

English 5
Theme: Questioning Cultural Myths

“Culture is a people enacting a story....and you hear it incessantly, because every medium of propaganda, every medium of education pours it out incessantly...”
from *Ishmael* by Daniel Quinn

COURSE SYLLABUS
FALL 2018
INSTRUCTOR: IORGOS GALANOS
OFFICE: Call Hall #683
OFFICE HOURS: T. TH. 1:00-2:00
OFFICE PHONE: 707-527499 ext. 2198
E-MAIL: igalanos@santarosa.edu
WEBSITE ADDRESS:

COURSE DESCRIPTION, OBJECTIVES AND REQUIREMENTS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to English 5, section 2214. This is a critical thinking and advanced composition course with special emphasis on questioning cultural myths. We will examine the traditional skills of logic and sound reasoning in argumentation but we will also give special emphasis on examining, critically, those assumptions, judgments and “stories” that are prevalent in our culture. This course will cover three areas of knowledge: the first is the critical thinking that arises from the special theme of the course, the reading material and the student-centered approach that I use to encourage maximum interaction and learning from other students. The second area consists of studying the tools of rhetoric (i.e. analyzing arguments, applying clear reasoning to reading and writing arguments and detecting faulty, fallacious or biased writing in essays or in our writing). Finally, in the third area that covers writing and composition, I will challenge you to go deeper in discovering your own style and voice in writing; I will ask you to become aware of the choices you make in all the steps of the writing process and on all levels of organization.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

A. Critical Thinking Objectives *

- Identify and analyze the structure of arguments in the reading assignments.
- Evaluate the validity and soundness of arguments in the readings and in your own compositions.
- Identify common formal and informal fallacies of language and thought.
- Apply principles of inductive and deductive reasoning in your arguments.
- Distinguish between factual and opinion statements.
- Distinguish between and use denotative and connotative aspects of language for appropriate rhetorical ends.
- Draw inferences from a variety of sources (print, media, Internet and electronic databases).
- Identify propaganda and other manipulations of rhetoric--charged language and slanted facts in the readings and in their own compositions.

B. Composition Objectives

- Write a number of essays totaling 6,500-8,000 words, divided between short essays of 1,000-

2,000 words and more comprehensive essays of up to 3,000-3,500 words.

- Employ writing strategies including analysis, synthesis, and summary.
- Employ writing strategies including causal analysis, advocacy of ideas, persuasion, evaluation, refutation, interpretation, and definition.
- Demonstrate continued development in writing correct, sophisticated college-level prose.
- Examine classical divisions of rhetorical appeal including ethos, logos, and pathos.
- Employ effective writing techniques including organization for logic and coherence; revision for focus, clarity, precision, and diction; use of correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Compile and evaluate library research for application in research papers.

ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES SPECIFIC FOR THIS COURSE

I have set the following additional objectives for this course:

- To strengthen your critical, independent thinking by exposing the degree to which we (as products of the culture we live in) identify and act out unexamined stories, myths and conclusions. I treat this unexamined identification as a major impediment in the developing of the kind of critical thinking that enables an individual to think for himself, herself and develop his/ her own unique voice. I facilitate this process of critical thinking by selecting texts that question our most popular assumptions and cultural myths.
- To discover and develop further your unique voice and style in writing, I invite you to use critical thinking to strengthen the following aspects of your writing: your own unique voice, your style (by the term style I mean the choices you make on all levels of organization of your writing) and mechanics (i.e. grammar, syntax, research. etc). To best accomplish this purpose, I teach writing as a set of heuristic choices and I expect you by the end of this course to become more aware of the choices you make at each step of the writing process.
- To be able to recognize intentional or unintentional choices writers make in shaping an argument or in carrying out an insight or view and be able to apply “choice” in your own writing.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Describe principles of critical thinking.
- Apply principles of critical thinking to texts, media, and everyday experience.
- Write critical analysis and response papers.

ADDITIONAL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES SPECIFIC FOR THIS COURSE

- Learn how to read critically by using such tools as active reading, annotation, summary, outline and critical responses.
- Become aware of your own assumptions and beliefs and be able to question them with an open and critical mind.
- Demonstrate knowledge of options writers have at each stage of the writing process and show awareness of the choices you make in your own writing.
- Compose clear, well organized, well proofread and well documented prose both in short essays or other types of prose and in the final research essay.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts

1. Stuart Kelly *Asking The Right Questions* (11th edition); 2. Diana Hacker, *The Bedford Handbook* (10th edition); 3. Daniel Quinn, *Ishmael*.

B. Writing

1. The formal writing will consist of three to four short, formal essays (3-4 typed pgs each) and one final research essay (5-7 typed pgs or more long). At least two of the essays should be argumentation and one, either analysis of literature or a critical analysis of an argument. In this course, I emphasize critical thinking and original insight for each of your essays. Also, after an initial review of grammar and syntax, I will emphasize awareness of stylistic choices on all levels. It is crucial that for each of these essays you begin the writing process early, write several drafts, and submit the final version on time. Late essays will be penalized. Throughout the writing process, I encourage you to select topics of your own interest and adopt an enthusiastic attitude toward the writing process and the communication of your own unique insights and ideas. You must save every draft of every essay in a flash drive (in addition to wherever you save it in the computer itself). There will be no excuse for a draft that you didn't save and can't access.
2. The informal or journal writing will consist of a few assignments per week (the number of entries assigned each week are indicated in the Journal Entry Calendar on the back of your syllabus): summaries of the readings of the week (half to one pgs each), one or more critical responses (half to one pg. each) to assigned readings, and several exercises. These assignments should be written in perforated sheets and entered in a binder. You are expected to complete all journal writing by the due date as indicated by the syllabus. You are also expected to bring your journal to class every time. I spot check your journal on a surprise basis throughout the semester.
3. The drafts are unfinished versions of the formal essays. You are responsible for bringing these drafts to class on the dates specified in the syllabus and for submitting a Xerox copy of each draft to your classmate whenever required.

C. Reading

I have selected writers who offer new and (even) unusual perspectives on current or old but enduring issues. I am using the reading assignments as a tool to generate insight and critical thinking that goes beyond the ready made opinion. In addition, I use the reading assignments to strengthen your rhetorical and analytical skills and to increase your ability to penetrate beyond the explicit or obvious layers of a text. To this end, I will ask you to devote a significant amount of time reading (and rereading) the assigned texts actively, analytically, and critically so that you become skillful at extracting all the richness of insight and information from a given assignment. I expect you to come to each class well prepared and ready to participate in discussions. What you have to say in response to the reading assignments is of much interest to me and, I hope, too other members of the class. Therefore, I will try to give to each student the opportunity to participate actively in the discussions and assert his or her opinions. I will encourage you to read each text carefully, annotate passages that interest you, and reflect on their significance.

I will give several **quizzes** throughout the semester. Those will be surprise quizzes and will cover the reading material of the preceding week. Missed quizzes or exams cannot be made up. You can earn up to 10 points for each question on given quiz. At the end of the semester, I total your points and I give you a grade using the following scale: 90-100%=A, 80-89%=B, 70-79%=C, 60-69%=D, Below 60%=F. It is possible to fail completely the course by failing in all or most of your quizzes.

D. Talk Shows

I may also ask you to participate in producing a talk show event. I use the talk show format to generate interest in the research of thought provoking topics and to encourage maximum participation from the class in the production and discussion of reading materials. Instructions and details on the production of class talk shows will be given to the class in the second or third week of the semester.

E. Attendance

I will take attendance every day at the beginning of the class. I hope that we, together, can make the class time a pleasurable working time so that you will attend the class not out of obligation, but because you want to.

The following will give you a general idea as to how absences can effect your performance in the course:

1. No absences is an indication of effort and consistency and will help raise the final grade.
2. After 2 absences, I begin to question the consistency and seriousness with which you approach the course; it can--depending on the situation--hurt the final grade.
3. After 4 absences, you will be asked to see me in conference. You will then be given a warning or an advice to withdraw. Six or more absences can cause you to fail the course.
4. Students who miss the first meeting without contacting me ahead of time with what I consider a legitimate reason may be dropped from the class in order to accommodate students in attendance at the first meeting with the hope of adding the class. Students who miss the first two meetings will be dropped from the class.
5. Don't miss class just because you're unprepared to turn in an assignment. Everyone has a rough week on occasion. Missing class can make things even more challenging for you in the course, so help yourself by coming to class and just take the late grade by turning in the paper the next day.
6. Class begins on time, so do not be late. If an occasion arises when you must be late, you may join the class if you do so without interruption. You may not be habitually late; if that occurs, you will be asked to drop the class. Please be aware that being late three times equals one absence.
7. If you come to class at least 20 minutes late, it is best that you wait until the class takes a break and enter the classroom for the second hour.

F. Participation

I consider participation as a very important learning aspect of this course. I strive to create an atmosphere where you can feel very comfortable, safe and confident to express your "voice" (i.e. responses to texts, comments, observations, questions..etc.) I especially encourage those students who feel shy or unsure and tend not to ask questions. The mere act of participating will contribute to your learning process and help raise your grade.

G. Final Grade

Below, I am giving you a general idea on the distribution of your grade according to the various components of the course. However, bear in mind, that failing to complete successfully any of these tasks could also result in a very poor grade or in failing altogether the course. The breakdown of point percentage of your final grade is as follows:

Reading, Quizzes, Online Postings, Participation 25%

Final Essay and Exam(s) 30 %

Binder 15%

Formal Essays 30%

ADDITIONAL RULES AND REQUIREMENTS

H. Open mind and respect

Because in this course we often read texts with unusual points of view and discuss controversial issues, I ask you to approach issues and texts and discussions with an open mind. It is ok to disagree with someone else's view as long as you do so with respect, fairness and with the intention to give feedback and help each other in the process of learning and improving. Please note that views expressed in any of the reading material I have assigned for this course, do not necessarily express my own personal views or opinions.

I. Conduct in class

As a student here, you are required to abide by SRJC's Student Code of Conduct:

<https://student-conduct.santarosa.edu/code-conduct-0> Failure to do so will result in suspension and/or dismissal from the class.

Please remember that talking is only permitted by raising your hand and only when your instructor gives you permission (unless, of course, the class is divided in small groups). Do not talk or whisper while another student or your teacher is speaking; such behavior can be disruptive and can hurt your grade or cause you to be dismissed from the class.

Electronic devices such as Pods, tablets, laptop computers, so-called smart watches, and any recording devices are not allowed in the class or if you carry them, they should be turned off. There should be nothing on your desk except for the class materials needed for the class on that day.

Cellular phones must have the volume turned OFF in class. Please have your phone and any electronic devices such as smart phones, iPods, tablets, laptop computers, so-called smart watches, and any recording devices out of your sight (not on your desk or your lap) so that they don't distract you and others. If you use either of these in class without my permission, your semester class participation grade will be an F and you may also be asked to leave the class for that day (which will count as an absence).

J. Plagiarism

1. Plagiarism—the undocumented use of someone else's words or ideas—will result in a grade of F or 0 for the assignment, depending on the nature of the offense. Repeated plagiarism will result in an automatic F in the course and possible administrative action by the college. (See College Catalog for academic penalties.)
2. In its commitment to academic honesty and accurate assessment of student work, SRJC uses Turnitin.com to prevent and detect plagiarism. This instructor reserves the right to have students submit their assignments to Turnitin.com in order to check for similarities between student submissions and the Internet, various research databases, and the Turnitin.com database of previous student submissions. Furthermore, this instructor may also submit essays to other instructors seeking plagiarism matches. For some or all of your written formal written work, I may ask you to submit your written work to the instructor and electronically to Turnitin.com. Therefore, by taking this class, you agree that all assignments are subject to plagiarism detection processes and plagiarism penalties.

K. ADA Statement

SRJC is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities upon timely

request of the student and upon verification of disability. Please contact the Disability Resources Office at (707) 778-2491.

On the Santa Rosa Campus (Bertolini Hall, 3rd floor), call (707) 527-4278.

*After our initial assessment test, I will decide which of those objectives will receive more emphasis and which less.