ENGLISH 131.020
COMPOSITION & RHETORIC

Instructor: Ms. Renee Williams
Class Hours: MWF 10:00-10:50 a.m.
Location: FERG 292
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Office Location: LAN 243
Office Hours:
M  8:00-8:45, 11:30-12:30
T  8:00-8:45
W  8:00-8:45, 11:30-12:30
Th 8:00-8:45
F 11:30-12:30

Course Description: Rhetoric and Composition (ENGL 131)—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 English 133H. Prerequisite: acceptable THEA score or at least a C in English 099. Must earn a grade of C or higher to be admitted to English 132.

Students in English 131 will write a minimum of four formal essays (totaling at least 15 pages) and at least one in-class timed essay. In English 131, the emphasis is on the development of critical thinking, reading, and holistic academic writing skills.

Required Texts and Materials:
- Lumberjacks Write!, 4th edition
- Notebook or loose-leaf paper
- Blue or black ink pen

Encouraged Optional Materials:
- Dictionary
- Thesaurus
- Dictionary/Thesaurus app (i.e., Dictionary.com app)

NOTE: Internet use is a requirement for this course. Assignments, quizzes, and other course materials will be posted to D2L, and students will turn in final drafts via dropbox in D2L. Lack of technology at home is no excuse for not turning in an assignment on time. If you do not have the resources at home, please take this opportunity to make use of the technology in the library that you pay for with your tuition.
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.

General Education Core Curriculum Outcomes:
As part of the communication component area, in any given semester one or more of the following Core Curriculum Objectives for English 131 may be assessed:

- Critical Thinking: creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
- Communication: effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
- Teamwork: the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.
- Personal Responsibility: the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

English 131 Student Learning Outcomes:
ENG 131 learning outcomes are goals that students must meet as part of the Freshman Composition requirements, which include:

1. Ability to show appropriate acquisition of CORE objective 1 skills. Students in composition courses make application of these skills in the writing of personal, expository, and persuasive essays, which require students to make inquiries into and exploration of topics in creative, innovative, or analytical ways. Students are expected to complete readings, to engage in course and group discussions, and to analyze, interpret, and synthesize their findings resultant from these critical engagements into well-developed essays. Written assignments will evidence the students’ command of these considerations: effective engagement of audience (pathos), logical development of ideas (logos), and effective use of examples, expertise, or insight (ethos).

2. Ability to show appropriate acquisition of CORE objective 2 skills. These skills include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication. Following instruction about group interaction, students will engage in oral communication through class discussions and group work (orally in face-to-face courses, electronically in online courses). Students will have occasion to respond to visual medium, as found in assigned readings, lectures, PowerPoint presentations, or other media, dependent upon course materials. Students learn processes for writing that help them to form coherent, well-developed, well-organized, and unified discussions through a variety of writing methodologies, including personal, expository, and persuasive methodologies. Students will write at least four essays in composition courses, and rubrics will assess such concerns as development and exploration, mechanical clarity, and interpretation or expression of ideas.

3. Ability to show appropriate acquisition of CORE objective 3 skills. These skills include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal. Following instruction about peer review processes and
small group work, students will perform peer mentorship on essay assignments and work together on group projects, which may include collaborative writing occasions, group presentations, or panel discussions. As peer review is the common teamwork experience, students will be required to share potentially diverse ideas with one another, to address those views in appropriate ways, and to help one another to finalize essays for submission.

4. Ability to show appropriate acquisition of CORE objective 4 skills. These skills include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making. Students will have opportunity to examine numerous readings, including essays written by classmates, to examine the credibility and value of those readings, and to understand how expository methodologies bear responsibility and consequence.

**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, expositive, 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.

**Course Objectives:**
1. Experience in all phases of the writing process, including invention, drafting, peer reviewing, revising, edition, proofreading, and final 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.

Accommodations for 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/.

Course Policies:

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.”

Attendance and Absences:
You are expected to attend every meeting having done the assigned work and being ready to participate in class activities and discussions. According to university policy, after nine absences (the equivalent of three weeks of missed class) for any reason whatsoever, you will automatically fail the class. In this class, you are allowed five absences with no penalty. Missing more than five classes will result not only in poor attendance and participation grades, but also in your final grade being dropped five points for each additional day that you are absent. You are responsible for keeping track of your own absences.

Please be on time to class. I will take attendance at the beginning of the class session. If you are not there when I take attendance at the beginning of class, you will be considered tardy. If you
come in after I take attendance or if you suspect you have been marked absent incorrectly, it is your responsibility to notify me at the end of class. Because entering a class in progress can disrupt the learning environment, three tardies will count as an absence.

The choice of whether or not to attend class is yours. However, bear in mind that, regardless of the reason for your absence, you are responsible for any and all information and work you miss during your absence. Regular attendance increases your odds of success in this and any other course. Unless you make prior arrangements (in a timely manner) with me concerning an absence, it is up to the instructor’s discretion whether you will be allowed to make up any work. Networking with your classmates through an exchange of contact information will likely benefit you greatly. Additionally, I encourage students to keep contact with me through email and during office hours. Remember: adults make arrangements.

Participation:
Each student will receive a grade based on his or her participation in class. Participation involves more than simply showing up to class—it requires being actively engaged in the learning process. The list below outlines some (but not necessarily all) of the elements that will affect the Participation grade.

1. **Be on time for class.**
2. **Submit work on time.** Work turned in after our class period is still late work.
3. **Put cell phones out of sight and on silent.** If I see you using your cell phone during class, I will not ask you to put it away, but I will mark your participation grade for the day as a zero. Extreme or repeated incidents will result in an absence for the class period.
4. **Complete assignments as instructed.** Always read all instructions that I provide and ask for clarification whenever necessary before you submit an assignment. Not following instructions will result in lost points on assignments, and telling me after you have received your grade that you found something confusing or unclear will not result in a change of that grade.
5. **Engage fully in group work and peer-review.** At the college level, students participate regularly in both individual and group work. Don’t be the person who makes others dread group work. All students will participate in peer-editing. Do your best to contribute meaningful feedback to your peers and incorporate what you learn from the peer-review process into your own work.
6. **Respect fellow class members and the instructor at all times.** Remember, our classroom is a professional atmosphere and must be treated as such.
7. **Do not sleep during class.** Students who sleep in class will be marked absent for the class session without comment from me.
8. **Refrain from eating noisy and/or pungent foods in class.**
9. **Do not bring children or other guests to class.** Please understand that the presence of a child in the college classroom is not conducive to learning, and the college classroom is usually an inappropriate place for children.
10. **Attend all scheduled conferences.** Failure to attend scheduled conferences will affect your Participation grade as well as the grade for the assignment about which we are meeting. Additionally, missing a scheduled conference will count against your absences.
Late Work:
In general, I do not accept late work. However, I MAY make exceptions under certain circumstances. If you find that you will be unable to meet a given deadline, please notify me as soon as possible (either in person or via email) AT LEAST 24 hours PRIOR to the due date to request a reasonable extension. Requesting an extension does not guarantee you will receive an extension. Expect a grade reduction on any late work that is accepted. Students who are habitually late will no longer receive this consideration.

Extra Credit:
During the semester, I may announce extra credit assignments in class. Any extra credit will be available to the entire class; I will not give individual extra credit assignments, so please do not ask.

Essay Revisions:
Students may revise and resubmit any ONE essay of their choice—except the final essay—for a chance at a higher grade. Below is the procedure for revision and resubmission.

1. Reread your graded paper and the comments I have included. Make sure that you understand the original requirements of the prompt. In some rare cases, you may need to completely re-conceive the essay in order to satisfy the requirements. Rewriting is not just about “fixing the errors.”

2. Use your grammar handbook or other resources to help you understand the markings and comments I have made. You must understand what you have done wrong before you can rewrite.

3. Contact an AARC tutor (through the OWL or on campus) and discuss the graded paper and assignment with your tutor OR schedule an appointment with me to go over your essay in more detail.

4. When you are sure that you understand what your problems were on the original assignment, rewrite the paper, proofread it, attach the AARC tutorial form (if applicable) and the original graded essay, and submit a digital copy of your revision to the Revisions dropbox and a printed copy to me.

5. Rewrites must be submitted within two weeks (preferably less) of the returned original paper.

6. If the grade for the rewritten essay is higher, it will replace the grade of the original essay. Essays resubmitted without significant revisions will not receive a higher grade.

Email and Electronic Resources:
Correspondence relating to this course may be sent to my SFASU email or Gmail, but please DO NOT email me through D2L. I prefer to receive email at rlbwilliams83@gmail.com, and you will receive replies much faster if you contact me at that address. The subject line must include your name and class number and section (Sally Student 131.0XX). I may not respond to emails with any other subject line, especially if they come from an email address I don’t recognize. I will not accept assignments by email unless I’ve specifically asked they be submitted that way. I
usually respond to emails received between 8am and 10 pm within a couple of hours. If you do not receive a response from me within 24 hours, try again or see me during office hours.

When you compose an email to me (and probably most other instructors), you should follow the guidelines below:

1. Begin with a salutation (e.g., “Hi, Mrs. Williams” or “Ms. Williams:").
2. Write in complete sentences.
3. Use standard punctuation and capitalization.
4. Run a spellcheck and proofread your email.
5. Be clear.
6. Be courteous.
7. Maintain personal responsibility and accountability.
8. Include a sign-off followed by your name (e.g., “Best, Sally” or “Thanks, Bob”).
9. Think about what you are saying and/or asking before you click Send.

Remember that your audience for this email is your college English teacher, not your friend or family member, and an email is a professional document, not a text message or social media post. I have a hard time responding when I get an email that looks like this:

why come I made a 3/10 on grammer 2 quiz and there was only 5 questions

If I receive an email that looks like the one above, I will respond by asking you to reread this section of the syllabus and try again. If I can’t understand what you’re asking in an email, I will respond by asking you to reread your email and try again.

**Academic Integrity:**

It is the student's responsibility to do his or her own work and to do it honestly. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses which will be dealt with promptly. 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 any questions about whether or not something constitutes cheating or plagiarism, do not hesitate to ask me; the consequences for academic dishonesty are too high to risk lightly.

Essentially, plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work, words, or thoughts as your own. Failing to give credit to the person or people whose work you use to supplement your own is plagiarism, even if you do not explicitly claim to have come up with it yourself. Cheating includes but is not limited to allowing someone else to do your work for you, doing another person’s work for him or her, allowing another person to copy your work and present it as his or her own, and using or attempting to use unauthorized materials for a test or assignment.

Please read SFA’s official policy on academic honesty at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp).
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 1 to 8 p.m. and on Sunday afternoons. You can also make an appointment online or by calling 468-4108.

Determination of Grade:
Final grades are determined by the following criteria:
10% Attendance & Participation
10% Essay 1
10% Essay 2
10% Essay 3
10% Essay 4
10% Group Project
10% Quizzes
10% Midterm Exam
20% Final Exam

Grading depends on multiple factors. The final grade is scaled from 1000 total possible points earned throughout the semester. These points are broken down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
<th>% of Course Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 formal essays</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 quizzes (10 points each)*</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project**</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Possible Points: 1000
900-1000 points = A
800-899 points = B
700-799 points = C
600-699 points = D
< 600 points = F

*Provided you submit more than 10 quizzes, I will drop the lowest two quiz scores. If you are absent on the day a quiz is given, assigned, or due, you will not have the opportunity to make up that quiz. However, as long as you turn in ten other quizzes, the zero will be dropped.

**The Group Project will consist of both an individual and a group grade, each worth 5% of your total grade for the course.
Grading Scale:

A = 90-100 percent

“A” work is excellent in the quality of its content, organization, and execution. I do not give an A grade lightly; the author of an A paper has exceeded expectations and demonstrated impressive control of language and style. When I read an A paper, I think, “Wow! This student clearly put a lot of thought and effort into writing the best paper s/he possibly could. There’s almost nothing that needs correction.” To earn an A in the course, students devote sincere effort to every assignment and put forth consistently strong work.

B = 80-89 percent

“B” work meets the minimum requirements and is relatively free of major flaws and errors. Papers that receive a B grade have fairly strong content development and adequate use of detail and elaboration, but they may be somewhat lacking in technical execution. Students who earn a B have performed better than average in engaging the material and transmitting their thoughts clearly and interestingly. When I read a B paper, I think, “This is very good writing with just a few areas that need improvement.”

C = 70-79 percent

“C” work represents an average or acceptable response to an assignment. A C is not a “bad” grade. When I read a C paper, I’m thinking, “This student is on the right track and making acceptable progress but still needs significant improvement.” C papers are reasonably well-constructed and demonstrate thoughtful effort and relative clarity, but they generally contain several major errors and/or lack adequate content development.

D = 60-69 percent

F = 50 percent and below

Work that receives a grade of “D” (60-69%) or “F” (below 60%) did not meet the minimum requirements of the assignment. Papers that demonstrate a lack of effort on the part of the authors to meeting those requirements receive a grade of 0. Students who receive a zero grade in this sort of situation are not guaranteed an opportunity to revise and resubmit.

PLEASE NOTE:

All final drafts of your writing for this course should adhere to the rules of standard written English grammar, punctuation, and spelling (American).

Failing to meet the minimum page count for final draft will reduce your maximum score for that essay by a percentage equal to the missing content. If the assignment is 4-5 pages, then that means that the assignment must be AT LEAST 4 FULL PAGES; the highest grade a 3 page paper could receive is 75%. Page counts do not include works cited pages or other supplemental material such as images or graphs.
All final drafts and major assignments must be submitted electronically through D2L and on paper unless I specifically direct you to do otherwise. Papers are due by the time class starts. Any paper received after that time is considered late.

Daily work, homework, and timed writings will be submitted on paper.

In order to pass this course, you must complete ALL assigned essays and the group presentation. Failure to turn in any one of these assignments will result in a failing grade for the course.

The Participation & Attendance grade constitutes 10% of the total grade for this course. This is a full letter grade. Making an effort to attend class and participate can be particularly helpful if you find yourself in a situation in which you have a “borderline” grade. In other words, high Participation and Attendance grades could make the difference between receiving a C or a B for the course.

**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.

**Complaints/Questions:**
I encourage all students to ask questions. If you leave a question unasked, it will remain unanswered. If you have any complaints or questions, please see me first; I can usually help resolve the problem. In the event that I cannot, I will direct you to the appropriate person who will be able to help you out.