

English 15: Rhetoric and Composition

Section 011 • 317 HHD • MWF 11:15 a.m.-12:05 p.m.
Molly Lehman • molly.lehman@psu.edu • 44 Burrowes (office)
Office Hours: T 3:30-4:30 p.m., W 12-2 p.m.

Course Goals

Developing skill and expertise in reading and writing means studying reading and writing together; therefore, English 15 is an intensive, rhetorically based experience in reading and writing that prepares students to understand the communications that surround them and to succeed in their own communication efforts. In this course, we will focus specifically on analyzing verbal and visual texts (our reading) as well as on producing such texts (our writing)—always in terms of traditional rhetorical principles.

Even if the term *rhetoric* isn't familiar to you, the practice of rhetoric is. In fact, you bring a good deal of rhetorical skill to this class: you already know how to gauge the way you perceive and produce language according to the speaker, the intended audience, and the purpose. You may not always gauge perfectly, your perception may not always be accurate, and your production may not always be successful—but you often think to interpret and choose language in ways that are appropriate to the rhetorical situation. You already know how to use language to make knowledge.

The goal of English 15, then, is to help you build on what you already know how to do as you become a stronger, more confident, more resourceful, and more flexible reader and writer. You will become more attuned to your goals as a writer, more aware of the on-going conversation surrounding the topic, and more resourceful in terms of the appropriate delivery of your information, the rhetorical appeals at your disposal, and the needs and expectations of your audience. In other words, we hope you'll come to write with skill, conviction, sophistication, and grace—if not immediately, then soon. In the process, you'll learn how to read more critically as well.

Required and Recommended Texts

- Glenn, Cheryl. *The Harbrace Guide to Writing* (Concise Second Edition)
- *Penn Statements*, 2012
- A good college dictionary (PSU students have free online access to the Oxford English Dictionary, at www.oed.com)
- The Penn State Libraries' Course Guide for English 15, at www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/course/up/ah/eng015.html (recommended research resource)

Requirements

To pass this course you must complete all major assignments, fulfill all weekly assignments, and submit all writing assignments on time. You are expected to attend all class meetings and to participate in draft workshops, in-class exercises, and classroom discussions. All proposals, drafts, papers, and revisions must be handed in on time; failure to turn in a proposal on time, or to appear at a draft workshop without a draft is equivalent to turning in an assignment late (i.e., a penalty of one grade per late day).

Grading

Paper 1 Narrative	10%
Paper 2 Rhetorical Analysis	10%
Paper 3 Evaluation	15%
Paper 4 Proposal	20%
Paper 5 Refutation	20%
Portfolio of Revisions (with cover letter)	15%
Participation	10%

(Participation includes attendance, discussion, in-class writing, and group work.)

Attendance

Your success in this course, and the success of this course, depends on your active participation; therefore, regular attendance is required. Excused absences are certainly appropriate, and of course you should communicate with me about your absences as much and as soon as possible. Informing me in advance is always preferable. Excessive absences, however, can negatively affect your performance and thus your grade in a class. If you exceed three unexcused absences, your participation grade may be affected, down to and including an F.

If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the assignments, class notes, and course changes from a classmate. If you miss class on a day on which written work is due, make arrangements to send that work along with a classmate or submit it to me electronically before the end of our scheduled class time. In-class work cannot be made up.

Office Conferences

Plan to have *at least* two conferences with me this semester to discuss your written work (at any stage of the process) and your progress in the course. At least one of these meetings should take place in the first ten weeks of the term; I will normally meet with you in the last weeks of the course only if I've met with you already at least once. Also consider taking your ideas and your written work to **Penn State Learning** for writing support (220 Boucke; 863-3240; www.pennstatelearning.psu.edu), where trained peer tutors will consult with writers about any piece of writing at any stage of the writing process, from rough idea to final draft.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, the intentional act of using another person's words or ideas as your own without attribution, is a breach of academic integrity. If you have any questions about plagiarism and its consequences (or about any other aspect of academic integrity), please ask. Because plagiarism may demonstrate contempt for ethical standards (not to mention for me and your peers), if you are caught plagiarizing, you risk failing the course. You may also be referred to the Office of Student Conduct, which may result in probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Format

Choosing a format, just like selecting and constructing content, is a rhetorical decision. Papers

should typically be typed in a 12-point, clearly readable font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. On the upper left-hand corner of the first page, include a single-spaced header with your name, the date, my name, and the assignment title. Number all pages except page 1. Fasten the pages with a paper clip (not a staple). Submit your essay in a folder that also contains earlier drafts (clearly labeled) and peer review activities; make sure the folder also has your name on it.

Statement on Nondiscrimination

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination, harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, genetic information, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status and retaliation due to the reporting of discrimination or harassment. Discrimination, harassment, or retaliation against faculty, staff or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University.

Note: The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please let me know as soon as possible.

Submissions to Penn Statements

The editors of *Penn Statements* encourage students to submit essays for possible publication in this student journal. Submissions are accepted on a rolling basis and can be sent electronically to PennStatements2013@gmail.com. Please include the title of the essay, the assignment it satisfied (very important!) and a release statement. The release statement should run as follows: "I, <name>, give permission to *Penn Statements* to publish my essay, "<Title>."

Course Schedule

Key: PS: *Penn Statements*, Spring 2012 edition. **HGW:** *The Harbrace Guide to Writing*, Concise Second Edition, by Cheryl Glenn.

Week 1

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
Part One—Planning and Invention				
1/9	M	Course Introduction		
1/11	W	Rhetorical Situation; Why Write?	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 1 (Understanding the Rhetorical Situation: pp. 3-28)	Draft proposal for project 1.
1/13	F	Fitting Response and Available Means	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 2 (Fitting Response: pp. 29-58) and Supplemental Reading #1: "Mother Tongue" (PDF)	

Week 2

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
1/16	M	NO CLASS	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	
1/18	W	Writing Narratives and Memoirs	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 3 (Memoirs: pp. 64-75 and 91-103); Narration, pp. 317-18	Proposal due for project 1.
1/20	F	Memoirs and Narratives; Interviewing as Invention	<i>PS</i> : read the memoirs.	

Week 3

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
1/23	M	Memoirs, cont'd. Drafting and Revising	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 9 (Drafting and Revising: pp. 296-305 and 321-327) and Ch. 3 (pp. 84-90)	
1/25	W	Peer Review Workshop		Rough Draft: Personal Narrative (or Memoir)
1/27	F	Building Ethos: Research	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 11 (Research and the Rhetorical Situation: pp. 350-61); Ch. 12 (Research in the Library and Online: pp. 363-73)	Project 1 due.

Week 4

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
1/30	M	Rhetorical Analysis	Supplemental Reading #2 (“Analyzing Written Arguments”) and Supplemental Reading #3 (“The Border Patrol State”) (PDFs)	
Part Two—Arrangement				
2	W	Principles of Arrangement	Supplemental Reading #4: “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (PDF)	
2/3	F	Analyzing Visual Arguments	Supplemental Reading #5: “Analyzing Visual Arguments” (PDF)	Proposal due for project 2

Week 5

*Work on revision of project 1

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
1/3	M	Rhetorical Analysis	<i>PS</i> : read the analysis essays	
1/4	W	Peer Review Workshop		Rough Draft: Rhetorical Analysis
1/5	F	Rhetorical Analysis, cont’d	Supplemental Reading #6: “Talkin’ and Testifyin’” (PDF)	

Week 6

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
Part Three—Style and Argument				
2/13	M	Principles of Effective Sentencing		Project 2 due; Revision of project 1 due
2/15	W	Definition	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 9 (Definition pp. 306-310)	
2/17	F	Evaluating Visual Culture	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 8 (Reviewing Visual Culture: pp. 260-273)	

Week 7

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
1/10	M	Evaluating Visual Culture; Sentences	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 8 (Reviewing Visual Culture: pp. 274-294)	
1/11	W	Evaluation and Definition	<i>PS</i> : read evaluation and / or definition essays	Proposal due for project 3: Evaluation or Definition

1/12	F	Reviews in Popular Culture; Def and Evaluation; Effective Sentences		
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Week 8

*Work on revision of project 2

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
2/27	M	The "Value Topics" in Your Project; Sentences		
2/29	W	Peer Review Workshop		Rough Draft: Evaluation or Definition
1 1/2	F	Peer Review Workshop on Sentences		Bring in 1-3 paragraphs from your critical review rough draft

Week 9

3/5-3/9	M-F	NO CLASS— Spring Break		
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Week 10

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
1/4	M	Style, continued		Project 3 due; Revision of Project 2 due
3/14	W	Proposals	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 7 (Responding with Proposals: pp. 224-259)	
3/16	F	Proposals, cont'd. Style, continued	<i>PS</i> : Read the proposals	

Week 11

*Work on revision of project 3

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
3/19	M	Proposals, cont'd	Review Supplemental Reading #3: "The Border Patrol State" (PDF)	Proposal due for project 4
1/7	W	Multi-lingual context; Style, continued	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 6 (Responding with Position Arguments: pp. 178-223)	
3/23	F	Available Means: Definition and Comparison	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 9 (Rhetorical Methods of Development: pp. 306-320)	

Week 12

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
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3/26	M	Peer Review Workshop		Rough Draft: Proposal
3/28	W	Peer Review Workshop on Style		Bring in 1-3 paragraphs from your rough draft
1/10	F	Style and Tone		Project 4 due; Revision of project 3 due

Week 13

*Work on revision of project 4

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
2	M	Investigative Reporting	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 5 (Responding with Reports: pp. 142-177)	
1	W	Counter-Argument	<i>PS</i> : read the rebuttals	Proposal due for project 5
2/3	F	Counter-Argument, cont'd	Review Supplemental Reading #4: "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (PDF)	

Week 14

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
Part Three—Style and Argument				
4/9	M	Counter-Argument	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 14 (Reading, Evaluating, and Responding to Sources: pp. 394-415)	
4/11	W	Peer Review Workshop		Rough Draft: Counter-Argument
4/13	F	Refining Format	Read <i>HGW</i> MLA essays (pp. 172-177, 215-222, 253-258)	Project 5 due; Revision of project 4 due

Week 15

*Work on revision of project 5

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
Part Four—Revising for Excellence				
1/4	M	The Portfolio of Revisions		
2/9	W	Acknowledging Sources: Formal and Informal	<i>HGW</i> Ch. 15 (Acknowledging Sources: pp. 416-464), focusing on MLA citation	
1/5	F	Style: Some Schemes and Tropes		

Week 16

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Writing Activities
4/23	M	Style: Some Schemes and Tropes		Draft due of cover memo

4/25	W	Semester Review: Invention, Arrangement, Style		Bring in questions about your portfolio
4/27	F	Course Wrap up		Portfolio of Revisions due