

College of San Mateo
Official Course Outline

1. **COURSE ID:** ENGL 165 **TITLE:** Composition, Argument, and Critical Thinking **C-ID:** ENGL 105, ENGL 115
Units: 3.0 units **Hours/Semester:** 48.0-54.0 Lecture hours; 16.0-18.0 TBA hours; and 80.0-90.0 Homework hours
Method of Grading: Letter Grade Only
Prerequisite: ENGL 100 or 105.
2. **COURSE DESIGNATION:**
Degree Credit
Transfer credit: CSU; UC
AA/AS Degree Requirements:
CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E2b. Communication and Analytical Thinking
CSU GE:
CSU GE Area A: ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION AND CRITICAL THINKING: A3 - Critical Thinking
IGETC:
IGETC Area 1: ENGLISH COMMUNICATION: B: Critical Thinking - English Composition
3. **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**
Catalog Description:
This course is designed to introduce students to logical and rhetorical tools for analyzing, evaluating and mounting persuasive arguments. Students will write a minimum of six thousand words of finished prose, employing methods of logical analysis and demonstrating skill in critical thinking.
4. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):**
Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:
 1. Practice the discipline of critical thinking through an engagement with, and inquiry into, various forms of persuasive arguments.
 2. Write clear, coherent, and engaging academic essays that develop their own analyses and evaluations of arguments and claims, sometimes with reference to secondary sources.
 3. Evaluate and appreciate the intellectual and analytical value of diverse voices articulating diverse points of view.
5. **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**
Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:
 1. Discuss the elements of logic (induction & deduction; standard form; hidden assumptions; distinctions between fact, inference & judgment)
 2. Discuss the elements of rhetoric (persuasive strategies, counter-arguments & concessions)
 3. Discuss the nature of authority (understanding the information ecosystem; evaluating sources)
 4. Discuss the nature of error (cognitive blind spots, the nature of bias, missteps in inductive and deductive thinking)
 5. Discuss the nature of persuasive manipulation (fallacies, use of pictures and imagery, memes, advertising etc.)
 6. Apply tools for evaluating a range of arguments (i.e., written arguments, documentaries, memes, advertising, etc.)
 7. Identify the range of standard research sources (i.e., think tanks, scholarly works, journalism, government reports etc.)
 8. See an issue from different points of view
 9. Reflect critically on their own opinions
 10. Understand persuasion and critical thinking as an ethical framework
 11. Conduct independent research
 12. Complete a complex, text-based writing process
6. **COURSE CONTENT:**
Lecture Content:
ENGL 165 is a second-semester composition course, emphasizing the development of process-based reading and

writing habits and critical thinking skills through an introduction to the analysis and evaluation of a variety of persuasive arguments in our complex information environment. (In contrast, ENGL 110, the alternative course, focuses on the development of process-based reading and writing habits and critical thinking skills through an introduction to the analysis and appreciation of poetry, drama, and fiction.)

Lecture Content:

While these do not have to take the form specifically of lectures, the following represent some of the material that is taught to support the SLOs of ENGL 165:

1. Elements of logic (induction, deduction, standard form, fallacies, etc.)
2. Elements of rhetoric (counter-arguments, concessions, audience awareness, manipulation)
3. Elements of epistemology (the nature of human thinking, unconscious bias, how we form opinions, how we make mistakes)
4. The landscape of the information ecosystem (social media, newspapers, research institutions, academic and other authorities)
5. The stages of the writing process (reading, drafting, collaboration, revision)
6. The stages of research (library use, evaluating sources, framing an inquiry)

Reading

1. Develop engagement with diverse persuasive texts by expanding the reader's sense of how to respond critically to new and different points of view
2. Read diverse arguments from different genres: prose (both long and short), documentaries, advertising, memes (including at least one book-length work).
3. Develop and practice strategies for annotation and note-taking for comprehension and critical reading
4. Compare and evaluate different arguments, and modes of persuasion
5. Research and respond to sources that provide context for, and critical discourse about, persuasive texts.
6. Understand the way in which patterns of language create an implicit meaning in a text
7. Use basic library research to investigate the cultural, social or political contexts of assigned texts and their authors.

Critical Thinking:

1. Understand major concepts of logic and epistemology, such as argument structure (premises and conclusions); logical method (deduction and induction); common sources of error (fallacies); the distinction between the objective and the subjective (fact, inference and judgment)
2. Understand major concepts of rhetoric, such as audience awareness; use of counter-arguments and concession; Rogerian strategy; and manipulation tactics (fallacies)
3. Understand the nature of authority and evidence, by learning which sources are considered "authoritative," what that means, and why;
4. Analyze and evaluate examples of persuasive rhetoric (mostly written, but also other common sources in today's information landscape) using concepts of logic, rhetoric and epistemology to identify weaknesses and strengths;
5. Understand concepts of logic, rhetoric and epistemology as laying out an ethical basis for persuasion (i.e., distinguishing between objective and subjective claims; evaluating the soundness and relevance of evidence; reflecting on and adjusting for one's own bias and error).

Writing:

1. Write 4 to 6 text-based essays, of at least 4 pages each, for a minimum total of 5,000 words of finished prose, emphasizing process-based, out-of-class writing rather than timed, in-class writing and on academic, inquiry-based assignments rather than merely descriptive narrative or summarizing. Students should not be assigned formulaic writing, such as the five-paragraph essay.
2. Write effective, well-organized essays that a) introduce a clear line of inquiry into a text or several texts, b) assert a central claim (a thesis), c) employ thorough and effectively written textual (and if appropriate, contextual) analysis; and provide conclusions that move beyond summarizing the thesis and primary supporting points.
3. Integrate textual evidence into polished, academic prose with efficiency and clarity.
4. Write essays in which the evidence is sufficient, thoroughly analyzed, sound, and integral to the argument.
5. Cite sources accurately with correct MLA style.

Lab Content:

No lab content.

TBA Hours Content:

ENGL 165 has a TBA (To Be Arranged hours) requirement. These TBA hours are instructional activities designed to help improve students' reading and writing skills. Students are required to complete the activities in the Writing Center (18-104) or in online synchronous conferences with Writing Center instructors and to log in and out of the attendance tracking system every time they work on one of the activities. Activities include orientations, one-on-one conferences with English instructors, tutorials on specific writing and critical thinking

skills, and group workshops.

7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Activity
- C. Critique
- D. Directed Study
- E. Discussion
- F. Guest Speakers
- G. Individualized Instruction
- H. Observation and Demonstration
- I. Service Learning
- J. Other (Specify): Typical methods of instruction may include: A. Lecture B. Small-group reading and writing activities C. Critique D. Directed Study E. Discussion F. Guest Speakers G. Individualized Instruction H. Observation and Demonstration Methods should include the following: A. Building community in the classroom: create a sense of community in the classroom to promote student investment in the course and to build students' confidence. B. Creating collaborative, student-centered classrooms C. Inductive rather than prescriptive teaching when appropriate: encourage and help students to reach their own conclusions and to make decisions about their writing rather than direct them explicitly D. Schema building: help students recognize and build upon their prior knowledge in order to contextualize assigned readings E. Structured whole-class discussion: help students understand assigned course material and build critical thinking strategies through instructor-guided discussion of course readings and writing assignments F. Scaffolding of analysis and interpretation: guide students through the steps necessary to evaluate and engage with arguments G. Modeling: use models of student and professional writing to introduce, teach and reinforce effective writing strategies H. Individual instruction: one-on-one student-teacher conferences I. Peer review workshops: students share and critique each other's writing J. Lecture: provide relevant or necessary background information for writing assignments; explain reading strategies and principles of clear, effective writing K. Group assignments: students in structured groups work together on a common assignment L. Portfolio assignment: Students revise selected works, creating an opportunity for students to deepen their understanding of their intellectual beliefs, attitudes and values, as well as their growth as writers.

8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

Writing Assignments:

Written essays (a minimum of 5,000 words) to demonstrate an understanding of course material and the writing process. Journal writing, summaries, and other responses to assigned readings to demonstrate understanding of forms of argument, and to synthesize readings.

Please see attached files.

Reading Assignments:

Students read extensive and varied examples of persuasive and expository writing (including at least one book-length work as well as a selection of shorter articles, empirical studies, satire, and other texts).

Persuasive writing can be supplemented by examples of multimedia persuasion (advertisements, memes, documentaries etc.)

To be Arranged Assignments:

Assignments -- which must be completed under the auspices of the Writing Center -- include orientations, one-on-one conferences with English instructors, tutorials on specific writing and critical thinking skills, and group workshops.

9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Class Participation
- B. Class Work
- C. Exams/Tests
- D. Group Projects
- E. Homework
- F. Oral Presentation
- G. Papers

- H. Portfolios
- I. Projects
- J. Quizzes
- K. Research Projects
- L. Written examination

10. REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):

Possible textbooks include:

- A. Rosemary Patton and Sheila Cooper.. *Writing Logically, Thinking Critically*, 8th ed. Pearson, 2015
- B. Andrea Lunsford, John Ruszkiewicz, Keith Walters. *Everything's An Argument*, 9th ed. McMillan Learning, 2022
- C. Sylvan Barnet and Hugo Bedau. *Current Issues and Enduring Questions*, 12th ed. Bedford St. Martins, 2022

Other:

- A. Instructors can also use book-length arguments, or texts that raise questions for logical discussion, analysis and/or evaluation, or that illustrate principles of rhetoric or logic. These books are not necessarily recent, but present arguments that do not lose currency in a few specific years.

Some examples:

Schulz, Kathryn. *Being Wrong*. Ecco: 2011.

King, Martin Luther, Jr. *The Strength to Love*. Fortress Press: 2010

Carol Tavris & Elliot Aronson. *Mistakes Were Made (But Not By Me)*. Mariner Books, 2015.

Jonathan Swift. *A Modest Proposal*. 1729.

Martin Luther King Jr. *Letter from Birmingham Jail*. May-June, 1963.

Ta Nehisi Coates. *Between the World and Me*. Random House, 2017

Ta Nehisi Coates. "The Case for Reparations." *The Atlantic*, June 2014.

Jonathan Rauch. *The Constitution of Knowledge*. The Brookings Institution, 2021

Victor Frankl. *Man's Search for Meaning*. 1946.

Johann Hari. *Chasing the Scream*. Bloomsbury, 2015.

Jared Lanier. *Ten Arguments for Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now*. Holt, 2018.

Krakauer, Jon. *Into the Wild*. 1997.

Berger, John: *The Ways of Seeing*. Penguin: 1990

Wilkerson, Isabel: *Caste*. Random House: 2020

Quinones, Sam: *Dreamland*. Random House: 2018

Temple, John: *American Pain*. Lyons Press: 2016

Levitin, Daniel: *Weaponized Lies*. Dutton: 2017

Hanna-Attisha, Mona: *What the Eyes Don't See*. One World: 2019

John Carreyrou. *Bad Blood*. Random House, 2018

Ari Rabin-Havt. *Lies, Incorporated*. Anchor, 2016

Neil Postman. Amusing Ourselves To Death. Penguin, 2005

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