Leap Summer 2005

**English 15: Rhetoric and Composition**

Companion course to CAS 100 with Chuck Edwards

Instructor: Joel Karpowitz  
Section: ENG 015.217  
Office hours: M, T: 12:45 – 2:00  
And By Appointment

MTWRF 2:20 – 3:35 pm  
113 Sackett  
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You can approach the act of writing with nervousness, excitement, hopefulness, or even despair—the sense that you can never completely put on the page what's in your mind and heart. You can come to the act with your fists clenched and eyes narrowed, ready to kick ass and take down names. You can come to it because you want a girl to marry you or because you want to change the world. Come to it any way but lightly. Let me say it again: you must not come lightly to the blank page.

--Stephen King, *On Writing*

**Course Description**

English 15 is designed to help you evaluate and generate effective and original thought. By the end of the course, you should be better able to articulate your own ideas clearly, thoughtfully, persuasively, and eloquently. You should also be able to evaluate the quality of others' arguments. In addition, I hope you will better understand your role as a member of an academic community, with all the opportunities and responsibilities such membership brings.

**LEAP**

This course is designed to work hand in hand with Chuck Edwards' CAS 100 course. We have developed assignments together and planned activities together. As such, frequently you'll find significant overlap between assignments in this class and in your speech class. Take advantage of that overlap! However, remember that these are still two separate classes and demand two separate approaches. Part of what you will learn in these two classes is how written and spoken arguments differ in tone, style, and approach—as well as how they are similar. It is our hope that by taking these classes together you will begin your college career ready and excited to communicate your thoughts and ideas in whatever medium required. Remember, whatever you do in school and in life, speaking and writing will probably be a part of it. Now is the time to hone those skills.

**Texts**

*Everything's An Argument (with Readings)* 3rd Edition by Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters  
Additional online or in-class readings as requested (Please feel free to contact me about articles or other materials that you think are appropriate for our current unit. I'm happy to add readings that you recommend, provided it is applicable and well-written.)

**Course Requirements**

To pass this course you must complete four major assignments and one major revision, as outlined in the assignment sheets included in this syllabus. You are expected to participate fully in draft workshops, classroom discussions, and other writing activities, both in and out of class. For further elaboration, see below.
What I Expect from You

• Attendance
  Though the majority of your grade in this class comes from writing assignments, daily attendance is essential. As a summer course, this class moves extremely quickly and it is easy to fall behind. Excused absences are appropriate, but more than two unexcused absences will result in a lower final grade in the class (including the risk of failing, despite assignment grades). If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get assignments, complete work, and submit papers. If you miss a workshop session or fail to turn in an assignment proposal, your paper grade will drop at least half a grade. This course depends on your active participation. Please be here.

• Participation
  Speaking of which, please come to class prepared to participate fully in discussions and other activities. This means doing your reading, preparing drafts and proposals on time, and being active in your own learning. While ENGL 015 could easily degenerate into a droning lecture course, I think you will find the course much more enjoyable when you involve yourself. Speak up and ask questions, even “stupid” ones. Be prepared to challenge and defend positions. Engage your classmates in lively discussion. I ask only that you be respectful of other views in keeping with the nature of academic exchange.

• Paper Components
  Each paper you turn in for this class should include at least three components, organized in a folder. Each paper should have
  1. Your assignment proposal, with my comments (if any).
  2. Your peer-reviewed rough draft and workshop worksheet.
  3. Your final, polished paper
  In addition, papers may require
  4. Any other materials, including copies of sources, or specially requested materials
  All graded assignments and drafts must be type-written in 12-pt font (double spaced) with one inch margins.

• Late Papers
  Late papers—unless specifically cleared with me beforehand (and only in rare cases)—will drop one letter grade for each day late. Papers are due at the beginning of class.

What to Expect from Me

• Office Hours
  I keep office hours for you, so please use them. It is your chance to seek advice on how to handle an assignment, to clarify any questions or concerns in a one-on-one environment, or just to talk. Taking advantage of this opportunity will result in a better grade on your assignment almost every time.

• Contacting Me
  I am available to help you any time, but please be considerate. Please do not phone after 10:00 pm and expect to get a happy, helpful instructor. In addition, I will check my e-mail daily by 5:00 pm and respond promptly, but please do not ask urgent or important
questions at the last minute and expect an immediate response. Procrastination on your part does not necessitate emergency action on mine.

- **Class Time**
  Our time together is valuable, and I know we will only get out of it what we put in to it! I will do my best to spend our time on significant and helpful activities that will strengthen you as a writer and a thinker. Together we can engage in meaningful discussion and entertaining debate that help us develop as scholars. I promise to be prepared each day and ask that you do the same.

Please be aware that I reserve the right to modify the schedule of readings and assignments as the situation necessitates. I am also open to student suggestions for further class reading (e.g., articles or web links of particular interest) which may alter the schedule. I will inform the class of any major changes or cancellations via ANGEL, so please check your PSU e-mail regularly.

**Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1: Visual Analysis</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Assignment 2: Definition</td>
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<td>Assignment 3: Evaluation</td>
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<td>Assignment 4: Proposal</td>
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<td>Assignment 5: Major Revision</td>
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<td>Participation and Minor Assignments</td>
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**Academic Integrity**

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University’s Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction. ANY ACT OF PLAGIARISM will result in assignment failure, and in some cases in course failure. For the College of Liberal Arts policy, see [http://www.la.psu.edu/undergrad/integrity/collegepolicy.htm](http://www.la.psu.edu/undergrad/integrity/collegepolicy.htm) In brief, don’t shortchange your own education.

**Things to Keep in Mind**

- The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, then please tell the instructor as soon as possible.

- Take advantage of the Undergraduate Writing Center (219 Boucke, directly across from the HUB). They offer drop-in peer consultations.

- I will occasionally post documents or other tools on ANGEL ([https://cms.psu.edu/](https://cms.psu.edu/)). Please be sure you know how to log in to the system.
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<tr>
<th>Week One</th>
<th>Reading Assignment Due</th>
<th>Written/Other Assignment Due</th>
<th>Class Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 29 (Wed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>In-class Writing Assignment</td>
<td>Introductions, Syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 30 (Thur)</td>
<td>EA: 27-37 (Intro to Arguments)</td>
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<td>Arguments</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1 (Fri)</td>
<td>EA: 301-330 (Visual Arguments)</td>
<td>Visual Analysis Proposal</td>
<td>Analyzing Advertisements</td>
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<th>Week Two</th>
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<tr>
<td>July 4 (Mon)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Holiday—No Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 5 (Tue)</td>
<td>EA: 461</td>
<td>Paper 1 Rough Draft</td>
<td>Rough Draft Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 6 (Wed)</td>
<td>EA: 147-159 (Definitions)</td>
<td>Paper 1 (Visual Analysis)</td>
<td>Rough Draft Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 7 (Thur)</td>
<td>EA: 160-164 (Definitions, cont.) 462-465, 806-810</td>
<td>(Visual Aid Pres. Speech—CAS 100)</td>
<td>Style Day One</td>
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<td>July 8 (Fri)</td>
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<td>Definition Proposal</td>
<td>Review Proposals</td>
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<th>Week Three</th>
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<tr>
<td>July 11 (Mon)</td>
<td>EA: 367-383 (Evidence)</td>
<td>Library Trip</td>
<td>Library Trip</td>
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<td>July 12 (Tue)</td>
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<td>Paper 2 Rough Draft</td>
<td>Rough Draft Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 13 (Wed)</td>
<td>EA: 174-189 (Evaluations)</td>
<td>Paper 2 (Definition) Due</td>
<td>Descriptive Writing</td>
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<td>July 14 (Thur)</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>(Motivational Appeals—CAS 100)</td>
<td>Form Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 15 (Fri)</td>
<td>EA: 190-194 (Evaluations, cont.) 480-482, 496-499</td>
<td>(Motivational Appeals—CAS 100)</td>
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<td>July 18 (Mon)</td>
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<td>Group Work</td>
<td>Review Proposals</td>
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<td>July 19 (Tue)</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Evaluation Proposals &amp; Outline Due</td>
<td>Style Day Two</td>
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<td>July 21 (Thur)</td>
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<td>(Issue Analysis Speech—CAS 100)</td>
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<td>July 22 (Fri)</td>
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<td>Paper 3 (Cultural Evaluation) Due (Issue Analysis Speech—CAS 100)</td>
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<td>July 25 (Mon)</td>
<td>EA: 238-247 (Proposals)</td>
<td>(Issue Analysis Speech—CAS 100)</td>
<td>Modest Proposals, Satire, Manifestos</td>
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<td>July 26 (Tue)</td>
<td>EA: 254-258, Letter From Birmingham Jail</td>
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<td>July 27 (Wed)</td>
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<td>Proposal Proposal</td>
<td>Review Proposals</td>
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<td>July 28 (Thur)</td>
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<td>(Policy Solution Speech—CAS 100)</td>
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<td>July 29 (Fri)</td>
<td>EA: 525-527</td>
<td>Paper 4 Rough Draft</td>
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<th>Week Six</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 1 (Mon)</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>(Policy Solution Speech—CAS 100)</td>
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<td>August 2 (Tue)</td>
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<td>Paper 4 Rough Draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 3 (Wed)</td>
<td>EA: 737-738</td>
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<td>Paper 4 (Proposal) Due</td>
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<td>August 5 (Fri)</td>
<td>Style Day Three</td>
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<td>August 8 (Mon)</td>
<td>Paper 5 Rough Draft (Group Presentations—CAS 100 Combined)</td>
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<td>August 9 (Tue)</td>
<td>Paper 5 Rough Draft (Group Presentations—CAS 100 Combined)</td>
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<td>August 10 (Wed)</td>
<td>Paper 5 (Revision and Portfolio) Due (Group Presentations—CAS 100 Combined)</td>
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<td>Rough Draft Workshop</td>
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Assignment #1: Visual Analysis

Purpose
The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to key aspects of rhetoric (ethos, pathos, and logos), with the hope that you will think about how persuasion works, both in your own writing and in the world around you. In addition, this assignment should encourage you to think critically about how communication is made and received.

Assignment
Find an advertisement or some other type of visual argument that you find interesting and that has a persuasive aim. Please choose something genuinely sophisticated and complex. Write an analysis that will help your readers understand how the piece in question works to persuade its audience(s).

Questions to Consider
What is the audience of the piece in question? What cues point you in that direction?
How does the text’s style make meaning? Why is it arranged as it is?
How does the author use logic and emotion to persuade?
How does ethos function in the text?
How do social, historical or other contexts inform the text’s meaning?
Where did this text appear, and how is this significant?
Does the author make interesting references in the text? Why?
What does this text say about the world around it?

Objectives
1. Be interesting! Go beyond the obvious.
2. Develop a complex understanding of a text. Reveal complexity.
3. Show a strong capacity for rhetorical analysis.
4. Write in a lively, unique, memorable voice and style.
5. Expand/challenge/transform the audience’s understanding of the text.

Remember
Please include a copy of the piece you are analyzing in your assignment folder.
Length: 2-3 full pages
Due: Wednesday, July 6
Assignment #2: Definition Arguments

Purpose
We rely on definition for successful, efficient communication. Not only do we need to know what others mean when they write to us, but we also want them to know exactly what we mean. We need to make sure that the meaning we intend is clear. To this end, the purpose of your definition essay will be to argue by (1) classifying the term or short phrase in a broader category and then (2) differentiating that term or short phrase from other terms in the same category, stating its distinguishing characteristics. Your definition will serve as the basis of your thesis statement.

Assignment
Choose a word or short phrase (no more than two or three words long) that you believe needs to be clarified or redefined. If appropriate, you may want to choose a term that will feed into your upcoming Issue Analysis speech. For example, if you were considering preparing an issue analysis speech on inner-city poverty, you might decide to define the word “ghetto,” which has gone through a significant evolution in contemporary society and now carries multiple meanings—some positive, some negative. You may or may not use this definition in your speech, but the related topics will be helpful for research and focus. Most importantly, select a term that is interesting and that generates discussion.

Questions to Consider
Why does your word need to be defined (or re-defined)?
What sets your definition apart from other definitions?
How will you use ethos, logos, and pathos in constructing your argument?
How has your term evolved historically, socially, or culturally?
What does your new definition add to any greater debates of which this term is a part?

Objectives
1. Develop a clear definition of a word and show its significance.
2. Compare and contrast your word against other words in its category.
3. Continue to develop a lively, unique voice and style.
4. Use interesting references (popular, academic, esoteric) to add texture to your piece.
5. Expand/challenge an audience’s understanding of a term or phrase.
6. Consider how language both reflects reality and shapes reality.

Remember
This paper requires at least four outside sources (three print sources, one quality Internet source). Length: 3-4 full pages
Due: Wednesday, July 13
Assignment #3: Cultural Evaluation and Analysis

Purpose
What can Spiderman tell us about gender or Grand Theft Auto about violence in society? We evaluate in order to make judgments and determine value. We base these judgments on specific criteria. Often, our evaluations can lead us to surprising conclusions, and a work of art we might evaluate positively according to one set of criteria may receive a negative evaluation according to a different set of criteria. In this case, your evaluation of a film, television series, or other pop culture “text” should reveal something new and unique about the culture that produced it and the way in which meaning is formed in that culture. In addition, this assignment should help you learn about collaborative writing and working in a group. Finally, this assignment will lay the foundation for your final group project in CAS 100.

Assignment
As a group, select a film, television series, video game, or other aspect of popular American culture. Though you are free to evaluate your selection within its category (i.e., is it a good movie?) the focus of your paper and research should be to explain and evaluate what your object of analysis says about the culture that created it. You may wish to discuss the history of a specific work of art or of a more general genre. Remember that this examination should go beyond the obvious and cause your audience to see the object of analysis in a new and challenging way. Use interesting criteria, and be original.

You will have in-class time for library research and group work. You will also be expected to meet with your group outside of class to work on this project. As part of the composition and research process, your group will submit an annotated research bibliography of at least 12 sources (of which each member will annotate 3) and an outline. For your final presentation you will be graded in CAS 100 for the way you create and deliver the oral presentation (on matters such as delivery, structure, coherence, and use of visual aids). For ENG 15, you will be graded on the written paper, originality, use of evidence, citations and research, and credibility.

Questions to Consider
What makes this film or other object worth analyzing? Do you have anything original to say? What specific criteria will you use to evaluate your “text”? What does this “text” tell you about the culture that produced it? Does this “text” reflect culture, shape culture, or both, or neither? Was this “text” popular or did it go unnoticed? Why? How have other critics and scholars dealt with the issues you wish to confront?

Objectives
1. Apply an interesting set of criteria to a “text” to determine its value.
2. Develop a clear thesis to guide the structure and content of your paper.
3. Situate the text within a context.
4. Cause the audience to re-examine its understanding of the topic.
5. Learn about collaborative research and writing.
6. Develop a coherent, lively blend from a variety of writing styles.

Remember
This paper requires an annotated bibliography due with the final paper. A written self and group assessment will be due with the final paper. Though not required, if possible, please submit a copy of the object being analyzed.
Length: 8-10 full pages
Due: Friday, July 22
Assignment #4: Proposal

Purpose
A proposal calls attention to a problem and suggests a solution. The purpose of this assignment is for you to write a proposal about a topic that interests you. If you decide to write a traditional proposal, then identify a problem, establish a strong thesis, and articulate a course of action, handling objections, issues of feasibility, and alternative possibilities along the way. If you decide to write a more experimental proposal, then use other appropriate rhetorical strategies.

Assignment
Option #1: Identify a problem and propose a solution.
Option #2: Write a modest proposal using irony and satire to make a compelling point.
Option #3: Write a manifesto.

Questions to Consider
Who is your audience? Are you hoping to change policy or change public understanding of a problem?
How much time will you spend on explaining the problem and how much on explaining your solution?
How will you lead readers to accept your solution over other possible solutions?
What issues of feasibility will you need to address?
For options 2 and 3, how will humor function in your proposal? Do you understand satire?
Ultimately, no matter what type of proposal you write, what do you hope to accomplish?

Objectives
1. Suggest a positive course of action, either directly or indirectly.
2. Acknowledge and refute at least one possible alternative course of action.
3. Write in an interesting voice; use a lively, unique style.
4. Show a capacity for identifying complexities within problems and responding to them.
5. Transform an audience’s understanding of the topic.
6. Go beyond the obvious.
7. Use interesting references as appropriate.

Remember
Modest proposals and manifestos will require special attention to word choice and tone; they are challenging to write well, so please be prepared for significant polishing and revising.
For Option #1 (straightforward proposals) please use at least four outside sources (three print sources, one quality Internet source).
Length: 3-5 full pages
Due Date: Thursday, August 4