



ENG 1302: Written Argument/Research (Honors)
Fall 2014, T R 11:00a–12:15p, T: EDN121, R: HL133

Instructor: Christian F. Hempelmann

Office: Hall of Languages 226

Office Hours:

online workdays 10am–10pm

office W 2–4pm

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Note: This syllabus will be revised during the semester as deemed necessary

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Required textbooks:

- Weems, Scott. 2014. *Ha! The Science of When We Laugh and Why We Laugh*. New York: Basic.

Additional reading:

- Further materials will be made available online.

Catalogue description

This course provides students with advanced training in communication skills emphasizing the writing and reading of argumentative prose and adapting writing to alternate audiences. Students will write weekly, including such texts as journals, reading response logs, summaries of argumentative texts, argumentative papers, and longer papers integrating secondary research activities include close reading of sample texts, both student and professional. Some sections will emphasize special topics in both reading and writing. Prerequisite: English 1301 or advanced placement or CLEP.

Course Description:

This course will let us read, talk, and most importantly write about humor. Humor as a character trait and behavior is a large part of what makes us human in our everyday interactions and in the media and literature we process. Humor research, the multidisciplinary study of humor, is a fascinating field for this reason alone, not least in the development of its multidisciplinary. In this course we will read about humor but also humorous texts, short stories, commentaries, sitcoms etc.. We will analyze and compare them, and respond to them through well-developed, logically and structurally sound, and increasingly longer and more complex texts. By interacting with these texts, with each other and each other's writings, and me, you will hone your rhetorical, analytical, and critical research skills as you improve strengths as a critical thinker and writer. Ultimately, the aim of this course is to further your development as an effective writer

of nonfictional prose in the academic and public communities. You will improve your ability to write for a variety of purposes and audiences; understand further the mechanism for writing effectively; become a better critic of other people's writing; and take the strategies learned in this class to the rest of your academic career and beyond.

The semester will have three larger sections: an introduction to the topic paired with shorter writings; a project on ethnic/aggressive humor that will start with shorter essays to be combined into a larger argumentative paper; and an ethnographic project analyzing the humor of a community that you belong to by again taking many shorter steps that will combine to the whole journey

Course Objectives:

1. Students will become familiar with various genres of non-fiction and academic writing.
2. Students will demonstrate the skills required to develop and craft shorter and longer argumentative theses.
3. Students will become active participants in the course, not only in staying current with readings and other assignments, but also in sharing their understanding of the material as assessed by weekly reading responses and contributions to in-class discussions.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate their mastery of effective rhetorical composition and critical writing as measured by a series of reading responses and essay projects.
2. Students will demonstrate the skill of crafting an effective thesis as measured by the composition of an analytical essay.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods, Activities, and Assessments

Reading

The syllabus is based on an introductory text and a selection of readings made available electronically. A close reading of the expected material and preparation of questions are expected and necessary for the comprehension of the course material.

Submitting Assignments

Assignments must be submitted electronically in MS Word format (.doc, .docx) by their deadlines, usually into a dropbox on eCollege. No make-ups are given. Assigned homework may or may not be graded, at my discretion. You should not drop your homework in my mailbox if you cannot attend class. Students who cannot attend class should make arrangements with me for turning in their homework (see attendance policy). All of the main projects will go through several phases of development. All main projects and all other assignments have to be completed for a final grade. All papers should be in MLA style and have a descriptive title. As writing is a social activity, you will respond to fellow students' work and provide them with important feedback for their revisions in peer review session. The feedback you give is part of your grade. Some of the smaller assignments will be group work. We will also meet in one-on-one conferences so that we can discuss your work in detail.

Larger Projects

Two larger essay projects will go through several stages, including in-class peer reviews, drafts and their revisions, and conferencing with the instructor.

Revisions

Real revisions of drafts—not edited and proofread copies—are a necessary prerequisite for a grade on the final versions. Once graded all projects can be revised one more time, provided they were handed in on time. The revisions are due one week after the class in which you received the grade. They have to be accompanied by a memo in which you explain the changes you did for the revision. I will consider only those changes that you point me to.

Weekly Readings, Responses, and Discussions

Course participation accounts for 20% of the final course grade. To receive full participation credit students must participate in discussions consistently by providing substantive comments and stay current with all readings and assignments.

Grading Policy

If you have completed all assignments by their due dates, in particular the larger projects, and satisfied the attendance requirements, and all other requirements stated in this specific or the departmental syllabus, your grade for this course will be determined as follows:

A	≥ 90%	shorter writings	30%
B	89-80%	project 1	20%
C	79-70%	project 2	30%
D	69-60%	participation	20%
F	< 59%		

Attendance Policy

Students are responsible for attending class and keeping a log of their attendance. Please note that this means that no excuse will be accepted for failure to comply with the class requirements. Students needing particular attention should notify the instructor during the first week. If you miss a class you are responsible to receive the information you missed or you have to be prepared for surprises.

week		date	remarks
1	T	8/26	Intro
	R	8/28	
2	T	9/2	
	R	9/4	
3	T	9/9	
	R	9/11	
4	T	9/16	
	R	9/18	
5	T	9/23	Project 1
	R	9/25	
6	T	9/30	
	R	10/2	
7	T	10/7	
	R	10/9	
8	T	10/14	
	R	10/16	

9	T	10/21	Project 2
	R	10/23	
10	T	10/28	
	R	10/30	
11	T	11/4	
	R	11/6	
12	T	11/11	
	R	11/13	
13	T	11/18	
	R	11/20	
14	T	11/25	
	W	11/27 <i>Thanksgiving</i>	
15	T	12/2	
	R	12/4	
Finals			

Note that this schedule is purely tentative and provided as a rough idea of how we will distribute class time. Changes can and will be made.

Finally

I believe that you learn to write by writing. So you (and consequently I) will write a lot. But I also believe that writing needs to be meaningful. So we will hopefully write relevant, interesting, engaging, even funny things. But keep in mind that different people have a different sense of humor. We will also have to discuss, and these discussions can be on controversial topics. I definitely encourage you to express your opinions, but remember that other people might think differently. While dissent and discussion are necessary, disrespectful and offensive behavior will not be tolerated. And somewhere in the course we will also have fun. I believe in fun, too.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Academic Honesty Policy

Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate **plagiarism** and other forms of **academic dishonesty**. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another person and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension and expulsion (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1, 2, 3]). Cheating, including plagiarizing papers in whole or part, will result in a grade of zero (0) on the assignment for the first offense and failure of the course for any subsequent offenses.

Attendance Policy

Because your active participation in discussions is expected, attendance is vital for success in this course. Attendance requires more than simply coming to class.

Assignment Policy

I will provide specific details during class meetings and possibly by email. Students must stay current with all readings and discussions. Students must complete and submit all assignments by their respective due dates.

Late Work

I will not accept any assignment after its due date. Assignments submitted after the due date may receive a score of zero (0).

Drop a Course

A student may drop a course by logging into his/her myLEO account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled "Drop a class" from among the choices found under the myLeo section of the Web page.

Incompletes

Incompletes (grade of "X") are granted only under rare and extraordinary circumstances.

Administrative Withdrawal

I reserve the right to drop a student from the course administratively for excessive absences or violations of student conduct codes.

University-Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct* from *Student Guide Handbook*).

Appendix

I hereby attest that I have read and understood the complete syllabus for Dr. Hempelmann's ENG 1302 *Written Argument/Research*. I have been offered a chance to ask questions about it to my satisfaction.

I have been made aware that this class, because of its subject matter, will at times deal with topics that are or may be considered offensive, obscene, sexually explicit, disparaging of minorities, politically incorrect, and/or otherwise inappropriate for exposure other than to adults. While the instructor will avoid any unnecessary exposure to such materials, students should be aware that the class may examine such materials. Two important points should be kept in mind: a) metalinguistic distance: there is a difference between saying "let us examine the claim that Mr X is crazy" and saying "Mr X is crazy." In the latter case the speaker is responsible for the truth and accuracy of his/her claim, while in the former he/she is not. b) critical distance: there is a difference between telling an obscene joke for the enjoyment of its obscenity and using an obscene joke as a topic of discussion of the role of obscenity in the humorous effect. In any case, students who feel that a given subject is not acceptable for examination will be given other topics. Students should also be aware that the materials that will be viewed may contain nudity and sexual situations, which may be considered offensive.

By signing the present syllabus and staying in class beyond this point I acknowledge that I have been warned as to the presence of controversial material in the course and that I have freely and deliberately chosen to view, read, and otherwise examine said material.

Name

Signature

Date