Rhetoric and Writing Studies 100  
The Rhetoric of Written Argument  
Fall 2015

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Blackboard: http://blackboard.sdsu.edu

Sched. #_______, Sec. ____  
Office hours: TTH 11:30-12:30  
and by appointment

RWS Dept. Office: SHW 141

COURSE MATERIALS

- Required textbooks:  Borgen & Cavender: RWS 100 Course Reader (at Cal Copy)  
  Raimes: Keys for Writers, 7th ed.
- A college-level dictionary and thesaurus of your choice
- A USB drive to save work done in class (bring to class every day)
- Current e-mail account

COURSE OBJECTIVES:  
General Education Capacities/Goals & RWS Learning Outcomes

Our Learning Outcomes Reflect the Goals and Capacities of the General Education Program.  
RWS 100 is one of several courses in the area of general education defined as  
"Communication and Critical Thinking." Focusing particularly on argument, this course  
emphasizes four essential general education capacities: the ability to 1) construct, analyze  
and communicate argument, 2) contextualize phenomena, 3) negotiate differences, and 4)  
apply theoretical models to the real world. This course advances general education by  
helping students understand the general function of writing, speaking, visual texts, and  
thinking within the context of the university at large, rather than within specific disciplines. In  
addition to featuring the basic rules and conventions governing composition and presentation,  
RWS 100 establishes intellectual frameworks and analytical tools that help students explore,  
construct, critique, and integrate sophisticated texts.

Within this framework of four general capacities, the course realizes four closely related  
subsidiary goals. These goals focus on helping students

1) craft well-reasoned arguments for specific audiences;  
2) analyze a variety of texts commonly encountered in the academic setting;  
3) situate discourse within social, generic, cultural, and historic contexts; and  
4) assess the relative strengths of arguments and supporting evidence.

Our student learning outcomes for RWS 100 are closely aligned with these goals and  
capacities, and reflect the program’s overall objective of helping students attain “essential  
skills that underlie all university education.”

COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

This is a computer-based course, involving frequent hands-on activity during class time,  
including drafting and revising essays and internet activities. Please bring a flash drive or  
other type of disk to class every day to save your work. The class will be conducted via  
Blackboard, through which I will distribute assignments, the syllabus, quizzes, etc. Therefore,  
you must have regular access to a computer and the internet outside of class time. If you do  
not have a home computer, you will find a variety of student labs on campus. It will not be  
necessary to have computer expertise to be successful in this class.
Note: All formal papers will be submitted via Blackboard. This is also how your papers will be returned to you with grades and instructor comments. Please take time to familiarize yourself with the Gradebook feature on Blackboard.

Working on the computer during lectures and class discussions is disruptive and disrespectful to your fellow students and the instructor. Please refrain from all internet activities (including social networking), sending e-mails, texting, tweeting, and doing work for your other classes. Disregarding these rules will negatively affect your grade.

COURSEWORK
Following are the types of work you can expect to complete this semester:

Writing
- Frequent in-class writing assignments
- Three formal papers
- In-class reading responses, summaries, and discussion questions, as assigned
- All formal work must use MLA conventions as explained in Keys for Writers
- I do not accept any work via e-mail

Reading
- Assignments from course reader and writer's handbook
- Reading quizzes
- Outside readings for research projects
- Other readings as provided

Group work
- Peer review: For each formal paper, you will form peer groups to review each other's work and offer insightful criticism and response. You will then revise each essay, incorporating feedback from peers.
- Group research project and presentation
- Frequent in-class group activities

Other requirements to succeed in this class
- Participate actively in class discussions and group activities
- Do not engage in texting, unrelated computer work, or other disruptive activities
- Attend class regularly
- Complete assignments on time
- Bring assigned reading materials to class every day, with text marked up to show active reading

GRADE BREAKDOWN
Your final grade will reflect the following coursework:
- 20% Writing Project #1: Producing an Account and Evaluating an Argument
- 20% Writing Project #2: Analyzing and Evaluating Rhetorical Strategies
- 10% Group Project #3: Gathering Information and Managing Sources
- 25% Writing Project #4: Assessing Multiple Texts
- 15% In-class work, reading responses, summaries, peer review, and miscellaneous writing assignments
- 10% Reading quizzes
Formal papers (WP #1, 2, and 4) are worth 20 points each, weighted according to above breakdown. Group project (P3) is worth 50 points, weighted at 10% of your final grade. Reading quizzes are each worth 10 points. In-class work, peer review, and misc. assignments will be graded on a point system; your grade in this category will reflect your percentage of total possible points for satisfactory work completed.

LATE WORK

- Quizzes will be completed on Blackboard before class time the day an assigned reading is due.
- There will be no opportunity to make up missed quizzes or in-class work.
- Formal papers: If you do not submit one of the formal papers, you will not pass the class. Papers submitted by the first deadline (official due date) will receive written feedback. Papers submitted by the late deadline will receive brief feedback on a grading rubric. I will not accept any papers for any reason after the late deadline.

PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

As a college student, you are responsible for your own attendance. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences; therefore, it is unnecessary to contact me every time you are absent. However, you must be present in class to submit assignments and fulfill the course requirements (e.g., group collaborations, in-class essays, peer review, class discussions, etc.). Frequent absences will negatively affect your grade. If you miss a scheduled in-class activity, there will be no opportunity to make it up.

STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICES STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

"If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619)594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated."

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

This class will be conducted in accordance with basic standards of academic honesty. If you have not already done so, please familiarize yourself with the definition of plagiarism in the SDSU catalog. In short, plagiarism involves submitting work (sentences, paragraphs, pages, etc.) written by someone else and claiming that you have written it, or directly using someone else’s ideas and not giving credit to the source. In accordance with university policy, plagiarism will result in a grade of ‘F’ for the assignment and possible failure of the course.

If you are unsure of what constitutes plagiarism, refer to the SDSU catalog or consult with the instructor.