

## English 3312 Advanced Composition

**Dr. Sarah Roche**

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**Office Hours:** By appointment; please see Announcements for when I will be in Eagle Pass and Uvalde for Office Hours

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### Course Description

Learning to write is a complex, individualized process which takes place over time with continued practice and daily reading. Five weeks is not much time for such a process; you will be introduced to practices which *you should continue throughout your lives*. This class will be a writing intensive workshop course in which you will develop your reading and writing. Given the complex, recursive nature of enhancing writing and speaking, we will read and write every day. We will focus on developing our own vocabularies and on choosing the most precise, powerful words for papers. You will write a sequence of assignments that culminates in a researched argument for our writing community.

### English Program Student Learning Objectives

1. Students will be able to construct essays that demonstrate clear topic/thesis, development, organization, and appropriate language.
2. Students will be able to select, evaluate, and synthesize primary and secondary sources and correctly document those sources.
3. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of a variety of literature, of elements of literature, and of literary genres necessary for success in teaching or in graduate school.

### Student Learning Objectives

Learning to write is a complex, individualized process which takes place over time with continued practice. Student Learning Objectives and assessment of how much students learn those objectives are as follows:

- Enhanced vocabulary
- rhetorical knowledge (purpose, audience, differences in communicative situations, genre). Assessment: argument essays;
- critical thinking, reading, and writing (locating, evaluating, analyzing, synthesizing primary and secondary sources; reflection). Assessment: in-class writing, argument essays, resource evaluations, peer critiques;
- understanding of and use of writing processes, (multiple drafts, revising, editing, proof-reading texts, peer critiquing and collaborative thinking and writing). Assessment: minute papers, all essays, group work and peer critiques;
- mastery of conventions (grammar, punctuation, spelling, paragraphing, and appropriate documentation). Assessment: in-class writing, all essays and final exam;
- control over the various approaches to documenting sources in the different disciplines, mastery of student's chosen documentation style guide.

### Course Texts

All course readings are in the Blackboard course under Readings or recommended in feedback on your papers.

### Assignment

25 daily blog entries (Blackboard)

### Date Due

daily

### Points Possible

10

Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting	7/12	10
Article Evaluation	7/14	10
Exploratory Essay	7/21	10
Article Evaluation	7/28	20
Argument	8/4	20
Argument with Cover Letter	8/11	20

### Grading

A: 90 – 100

B: 80 – 89

C: 70 – 79

D: 60 – 69

F: 0 - 59

To earn a C, writing must be free of issues that interfere with readability, some of which include:

- Sentences that do not have clear subjects and verbs
- Unclear vocabulary: wrong words, unclear words
- Unclear pronouns (it, they, them)
- Major sentence structure errors: fragments, run-ons, comma splices
- Lack of agreement between subject and verb and between verb and object
- Inconsistent capitalization (i for I, use of capital letters for common nouns, etc)
- Failure to show possessive case with apostrophes
- Spelling errors or inappropriate abbreviations (u for you, thru for through, etc)

**A paper** (professional/publishable): The A paper includes all the positive qualities of the B paper listed below. The A paper teaches readers a new perspective on the subject. The A paper persuades readers that its points should be seriously received. The A paper is original, imaginative, creative. The A paper is written in the student's own voice, so the quotations are integrated into the student's sentences without undermining his or her voice. The A paper fully develops and discusses the thesis and how each supporting detail connects to the thesis so that the reader feels significantly taught by the author, sentence after sentence, paragraph after paragraph. The A paper is also engaging without unclear passages or errors that distract the reader. The title and the opening get the reader's attention and make sense; the transitions clearly connect paragraphs to the thesis; the sentences are clear and correct; the vocabulary is varied and precise.

**B paper** (superior): The B paper is significantly more than competent. Besides being almost free of mechanical errors, the B paper delivers meaningful information--that is, information that raises a new awareness for the reader. Its specific points are logically ordered, well-developed, and unified around a clear thesis that is apparent *early in the paper*. It may develop an idea fully and accurately but some of the B paper's content may say the obvious, what the reader already knows, or it may not develop discussions about the supporting details as fully as the A paper does. The opening paragraph gets the reader's attention; the closing paragraph is conclusive and connects nicely to the opening. The transitions between paragraphs are mostly smooth, the sentence structures varied. The vocabulary is concise and precise.

**C paper** (good; fulfills the assignment): The C paper is competent; however it generally tells the reader what he or she would know already, so that the reader does not gain a new perspective on the topic or the literature. The C paper satisfies the assignment, does not have too many distracting errors and is mostly well-organized and developed. The thesis may be general or vague so that the supporting references to the readings don't

always connect well. Some of the supporting details may not be explained or discussed very fully and ideas may be unnecessarily repeated. The paragraphs may not be organized as logically as further revision might have achieved. It may have a pattern of sentence structure errors or other kinds of error. Vocabulary may be general or repetitious. The C paper is capable of becoming a B or A paper, but it needs more revising of ideas and paragraphs, editing of sentences and words, and proofreading of mechanical errors and formatting.

**D paper (Unsatisfactory):** This paper seems incomplete. It may contain an unclear thesis or none at all, it may simply restate some ideas from sources, or it may lack organization. Patterns of error interfere with the audience's reading and cause the communication to fail. However, the D paper shows that with revision and editing it could become a more successful paper.

**F paper (Unacceptable):** Its treatment of the subject is superficial; its theme lacks discernible organization; its prose is hard to read. Mechanical errors are frequent. In short, the ideas, organization, and style fall far short of acceptable college writing in English.

### Course Policies

**DISTANCE EDUCATION STATEMENT:** Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

### Procedures and Policies for Blackboard Courses

Course assignments must be produced in **Microsoft Word documents whose file names end in .doc**. If you have questions about Blackboard, contact Sandy Bogus at 432-837-8523 or [sbogus@sulross.edu](mailto:sbogus@sulross.edu) or Rusty Klein at [rklein@sulross.edu](mailto:rklein@sulross.edu) or 432 837 8595.

Late papers will not be accepted, unless you notify me three days before the assignment deadline by a memo email explaining your situation and requesting an extension. The email memo must be professional, revised and edited.

### Scholastic Honesty

All work submitted must be your own and must be written exclusively for this class; the use of sources must be appropriately, correctly, and consistently documented. Quotations, paraphrases, or summaries that are not documented and the use of papers written by others constitute plagiarism.

Three different acts are considered plagiarism:

- (1) failing to cite quotations and borrowed ideas,
- (2) failing to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks, and
- (3) failing to put summaries and paraphrases in your own words.

**A grade of "F" for the course is earned if the work exhibits any of these kinds of scholastic dishonesty.**

### Turning in Papers/Assignments

To pass the class you must successfully complete and turn in to me each assignment by the due date. All assignments must be submitted to Blackboard. If you do not submit assignments to Blackboard, they will be

considered late. If you fail to turn in any assignments, even one, you may earn an F for the course. If life gets in the way, and you find yourself turning in two papers late, withdraw from the course and take it in a semester when you have more time.

### **Grade Changes**

Please discuss your grades with me during the first four weeks of the session. Once the session is over and I have entered grades into the system, however, I will not consider grade changes unless I, myself, miscalculated. Please do not ask for extra credit or chances to revise after the fifth week of class because I will refuse such appeals. You should know that you have the right to appeal your grade. According to the *Sul Ross Rio Grande College Student Handbook*, "if you disagree with a grade you received, you should discuss it with the instructor of the course. If you are not satisfied with results of that discussion, make an appointment to discuss it with the Chair of the Department [in this case, Dr. Roche]" (17).

### **ADA Statement**

SRSU Rio Grande College is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Disability Services Coordinator assists students with disabilities in gaining opportunities for full participation in programs, services and activities. The Disability Services Coordinator is the Director of Student Services 830-758-5006 in Eagle Pass, Texas.

### **Schedule**

#### **Week 1** Tuesday July 10 to Saturday July 14

Week One Readings

Blog entries

Video Conference Wednesday, July 11 from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting paper due Thursday, July 12

Article Evaluation due Saturday, July 14

#### **Week 2** Monday July 16 to Saturday July 21

Week Two Readings

Blog entries

Exploratory Essay due Saturday, July 21

#### **Week 3** Monday July 23 to Saturday July 28

Week Three Readings

Blog entries

Article Evaluation due Saturday July 28

#### **Week 4** Monday July 30 to Saturday August 4

Week Four Readings

Blog entries

Argument due Saturday August 4

#### **Week 5** Monday August 6 to Saturday August 11

Week Five Readings

Blog entries

Final Argument with Cover Letter due Saturday August 11