

English 2010 – Intermediate Writing: Science and Human Values

Fall '09

Dr. Bryce Christensen

Office: BC303A // Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 9-10; Tuesdays and Thursdays 2-4; Wednesdays 3-4.

Course meeting time and location: Sec. 1, 8 a.m., MWF, BC 202
Sec. 6, 11 a.m., MWF, BC 201

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course web-site: eLearning (<https://elearning.suu.edu/webct/entryPageIns.dowebct>)

Texts: Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell, *The Concise Wadsworth Handbook* (optional; referred to as *WH* on the website); *Dance for Two*, by Alan Lightman (required to as *DT* on the website); Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say / I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing* (required; referred to in the course website as *TS*); C. P. Snow, *The Two Cultures* (required; referred to in the course website as *TC*); *SUU Guide to English Composition* (optional, referred to as *SGEC* on website).

Course objective: As an intermediate course in persuasive writing, this class will help students to see argumentation as a social act in which a writer, responding to urgent need, analyzes and clarifies an issue or problem and recommends a course of action to an audience. Students will read and critically evaluate a variety of arguments and study traditional rhetorical patterns. They will write four short formal assignments (three short essays plus a formal annotated bibliography) situated in a variety of rhetorical contexts and one long formal research essay (of eight to ten pages) written for academic readers.

This course will also ask students to do the following:

- Consider the function of argumentation and persuasion in society as a social act. They should use rhetorical strategies to work toward an argument that acknowledges and facilitates diverse perspectives.
- Consider and use a variety of viewpoints (not just “the other side”) as they frame their arguments. Understand how to use concession and qualification as part of the way they shape their arguments.
- Use common organizational patterns (such as definition, cause and effect, and problem/solution) as models of framing essays organizationally and as ways of thinking and evaluating issues.

- Become sensitive to the ways in which a writer's purpose towards and relationship with the audience affects choices of organizational formats, proofs, and style.
- Review, define and practice the kind of logical structures and proofs that academic and professional audiences find most valid, credible, and persuasive, particularly in connection with the use of source material. Understand logos, pathos, ethos, and bathos.
- Learn to evaluate and integrate external source material, using summary, paraphrase, and quotation, and professional academic documentation conventions. Document sources using in-text parenthetical citation and reference page conventions. Learn the difference between plagiarism and accurate and fair incorporation of other people's ideas and words. Be able to indicate clearly to the audience what materials are the student's ideas and what materials have been incorporated from external sources.
- Gain primary research strategies as a means of collecting data.

As a theme-based course, this class will focus its writing assignments and class discussions on the moral significance of science in modern society. Students will be asked to consider the special rhetorical challenges of addressing scientific issues fully understood only by technical experts, of creating connections between culturally disparate disciplines, and of interpreting disputes arising from divergent non-empirical assumptions.

The major research paper will be a eight-to-ten-page persuasive essay properly documented in MLA style manifesting a deep understanding of how human values connect (or fail to connect) with scientific principles in your own life, in the work of some prominent scientist, in some governmental or institutional scientific policy, or in some artistic portrayal of science. This paper (due on Nov. 9th) must make use of electronic library reserve materials that will be identified on the course website and in class discussion.

Grading: Final grades for the course will be based on the following formula:

Short Essays: 35%

Major Research Paper: 20%

Annotated Bibliography: 5%

Group Presentations (Two: One on exemplary student essay; one on Thomas essay): 10%

Participation (attendance; discussion board postings; critiques of peer essays; reader- and expert-response forms; in-class and homework assignments; written responses to assigned readings): 20%

Final Exam: 10%

Grades will be assigned based on the following distribution: 91-100 A, 87-90 A-, 84-86 B+, 81-83 B, 76-80 B-, 73-75 C+, 70-72 C, 67-69 C-, 64-66 D+, 61-63 D, 57-60 D-, 56 and below F.

Regular attendance is required at all class meetings. Students who miss class because of participation in athletics, forensics, student government, or other university-related activities will receive participation credit for the class missed only if they submit a paragraph explaining how they will compensate for activities and discussions held in class. A separate paragraph must be submitted for each absence.

Each essay must be submitted in a folder of a color specified by the instructor. Students must also send an e-text of the essay by e-mail on or before the day the essay is due. The teacher reserves the right to refuse to accept any essay not submitted with an electronic copy. The e-text for each essay must be in Microsoft Word or must be copied and pasted into an e-mail message. Failure to submit an acceptable e-text for an essay will result in a 20-point participation penalty even when the essay is accepted. Each essay should also be submitted with four reader responses. Students who do not submit reader responses will lose 20 participation points for the week the essay is due.

Late work: Late work will be penalized one letter grade. No makeup work will be accepted more than one week late except in cases of medical or other documented emergencies. *Late work will be graded without comment or markings.*

Revision policy: Two of the three short essays and the research essay may be revised and re-submitted for up to a full-letter-grade re-evaluation. Revised work must be re-submitted *with the original version and the original grading rubric* within three class sessions of the day essays are returned in class. *Revised essays must include marginal annotations identifying where and explaining why revisions have been made.*

The final short essay cannot be revised and re-submitted.

Writing conference: Each student is required to schedule at least one writing conference with the instructor. This conference should focus on an essay in progress. Additional writing conferences are recommended. For full credit, the working draft of the essay must be submitted to the instructor at least a day before the conference. ***Please note the date stipulated in the course website calendar for completion of the required writing conference.*** Students who participate in no writing conferences with the instructor will lose credit for one week of participation.

Due Dates and Topics for Essays:

Short Essay #1: Four-five page narrative essay exploring meaning of personal experience with science/technology. Due Sep. 14th.

Short Essay #2: Four-five page persuasive essay analyzing the cultural impact of some technological or theoretical product of science. Due Oct. 12th.

Major Research Essay: Eight-to-ten page persuasive essay—fully researched and documented (MLA Style)—analyzing the way some aspect of science or technology connects with or fails to connect with human values. This essay must acknowledge and respond to alternative perspectives on the issues in view. Due Nov. 9th.

Short Essay #3: Four-five page persuasive essay analyzing the message (and/or the artistic techniques used to deliver that message) found in some creative work (poem, play, story, novel, movie) about the nature of science. Due Dec. 4th.

When you enrolled in this class, you paid a \$20 fee to give you access to the Writing Center. Designed to give you the chance to talk your papers over with friendly peer consultants who are strong academic writers, the Writing Center is open weekdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in BC 204. The center can help you at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to polishing. To make an appointment, drop by the Writing Center, call 865-8176, or send an e-mail to writingcenter@suu.edu. Although the center accepts drop-in appointments, it's safest to make your appointment a few days ahead. If you remember to bring your professor's written assignment to your appointment, you'll help ensure a productive discussion.

Visit the center's website <http://www.suu.edu/hss/english/writingcenter/> to find out more about what it can offer you. Details about new on-line tutorials and about other center-sponsored programs and workshops will be posted on the site throughout the semester.

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent. Fuller treatment of this topic (and other course-related matters) is found in the *SUU Guide to English Composition*. Students are expected to have read the *Guide* and understood the current issue of the student handbook (published by Student Services) regarding student responsibilities and rights, and the intellectual property policy, for information about procedures and about what constitutes acceptable on-campus behavior.

Students with medical, psychological, learning, or other disabilities desiring academic adjustments, accommodations, or auxiliary aids will need to contact the Southern Utah University Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), Room 205C, Sharwan Smith Center, phone (435)865-8022. SSD determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of services.

Information contained in this syllabus, other than the grading, late and revised assignments, and attendance policies, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.