

Sul Ross State University
English 4300: Portfolio Capstone
Policies and Syllabi
Fall 2015

Instructor: Dr. Laura Rebecca Payne
Office: MAB 114
Office Hours: M/W 12:30-3:30; T/Th 11-1 (and by appointment)

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Course Description: English 4300, Portfolio Capstone, is a course which seems to arrange, analyze, and assess the coursework objectives from a student's academic career into graduation. The intent is for the student, along with faculty, self-assess performance versus learning objectives and to then feel prepared to move to the workforce or to further graduate studies.

Course Objectives: The course asks students to create a portfolio of completed and graded work, which reflect a sampling of coursework in different genres and types. The course also requires writing a nonfiction statement of educational values and experiences, as well as aspirations for the future. The portfolio is assessed by the faculty of this department, although the course grade is determined by the instructor of record and is based on performance in the pursuit of the portfolio and on the finished product of the portfolio. Students will communicate in discussion with the instructor by arrangement.

Assessment of English Majors

Rationale: The Coordinating Board of the Texas State University System requires that all departments provide some form of assessment of their majors. In the fall of 1994 the Department of Languages and Literature implemented a portfolio system of evaluation for English majors.

Portfolio's Contents: Each portfolio should contain a wide variety of assignments. We are requesting that you submit four papers written for different English professors and that you include three essay exams from specified literature classes (seven papers, total):

- ❖ **One Expository Writing Sample** (a personal essay on a nonliterary topic). This paper should have no sources and may take the form of a memoir/narrative essay or an essay in one of the rhetorical modes—comparison/contrast or argument, for example. You might choose a paper you have written in Eng. 1301, 1302, or 3312.
- ❖ **One Critical/Analytical Writing Sample** (a critical analysis of a literary work—short story, poem, or play). This paper should have no sources other than the literary work. You might choose a paper you have written for Eng. 2301 or another literature class.
- ❖ **One Research Paper** (a paper using quotes and paraphrases from critical sources, with MLA citations and documentation). You might choose a paper from a literature class or from Eng. 1302 or 3312.

- ❖ **One Creative Work done in an English class** (poetry, fiction, media project, photo essay, or any other strongly original project).
- ❖ **One Essay Exam in literature** (one from either world, British, or American literature classes). This essay exam must have been written in a timed, classroom setting.
- ❖ **One daily project/assignment** from a world, British, or American literature course. This may include from journal entries, discussion boards, analytic answers to prompts, creative invention exercises, etc.).

Portfolio's Form: Place the documents in a binder and create a title page and a table of contents. On the title page, give your name and the date. The table of contents should identify the type of assignment, the title of the paper or exam, the course, and the instructor. Please be sure that you **include papers that have been marked and graded by the professor**; we are interested in seeing how you have been evaluated as well as seeing the work itself. We would also like to see a rough draft for one of the papers, if possible, to determine what kinds of revisions you have made and how much assistance you received from a professor in guiding those revisions. If you have printed assignment instructions for any of your papers, include those, as well.

Portfolio Self-Assessment Essay: Immediately after your Table of Contents, include a self-assessment essay (about 1 page) in which you address the following: 1) Of the six papers in your portfolio, which three do you feel were your most successful? What made them successful? 2) Overall, how well do you feel that you have mastered the goals of assessment laid out in the rubric for portfolio assessment? (Broad goals might include, for example, ability to craft well-written and well-documented papers, conduct research, and think creatively or analytically.)

Grades: English 4300 will be graded on a scale of 100 with an A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, and F=59 and below.

Attendance: As this is a web-format workshop course, consistent participation is absolutely necessary. Remaining current with the course schedule and taking part during the expected due dates will not only keep you personally engaged, but will ensure that other participants of the course can benefit from your thoughts, ideas, and reactions toward the readings and writing assignments.

Late Work: Assignments that are turned in late receive a 10-point deduction, regardless of how late the work is. Thus, an assignment that is graded at a B will be automatically reduced to a C, if the assignment is late. Assignments are due as listed in the schedule. Assignments turned in at any time after the posted due date and time are considered late. Please let me know in advance if you are experiencing a problem. I will not accept any late work after the final examination period for this course. It is completely the student's responsibility to make arrangements for and to turn in late work. I will not remind students of late or missed work.

The Writing Center: The Writing Center is an academic support service available to all Sul Ross students. I strongly encourage you to make the center an integral part of your writing process by visiting the tutors frequently during the semester. The benefits of such visits are readily apparent in your work. The Center is located on the first floor of MAB, room 102, and its phone number is 432.837.8270. The email is writing@sulross.edu.

Disabilities Statement: Persons with disabilities that may warrant academic accommodations should contact me as soon as possible so that we may make arrangements to ensure the most hospitable and enhancing (cyber) learning environment as possible.

Academic Ethics: Any student who represents someone else's work as his or her own will automatically receive a zero for that assignment. Plagiarism can be purposeful or inadvertent, but either results in an unacceptable and unethical academic performance. Plagiarism will most likely result in a failure for the course.

Miscellaneous yet Important:

If, for any reason, you require accommodations for the successful completion of this course, please let me know as soon as possible so that we may make arrangements.

I require that all discussions of our creative/scholarly work remain tactful, sincere, and highly ethical. Take the time with one another's work that you would wish taken with your own. If you do not feel up to this challenge, please find another course.

My office hours are, of course, "cyber" hours, although I will be available on campus at Sul Ross during those hours as well. Please do not hesitate to call the office phone. Or, I can provide further numbers and arrange more convenient times to speak as necessary. I will answer emails within 48 hours of receiving them (with the exception of weekends), so please do not wait until the last moment to ask questions. Also, please check the announcements for the class each day—I often address course issues and give suggestions and directions there, as they affect all students.