

Composition and Rhetoric

Fall 2007

ENGL 1301-45 CID 0855

MWF 9:50 – 10:40 a.m.

ENGL 1301-53 CID 0840

MWF 8:55 – 9:45 a.m.

Navasota High School

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Academic O-3

Conference hours: by appointment: call ahead of time!

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Course Description

English 1301: Composition and Rhetoric is a writing-intensive first-semester freshman composition course that focuses on the writing of researched argumentative expository and persuasive papers. Analytical reading, critical thinking, and library-based research skills are emphasized. Essays, including a 2000-word documented library research-based paper, are required. Three class hours per week; credit: three semester hours.

Course Objectives

English 1301 is an introduction to college-level academic writing—with emphasis on writing from sources—that focuses on the writing process, especially on content (with attention to purpose, audience, and tone), organization, revision, editing, and the documentation of sources, as well as on the proper use of the library as a resource tool. The student will have an opportunity to organize, revise, and edit several essays, an annotated bibliography, and a 2000+ word documented researched term paper.

Full participation in English 1301 should allow the student to learn

- to use appropriate library research methods;

- to paraphrase and summarize, fairly and accurately, the ideas of others;

- to support his own theses with the works of others in a well-assimilated, accurately and appropriately documented final product;

- to follow the guidelines and conventions set forth by the Modern Language Association for the writing of research papers;

- to recognize purpose, audience, and voice (tone) as they apply to various readings;

- to apply the principles of purpose, audience, and voice (tone) to his own writing;

- to revise essays in response to others' comments so that improvement is evident to his immediate audience;

- to evaluate and formulate discourse, thereby reinforcing the inherent logical habits of the mind;

- to understand the connection between thought and written language, especially the concepts that govern grammatical and syntactical usage, as well as the various criteria that determine correctness, appropriateness, and idiomatic language choice as dictated by given rhetorical situations in the endeavor to communicate logical thought clearly and precisely;

- to analyze and review essays or short studies in a critical manner; and

- to understand and apply the principles of persuasion to the development of arguments.

Core Curriculum Statement

English 1301: Composition and Rhetoric is a core course in the forty-two-hour Core of Blinn College. As such, students will develop proficiency in the appropriate Intellectual Competencies, Exemplary Educational Objectives, and Perspectives. A full listing and explanation of these Intellectual Competencies, Exemplary Educational Objectives, and Perspectives can be found on the Web at <http://www.blinn.edu/corecurriculum>.

Required Texts

Fowler, H. Ramsey, and Jane E. Aaron. The Little, Brown Handbook. 10th ed. New York: Pearson-Longman, 2007.

Neulieb, Janice, Kathleen Shine Cain, Stephen Ruffus, and Maurice Scharton, eds. The Mercury Reader: A Custom Publication. Boston: Pearson, 2005.

Any standard collegiate dictionary. **(Most paperback-size dictionaries will not suffice.)**

Course Requirements

The student is required to bring both textbooks and the dictionary to class.

The student is required to bring highlighter(s), paper, etc. to every class meeting.

The student is required to annotate his textbook while preparing for class.

The student will compose and submit

- two MLA-format working bibliographies (associated with the researched term paper);

- one MLA-format annotated bibliography (associated with the researched term paper);

- three 750+ word essays;

- one 2000+ word (text) documented researched term paper; and

- a required 800-1000-word minimum in-class documented final examination essay.

All writing assignments must be submitted in order for the student to earn credit for the course.

The 2000+ word documented term paper must reflect a sincere effort in order for the student to earn credit for the course.

NB: In that enrollment in English 1301 is predicated on the student's ability both to follow directions and to use a writing handbook, careless proofreading, indifferent editing, and/or non-compliance with the MLA format for documenting research papers—as presented in class—will not earn the student a passing grade for the assignment marred by any of these failings. **NB:** Writing assignments should be idiomatically and grammatically correct; spelling and punctuation errors should not appear in final drafts. The paper's content alone will not serve to carry a poor presentation. See Grading Criteria.

NB: Any assignment not meeting minimum requirements will not be read and will earn a zero.

Due Dates

No late work is accepted without severe penalty unless the student and the instructor agree on a different due date well in advance of the original due date. Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments are due at the beginning of the class. Severe penalty means one letter grade off for each calendar day the assignment is late.

Class Attendance: Class Attendance and Participation Are Expected

The College District believes that class attendance is essential for student success; therefore, students are required to promptly and regularly attend all their classes. Each class meeting builds the foundation for subsequent class meetings. Without full participation and regular class attendance, students shall find themselves at a severe disadvantage for achieving success in college. Class participation shall constitute at least ten percent of the final course grade. It is the responsibility of each faculty member, in consultation with the division chairperson, to determine how participation is achieved in his or her class. Faculty will require students to regularly attend class and will keep record of attendance from the first day of class or the first day the student's name appears on the roster through the final examination meeting. If a student has one week's worth of unexcused absences during the semester, he or she will be sent an e-mail by the College requiring the student to contact his or her instructor and schedule a conference immediately to discuss his or her attendance issues. If the student subsequently accumulates two weeks' worth of unexcused absences, he or she will be administratively withdrawn from the class.

NB: The instructor is not responsible for ensuring that the student who elects not to attend class and who chooses not to complete a Change of Registration Card is dropped from this course. It is the student's responsibility to officially drop the class. The student should check the academic calendar for Last Day to Drop dates. The student accruing six hours of absences during the course of a long or short academic term is well on the way to ensuring his or her failing the course.

NB: This instructor views arriving to class late and, especially, leaving class before it is dismissed inexcusable. A student should not expect to successfully complete the course if he or she chooses not to attend class. Arriving late is grossly inconsiderate and inappropriate. Repeated tardiness can negatively affect a student's performance in this class. Leaving the room before class is dismissed—except in extremely dire circumstances—is also grossly inconsiderate and inappropriate and can negatively affect a student's performance in this class.

Conference [office] hours are reserved for students who come to class on a very regular basis: These students are encouraged to seek clarification or to pursue a line of questioning stemming from either classroom discussion or individual reading. If, however, the student's need for a conference is more along the lines of academic progress, the student—no matter how many classes he or she might have missed—should come by to discuss viable options.

Make-Up Policy

The student is responsible for all assignments, including those made during any class meeting from which the student has absented him- or herself. Any clarification of directions, etc. for any assigned work will take place during the instructor's conference hours. All assigned work is due before or on the designated day and time. Unless indicated otherwise, all assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day designated. If a student is unable to attend class on the day that an assignment is due, he or she should nevertheless ensure that the instructor receives the assignment by the designated time. In-class essays and daily quizzes can be made up only if the student's absence is excused in accordance with Blinn attendance policy. No late work is accepted without severe penalty unless the student and the instructor agree on a different due date well in advance of the original due date. Severe penalty means one letter grade off for each calendar day the assignment is late.

Manuscript Form

All papers should be written in dark ink or typed (dark ribbon, etc.) on standard-size paper--one side only—in accordance with the MLA format as outlined in the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 5th or 6th edition. (See LBH and hand-outs.) Handwritten papers must exhibit an understanding of the MLA format, including adherence to margin requirements. All bibliographies and works-cited pages, as well as the researched essays, must be typed. Papers must be argued from the third-person and in the literary present tense. All essays and papers submitted must have a title that is both appropriate and adequate. English 1301 is not a course in creative writing: Be certain that the paper's title indicates fully the paper's contents.

----- **No staples; use a paper clip. Do not align right.** -----

Decorum / Civility Statement / Civility Notification Statement

"Members of the Blinn College community, which includes faculty, staff, and students, are expected to act honestly and responsibly in all aspects of campus life. Blinn College holds all members accountable for their actions and words. Therefore, all members should commit themselves to behav[ing] in a manner that recognizes personal respect and demonstrates concern for the personal dignity, rights, and freedoms of every member of the College community, including respect for College property and the physical and intellectual property of others. [. . .] If a student is asked to leave the classroom because of uncivil behavior, the student may not return to that class until he or she arranges a conference with the instructor; it is the student's responsibility to arrange for this conference" (2007-2008 Blinn College Student Handbook 47).

Scholastic Integrity

Pride of accomplishment is the boon of any academic achievement. It should be the goal of each student to put forth the best effort possible for each assignment; progression toward better writing is the reward of diligent application to the tasks assigned. The student who demonstrates a lack of integrity by seeking academic gain (good grades, scholarships, etc.) through avenues that circumvent the rigors and rewards of truthful scholarship will be, at some point, thwarted and ill-prepared to work within an honest system. College policy maintains that it is "the responsibility of instructors to maintain scholastic integrity at Blinn College by refusing to tolerate any form of scholastic dishonesty. [. . .] If there is compelling evidence that a student is involved in cheating or plagiarism, the instructor should assume responsibility and address the infraction" (2007-2008 Blinn College Student Handbook 47).

Any degree of plagiarism appearing in any assignment submitted by the student will earn that student a zero for that assignment. Egregious plagiarism may result in the student's failing the course. The 2007-2008 Blinn College Student Handbook states that "sanctions may be imposed by the instructor and the division chairman: an appropriate grade penalty ranging from a grade of zero on the assignment/examination up to and including the imposition of an F for the entire course" (45). For clarification of the concept, see Joseph Gibaldi's MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 6th edition, which is available for in-library use at the circulation desk, and/or The Little, Brown Handbook 10e, chapter 45. And because the numerical equivalent for an F earned for an honest paper is 50, it is better to submit a poor paper than to submit a plagiarized paper. Note that a "student receiving an F in a course because of scholastic dishonesty may not withdraw from that course" (47).

Blinn Board Policy FLB (Local) defines plagiarism as the "appropriating, buying, receiving as a gift, obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own written work." All students should be aware of the several different types--not levels--of plagiarism, including the failure to properly indicate directly quoted passages, phrasings, or significant wordings as such by the proper use of quotation marks, as well as other failures, including misattribution of cited material, as early as possible in the semester. Students should also be made aware that collusion is considered to be as egregious an offense as plagiarism is.

Blinn Board Policy FLB (Local) defines collusion as the "unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of course requirements."

NB: In an effort to both discourage and detect plagiarism and, simultaneously, to show respect for the honest, diligent student, the English Department is subscribing to Turnitin.com, an on-line plagiarism prevention service. Early in the semester, after receiving a class ID number and a class enrollment password from the instructor, each student will be required to go to <http://www.turnitin.com> in order to create a user profile, to enroll in this class's section, and to submit the final copy of each major assignment—the researched papers and the annotated bibliography. **Papers that are not submitted to Turnitin first will not be graded, resulting in automatic grades of zero.**

Other Considerations

Because the nature of the course and the nature of the presentation both invite classroom discussion, any potential impediment to the free flow of ideas cannot be allowed; therefore, **no mechanical recording of class meetings is allowed.** See instructor.

The Internet cannot be considered a final, authoritative source of information; therefore, the Internet and information obtained therefrom should not contribute to any aspect of the research for any paper associated with this course unless it has been cleared with the instructor well beforehand.

The student will be held responsible for all assignments, even reading assignments not actually discussed during scheduled class meetings. Class meetings are designed to further understanding; therefore, class time will be spent exploring—not explaining—the assigned reading. In short, the student must come to class prepared to discuss any and all aspects of the assigned reading.

The student should bring to the classroom setting notebook paper, highlighter(s), functioning pen, dictionary, the anthology, and all handouts. The student should not at any time rely on borrowing; borrowing will be construed as a sign of ill preparedness, which, in turn, affects the student's participation grade.

Cell phones and beepers/pagers must be disengaged while the student is in the Blinn College Library or any classroom or lab.

Consumption of food and drinks is not allowed in Blinn College's library, classrooms, and labs.

Please allow for the passage of ten days' time before expecting the return of major written assignments.

Students with Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities may seek support from Blinn College's Office of Disability Services. Students are encouraged to contact this office as early as possible to initiate services. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) provides direct services and makes appropriate referrals to resources on and off campus. Students with documented disabilities requiring academic accommodations in the classroom or in testing situations must self-identify and provide current, appropriate documentation of the disability to the ODS. Information, education, and consultation about specific disabilities are available to interested parties on request. For answers to specific questions or to request an information packet contact ODS at 979 830-4157.

Grading Symbols for Compositions and In-Class Essays

Editing symbols and chapter-section references used in the marking of student papers are found on the end sheets in The Little, Brown Handbook, tenth edition. The following common, inexcusable errors, absent from **A** and **B** papers, occur infrequently in **C** papers and guarantee, when they occur with any frequency, the paper's earning a **D** at best.

agr; s-v; p-a	= error in subject-verb or pronoun-antecedent agreement	Chapter 15a	-	15b
ap	= apostrophe needed or misused	30a	-	30d
cs	= comma splice	18a	-	18b
frag	= sentence fragment	17a	-	17d
fs; r-o; ro	= fused sentence; run-on sentence	18c and		28; 29
huh?	= garbled, incoherent, or illogical grouping of words			
ref	= error in pronoun reference and/or shift, including the "indefinite you"	19a	-	19f
SLN	= see lecture notes! (for which you are always responsible)			
sp	= misspelled word	41		
vb	= error in verb form or verb tense	14a	-	14h
ww	= wrong word	38		
wc	= word choice: perhaps a synonym study, not a thesaurus, is the appropriate resource!			

Grading Criteria for Papers and In-Class Essays

The **A** paper represents original outstanding work; it shows careful thought, fresh insights, and stylistic maturity. Having practically no mechanical errors to distract the reader, it is free of jargon, clichés, and other empty language. Word choice is marked by a high degree of precision and a varied, advanced vocabulary; sentences are structured in a manner that creates interest and rhetorical power. The tone is appropriate for the designated audience. The reader moves through the **A** paper effortlessly because of its effective transitions, lucid organization, and thorough, purposeful development. Having finished, the reader feels that he has learned something, that he has received some unexpected and welcome illumination. In the **A** paper all research material is correctly documented, and formatting adheres to current standards of the Modern Language Association. Directly quoted passages are gracefully integrated into the text with appropriate attribution.

The **B** paper is significantly more than competent. Besides being almost free of mechanical errors, the **B** paper delivers substantial information and makes cogent, fresh arguments—that is, in both quality and interest-value. Its specific points are logically ordered, well developed, and supported, and unified around a clear organizing principle that is apparent early in the paper. The **B** paper's relatively few syntactic, usage, and mechanical errors do not seriously distract the reader, but the language, while neither trite nor bureaucratic, probably lacks the candor and the precision of the most memorable writing. Its transitions, while appropriate, emphasize the logical turnings of the writer's mind, making the reader occasionally more aware of the efforts taken to unify and control an idea than of the idea itself. In the **B** paper all research material is correctly documented, and formatting adheres to current standards of the Modern Language Association. Directly quoted passages are integrated into the text with appropriate attribution.

The **C** paper represents average college-level work. It is a competent expression of ordinary thoughts in ordinary language; its **content/focus** is general, commonplace, or trivial, or not adequately related to the assignment; its **development** is vague, incomplete, or inconsistent; its **organization** lacks adequate or appropriate transitions or relation of ideas. The **C** paper, in addition to meeting all the requirements of the assignment, exhibits a **writing style** that is basically correct and is marred by a relatively few syntactic, usage, and mechanical errors. By relying on generalities rather than precise, illustrative details, the writer of a **C** paper leaves the reader feeling not much better informed than when the reader first picked up the essay. In the **C** paper all research material is correctly documented, and formatting adheres to current standards of the Modern Language Association. Directly quoted passages are integrated into the text with appropriate attribution.

The **D** paper has only skeletal development and organization. Its serious mechanical errors, together with the awkwardness and ambiguity of its sentence structure, make the reader feel slighted, as if his or her time and attention were of little concern to the writer.

NB: A paper exhibiting major weaknesses in any specific area—**content, development, organization, grammar and mechanics, documentation conventions, writing style**—or, indeed, a failure to address the assignment is usually considered, at best, a **D** paper.

As writing that falls below minimum standards for college-level literacy, the **F** paper shows a lack of thought and purpose, little or no organization, numerous mechanical errors, and a garbled or immature style. Sometimes inadequacy in one area is enough to fail a paper—the writer, for instance, may not have control of punctuation, producing fragments or comma splices in almost every paragraph; however, serious weaknesses usually occur in several areas of concern.

A paper should earn the grade **zero** if it contains plagiarized content in any form, including the failure to acknowledge the source of any borrowed material (summarized, paraphrased, and directly quoted) and unmarked exact wording (directly quoted from either a primary or a secondary source), whether a specific well-chosen word, a phrase (two or more words), a clause, or full sentence(s). A paper can earn a **zero** if it does not address the assigned topic or if directions have been either ignored or not followed.

Required Conferences

Each student is required to meet with the instructor at least twice. The purpose of both conferences is to ensure that progress is being made toward the satisfactory completion of the researched term paper. NB: An acceptable paper—one that reflects the student's sincere effort to complete the assignment on his own—must be submitted in order for the student to receive credit for the course.

Grade Determination

750+ word essays and annotated bibliography	40%
working bibliographies	10%
documented researched term paper	20%
final examination	15%
two conferences, unannounced quizzes, in-class essays, and active participation	15%

Tentative Paper Due Dates and Exam Dates

17 September	narrative-descriptive essay due
8 October	documented extended definition essay due
15 October	researched term paper topics due
26 October	first working bibliography due
5 November	documented causal analysis essay due
14 November	second working bibliography due
26 November	annotated bibliography due
3 December	documented position paper due (two copies)
TBA December	cumulative final examination

A	95	B+	88	C	75	D+	68	F	50
A-	91	B	85	C-	71	D-	61	F-	25

The Writing Room

In an effort to enhance student engagement on the Brenham campus, **The Writing Room** provides, free of charge, a supportive, non-directive environment for all students at any stage of the writing process. Located in room 14 of the Academic Building, The Writing Room, while not providing proofreading or editing services, does provide activities for idea invention, computers and computer programs that simplify the task of composing, reference books to help students find the answers to their questions, and English consultants to offer feedback to students as they learn to identify both the strengths and weaknesses of their own writing. While computers in The Writing Room are available on a walk-in basis, students are encouraged to make appointments in advance to meet with Writing Room consultants.

Notes

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Tentative Course Outline and Schedule of Reading Assignments

NB: The student is responsible for not only the actual text of each assigned reading but also the questions that might follow each reading; the student is also responsible for understanding the vocabulary found in the readings, the very words (familiar and unfamiliar to the student) that constitute the authors' written expression.

Note: LBH = The Little, Brown Handbook 10e;

MR = The Mercury Reader (unless otherwise noted, pagination refers to The Mercury Reader)

M	27	August.	course introduction annotating the text introductory essay	
W	29	August.	departmental course inventory overview of aims and forms of discourse brief discussion concerning plagiarism A Word about Honesty LBH: Avoiding Plagiarism and Documenting Sources Northrop Frye's "Don't You Think It's Time to Start Thinking?"	1-2 629-38 17-20
F	31	August	Adler's "How to Mark a Book" assign first major paper Rhetorical Strategy: Narration Rhetorical Strategy: Description Neil Postman's "Future Shock"	211-16 360-61 209-10 326-37
M	3	September	N. Scott Momaday's "The Way to Rainy Mountain" Maya Angelou's "Champion of the World" LBH: Writing in Academic Situations LBH: Forming a Critical Perspective	380-88 217-22 128-34 150-78
W	5	September	E. B. White's "Once More to the Lake"	424-32
F	7	September	Maya Angelou's "Graduation" James Thurber's "University Days"	362-75 416-23
M	10	September	Wallace Stegner's "The Town Dump" Brent Staples's "Black Men and Public Space" Rhetorical Strategy: Example Loren Eiseley's "The Brown Wasps"	711-16 410-15 275-76 291-300
W	12	September	Stephen Jay Gould's "Sex, Drugs, Disasters, and the Extinction of the Dinosaurs" Comparison and Contrast revision and editing workshop for first paper: final draft of essay due at class time	301-11 117-19
F	14	September	Bruce Catton's "Grant and Lee: A Study in Contrast" Barbara Ehrenreich's "The Myth of Man as a Hunter"	124-29 62-65
M	17	September	first 750-word documented essay due at beginning of class assign second major essay Rhetorical Strategy: Definition Thomas Paine's "The Rights of Man" (excerpted)	 149-51 193-97
W	19	September	Isaac Asimov's "What Is Intelligence Anyway?" Nancy Mairs's "On Being a Cripple" Richard Rodriguez's "The Fear of Losing a Culture"	152-54 179-92 198-203
F	21	September	William F. Buckley Jr.'s "Why Don't We Complain?" Lars Eighner's "On Dumpster Diving"	232-40 252-66
M	24	September	Margaret Atwood's "Pornography" Bruno Bettelheim's "The Holocaust"	223-31 159-64
W	26	September	Jeremy Rifkin's "The Efficient Society"	handout
F	28	September	Francis Bacon's "Of Studies" K. C. Cole's "The Arrow of Time"	58-61 handout
M	1	October	Edward O. Wilson's "The Biological Basis of Morality"	83-105

W	3	October	Anthony Burgess's "Is America Falling Apart?"	handout
F	5	October	revision and editing workshop: final draft of essay due at class time	
M	8	October	second 750-word documented essay due at the beginning of class	
			LBH: Planning a Research Project	558-71
			LBH: Finding Sources	571-98
			LBH: Working with Sources	599-629t
W	10	October	LBH: Reading Arguments Critically	179-98
			LBH: Writing an Argument	199-218
			Rhetorical Strategy: Cause and Effect	3-7
			assign third and fourth major essays	
F	12	October	Rhetorical Strategy: Persuasion	433-37
			E. M. Forster's "My Wood"	474-79
			Susan Sontag's "Beauty"	585-89
M	15	October	single topic for causal analysis paper and researched term paper due	
			the working bibliography; the annotated bibliography	
W	17	October	Katha Pollitt's "Why I Hate 'Family Values' (Let Me Count the Ways)"	28-37
F	19	October	Charles Darwin's "Understanding Natural Selection"	8-16
M	22	October	Edward Said's "Stereotyping of Arabs by the U.S. Ensures Years of Turmoil"	38-43
W	24	October	Bruno Bettelheim's "Fairy Tales and Modern Stories"	456-60
			Gore Vidal's "Drugs"	handout
F	26	October	first working bibliography due	
M	29	October	LBH: Recognizing [Logical] Fallacies	192-98
			Max Shulman's "Love Is a Fallacy"	695-705
W	31	December	George Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant"	
F	2	November	Marie Winn's "Television: The Plug-In Drug"	44-54
			Bruce Bettelheim's "A Victim"	handout
M	5	November	third 750-word documented essay due at the beginning of class	
W	7	November	Cornel West's "Race Matters"	624-32
			Lani Guinier's "The Tyranny of the Majority"	handout
F	9	November	revision and editing workshop: final draft of third essay due at class time	
M	12	November	Paul Fussell's "Thank God for the Atom Bomb"	handout
			Robert Freeman's "Was the Atomic Bombing of Japan Necessary?"	handout
			Eugene Jarecki's "Truman Haunts Us"	handout
W	14	November	second working bibliography due	
F	16	November	Jonathan Kozol's "The Human Cost of an Illiterate Society"	536-46
M	19	November	Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail"	514-35
			Stanley Milgram's "The Perils of Obedience"	552-69
M	26	November	annotated bibliography due	
			Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal"	590-600
W	28	November	Henry David Thoreau's "On Civil Disobedience"	601-23
F	30	November	assign final examination essay	
			revision and editing workshop: final draft of fourth essay due at class time	
M	3	December	researched and documented 2000-2200-word position paper due at class time (two copies)	
W	5	December	Paul Tillich's "The Lost Dimension in Religion"	handout
			course inventory completed	
TBA	December		final examination: in-class 800-1000-word documented essay persuasive essay	
TBA	December		final examination: in-class 800-1000-word documented essay persuasive essay	