

**BRAZOSPORT COLLEGE
LAKE JACKSON, TX**

**ENGLISH 1301
SYLLABUS**

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

ENGLISH 1301 COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC I. CIP 2313015112

This course introduces the rhetorical and mechanical skills necessary to develop confident, informed voices. Students will learn about the writing process through critical reading of non-fiction and fiction prose, revision, editing and collaboration. In particular, the course focuses on the strategies and conventions of academic writing, especially exposition and argumentation.(3 SCH, 3 lecture, 0 lab)

Required skill level: College-level reading and writing.

Dr. Kathleen Andersen-Wyman

Roy Lewis

Dr. Brenda Dillard

Emily Masterson

Dr. Joy Kennedy-O'Neill

Mariellen Overly

Dr. Chun Lee

Dr. Ed Putty

Dr. Kate Funkhouser, Chair
Communications & Fine Arts Division

Dr. Lynda Villanueva
VP, Academic and Student Affairs

November 2013

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

ENGLISH 1301 emphasizes writing as a process, a process of discovery and thinking. Students are led through the processes of inventing, drafting, reading drafts critically, revising and polishing, and editing their compositions.

The pedagogy of the course is based on the position that clear, effective communication is one of the most important aspects not only in the education of all human beings but also in the development of their ability to succeed in whatever vocations or professions they choose and follow; thus, **Composition and Rhetoric I** emphasizes the basic communication and writing skills that make freshman students competent writers; in addition, the course provides a foundation for the students to build on in subsequent English and content courses to succeed in college and eventually in the world of work.

Philosophically, the general objectives of the course are designed to make the students aware of their uniquely human capacity to communicate and to encourage students to develop and polish their writing skills.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND COURSE CONTENT

The students who complete the course satisfactorily should have an awareness of how to write coherent documents with definite, clear purposes to specific audiences on particular occasions. They should have a command of the skills of stating or clearly implying a central idea, developing the idea or thesis with specific and relevant details (properly documented when the details are taken from other sources), and providing and maintaining transitions and a discernible and logical design in their writing; they should demonstrate the basic writing competencies established by the English Department, use standard vocabulary and diction appropriate to the audience and the purpose of their writing, and edit their papers to conform to the criteria of standard edited English.

Specifically the course objectives are attained through the completion of seven to eight writing assignments, in length varying from 300-500 words for short compositions to 500-2000 words for longer papers. The writing assignments generally fall into the four traditional rhetorical strategies or modes – narration, description, exposition, and augmentation/persuasion; however, the emphasis is upon the idea that effective writing incorporates all modes of rhetoric when they are necessary and appropriate to the purpose, the audience, and the occasion.

At least one to two writing assignments require students to do library research, take appropriate notes, and incorporate their research, properly documented, into informational/argumentation/persuasive essays.

Students are led to “discover” and explore topics in their readings from “free writing” and journal work, and from library and field research in topics of interest and relevance to them and their future vocations and careers. The basic guide in matters of grammar, punctuation, diction, and mechanics is the college handbook. In addition, students meet

in the writing lab and use *Microsoft Word* as the software for formatting and writing their papers. In some instances, students are encouraged to work on papers that are related to other courses.

CORE CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENTS

As part of the Brazosport College Core Curriculum, this course provides students the opportunity to achieve the following core curriculum objectives:

1. **Critical Thinking:** Including innovation, creative thinking, inquiry and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
2. **Communication Skills:** Including effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
3. **Teamwork:** Including the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.
4. **Personal Responsibility:** Including the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision making.

Objectives will be assessed according to the Brazosport College Core Assessment Plan through the sampling and evaluation of student work.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Generally, the evaluation of students' performances in **English 1301** is based on how well they meet the English Department's criteria of "Minimum Writing Competency," a copy of which is attached in the appendices to this document. More specifically, essays are evaluated and marked using the Brazosport College Department of English "General Evaluation Standards," also included in the appendices. The percentage breakdown in determining a student's final grade is as follows:

- 25% shorter writing assignments (three to four papers) and other class tasks
- 50% longer writing assignments (three to four papers)
- 25% final examination

The final examination requires that students demonstrate their basic writing competencies by writing an essay on a literary work chosen by the English faculty members. The students will write about it on the final examination to help them to make the transition from writing about their own experiences and interests to writing about and responding to literature, which is the general thrust of Composition and Rhetoric II.

The course is evaluated on a regular basis. One method is to track students' progress in subsequent English courses at Brazosport College. In addition, periodic sampling of students' performances on departmental final exams is conducted. Some classroom assessment measures are taken during the semester to encourage student evaluation of the course. At mid-semester, all instructors are required to ask students to evaluate the course and the instructor's performance through anonymous evaluations. Finally, the English faculty reviews the course periodically.

(MINIMUM WRITING COMPETENCY)

The entire writing performance may outweigh the skills demonstrated in specific categories.

1. Thesis
 - a. Statement of controlling idea
2. Support
 - a. Relevant
 - b. Specific
 - c. Adequate for assignment
3. Organization
 - a. Identifiable design
 - b. Logical arrangement of ideas to one another and to the whole
4. Sentence Structure
 - a. Sentences make sense
 - b. Logical flow of words and ideas
 - c. No more than three major sentence structure errors per two hundred words (comma splices, fused sentences, fragments)
5. Diction
 - a. Free of serious or multiple types of errors in word choice, including mistaken use of homonyms
6. Mechanics
 - a. Free of multiple errors in subject-verb agreement and spelling (no more than four misspellings of relatively simple words or three serious subject-verb agreement errors per two hundred words)
 - b. Free of multiple punctuation and capitalization errors which detract from meaning and violate conventional standards

(GENERAL EVALUATION STANDARDS)

Since quality of students' written work is a major factor in determining their grade, the students should be familiar with basic evaluation standards. The following points will receive attention:

1. Significance of purpose or controlling idea
2. Amount and relevance of supporting evidence
3. Plan, proportion, and transitions
4. Sentence structure
5. Diction
6. Mechanics

Listed below are general characteristics of each grade category:

Grade of A: Significant thesis; excellent support of thesis; well-planned, well-proportioned, effective transitions; varied sentence structure; accurate and imaginative diction; free from errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Grade of B: Significant point; adequate support; good arrangement, proportion, and transitions; competent sentences; precise diction; practically free from mechanical errors.

Grade of C: Fairly obvious point with relevant support, good planning, proportion, and transitions; mechanically correct sentences; conventional diction; infrequent mechanical errors.

Grade of D: Obvious and insignificant point with inadequate or irrelevant support, weak planning, proportion, and transitions; unimaginative, faulty sentences; colorless diction; many mechanical errors.

Grade of F: Trivial thesis, lack of supporting material, lack of plan, proportion, and transitions; frequent structural errors, inadequate diction, illiterate mechanics.

Instructors will apply the above standards relatively. It is not likely that a particular paper will have all the characteristics listed in any one category.

COURSE EVALUATION

At mid-semester, all instructors are required to ask students to evaluate the course and the instructor's performance through anonymous evaluation.

DEPARTMENTAL EVALUATIONS

The course is evaluated on a regular basis. One method is to track students' progress in subsequent English courses at Brazosport College. In addition, periodic sampling of students' performances on departmental final exams is conducted. Some classroom assessment measures are taken during the semester to encourage student evaluation of the course. Finally, the English faculty reviews the course periodically, including the course competencies, perspectives and objectives.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

BC is committed to providing equal education opportunities to every student. BC offers services for individuals with special needs and capabilities including counseling, tutoring, equipment, and software to assist students with special needs. Please contact Phil Robertson, Special Populations Counselor, 979-230-3236 for further information.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

BC assumes that students eligible to perform on the college level are familiar with the ordinary rules governing proper conduct including academic honesty. The principle of academic honesty is that all work presented by you is yours alone. Academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion shall be treated appropriately. Please refer to the BC Student Guide for more information, this is available online at <http://www.brazosport.edu>, click on the link found on the left side of the homepage.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to fully participate in the course. The following criteria are intended to assist you in being successful in this course.

- a. Time Management
- b. Understanding the Syllabus Requirements
- c. Utilizing Online Components (such as WebCT)
- d. Communicating with the Instructor
- e. Completing Course Work

OTHER STUDENT SERVICES INFORMATION

This list is provided to assist students in locating available services. Information about the BC Library is available at <http://www.brazosport.edu/~lib/Information.htm> or by calling 230-3310. Tutoring for Math, Reading, Writing, Biology, Chemistry, and other subjects is available in the LAC, 230-3253. To contact the Communications & Fine Arts Division call 230-3224. The Student Services area provides the following services: Counseling and Advising, 230-3040; Financial Aid, 230-3294; and Student Activities, 230-3355.

LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR ENGLISH 1301 COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC I

1. Students can write compositions that are well developed which includes organizing ideas effectively (with an introduction, support and conclusion), establishing a clear, narrowed, sophisticated main idea with content that is “college level” and details that are full and complete, and maintaining focus on the central idea.

Assessment: 5-8 compositions (passing with at least 70%)

2. Students can write compositions that are clear and communicative: using Standard English and corresponding grammar, sentence structure, mechanics, punctuation, diction, etc., and using a style appropriate to the reader while making rhetorical decisions based on audience awareness.

Assessment: 5-8 compositions (passing with at least 70%)

3. Students can write compositions that follow MLA guidelines such as formatting the essay, using parenthetical documentation, constructing a correct works cited page, understanding the nature and consequences of plagiarism, writing a paper free from argument fallacies, and making critical judgments regarding the validity of an argument (written in documents or spoken in a classroom setting).

Assessment: 1-4 compositions (passing with at least 70%)

4. Students can conduct different methods of research necessary for a college student (library, online, field, etc.), evaluate a source according to their rhetorical needs, and integrate the source into their own work without losing their writing voice.

Assessment: 1-4 compositions (passing with at least 70%)

5. Students can analyze a work and write a composition appropriate to the instructions, indicating their understanding of the work in a timed, final exam.

Assessment: final exam (passing with at least 70%), though passing the course is not dependent on passing the exam