Welcome to English 30: Honors Introduction to Rhetoric and Composition
Your Teacher: Mary Miles
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Office: 59C Burroughs
Hours: T 1:30-2:30, 3:45-5:15
R 1:00-2:30

Rhetoric is the process by which we identify the available means of persuasion in given situations, then utilize those means effectively. The importance of persuasion extends beyond our abilities to win clearly defined debates. Anytime we wish to write anything interesting, we hope that readers will take us seriously and engage our ideas. We persuade them to adopt our point of view, to seriously consider our ideas, or at least to keep reading. In this course we will develop these persuasive abilities through several avenues. In addition to learning to express our ideas clearly and in compelling style, we will try to understand the ways that our words contribute to larger conversations taking place in the communities around us. We will work to identify interesting conversations and compelling contributions that we might make.

Most of the assignments are constructed to invite you to pursue your own interests and introduce them to me and to your classmates. I will, however, also provide a number of topic suggestions and issues for us to discuss as a class, which you may also chose to analyze in your assignments. These will include, but are not limited to, analysis of various books and movies, generation gaps in America, the emphasis on youth in our popular culture, the way that animals are treated in our society, and the goals and challenges of our education here at Penn State. Your assignments will include a personal narrative, a book or movie review, an analysis of a cultural artifact, and an editorial on an issue of your choice. We will also participate in a group project in which you will select a cause or organization – anything from the ASPCA to Dance Marathon, The American Heart Association, or the College Democrats/Republicans – research that group and convince the class to support your cause.

Books: Making Sense, Cheryl Glenn
The Life of Pi, Yann Martel
Elements of Style, W. Strunk and E. B. White

Course Policies:
The most important thing to remember in our English 30 classroom is to remain engaged in the course. This is a class about the formation and expression of ideas. We practice these skills in our daily discussions and activities, as well as in our graded assignments. We spend significant time working together in small groups. Therefore, an enthusiastic, positive level of engagement from each student is crucial to the success of your learning experiences. Your grade can rise or fall a complete letter grade based upon your contributions and attitude in classroom discussions and activities.

Late Papers are accepted if you have a legitimate emergency, such as illness, family emergencies, violent crimes perpetrated against you, the theft of your work, fire in your
residence, attacks of killer birds, etc. Otherwise, you will be docked one half-step (ie. From an A- to a B+, or a C to a C-) for every two days that pass before you hand it in, and your participation grade will be influenced. **Email late papers to me as soon as they are done, then bring hard copies to class.** Like late papers, absences are excused in cases of emergency. In these cases you should inform me of your legitimate reasons for absence as soon as possible. Everyone is also given 2 “personal days” that will not affect their grade. In extreme cases, students who fail to hand in assignments or stop coming to class on a regular basis can have their grades lowered to an F.

There are seven components to **your grade:**
- Participation in class activities and discussion 15%
- Responses and Reflections Work 10%
- Formative Experience Narrative 15%
- Book or Movie Review 15%
- Persuasive Group Project 15%
- Cultural Analysis 15%
- Editorials 15%

**Responses and Reflections:**
I would like everyone to keep a brief journal of ideas and experiences. I will provide a series of free writing activities or suggestions for writing in your journal each week. You are also welcome to develop your own reflections on our readings and discussions from class, or to reflect on topics from outside of class. The purpose of this assignment is for you to experience writing as an unstructured, creative and generative process and to express your ideas freely. Therefore, it will not be graded on style or content. Instead, I will collect journals at several points throughout the semester (announced in advance) and check to make sure that you have been writing in them each week. You should write approximately ¼ to 1 page double-spaced per week. You may skip occasional weeks, but should have a total of **at least ten separate entries and ten pages of writing** by the end of the semester.

**Academic Honesty**
It is important to avoid plagiarism and other forms of cheating. Do not buy papers off of the internet, do not use your older friends’ essays, do not make-up sources, do not copy word for word out of journals and books. Doing so may cause you to fail the assignment or the class, or face university imposed penalties.

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

**Tentative Schedule of Readings and Activities:**
***please be aware that I will make adjustments to this schedule that will be announced in class and through the email. An Updated Syllabus, along with journal prompts and assignments will also be emailed and available at www.angel.psu.edu***
- Sept. 2 Welcome, begin developing topics for assignment 1.
Sept. 7  Reading to have done for today: Ch. 3, “Narration” and “Me Talk Pretty One Day,” “Prison Studies,” “Bedside Terror” (from the essays for Ch. 3)
Sept. 9  Read Ch. 2 and “Music is My Bag,” “Where Worlds Collide,” “Snow.”
Sept. 14  Library Open House and Proposal Workshop
Sept. 16  Video: Witness. Discuss Narrative Strategies
Sept. 21  **First Draft Peer Reviews**
Sept. 23  **Formative Narratives Due** Introduce Book or Movie review. Videos: Dead Poet’s Society, Henry V, Wall Street.
Sept. 28  Read and discuss Life of Pi (selections TBA) in class writing activities
Sept. 30  Read and discuss reviews of Life of Pi Proposals
Oct. 5   **First Draft Peer Review**
Oct. 7   **Reviews Due, Introduce Group Projects**
Oct. 12  Organize Groups, Read Ch. 4, and “The Human Costs of an Illiterate…”
Oct. 14  Read Ch. 8, and “The No-Book Report.”
Oct. 19  Supplemental readings on Angel
Oct. 21  In-class meetings and discussion of projects
Oct. 26  Groups 1-3, lead discussion on projects (turn in essays)
Oct. 28  Groups 4-6, lead discussion on projects (turn in essays)
Nov. 2   **Introduce Cultural Analysis**
Nov. 4   Read: Ch. 9, “Love or Haight,” The American Teenager.”
Nov. 9   Read: Ch. 7, “Embalming Mr. Jones,” “Leg Waxing.” (p. 470) Proposals
Nov. 11  **First Draft Peer Review**
Nov. 16  **Palmer Museum Field Trip**
Nov. 18  Cultural Analysis Due, Introduce Editorial Assignment
Nov. 23  Read Elements of Style and Ch. 1 in Making Sense.
Nov. 25  Thanksgiving®
Nov. 30  Chapter 10 and “Casebook on College Athletics” Proposals
Dec. 7   **First Draft Peer Review**
Dec. 9   **Final Drafts Due/Closing Thoughts**