

Advanced College Writing

Fall 2017

Instructor Info:

Ashley Squires, PhD

Email: asquires@nes.ru

Office: Skolkovo 2.07

Office Hours: M 11:00-13:00

Course Info:

English 301, CID 2994

Section 1: M 14:20-15:40, Room 3.04; Friday 13:40-15:00, Room 2205

Section 2: M. 15:50-17:10, Room 3.04; Friday 15:10-16:30, Room 2205

Course Description:

On television, in the newspaper, and on the internet, arguments are all around us. We make arguments when we speak to our instructors, our parents, our friends. We encounter them when we read signs on the highway or consult our favorite popular culture blog. Arguments—speech acts designed to persuade—are at the core of human communication, though many of us never think about understanding how to interpret and produce them as essential skills for developing literacy and fluency.

Advanced College Writing is designed for students at an advanced level of English language study who wish to have a firmer grounding in writing before proceeding to content courses where more highly developed writing skills are required. Though continuing to build English language fluency is a goal for this course, at its heart, this is a course in argumentation grounded in both classical and modern rhetorical theory. The aim of the course is to help you develop the skills necessary to understand, break down, and critique someone else's argument while also helping you develop a process for constructing and presenting your own ideas in a persuasive form.

Required Texts:

Provided on my.nes.ru

Assessment:

Class Participation and Attendance – 10%

Journal Entries – 10%

Short Assignments – 30%

Major Essays – 40%

Final Presentation – 10%

Attendance:

Regular and timely attendance is essential to doing well in this class. You are counted absent if you miss more than twenty minutes of any given class period. You are allowed 4 “free” absences for the entire semester. Each subsequent absence will result in the deduction of 1 point from your final grade. The only absences that are excused are those that have been documented and approved by the Joint Program office.

Deadlines and Extensions:

All assignments are due at 23:59 on the date listed on the schedule. Assignments can only be submitted late with prior approval from the instructor. Requests for assignment extensions *must* be made via email and not in person.

Make-up Work:

If a student receives a failing grade in the course, he/she must complete any major assignments that are failing or incomplete. These assignments must be completed during the designated make-up period and will be assessed by a three-member panel, including the course instructor. To determine the student's final grade, the make-up assignments will be plugged into the regular assessment formula with all grades previously earned in the class. Some assignments (participation, peer reviews, proposals, and select short assignments) cannot be made up and will stay recorded as zeros for the purpose of final assessment.

Electronics:

Unless use is authorized during group activities, laptops must be put away during class. Phones and tablets may be used as dictionaries, to access assigned readings, and to record lectures but must be kept silent. Suspected inappropriate use of electronics will result in points deducted from your participation grade.

Classroom Etiquette:

Students are expected to observe the following basic rules of classroom decorum:

- You must come to class on time.
- When the instructor or another student is talking in front of the class, you should not be talking.
- If discussion is happening in class, you should not be conducting side conversations with your friends.
- If you find yourself becoming sleepy during class, you are permitted to leave the room for a few minutes to collect yourself. Under no circumstances should your head be on your desk.

Egregious violations of these rules (talking during student presentations, excessive lateness, sleeping during class) may result in an unexcused absence or deductions from your participation grade.

Academic Honesty:

This course seeks to uphold the Joint Program's commitment to ensuring academic honesty. All work submitted in this class must be the student's own. Assignments calling for the use of outside sources must contain both a Reference page and in-text citations or footnotes. APA and MLA are the standard citation formats for this course. Suspected cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Joint Program administration.

Communication:

Students should check their nes.ru email accounts regularly, as important information about the course (emergency cancellations, deadline changes) may be communicated in that way. Email is also the best way to reach me, though you should understand that I generally do not respond to email after 22:00 or before 9:00. If you have a question about an assignment, you should not wait until the night before it is due to ask.

The Writing and Communication Center

The WCC is a free student support service designed to assist you with all your writing needs during your time in the program (and even after you graduate). Consultants (both English and Russian speakers) are available to meet with you for 45-minute sessions. You may sign up for a consultation using the "WCC" tab on my.nes.ru. Limited walk-in hours are also available. For further information, see the WCC's website at www.nes.ru/wcc and follow the WCC's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/neswcc).

Schedule (*subject to change*):

Homework assignments and required readings are listed on the date they are due. All written assignments are due online by 23:59 pm on the date listed.

Unit I – Recognizing and Understanding Arguments

Week 1 (September 4-8)

Day 1 – Orientation – No class

Day 2 – Introduction; What is an Argument?

Read: Robert Epstein, “The Empty Brain”

Week 2 (September 11 – 15)

Day 1 – Naïve Realism and Other Cognitive Biases

Listen: You Are Not So Smart podcast, episode 101

Write: Journal Prompt #1

Day 2 – Argumentation and Deliberation

Read: Hugo Mercier, Dan Sperber, “Why do humans reason? Arguments for an Argumentative Theory”

Week 3 (September 18 – 22)

Day 1 – Controversy Selection, Explanation of Research Summaries

Read: Reid Hastie & Cass Sunstein, “Polarization: One reason groups fail”; Helen Landemore & Hugo Mercier, “Talking it out with others vs. deliberation within and the law of group polarization”

Write: Journal Prompt #2

Day 2 – Evaluating Sources

Read: Vanessa Otero, “News Quality,” “The Reasoning and Methodology Behind the Chart”

Write: Research Summary 1

Week 4 (September 25 – 29)

Day 1 – Documenting Sources

Read: Yale University, “What is Plagiarism”

Write: Research Summary 2

Day 2 – Explanation of Major Essay I; Pre-writing

Write: Research Summary 3

Week 5 (October 2 – 6)

Day 1 – Outlining and Paragraphing Strategies

Read: Anne Lamott, “Shitty First Drafts”

Write: Journal Prompt #3

Day 2 – Peer Review and Conferencing Day

Write: Rough Draft of Major Essay I

Unit II – Analyzing Arguments

Week 6 (October 9 – 13)

Day 1 – Breaking Down an Argument (Toulmin)

Read: TBA

Day 2 – Rhetorical Analysis: Logos, Ethos, and Pathos

Write: Journal Prompt #4; First Draft of Major Essay I

Week 7 (October 16 – 20)

Day 1 – Rhetorical Analysis: Arguments and Audience

Watch: Alexander Betts, “Why Brexit Happened” (TED Talk)

Day 2 – Logical Fallacies

Write: Short Analysis I;

Week 8 (October 22 – 27)

Consultation Week – no classes

Write: Journal Prompt #5; Second Draft of Major Essay I

Week 9 (October 30 – November 3)

Day 1 – Analyzing a Creative Work – *The Big Short*

Watch: *The Big Short*

Write: Journal Prompt #6

Day 2 – Analyzing a Creative Work – *The Big Short*

Write: Short Analysis II

Week 10 (November 6 - 10)

Day 1 – Analyzing a Creative Work – Zadie Smith

Read: Zadie Smith, “The Embassy of Cambodia”

Write: Journal Prompt #7

Day 2 – Peer Review Day

Write: Rough Draft of Major Essay II

Week 11 (November 13 – 17)

Day 1 – Common Grammatical Errors and How to Fix Them

Day 2 – Punctuation Rules in English

Write: Journal Prompt #8; First Draft of Major Essay II

Unit III – Making Arguments

Week 12 (November 20 – 24)

Day 1 – Audience Game

Day 2 – Catch-Up Day

Read: TBA

Week 13 (November 27 – December 1)

Day 1 – Structuring an Argument (Return to Toulmin)

Day 2 – Structuring an Argument (Return to Toulmin)

Write: Second Draft of Major Essay II

Week 14 (December 4 – 8)

Day 1 – Wrap-Up Discussion

Read: Conclusion and Post-Script from *Strangers in Our Midst*

Day 2 – Peer Review Day

Write: Rough Draft of Major Essay III

Week 15 (December 11 – 15)

Day 1 – Final Presentations

Write: Journal Prompt #9

Day 2 – Final Presentations

Write: First Draft of Major Essay III

Week 16 (December 18 – 22)

Day 1 – Final Presentations

Day 2 – Final Presentations

Write: Journal Prompt #10

Week 17 (December 25 – 29)

Exam week – no class

December 30 – **Second Draft of Major Essay III**

