

Elizabeth Sosa
eliz_sosa@hotmail.com
Office hours: Wednesday 11-12 pm and by appointment
Vista 314

Tuesdays 6:30- 9:30 pm

English 5 Critical Thinking

Introduction

We will be questioning: Who we are? What we're told? And who (or what) is defining our expectations of the world? Our discussions should be lively and will, at times, hit a nerve. It is important we remain respectful of everyone's opinion and input. Open dialogue is our goal.

Prerequisite

A prerequisite exists for enrollment in English 5. You must have completed English 1A with a grade of "C" or better. If you do not meet the requirements, you are not eligible to be in this class.

Required Texts

From Critical Thinking to Argument: A Portable Guide, Sylvan Barnet and Hugo Bedau
(ISBN: 0312436262)

The American Way of Death Revisited, by Jessica Mitford (ISBN: 0679771867)

On Bullshit, Harry G. Frankfurt (ISBN: 0691122946)

Various hand-outs

- All of the required text will be available at the school's bookstore. Most text can be found at local used bookstores (i.e. Moe's) or online (half.com).

Also Required

An active email account

Internet access

Recommended Text

A Writer's Reference, Diana Hacker

A dictionary AND a thesaurus

Class Blog

I will maintain a class blog and post all of your class assignments. If you miss class, check the blog for the homework instructions. On the blog, I will provide additional information on the topics we discuss and helpful web links. The address is

<http://english5spring06.blogspot.com/>

Course Requirements

Essay 1 -3: 100 points each

Final Project: 150

Final project preparation materials: 50

Short assignments and annotated bibliographies: 120

Workshops (25 points each): 100
Class Participation: 100 Student-
lead discussion: 75 Discussion
defense paper: 25
Portfolio: 80

Total points: 1000

A = 1000-900 B = 899-800 C = 799-700 D = 699-600 F = 599-0

Course Work

Student-lead discussion: You will sign up to lead a class discussion. You are expected to find an article from a reputable news source (print or internet) relevant to the unit we are working on. Make enough copies for the class (or give me the article in advance and I'll make the copies). Explain why this source is reliable or why it should be questioned. (Are there biases? Omitted information?) Discuss the content of the article and why it is relevant to the class. Prepare a 15-minute presentation for the class and write a two-page justification. The most successful presentations are creative and interactive. Email me prior to your presentation day with a quick summary of what you are planning.

Annotated Bibliographies: I will regularly assign annotated bibliographies (annotated bibs.). An annotated bib. requires you to list the text in MLA format. Beneath the citation, you will write 2 or 3 sentences summarizing the article or book chapters. Include 5 or 6 more sentences that articulate your own views regarding the text. When writing an annotated bib. think about:

- What is the author's primary argument?
What words or key terms are fundamental to that argument?
What evidence does the author provide to support the argument?
What underlying assumptions shape the author's position?

One-pagers: I will periodically assign a one-page paper ("one-pager") responding to a prompt I distribute in class. Your response should be typed, double-spaced and proofread.

Essays: You will write three polished essays during the semester. Though the essays may explore more creative or personal topics, I still expect high quality writing. For each essay, you will receive a detailed assignment, which will specify the requirements.

Final Project: The final project for this class will be creative, detailed and (hopefully) fun. In addition to your creative project, you will write a justification paper explaining and analyzing your work. Leading up to the final project you will submit short preparatory assignments reflecting the development of your ideas for the final product.

Workshops: Each essay and the final project will undergo a workshop with your peers. You need to come prepared with a fully complete draft. Partial drafts will not receive workshop credit.

Writing portfolio: The writing portfolio will represent the body of work you produce throughout the semester. Portfolio guidelines will be handed out later in the semester. You are allowed one rewrite of a paper that received 70 points or lower. You may submit a rewrite to me at any point in the semester but no later than the portfolio due date. You must include your original essay with my comments. Make sure you SAVE EVERYTHING.

Course Policies

Participation: This class is interactive and requires active participation. If you are not comfortable speaking 'on the spot' come prepared with a question for class discussion.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. In order to be an active participator in the class, you must attend.

Vista catalogue states:

"Instructors may drop you from class if the number of absences during a semester exceeds the number of times the class meets in two weeks unless there are extenuating circumstances warranting special consideration by the instructor."

Specifically, if you miss more than two classes, your grade will be affected. After four missed classes, you will be asked to withdraw. If you do not withdraw, I will drop you from the class. I will allow two excused absences, but I must be notified 24 hours in advance. (Excused absences are intended for sick days or family emergencies; don't waste an excused absence because you don't feel like coming to class.) Adding the class late counts against the number of absences allowed in a given semester.

Contact me as soon as possible if you are going to be absent. It is your responsibility to complete any make-up work by the next class meeting. You may contact a fellow student or check the class blog to find out what assignments you missed.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism means using someone else's words and/or ideas without acknowledging the source of those words and ideas. The following examples are only some of the many forms plagiarism may take:

1. Submitting a term paper, examination, or other work written by someone else.
2. Failure to give credit for ideas, statement of fact, or conclusions derived by another.
3. Failure to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it is a paragraph, a sentence, or even a part thereof.
4. Close and extended paraphrasing of another.
5. Mix & Matching: Taking another's sentence structure and substituting some of their words or phrases with words of your own; merging together half, whole, or parts of a sentence (or sentences) from an outside source (or sources) and "creating" a new sentence; slightly tweaking or altering the phrasing or order of words of another source and passing it off as your own.

In addition, it is important to note that collaborative work and/or obtaining help with idea generation, editing, proofreading, or writing from anyone other than the instructor or an

authorized tutor at the school's writing center is considered "unauthorized assistance" and will be deemed inauthentic work. You will not receive credit for work that is authored, co-authored, edited/proofread, or developed/designed by another.

If you submit plagiarized work, you will receive a failing grade on the assignment. An additional incident will result in a failing grade for the course and administrative action.

Late Papers: No late papers will be accepted. If you cannot attend class on the day a paper is due, you must email your paper by 9:30 pm on the night it is due. (Papers placed in my mailbox at Vista must be time stamped by an employee of Vista with his/her initials.) If you have a legitimate emergency that prevents you from completing the paper on time, contact me regarding an extension. Extensions are not guaranteed and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. No student will be allowed more than one extension per semester (so use it wisely). You must contact me at least 24 hours before the paper is due to request an extension. No extensions will be given on the paper due date.

Tardiness: If you are tardy, you will be marked late to class. If you are more than 10 minutes late to class or leave before class concludes, you will be given 1/2 credit for the day. If you are 30 or more minutes late or leave 30 or more minutes early, you will be marked absent for the entire class.

Classroom Etiquette: Much of the material we will be discussing this semester will be very serious and potentially controversial in nature. Our classroom environment is one of learning and mutual respect. Think before you speak as to avoid offending any fellow classmates (and your instructor), do your best to show respect at all times. You are expected to arrive on time, participate in classroom activities and discussions, and listen respectfully to lectures and your classmates. Refrain from talking over each other or cutting someone off. If you must arrive after class begins, please enter the classroom quietly and keep distractions to a minimum. I must warn you that I find the following extremely distracting and rude, and I will remember who you are if you:

- allow your phone to ring during class
- leave the classroom for any reason other than using the restroom
- have side conversations with your neighbor while I or someone else is talking
- rustle around in your backpack/purse noisily while I or someone else is talking
- take class discussion off on a tangent that doesn't directly relate to what we are discussing

As the instructor, I have the right to remove anyone who demonstrates inconsiderate or disruptive behavior.