

Policies

English 4300



Instructor: Dr. Laura Rebecca Payne

E-mail: lbutler@sulross.edu

Phone: 432.837.8744

Office: MAB 114

Office Hours: MW 1-3; T/Th 8-11

Course Text:

What to Do with Your English or Communications Degree. Rachel Klein, et. al. (Princeton Review, 2007) ISBN 978-0-375-76624-4

A Writer's Reference. Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers (Eighth Edition) ISBN 978-1-4576-8625-2

Portfolio Capstone Seminar Spring 2016

Objectives:

The objectives of the English senior portfolio capstone course is to prepare graduating seniors for their professional pursuits beyond graduation and to synthesize and analyze their educational experience. The course will encourage more intense development of language and critical-thinking skills as befitting graduates of a program in English studies. Finally, the course hopes to build further appreciation of multiple perspectives that reflect intellectual and cultural diversity within and beyond college.

Course Description:

Portfolio Capstone is designed to help students develop strategies and skills necessary for successful beyond their college careers. Topics include professionalization, further academic goals, career paths, networking, and self-assessments. Students will learn about vast array of opportunities post-graduation while compiling and assessing their growth as academics during their college career at Sul Ross. Throughout the course, students will use critical thinking skills to make informed choices, to understand their responsibilities for academic and professional success, and to further become independent, motivated learners and professionals. Students will learn to evidence their assessments and growth via documents such as a professional resume or curriculum vitae and a course portfolio.

Program Learning Objectives:

1. Involve students in applying personal and academic success strategies and evidentiary documents that advance intellectual and professional intellectual development.
2. Engage students in critical analysis and creative thinking.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Implement personal academic assessment.
2. Understand available post-graduate professional and academic opportunities.
3. Discuss the academic experience, personal aspirations, and professional goals in comprehensive expository writings.
4. Exhibit critical analyses via the presentations of professional documents.
5. Exhibit financial literacy in relation to college and beyond.
6. Discuss the importance of and English degree from SRSU in the larger community.

Attendance & Class Participation

Your attendance and participation in this course are reflected in your grade. Please be proactive in informing the professor of any expected absences in advance in order to meet class requirements. If work is turned in late, ten points will be deducted from the grade, regardless of how late the work is. I do not take late work of any kind beyond the Thursday of final

Portfolio Capstone Seminar Spring 2016

examinations at twelve noon. If you fail to log into the course regularly or fail to attend meetings without prior consent of me, the instructor, I reserve the right to fail you.

Assignments

The course will consist of four major assignment areas, which are described briefly below. More detailed assignments may be found online under the assignment link where appropriate (i.e. the portfolio and the introductory essay). The due dates and times are listed at the calendar view in Blackboard.

Discussion Boards: The discussion boards allow us to speak to one another. Think of the discussion boards as the “cyber” equivalent of sitting at the seminar table with one another and talking about our readings, writings, thoughts and reactions to the coursework. The first discussion boards will ask you to do just this. Please answer in detailed manners, using examples and analysis of the why and how of your answers. The posts must be approximately three to five hundred words. Responses to posts should be approximately one to two hundred words. You will respond to all posts. The discussion boards will improve our communication skills, practice of methodologies, and to articulate our growing knowledge-base and expertise in the field.

Journal Elements: The journal elements will be brief essays on topics associated with the course progression. They will work toward your professionalization and self-analysis of academic development and professional aspirations. They will also help develop your expository writing skills. These will be turned in weekly under the “journals” tab in Blackboard.

Introductory Essay: See the full assignment in Blackboard under the assignment links.

Portfolio: See the full assignment in Blackboard under the assignment links.

Classroom Behaviors

You are encouraged and expected to openly engage in class discussions, ask questions, share ideas, and express your thoughts. This is even more crucial in the online component of the course. Please be respectful of others by avoiding disruptive behaviors such as side conversations, cell phone use, arriving late, leaving early, etc. Online, I have found this to include not taking time with fellow students in discussion boards or taking combative tones with one another.

Academic Honesty

“The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of their classroom. The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a

Portfolio Capstone Seminar Spring 2016

student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.”
--Excerpt from the Student Handbook

Special Needs

It is Sul Ross State University policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodations because of a physical, mental, or learning challenge, please contact the ADA Coordinator, Mary Schwartz, in the Counseling office in Ferguson Hall, Room 112. All requests for special accommodations must be related in writing to the professor. If you are uncomfortable with an online academic environment, please make an appointment with me. I am happy to “walk” you through the course.

Late Work

Late work is accepted with a ten-point deduction for being late unless arrangements have made prior to the due-date and documentation is provided for explained absences. These include illness for which a doctor prohibits class attendance, a death of an immediate member of your family, and a school sanctioned event, such as debate, student government conference, athletics, etc.

Grade Breakdown:

Discussion Boards	25%
Journal Essays	25%
Portfolio Introduction Essay	25%
Final Portfolio	25%

Portfolio Capstone Seminar Spring 2016

Grading Scale:

90-100 =A

80-89 =B

70-79 =C

60-69 =D

Below 60=F

Syllabus



Portfolio Capstone Seminar Spring 2016

Weekly Schedule

Week 1 (January 19th)

*Read the course policies and syllabus; collate against the quick calendar view.

*Contact Dr. Payne to arrange a physical meeting time.

DB1: Introduce yourself to your classmates and instructor. Talk about where you are from, what you enjoy, where you are headed.

Week 2 (January 25th)

What to Do with Your English or Communications Degree: Read Chapter 1

A Writer's Reference: Read "Composing and Revising"

DB2: Discuss your professional and/or academic aspirations, both immediate and long-term. What activities have you or are you currently involved in which help move you forward toward these goal. Can you think of further directions to take now in the same vein?

Journal Element 1: Write an "accomplishment Story" via the questions on page 21 of *What to Do...* Explore characteristics on page 26, citing personal examples. Write a "sound bite" as exemplified on pg. 32.

Week 3 (February 1st)

What to Do with Your English or Communications Degree: Read Chapter 2

A Writer's Reference: Read "Academic Reading, Writing, and Speaking"

DB3: Discuss the different types of graduate programs you might be interested in (even if it is in the abstract at this point). What are some of the better schools, both national and regional, for achieving these degrees? What will you hope to do with a degree such as this?

Journal Element 2: Interview a faculty member or a professional regarding their graduate program. Write an essay in which you discuss what you learned, profiling the subject of the interview.

Week 4 (February 8th)

What to Do with Your English or Communications Degree: Read Chapter 3

Portfolio Capstone Seminar Spring 2016

A Writer's Reference: Read "Sentence Style"

DB4: Discuss some of the jobs discussed in chapter three. Were some a surprise? Which positions seem most intriguing as potentials? Do you already have a certainty as to your professional directions?

Journal Element 3: Interview (or, indeed, shadow) at least one professional in the positions listed in chapter three. Write an essay in which you discuss what these professionals actually do in their careers.

Week 5 (February 15th)

What to Do with Your English or Communications Degree: Read Chapter 4

A Writer's Reference: Read "Word Choice"

DB5: Working through the ideas in chapter four, discuss the issues, practicalities, and values which are determining your professional aspirations.

Journal Element 4: Write an essay in which you profile a mentor—or someone you admire but whom you may not know (even someone famous!). How did they achieve in their field?

Week 6 (February 22nd)

What to Do with Your English or Communications Degree: Read Chapter 5

A Writer's Reference: Read "Grammatical Sentences"

DB6: Discuss professionalization in the job search. What are some crucial points brought up in chapter five that we should all remember?

Journal Element 5: Write a resume or curriculum vitae (an educational resume)

Week 7 (February 29th)

What to Do with Your English or Communications Degree: Read Chapter 6

A Writer's Reference: Read "Multilingual Writers and ESL Challenges"

DB7: Post copies of your resume and comment on one another's in the replies. The original discussion board will be the resume, itself. Tell each other what is most successful about the draft, and then make a suggestion for revision.

Portfolio Capstone Seminar Spring 2016

Journal Element 6: Write a cover letter for a job, either fictitious or real. Then, write a thank you for an interview for the same position.

Week 8 (March 7th)

What to Do with Your English or Communications Degree: Read Appendix I

A Writer's Reference: Read "Punctuation and Mechanics"

DB8: Pick three of the questions in Appendix I to answer. Comment on other's answers—be sure to identify the question!

Journal Element 7: Work through the questions from the appendix, either asking your colleagues the questions and recording answers or answering them for yourself.

Week 9 (March 21st)

What to Do with Your English or Communications Degree: Read Appendix II

A Writer's Reference: Read "Basic Grammar"

DB9: What was most interesting about what you learned in Appendix II? You will wish to complete the journal 8 before answering this discussion board.

Journal Element 8: Look up and describe each of the sites listed in the Appendix II.

Week 10 (March 28th)

What to Do with Your English or Communications Degree: Read Appendix III

A Writer's Reference: Read "Researching"

DB10: What was intriguing about the information in Appendix III? Did it give you any ideas for future professional or educational avenues?

Journal Element 9: Look up and describe the financial awards listed in Appendix III.

Week 11 (April 4th)

*Read the assignment for the portfolio found in assignments link.

Portfolio Capstone Seminar Spring 2016

A Writer's Reference: Read "MLA"

DB11: Discuss your plan of action for compiling the portfolio. What are your strategies?

Journal Element 8: Discuss which documents you plan to use for the portfolio and why each is the most appropriate choice.

Week 12 (April 11th)

*Read the portfolio introduction assignment under the assignments tab.

*Spend at least an hour in the writing center watching tutorials. This means that you watch at least two full tutorials. Also, interview one or more of the tutors to learn about their position as a tutor, a graduate assistant, a graduate student.

A Writer's Reference: Read "APA/CMS"

DB12: Discuss the experience watching tutorials. What did you learn about this type of academic outreach, pedagogy?

Journal Element 11: Write an essay in which you describe the writing center and profile one or more of the graduate assistants who work there.

Week 13 (April 18th)

*Introduction Draft Due for workshop

*Visit the writing center with your draft

A Writer's Reference: Read "Index" (i.e. get a notion of how one cross references—note also the other areas of content referencing in the text).

DB13: Post a draft of your introduction in the discussion board. Read and comment on one another's. What aspect of each is most successful? What revisions do you recommend?

Journal Element 12: Discuss the writing process for the introduction. How did you go about idea-building, composing, revising? What are you most pleased with? What do you feel needs work? How did the workshop help the process, or what is your opinion of collaborative writing?

Week 14 (April 25th)

*Introduction Due for grading

Portfolio Capstone Seminar Spring 2016

DB14: Discuss the writing center tutorial. What did you learn from the experience?

Journal Element 13: Assess design and content choices you are making in the portfolio. What have been the challenges of creating the portfolio. What do you still need to accomplish to complete the portfolio?

Week 15 (May 2nd)

*Portfolio Drafts Due for compilation

DB15: Say good bye to one another. What has changed for you this semester, as you approach the completion of your college career?

Journal Element 14: Pull the course together into a comprehensive discussion of the experience. What did you learn/accomplish in the course? What do you wish we had covered?

Week 16 (May 9th)

*Completed Portfolio Due

