come up with a product you want to advertise and think of this presentation as if you were pitching it to potential buyers.
Argument (20pts. 6-9 pages)
In this paper, you will read the assigned essay, effectively analyze the thesis presented in the essay and then draw and explain your argument about why you agree or disagree with the essay. Then, to fulfill all the requirements outlined for this capstone essay, you will discuss how this essay affected you and your mindset, whether it be emotionally, mentally, or spiritually. Through this assignment, you will learn the basis for argument and the ability to state your position.

Participation (10pts)
Daily Work and Class Participation is covered in class discussion, peer review, turning in rough drafts for peer review, and a small group project.

Blogs (10%)
In lieu of readings quizzes, you will be required to keep a weekly blog where you will write a passage about what you learned and/or read that week. These blogs will be due every Monday unless noted by the instructor.

Final Essay (10%)
Your final essay will be a timed, in-class essay. You will need to bring your pen (not pencil—too hard to read) and a blue book. The prompt will be given to you at the beginning of the exam.

ALL PAPERS MUST:
• Meet the guidelines given on the prompt.
• Be in essay form.
• Be typed, double-spaced in MLA format, using Times New Roman 12pt font.
• Have appropriate headings.
• Have an original title. DO NOT use the title of another work as your title.
• Be submitted online through D2L, and into me in hard copy, by the beginning of class on the due date. Papers that are not turned in on time will receive a 2 point deduction for the first day it is late, after which the paper will not be accepted.
• If the assignment requires quotes or sources, use appropriate citation.

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, going into the fourth page.
• Does not follow proper format. We will have gone over correct MLA formatting for essays. You should know how to do this.
• An abundance of spelling/grammar errors.
• Is plagiarized.

If you fail a paper, do not lose hope, or think it is personal. You are here to learn, and we sometimes learn best through our failures. Any comments I make are meant to help you.

You will be allowed to revise one paper, except for the final paper because it will be too late in the semester. To receive full credit, your revision must be extensive and go beyond my edits and suggestions. This means:
• You must have an essay to revise, meaning you cannot skip an essay assignment and then “revise it.” Also, essays that are submitted late cannot be revised.
• To reiterate, your revision must go beyond surface level corrections and edits. This means correcting only the grammar does not count as revision. Utilizing only my comments and edits does not count as a complete revision. It is only a step in the revision process.
• **Go to the AARC at least once** with your essay. They are there to help you and the AARC is free. When you visit the AARC, you must bring back with your revision documented as proof that you went there for assistance.
• **When you submit your revision, you must turn in the original and the revised copy.**

**More Necessary Stuff**

**Acceptable Student Behavior**
As stated in Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1, “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. 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.”

**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/).

**AARC**
Writing tutors are available in the Academic Assistance and Research Center on the first floor of the library. Drop-in tutoring is offered Mon.-Thurs from 3 to 8 p.m and on Sunday afternoons from 4-8p.m. You can also make an appt. by calling 468-4108.
Tentative Calendar

WEEK ONE—UNIT ONE: EXPRESSIVE WRITING
W: Intro/Syllabus Day. HW: Read “This is Water” by David Foster Wallace.
F: Discuss DFW. Audience. Assign Blogs and Personal Narrative.

WEEK TWO
F: Discuss essay. Writing detail. Point of View. HW: David Foster Wallace short story.

WEEK THREE
M: Discuss DFW. Changing beliefs/truth in narrative. HW: Work on essay.
W: Peer review/Practice workshop.
F: Rough Drafts Due for Workshop

WEEK FOUR—UNIT TWO: EXPOSITORY WRITING
M: Narratives Due. Review essay assignment.
W: Discuss sample essays. Pulling support/Types of summary.
F: Review exercises.

WEEK FIVE
F: Workshop Essays

WEEK SIX—UNIT THREE: RHETORICAL ANALYSIS
M: Essays Due. Assign Rhetorical Analysis. HW: Read Claire Vaye Watkins.
W: Discuss essay. HW: Olga Khazan essay.
F: Discuss essay. Voice in analysis. HW: “The ME ME ME Generation”

WEEK SEVEN
W: Discuss essay. HW: Work on essay.
F: Logical Fallacies. HW: Write one page draft.

WEEK EIGHT
M: Drafting day. HW: Write Rough draft for workshop.
W: Peer Review Workshop.
F: Open discussion for essays.

WEEK NINE
BREAK

WEEK TEN
M: Group presentation discussion
W: Group presentation discussion
F: Happy Easter
WEEK ELEVEN
M: Happy Easter
W: Presentations
F: Presentations

WEEK TWELVE—ANALYSIS AND ARGUMENT
W: Discuss essay.
F: Discuss essay.

WEEK THIRTEEN
M: Discuss essay.
W: Finding support for claims.
F: Research, finding sources.

WEEK FOURTEEN
M: Conferences
W: Conferences
F: Conferences

WEEK FIFTEEN
M: Peer Review
W: Peer Review
F: Open discussion day

WEEK SIXTEEN
M: Watch movie
W: Watch movie
W: Watch movie

WEEK SEVENTEEN
Final Exam: