

# Policies

## English 4300



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Office: **MAB 114**  
Office Hours: **M-Th 1-3:30**

Course Text:

*A Writer's Reference*. Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers (latest edition)

# Portfolio Capstone Seminar Fall 2018

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## 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 Wednesday of final examinations at twelve noon. If you fail to attend course meetings without prior consent of me, the instructor, I reserve the right to fail you.

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## Assignments

The course will consist of three 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.

**Journal Elements:** The journal elements will be brief essays (500-700 words) 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.

**Introductory Essay:** See the full assignment attached.

**Portfolio:** See the full assignment attached.

## 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 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.

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## Grade Breakdown:

Journal Essays	40%
Portfolio Introduction Essay	20%
Final Portfolio	40%

## Grading Scale:

90-100 =A

80-89 =B

70-79 =C

60-69 =D

Below 60=F

# Syllabus



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## Weekly Schedule

### Week 1 (August 27)

- \*Read the course policies and syllabus.
- \*Contact Dr. Payne to arrange a physical meeting time.

### Week 2 (September 4)

Journal Element 1: Write a personal essay of introduction.

### Week 3 (September 10)

*A Writer's Reference*: Read “Academic Reading, Writing, and Speaking” and “Composing and Revising”

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 (September 17)

*A Writer's Reference*: Read “Sentence Style”

Journal Element 3: Interview (or, indeed, shadow) at least one professional in a professional positions you might pursue. Write an essay in which you discuss what this professional actually does in his or her career/work day.

### Week 5 (September 24)

*A Writer's Reference*: Read “Word Choice”

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?

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Week 6 (October 1)

*A Writer's Reference:* Read "Grammatical Sentences"

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

Week 7 (October 8)

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

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 (October 15)

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

Journal Element 7: Write an essay in which you describe the writing center and profile one or more of the graduate assistants' methodologies who work there based on watching tutorials. Interview the tutor(s) and add their thoughts of their work into the essay.

Week 9 (October 22)

*A Writer's Reference:* Read "Basic Grammar"

Journal Element 8: Read the assignment for the portfolio and begin planning the compiling of the writing examples. Discuss which documents you plan to use for the portfolio and why each is the most appropriate choice. Write an assessment of the paper choices, clearly indicating the instructor or record for the essay and the scope of the course for which each was written.

Week 10 (October 29)

*A Writer's Reference:* Read "Researching"

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**Journal Element 9:** Write a plan for revising each of the writing examples for the portfolio—make a schedule for meeting with each professor for revising the pieces. Draft the introduction to the portfolio.

Week 11 (November 5)

*A Writer's Reference:* Read “MLA”

**Journal Element 8:** Revise at least two portfolio documents and write an essay in which you discuss the process of revision and how and why your revision is successful. Draft the table of contents.

Week 12 (November 12)

*A Writer's Reference:* Read “APA/CMS”

**Journal Element 11:** Revise at least two portfolio documents and write an essay in which you discuss the process of revision and how and why your revision is successful. Redraft introduction.

Week 13 (November 19)

*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).

**Journal Element 12:** After compiling the portfolio, write an essay in which you discuss your feelings regarding the progression of your work, as well as the process of compiling, revising, and presenting a portfolio. Redraft Table of Contents.

Week 14 (November 26)

\*Introduction Due for grading

**Journal Element 13:** 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?



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Week 15 (December 3)

\*Portfolio Due for grading



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## 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. 2341 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

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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.)

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Assignment:

Portfolio Introduction

Self-Assessment Essay

Immediately after your Table of Contents, include a self-assessment essay of one to three pages in length. This essay will serve to introduce the portfolio, and, more importantly, prove to be a personal narrative of you as a graduating English major.

In the essay, you will address the following: 1) Of the six papers in your portfolio, which three do you feel were your most successful? What made them successful? And, conversely, where do you feel your writing and scholarship could have improved? 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.)

In addition, you may wish to review your time at Sul Ross and your aspirations as you move forward. The challenge of the essay is to think critically and to analyze your academic experiential progression, while also exuding your own life.

The introduction should certainly be a personal narrative. As such, it might take various directions to reflect your journey and you as a writer and scholar.

The essay should be written in Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double spaced. It will be assessed for its rhetorical effectiveness to include the correctness of writing.

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Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Rubric for Senior English Majors' Portfolio Assessment

Evaluate the specific features under each mode, using (4) for excellent, (3) for good, (2) for satisfactory, (1) for poor, and (0) if the feature is not present in the paper. Add and put the total in the blank beside the number. If there is no paper in the mode, indicate that with a (0).

\_\_\_\_ 1. Introduction essay

\_\_\_\_ a. Focus

\_\_\_\_ b. Effective organization

\_\_\_\_ c. Thorough development

\_\_\_\_ d. Correct grammar and mechanics.

\_\_\_\_ 2. Expository writing sample: Personal essay (non-literary topic, no sources)

\_\_\_\_ a. Focus

\_\_\_\_ b. Effective organization

\_\_\_\_ c. Thorough development

\_\_\_\_ d. Correct grammar and mechanics.

\_\_\_\_ 3. Critical/analytical sample: Analysis of literary work (no sources)

\_\_\_\_ a. Demonstration of critical thinking skills

\_\_\_\_ b. Effective organization

\_\_\_\_ c. Thoroughness and depth of analysis

\_\_\_\_ d. Use of appropriate terminology of literary analysis

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- \_\_\_\_ 4. Research paper: Documented paper (with sources), literary or non-literary topic
- \_\_\_\_ a. Clearly stated thesis or focus
  - \_\_\_\_ b. Ability to incorporate sources into the writer's own text
  - \_\_\_\_ c. Use of a variety of sources
  - \_\_\_\_ d. Correct MLA documentation form
- \_\_\_\_ 5. Creative work done in an English class: poetry, fiction, multimedia project, photo essay, graphic novel, or any other strongly original project
- \_\_\_\_ a. Originality
  - \_\_\_\_ b. Effective formatting of media and design
  - \_\_\_\_ c. Audience appeal
  - \_\_\_\_ d. Successful development of content
- \_\_\_\_ 6. Essay exam in literature (written in-class in a world, British, or American literature course)
- \_\_\_\_ a. Use of well-selected general statements/claims to formulate answer
  - \_\_\_\_ b. Use of specific examples to support generalities
  - \_\_\_\_ c. Use of essay conventions (thesis, topic sentences, paragraphing, etc.)
  - \_\_\_\_ d. Thoroughness of answer
- \_\_\_\_ 7. Example of daily course assignments from World, British, or American literature courses (e.g. journal entries, discussion board posts, analytic question prompts, creative invention exercises, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_ a. Clear focus, conformity to assignment
  - \_\_\_\_ b. Creative, analytic, and/or critical approach
  - \_\_\_\_ c. Thorough, effective, detailed development
  - \_\_\_\_ d. Effective rhetorical design, correctness of writing