

ENGL 3330: Advanced Composition

Spring 2018, Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00 A.M. to 12:15 P.M., Founder's Hall 209

Instructor: Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr.

E-mail: bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu

Office: Warrior Hall 322C or University Writing Center

Office Hours: Walk-in or Email for an Appointment



Course Description: ENGL 3330: Advanced Composition enhances students' proficiency in critical reading and thinking, rhetorical concepts/awareness, the writing process, academic argument, scholarly research, and productive revision practices. Through intensive writing workshops and critical engagement with a variety of interdisciplinary texts, students hone their writing abilities to meet the demands and expectations for different writing contexts with a particular focus on writing for academic audiences.

Course Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Read and engage critically with a variety of different texts
- Comprehend, and apply to their composition practices, key rhetorical concepts through composing a variety of texts for different audiences/purposes
- Locate, evaluate, and synthesize both primary and secondary sources (scholarly journal articles, essays, journalistic sources, books, data, etc.) to support and bolster their claims and arguments
- Formulate rhetorically and logically sound academic arguments by employing solid reasoning and supporting evidence

- Become familiar with, and adhere to, various disciplinary conventions for academic writing, including understanding the epistemological rationales behind such conventions
- Engage with and apply criticism and feedback from both peers and their instructor in order to improve their writing and view writing as a social process
- Develop their writing through multiple drafts by refining their composition practices and employing successful revision and editing strategies

Required Textbooks and Materials:

- *The Bedford Handbook: 10th Edition*, Eds. Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers, ISBN (13) #978-1-4576-8303-9
- *Crimes Against Logic: Exposing the Bogus Arguments of Politicians, Priests, Journalists, and Other Serial Offenders*, Jamie Whyte, ISBN (13) #978-0-07-144643-3
- Various .pdf articles and selections from various texts (available through Canvas)
- Access to a Computer (the university provides a number of computer labs)

This course will use the TAMUCT Instructure Canvas learning management system.

Logon to [TAMUCT Canvas \[https://tamuct.instructure.com\]](https://tamuct.instructure.com)

Username: Your MyCT username (xx123 or everything before the "@" in your MyCT e-mail address)

Password: Your MyCT password

Portfolio Evaluation: This class employs a hybrid version of portfolio grading; as a result, you will be assessed on both your individual assignments as well as your final portfolio. Your 1st drafts will be for peer review, your 2nd drafts will be for me to provide feedback/evaluation, and your final drafts (along with annotated versions) will be posted—along with your other drafts—when your e-Portfolio is completed. Your participation in class and forum posts will account for the remainder of your grade.

Participation= 10%

Forum Posts= 5%

“Changing Hearts and Minds! Composing a Persuasive Editorial”= 10%

“The Rhetoric of Controversy! Analyzing the Rhetoric of Multiple Viewpoints”= 10%

“Annotate This! Creating an Effective Annotated Bibliography”= 5%

“Getting Your Academic Voice Heard! Persuading the Professors”= 20%

“Electronic Portfolio”= 40%

Journals: Almost every class you will write in your journals for the first few minutes. You can either write by hand or type your journal entries. However, for your portfolio, you will be required to have samples of your journal entries typed. Most days, I will dictate a topic for you to write about. Think thoroughly about the topic, yet try to write continuously throughout the duration of the exercise. Sometimes, merely writing down your thoughts can help you to gain a better understanding of the topic and your own thought processes.

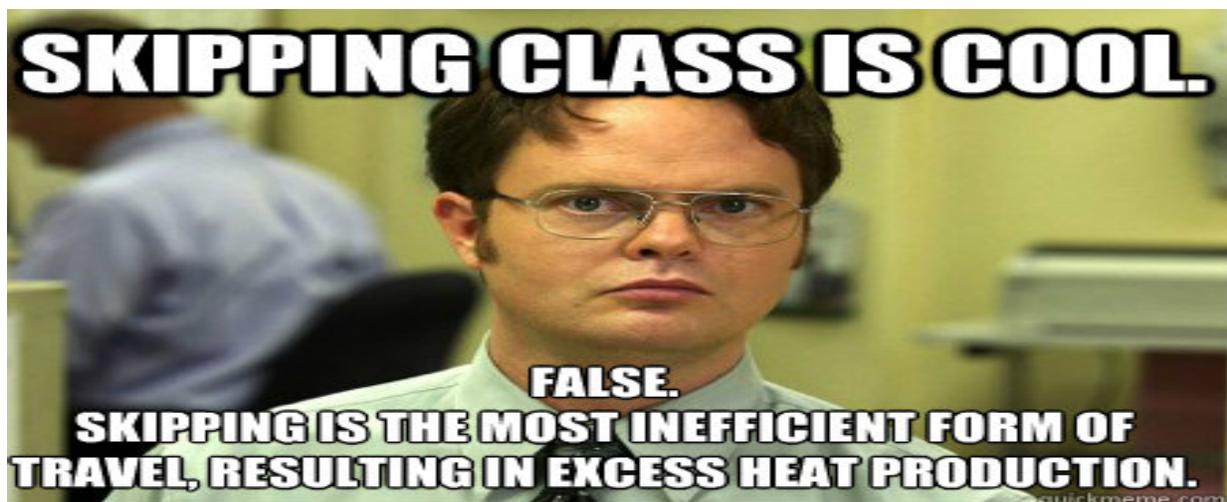
At the beginning of some classes, you will be allowed to free write in your journals. You could contemplate a problem you’ve been having with one of your writing assignments or with one of the assigned readings. You could write about a problem you overcame successfully while writing. Even if I do not dictate a topic to you, your journal entries should have some relevant

connection to the work/topics of our classroom. Journal entries should not be written about people in your life or a funny story from the night before. They reflect your work in the class.

Forum Posts: Forum posts are an extension of our work in the classroom. Frequently, they will prompt you to contemplate upcoming topics of discussion for our class and/or ask you to reflect on readings assigned for the class. They should be posted the day before class by 12:00 P.M. at the latest (this gives me time to read them). These forum posts are informal, so do not concern yourself as much with grammar and syntax as you would for a formal paper. However, do reflect seriously on the topics you are expected to discuss.

Your forum posts should be between 1-2 pages double-spaced. Under a page is probably not enough to elaborate on your ideas. Also, make sure to reply to at least one of your classmates' forum posts with thoughtful commentary. Just posting to the forum is not enough—you need to enter into a conversation with your peers.

Class Attendance Policy: Attending class is vital if you are to get the most out of this course. As a result, I do require that you miss **no more than four classes** throughout the semester. If you miss more than four classes, this will be grounds for possible failure.



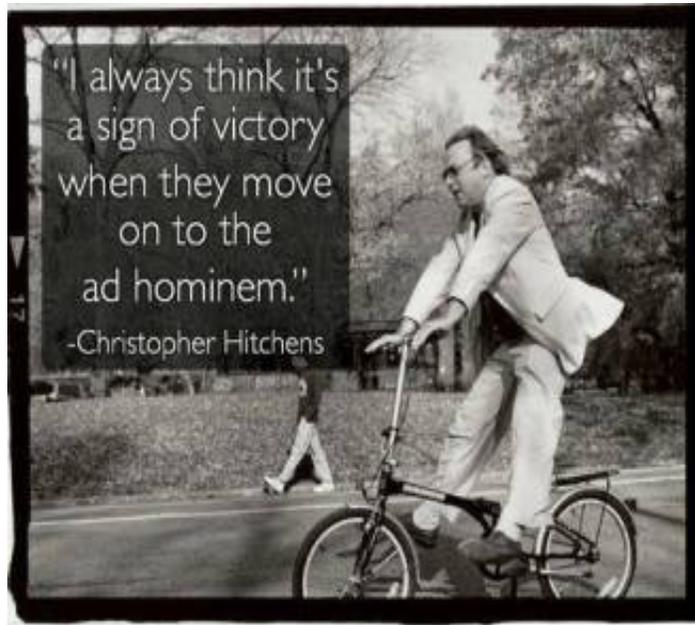
However, I am willing to be lenient with this policy in the event of long-term health problems, family emergencies, or any other unforeseeable circumstance that might cause you to miss class. In spite of this, you will need to discuss these issues with me as they arise—do not attempt to come to me with a host of excuses at the end of the semester. **If you miss class for any of the aforementioned reasons (or any other reason you believe is valid), please see me immediately so we can discuss this issue.**

Class Civility Policy: This class will tolerate neither disruptive language nor disruptive behavior. Disruptive language includes, but is not limited to, violent and/or belligerent and/or insulting remarks, including sexist, racist, homophobic or anti-ethnic slurs, bigotry, and disparaging commentary, either spoken or written (offensive slang is included in this category). While each of you have a right to your own opinions, inflammatory language founded in ignorance or hate is unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately.

Disruptive behavior includes the use of cell phones, pagers or any other form of electronic communication during the class session (email, web-browsing, etc.). Disruptive behavior also includes whispering or talking when another member of the class is speaking or engaged in relevant conversation (remember that I am a member of this class as well). This classroom functions on the premise of respect, and you will be asked to leave the classroom if you violate any part of this statement on civility.

However, please do feel free to engage in constructive criticism and debates. This policy is not meant to discourage disagreement or passionate conversation. We will be engaging in discussions and/or debates about a host of potentially controversial topics; it is not my intention to censor your opinions. Yet, I do feel it is important to foster an environment conducive to learning where no one feels threatened and/or not entitled to their opinion.

Remember, if you disagree with someone (including myself), always remember to argue against the **IDEA** the person is presenting—not the individual.



Late Work: While I understand that circumstances may arise that could prevent you from turning an assignment in on time, **I do not accept late work—period!** However, I am always willing to discuss extensions **ahead of time or work with you if unforeseen circumstances arise that could prevent you from handing your work in on time.** If you have a reasonable reason why you believe you should be entitled to an extension, or for why you were not able to meet a deadline, either come see me after class, during office hours, or e-mail me.

Academic Integrity: Texas A&M University – Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M – Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student's work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

Class Plagiarism Policy: As an instructor, I operate by the WPA (Council of Writing Program Administrators) definition of plagiarism: “In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer **deliberately** uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.” The key here is deliberate—I do not want you to be so paranoid about plagiarism that it inhibits your creativity.



To that extent, any instance of “plagiarism” that **does not appear to be deliberate in intent** will be dealt with “in house.” You may be asked to revise; I may even deduct from your grade if this was a result of negligence. However, unless intentional, you will not fail merely as a result of plagiarism nor will you be brought up on plagiarism charges.

That being said, deliberate plagiarism will not be tolerated in any manner. If you willfully steal someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledgment, or submit an assignment for this class that you submitted for another (without previously discussing it with me), be forewarned—you will receive a 0 for the assignment, and I will pursue plagiarism charges with the utmost zeal! Such behavior hinders your learning, is unfair to your classmates, is a violation of my trust, and—above all else—is highly unethical. This is your one and only warning—you would be wise to heed it!

911 Cellular: Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University – Central Texas
911Cellular is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in 911 Cellular through their myCT email account.

Connect at 911Cellular [<https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management>] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in 911Cellular, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

UNILERT: Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University – Central Texas
UNILERT is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University – Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in UNILERT through their myCT email account. Connect at <https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/security/unilert.php> to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in UNILERT, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

Technology Support: For technology issues, students should contact Help Desk Central. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

Web Chat: <http://hdc.tamu.edu>

When calling for support please let your support technician know you are a TAMUCT student. For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Drop Policy: If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a Drop Request Form, found through the Registrar's web page:

<https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/business-office/droppolicy.php>

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the University Calendar for which the form must be completed, signed and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

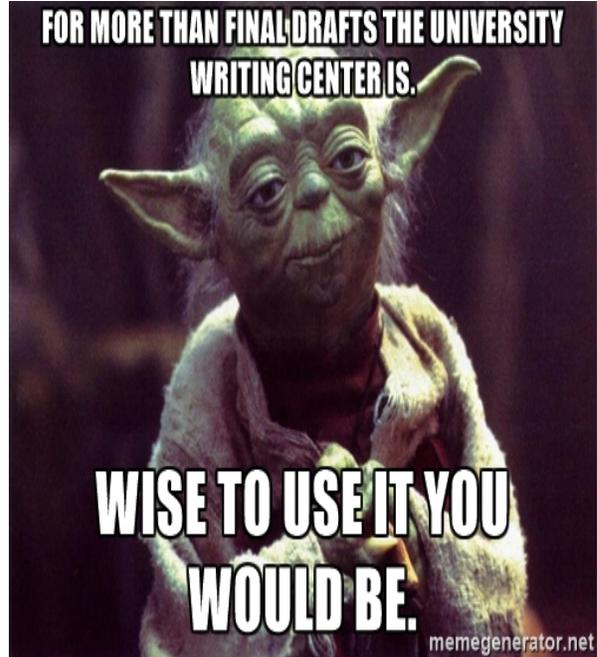
Academic Accommodations: At Texas A&M University – Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier free education. The Department of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the University's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Department of Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit our [Access & Inclusion](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html) webpage [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html>].

Texas A&M University – Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. For more information, please visit <https://www.tamuct.departments/index.php>. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these requirements and guidelines online, please visit the website: [<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>].

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender – including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Division of Student Affairs at 254-501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University’s Title IX Coordinator.

University Writing Center: Located in 416 Warrior Hall, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University – Central Texas is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10am-5pm Monday-Thursday with satellite hours in the University Library Monday-Thursday from 6:00-9:00pm. Students may arrange a one-on-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by visiting the UWC during normal operating hours (both half-hour and hour sessions are available) or by making an appointment via [WOnline](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/) at [\[https://tamuct.mywconline.com/\]](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/). In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu to schedule an online tutoring session. Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process.



While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students’ ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students’ texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the University Writing Center is here to help!

If you have any questions about the University Writing Center, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu.

Tutoring: Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both on-campus and online. On-campus subjects tutored include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Suite 111.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at 254-519-5796, or by emailing Dr. DeEadra Albert-Green at deeadra.albertgreen@tamuct.edu.

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log-in and receive FREE online tutoring and writing support. This tool provides tutoring in over forty subject areas. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

University Library: The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 72,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On-campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available twenty-four hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](https://tamuct.libguides.com/) [https://tamuct.libguides.com/].

Artifact Collection: To ensure the learning outcomes are met in the English Department, there is a program-wide artifact collection process. To that end, your final portfolio for ENGL 3330: Advanced Composition this semester may be used for programmatic assessment. Please note that all efforts will be made to keep your identity anonymous; as such, all identifying markers will be removed from your work if used for programmatic assessment. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu.

Syllabus Change Policy: Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

ENGL 3330: Advanced Composition—Major Projects

*In order to explore audience adaptation, rhetorical awareness, genre, etc., you will pick a particular theme/topic for which you will compose all of your assignments in relation to. While you can compose each of your assignments in regard to particular facets and/or debates in regard to your theme/topic, each assignment should pertain directly to this theme/topic. For example, you could select the theme/topic of gun control and compose your “Changing Hearts and Minds! Composing a Persuasive Editorial” assignment arguing for legalizing the right to carry nationwide, your “The Rhetoric of Controversy! Analyzing the Rhetoric of Multiple Viewpoints” assignment analyzing two scholarly journal articles on the Stand Your Ground Law, and your “Getting Your Academic Voice Heard! Persuading the Professors” assignment by making a scholarly argument for advanced safety and training requirements in lieu of stricter gun control laws.

You will select your theme/topic at the beginning of the semester and receive approval from me. I will do everything in my power to not censor you; however, there are a few themes/topics I may deem off limits. If this is the case, I will discuss this with you in private as well as openly and honestly.

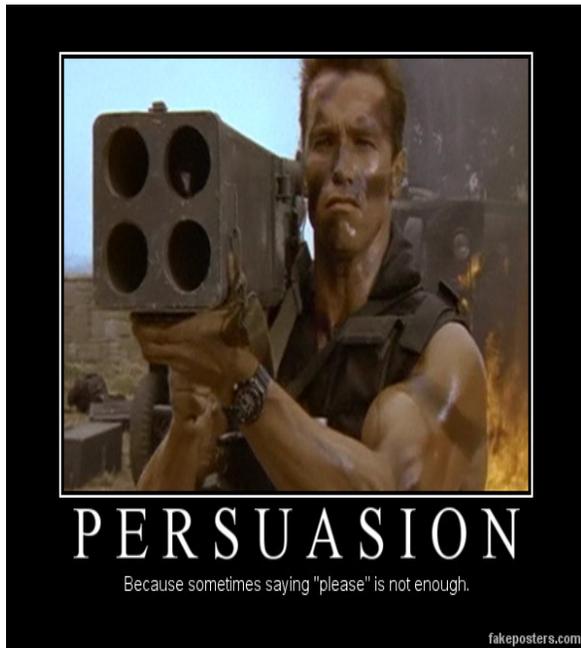
For each of your assignments, you will also get approval for the particular approach you are taking. At times, you might need to narrow or expand your approach to address the assignment. Furthermore, your approach may need to be modified considering your intended audience and/or place of publication.

Lastly, once you have chosen a theme/topic or approach, you must seek approval from me in order to switch to another theme/topic for the class and/or approach for a particular assignment. Any article written on a theme/topic and/or approach that you were not approved for will result in an automatic resubmission and/or potential failure of that assignment.

**For each of the three main articles (excluding your annotated bibliography), you will submit a reflective memo with your 2nd draft. This memo is informal and should be brief; however, do provide detailed answers for all of the reflective questions for that assignment. You should have a solid paragraph (three to four sentences) response for each of the reflective questions.

“Changing Hearts and Minds! Composing a Persuasive Editorial”
(approx. 2 pages)

Unlike traditional journalism, editorials do not seek to remain objective and unbiased. Instead, they present an argument for embracing a particular view on an issue and/or advocate for a certain course of action in response to a certain issue. For your first assignment, you will compose an editorial for a particular newspaper or magazine persuading readers to adopt a particular stance towards an issue pertaining to your theme/topic and/or advocating for a specific course of action or policy in regard to that issue. You can write on any issue that intrigues you within your theme/topic; however, your editorial must be aimed at a specific publication (e.g. *The New York Times*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Atlantic*, *Vanity Fair*, etc.) and at a particular audience that would read such a publication.



Thus, your first step in composing this editorial will be to identify the publication you will be writing for and the audience you will be trying to reach. Although you are given substantial freedom in this regard, you may not “shoot fish in a barrel,” so to speak. Thus, you cannot write a pro-life editorial for *Fox News* nor can you write a pro-choice editorial for *The Huffington Post*. (However, you could argue for a specific course of action for such audiences—e.g. promoting adoption over attempting to change legislation.) Once you have identified your publication and intended audience, you will need to contemplate the best methods for persuading your audience by considering the style, tone, organizational structure, rhetorical strategies, types of evidence, etc. that will be most likely to convince your audience.

What are the political, philosophical, and epistemological leanings of your audience? For example, if you are writing about a political issue, is your audience more liberal, conservative, or perhaps centrist leaning? What assumptions does your audience perhaps already subscribe to that you can draw upon? Do they have any potential biases that might make them reluctant to accept your point of view? Will your intended audience possess certain background knowledge about this particular topic or will you need to frame the issue in a more in-depth fashion for them? What types of evidence/rhetorical strategies are they most likely to be influenced by? Are they more empirical in nature or will a more emotionally-driven approach work best?

After you have identified your publication and intended audience, and contemplated your rhetorical approach, you will compose an editorial approximately two pages in length. Your editorial should provide the appropriate background information necessary for your audience to understand the specific issue you are addressing, make a clear and compelling argument for the position or stance you want your audience to adopt and/or the course of action you would like them to take, and draw upon effective rhetorical and compositional strategies for the task at

hand. The editorial should also avoid engaging in any of the informal fallacies and/or rhetorical deceptions we have discussed in class.

Evaluation for this assignment will primarily be based on the rhetorical and logical strength of your argument and/or explanation, how effectively you tailor your piece to the particular audience you are aiming for, how successfully you organized your argument to meet your goals, and the polished nature of your final project (remember, grammatical and spelling errors zap your ethos!). The primary question I will ask myself when I assess your work will be: *If I were a member of this rhetor's intended audience, how likely would I be to be persuaded by her/his argument?* Take this opportunity to make your voice heard, yet—remember—make sure you do so in a rhetorically sophisticated and logically convincing fashion!

Reflective Memo Questions:

1. What publication are you composing this editorial for? Who do you consider to be the primary audience for this piece? What are their potential leanings, assumptions, and biases? What types of persuasive appeals tend to work best for such an audience?
2. How did you tailor your rhetorical strategies and composing practices in accordance with this audience?
3. Imagine you are a reluctant reader. What aspect(s) of your editorial do you believe such a reader would be most likely to “push back” against? How did you craft your editorial in anticipation of such a response? How might you improve upon this aspect of your article during revision?
4. What are your editorial's biggest strengths in your estimation? What are its biggest weaknesses? What strategies might you employ during revision to improve upon these weaknesses?
5. How would you like me to focus my response to your editorial? In other words, what aspects of your editorial do you most want feedback about?

“The Rhetoric of Controversy! Analyzing the Rhetoric of Multiple Viewpoints” (approx. 5-6 pages)

Giving you the cold, hard facts. The No Spin Zone. Fair and Balanced. Objective Truth vs. Subjective Opinion. *Fox News* is a bunch of Republican propaganda masquerading as “Fair and Balanced.” *The New York Times* is a liberal rag that unfairly slants the news. Unfortunately, in modern society, there is a tendency to vilify rhetoric, positioning it as what the “other side” does while advocating for the inherent truthfulness, ethicality, and/or moral superiority of a particular opinion or position.

Surrounding any controversial issue is a wealth of rhetoric on every side of the debate. Although it might be fair to say that the rhetoric of a particular group is more effective, ethical, valid, etc. than that of another, it is undeniable that rhetoric frames these controversial issues from all perspectives. Thus, for this project, you will do a rhetorical analysis of a particular controversial issue pertaining to your chosen theme/topic. However, the purpose of this assignment is **not to advocate for one position/side over another**. Instead, you will explore how rhetoric frames multiple perspectives on the issue. Although you are free to critique the rhetoric employed by various advocates for certain positions, once again, your analysis should not advocate for one particular position nor should it solely critique the rhetoric of one group while lionizing the rhetoric of another.



If you don't believe rhetoric influences the way we interpret and experience reality, let me present you with Exhibit A that you are wrong!

Your first step will be to choose a particular controversy within your theme/topic that you believe is ripe for such an analysis. The key will be to find a topic that you are already quite knowledgeable about and that you believe demonstrates rhetorical concepts that you are



Who is the genuine rhetor and who is the false prophet? As my main man Obi-Wan Kenobi once said, “Luke, you're going to find that many of the truths we cling to depend greatly on our own point of view.”

comfortable in explicating. Once you have chosen your approach, you will need to have it approved by me in class; while I am open to controversy, I do reserve the right to veto any topic that I believe may cause significant issues. That being said, I will do my best not to censor you in anyway.

After you have chosen an approach, you will need to select artifacts from the various perspectives on the issue to demonstrate your points. It is not enough to claim how each side uses liaisons to their advantage—you need to show your readers this through analysis of artifacts (e.g. speeches, essays, articles, interviews, visual imagery, film clips, podcasts, etc.). Make sure you can back up your claims with actual evidence! You will probably only want one to two artifacts (probably one a piece) for each perspective; furthermore, it usually works best if both artifacts are of the same medium and/or genre (e.g. speech compared to speech, essay compared to essay, podcast compared to podcast, etc.).

Next, you will need to decide which rhetorical theories and concepts you will discuss. You may choose to address the manner in which the various sides of the debate employ ethos, pathos, and logos; you could examine how different sides create liaisons and what assumptions of the audience(s) drive these liaisons; you could demonstrate how various rhetors make certain aspects of the issue more salient (or present) for the audience(s); you may choose to focus on where the presumption lies in the debate and how the side opposite the presumption attempts to shift the burden of proof; you could address epistemological differences in the types of evidence each side presents. The possibilities are endless, yet you should discuss **at least two of the theories we have discussed in class**.

This project should be approximately five to six pages double-spaced (if you use extensive quoting from texts and/or images, you may need to exceed this page requirement), include at least two major rhetorical theories/concepts from class in your analysis, and follow MLA citation practices.

Your project will be assessed primarily on your ability to explicate the particular rhetorical theories/concepts you apply to the controversial issue, the manner in which you apply these rhetorical theories to the rhetoric of the various positions pertaining to the controversial issue, the strength of the organizational structure employed, and—most importantly—the strength of your rhetorical analysis. The main question I will ask myself when I assess your work will be: *How well did this student demonstrate how rhetoric frames the various perspectives on this controversial issue?*

Here are some general guidelines to ensure success on this project:

- Choose a controversy that you are knowledgeable and passionate about; however, be careful of any controversy you may be too passionate about to properly evaluate the rhetoric of each perspective.
- In a similar vein, please avoid choosing “straw men” artifacts, per se. In essence, try to choose strong representations of the particular positions you are analyzing. For example, do not choose a well-crafted editorial for one position and the inane rantings of a two-bit blogger for another.
- Remember, the goal is to analyze the rhetoric that surrounds the controversial issue, not to advocate for a particular stance and/or to completely demonize the rhetoric of one particular viewpoint. Intelligent commentary and critiques are encouraged, but they should not dominate the analysis nor should your analysis merely critique and/or promote one particular vantage point.
- Understand and analyze your artifacts in-depth. The key to great rhetorical analysis is thorough comprehension.
- Provide evidence for your assertions. It is not enough to merely state that the rhetoric of a certain position relies on *x* assumption from the audience. You need to show how the rhetoric is relying on that assumption.

Reflective Memo Questions:

1. Why did you choose the particular controversy you analyzed? Why do you believe it is important to analyze the rhetoric surrounding this particular controversy?

2. What was the rationale behind the artifacts you selected? Why did you believe these artifacts were solid representations of certain vantage points and apt for rhetorical analysis?

3. After conducting your rhetorical analysis, what were the most intriguing aspects of the controversy you discovered? How did you attempt to communicate these discoveries to your audience?

4. What are your rhetorical analysis' biggest strengths in your estimation? What are its biggest weaknesses? What strategies might you employ during revision to improve upon these weaknesses?

5. How would you like me to focus my response to your analysis? Would you like me to focus on your understanding of a particular rhetorical theory? Do you wish for me to focus more on your organizational strategies? Etc.

“Annotate This! Creating an Effective Annotated Bibliography”
(approx. ½ page per entry)

I have no doubt that most of you are familiar with a bibliography. However, an annotated bibliography goes a step further and asks you to analyze the source and discuss its value and usefulness to your own research intentions. For your final project, “Getting Your Academic Voice Heard! Persuading the Professors,” I want you to construct an annotated bibliography including five of your eight sources. Of the five sources you examine, three must be from peer-reviewed, scholarly journals and only one can be from an electronic source (excluding sources originally in print that you found on the internet or scholarly journals that exist solely online).

Once you have chosen your sources, you will provide the appropriate citation for each in MLA style or APA style (or another format if it is more fitting for your research area). Along with your citation, you will write about 100-150 words per source analyzing and critiquing it. Ask yourself: Is this source reliable? If not, why? What is the position of the author(s) of the source towards the topic? Does this cause any biases? If so, are they possibly detrimental? What types of argumentative strategies/evidence does this source rely on? Are they effective given the topic and/or disciplinary context? And, overall, is this source useful for MY research? (This last question is the most vital.)

Completing this annotated bibliography will allow you to not only get started on your research but will also afford you the opportunity to truly examine the benefits/drawbacks of your potential sources. Remember, the sources you choose will be critical to your final project—choose wisely!

“Getting Your Academic Voice Heard! Persuading the Professors”
(approx. 8 pages)

As we have discussed in class, academic writing requires different compositional approaches, rhetorical strategies, evidence, disciplinary convention, etc. than many other forms and genres of writing. Additionally, each distinct academic discipline (and even different specialties within these disciplines) has its own expectations, rhetorical tendencies, evidentiary demands, and conventions. For your final project, you will compose an eight page scholarly article.

To begin, you will select, and narrow down, a topic/research question that interests you and choose a disciplinary area and publication to compose your article for. Do certain academic disciplines intrigue you? What academic disciplines would seem a likely home for your topic? Where could you publish your article so that it would gain the most traction and have the greatest impact?

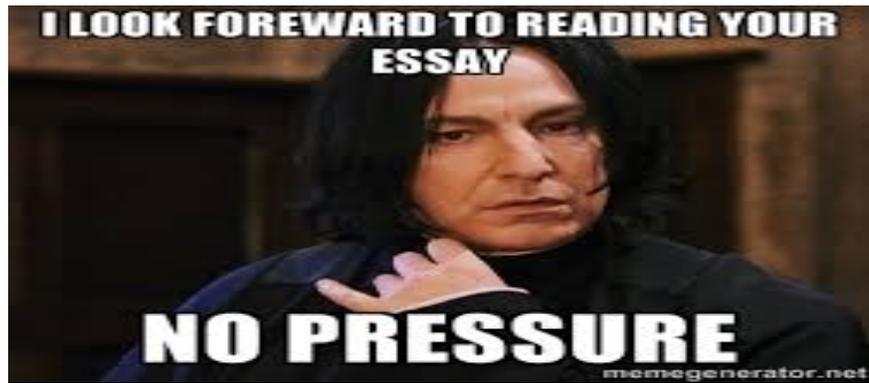
Once you have chosen your topic/research question and disciplinary area/publication, you will need to contemplate the particular academic audience to which you will be composing. What kind of background knowledge about your topic can you assume of this audience? What background knowledge will you need to provide? What are the compositional approaches, rhetorical strategies, evidentiary demands, etc. for such a disciplinary audience? How can you tailor the organizational structure, rhetorical strategies, and supporting evidence to suit such an audience? What expectations will they have? What possible assumptions and biases might you be working against?

After you have evaluated your audience, you will compose your scholarly article. While you will be given much freedom and latitude in how you approach this assignment, you are expected to provide a clear introduction to your topic, to formulate a concise yet intriguing thesis, to organize your essay in a logical fashion that best suits your rhetorical intentions, and to argue your thesis in a rhetorical and logically effective fashion congruent to the expectations of the discipline in which you are composing and the audience you are addressing. Your essay is required to be approximately eight pages, include at least eight sources (four of which must be scholarly sources), and use the proper citation style/format for the particular discipline you are composing for (e.g. MLA for the Humanities, APA for Social Sciences, etc.).

In addition, you will prepare an 8-10 minute presentation on your research for the class. This presentation can take a variety of different approaches (e.g. formal speech, PowerPoint or Prezi presentation, etc.); however, you must include at least one visual and/or auditory aid and address the topic in a logically organized fashion. These presentations will be factored in to your final project grade using the following heuristic: exceptional presentation= bolstered final grade; adequate presentation= final grade remains the same; and poor presentation= lowering of your final grade.

Assessment for this project will primarily be based on how well you tailor your rhetoric, reasoning, and evidence to your intended audience; the effectiveness of your organizational structure; the strength of your arguments and supporting evidence/sources; and the overall polished nature of your work (e.g. grammar, proper citation, clarity, etc.). The most important question I will ask when I assess your work will be: *If I were a member of this academic*

audience, how suitable for publication would I consider this article to be (accounting for the author being an undergraduate)? This is your chance to influence change in a particular discipline and make a difference—take advantage of it!



Reflective Memo Questions:

1. What academic discipline and publication are you composing this scholarly article for? Who do you consider to be the primary audience for this piece? How did you tailor your rhetorical strategies and composing practices in accordance with this audience?
2. How did you organize/arrange this scholarly article? What is the logic behind this organization?
3. What types of evidence and argumentation did you rely on? Why do you believe such evidence and argumentation styles would be effective?
4. Imagine you are a reluctant audience member. What aspect(s) of your scholarly article do you believe such an audience member might find objectionable or unconvincing? How did you craft your scholarly article in anticipation of such a response? How might you improve upon this aspect of your scholarly article during revision?
5. What are your scholarly article's biggest strengths in your estimation? What are its biggest weaknesses? What strategies might you employ during revision to improve upon these weaknesses?
6. How would you like me to focus my response to your article? Where do you believe you need the most guidance?

“Electronic Portfolio”

(approx. 3-4 pages of reflection and all relevant components detailed in the description)

The primary purpose of an e-Portfolio is not a matter of simply collecting your work for the semester and providing some cathartic reflection about how this class changed your life. Honestly, I am not that great of an instructor, and I highly doubt that you finally “saw the light,” so to speak. You might laugh; however, trust me—this tends to be a rather generic approach to portfolios that is more common than you might expect. When you construct your portfolio, I want you to dig deeper and examine what you have truly learned in this class, ways in which your writing has developed, concepts and ideas you may have been introduced to (and their value or lack thereof), areas of weakness that persist, etc.

For starters, your e-Portfolio should contain the following items:

-eight of your journal entries (typed, not scanned, please)

-all six of your forum posts

-your 1st, 2nd, and final draft of each of the three major assignments (“Changing Hearts and Minds! Composing a Persuasive Editorial,” “The Rhetoric of Controversy! Analyzing the Rhetoric of Multiple Viewpoints,” and “Getting Your Academic Voice Heard! Persuading the Professors”) along with an annotated version of your final draft

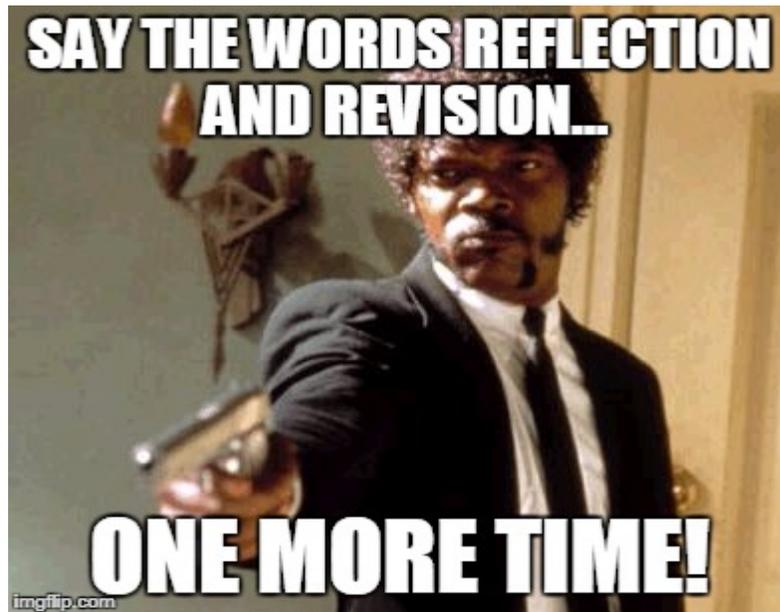
-a polished version of “Annotate This! Creating an Effective Annotated Bibliography”

-visual representation of any major revisionary changes (not just minor grammatical corrections) you made in your annotated final drafts as well as discussion of any large scale structural and/or organizational changes (those that cannot be represented visually) in your reflection

-three to four pages of reflective writing arranged in any fashion you deem to be the most effective

You may choose to design your e-Portfolio in any manner you choose and organize it using any logical method. From a design standpoint, I want your e-Portfolio to be aesthetically pleasing and intriguing for a reader; additionally, I want to be able to navigate your work in an accessible manner. You should not merely “dump” your drafts into a digital repository; your e-Portfolio should have a design and a logical navigational structure.

The main objective of this e-Portfolio is the reflection—it will also serve as one of the most crucial elements in my grading. As with the design element, you are free to reflect in any manner you choose. I require three to four pages double-spaced worth of reflection, yet you can fulfill this requirement in a variety of different ways. You could write a four page reflective letter; you could compose a brief reflective letter as an introduction and have individual reflections for each element of the e-Portfolio; you could even have reflection within the work itself! The choice is yours, but make it wisely.



Although I do not want to give you detailed instructions as to how to accomplish your reflection, use these guidelines as a heuristic:

-Use the contents of your e-Portfolio to generate your reflection. Truly examine your work before you begin your reflection.

-Tie specific assertions to specific examples from the e-Portfolio. For example, do not just tell me that you catered the rhetoric of your scholarly article to a more empirically-minded, scientific

audience—show me this in your work. I am encouraging you to quote and/or comment on yourself.

-Overall, the emphasis should be on YOUR writing. You can discuss the class or myself if it pertains to your writing, yet do not focus primarily on these aspects. Merely evaluating the class is not reflection. Besides, you will be given the opportunity to do this during course evaluations.

-Once again, I reiterate, do not turn the reflective portion of your portfolio into an overly dramatic chronicle of your journey in the class. Be analytical and descriptive. Examine your work and your learning.

-In class, we discussed how I consider a primary goal of this course to be the development of rhetorical awareness. This is your opportunity to demonstrate this. Discuss the thought processes behind various decisions you made throughout your writing for this class. Explain the rationale behind your choices. How did genre considerations influence your writing? Who was your audience? What rhetorical strategies did you employ? Why? What motivated the decisions you made during revision?

Please use these guidelines merely as guidelines. Do not take them as the authoritative instructions for your portfolio and merely address the questions I have asked. Experiment and be creative.

In the end, I will be evaluating your e-Portfolio on the progress you made as a writer, the diligence you spent in revision (your final drafts should not merely be the drafts you submitted to me with minor punctuation changes), the polished nature and overall quality of your final drafts, the design and ease of the navigation of your portfolio, and—primarily—through your reflection. The portfolio is 40% of your grade—do not “mail-in” the reflective aspect or your revisions. Take the time to truly reflect: you might be surprised by what you find out about yourself as a writer!