Syllabus, Spring 2016  
RWS 280  
San Diego State University  

Instructor: John Vanderpot, M.A., M.F.A  

Contact Information: email: johnvanderpot@gmail.com  

Office Hours: 5:30-6:30, Starbucks, Main Campus (M, T, W)  

Required Texts: *Born to Run* (C. McDougall), *Generation Me* (J. M. Twenge), *Stranger Than Fiction* (C. Palahniuk)  

Course Goal: RWS 280 engages students in using key rhetorical concepts as a mode of inquiry and invention as they develop reading and writing proficiency in academic disciplines and other contexts.  

Student Learning Outcomes:  

1. Develop an effective process of reading for comprehension.  
2. Develop an effective writing process – including prewriting, drafting, revision, and self-evaluation.  
3. Analyze the elements of academic texts – particularly argument, genre, audience, context, purpose, and strategies.  
4. Articulate in writing key rhetorical concepts.  
5. Explore the significance of texts to oneself and one’s educational project.  

Course Requirements: All assignments (both reading and writing) should be completed prior to the start of class and competent participation is expected. There will be discussion/presentation groups, in-class writing assignments, and workshopping/peer review sessions. Also, reading response questions are required for the various reading assignments (accepted only at the start of class). It is assumed that students will conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to a university setting (including, but not limited to, turning off their cell phones in class), and it is expected that they will be actively engaged in, because they are ultimately responsible for, their education.  

Grading: Specific criteria will be handed out and discussed in advance of each assignment. However, overall and in general, grades will be determined using the following criteria: Does your paper directly address the assignment’s requirements? Is the paper organized in a logical and appropriate manner? Does the writing conform to the basic guidelines of the English
language? Grades go down a ‘notch’ for each day papers are late and remember to attach your draft (no draft, no ‘A,’ no exceptions) to the final copy. Final grades will be calculated as follows: 5 papers at 10% each, a full-length essay at 20%, a revision assignment at 10%, 10% for participation, 5% for reader responses, and the final is worth 5%.

Attendance: It will be very difficult for students to pass the course if they miss more than three classes; excessive lateness or leaving early will count as half an absence. Students are responsible for finding out what occurred on days they miss and use of the ‘buddy system’ is therefore encouraged. (This is seriously encouraged: The instructor simply cannot ‘reteach’ the class several times a week at the random convenience of those who were absent…so, please, make some reliable friends and keep in contact with them!)

Tentative Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction  Week 9: Paper #4
Week 2: McDougall  Week 10: McDougall
Week 3: Paper #1  Week 11: Paper #5
Week 4: Twenge  Week 12: Palahniuk
Week 5: Paper #2  Week 13: Palahniuk
Week 6: Twenge  Week 14: Essay #1
Week 7: Paper #3  Week 15: Revision
Week 8: Twenge  Week 16: Final (All work due!)

Students with Disabilities: 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 delay in 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. Thank you.