

# ENGLISH 103

## ACCELERATED COMPOSITION: Culture, Identity, and Society

### CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

Jimmy Butts  
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OFFICE: Strode 205  
OFFICE HOURS: TTH: 10-12 a.m.  
EMAIL: [jbutts@live.com](mailto:jbutts@live.com)

“Writing is easy. You only need to stare at a piece of blank paper until your forehead bleeds.”

-Douglas Adams

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course focuses on writing and critical thinking by using an integrated approach to writing that teaches various rhetorical strategies for reading and constructing arguments (written and visual) in both print and digital environments. You will learn to read texts critically according to key components in argumentative discourse (i.e., claims, grounds, explicit and implicit assumptions, fallacies, etc.) and to recognize the different purposes of argument. You will write and revise three writing projects based on issues and research raised in the various texts read during the semester. The assignments will give you extensive practice in reading critically and writing according to the rhetorical conventions of an argumentative essay using the full range of writing processes—invention, arrangement, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading—for multiple assignments. During this course, there will be four course strands that guide your learning:

**Rhetoric and Argumentation** - Rhetoric, where we will explore the uses of rhetoric as a tool of persuasion in written, visual, and multimodal texts. We'll learn how rhetoric works through attention to persona, audience, and persuasive appeals (such as *pathos*, *logos*, *ethos*, *kairos*). Rhetoric teaches us how we might persuade others, and whether to be persuaded ourselves. In addition, we will examine strategies of argument and critical thinking about the world we live in. To these ends, we will pay particular attention to cultural and individual assumptions, to evidence and other types of support, to arguments and fallacies, and to rhetoric and language. This strand also encompasses the entire writing process (abstracts, outlines, multiple drafts, edited final products), as well as formal attention to arrangement, style, grammar, punctuation, and document design conventions.

**Information Design and Technology** – Information design and technology, where we will explore recently developed technologies for research, composing, and communication. We will also learn to design multimodal compositions (involving combinations of text, graphics, and in some cases, sound) that form dynamic visual arguments.

**Research** – Research, where we will use a wide variety of conventional and online search strategies to gather information about a topic and learn to integrate these sources into writing while producing an original text. Most important to this strand is the promotion of academic integrity and establishing our *ethos* as writers. Our credibility as writers is the foundation of learning how to research effectively and appropriately, and how to integrate our sources into our writing *honestly*. To that end, we'll explore effective strategies for note-taking, integrating quotations, and learning to hold a scholarly conversation with our sources.

**Collaboration** – Collaboration, where we will gain experience working with others to achieve a common goal and learn the social aspects of writing processes. We will learn the value of multicultural differences and the value of persuasive discourse in cultural contexts. Collaboration also means helping hold each other accountable for academic integrity. We'll learn about our texts, our topics, and our own methods as writers by engaging in many collaborative activities during class.

#### **REQUIRED TEXTS & SUPPLIES**

*Envision in Depth: Reading, Writing, and Researching Arguments*. By Christine L. Alfano and Alyssa O'Brien. Pearson Longman, 2009.

*The DK Handbook*. By Anne Frances Wysocki and Dennis A. Lynch. Pearson Longman, 2009.

Laptop computer as per classroom teacher's instructions

Approximately 50 3x5 notecards and pen and paper

#### **COURSE POLICIES & GRADING PROCEDURES**

##### ***Attendance***

Regular attendance is essential in all writing courses. While some instruction is delivered through lecture, much of the course content is taught through class discussion, workshops, and interactive activities such as brainstorming or editing. When students miss a day, they will often have missed not just hearing a lecture but also actually working toward the successful completion of an assignment. Students are allowed up to **TWO (2)** excused absences. If students reach the limit of absences by the drop date, the instructor may drop them from the class for excessive absences. The instructor will determine what to do in case of extended illness or personal crisis on a case-by-case basis. *However, excessive absences are an adequate reason for being failed in first-year composition, even if students have turned in all the required papers on time.*

**\*See Grading Sheet for calculation of additional absences. Absences beyond your allotted two incur a 1000 point deduction from your total final points.**

**E-mail me if you aren't going to be in class, preferably ahead of time.**

If a student uses excused absences, that student will not receive unexcused absences above and beyond those excused absences. In the case of athletes, if a student misses two classes for athletics, he or she will have one additional absence to use at her discretion.

Arriving late to class or leaving is unprofessional and will be factored into the attendance policy. Each recorded instance will count as **ONE (1) Tardy**. Three tardies equal one absence.

If I must cancel class, I will try to give you advance notice by email. But if I am more than 15 minutes late, you may leave the class and check your email to see if I've died or for further instructions.

### ***Participation***

Students are expected to participate in the intellectual activities of the course. Participation will be measured through class discussion, workshop participation, class activities, and online activities. The course is designed to stimulate interaction between students, which necessitates regular attendance and participation for two reasons: 1) to listen to the ideas of other members of the class, and 2) to voice ideas for the benefit of the class. If a student misses class, she cannot expect always expect to "get notes" from another classmate or otherwise "make up" the work because the social dynamic of the class period cannot be reconstructed.

### ***Accommodations for Students with Disabilities***

Students with disabilities who need accommodations should make an appointment with Arlene Stewart, Director of Student Disability Services, to discuss specific needs within the first month of classes. Students should present a Faculty Accommodation Letter from Student Disabilities Services when they meet with instructors. Student Disability Services is located in G-20 Redfern (telephone number: 656-6848; e-mail: [sds-l@clermson.edu](mailto:sds-l@clermson.edu)). Please be aware that accommodations are not retroactive and new Faculty Accommodation Letters must be presented each semester.

### ***Technology***

This course requires the use of computer technologies in and out of class. Students are expected to bring their laptops to class with batteries fully charged. While some class time is provided for computer literacy instruction, the instructor on an individual basis will either provide additional help or recommend other support for advanced applications. Additionally, we will treat this class like a professional environment. **Please turn off cellular phones during class. Also, if you're caught Facebooking during class, you will lose 250 points off of your total grade. If it happens a second time, you'll be asked to leave class and will lose 1000 points as you would in the case of an excessive absence.**

### ***Office Hours***

Please note my regular office hours above. You also can arrange to see me at other times that are mutually convenient. Office hours belong to you just as much as our class time. Do not hesitate to take advantage of my availability and the help I am ready to offer. If you need to contact me outside of class time or office hours, it is best to communicate with me by email. With this being said, I've now taught long enough to have this availability used in silly ways. Do I know how to cite this book in MLA format? Yes. Yes, I do. But you should be savvy enough to look that up on the internet or in your textbook on your own. You should not, in the future, write your boss and ask him questions that you should be able to handle on your own. It won't make you look very impressive to the boss man...

### ***Grading Policy***

Your major assignments will receive individual grades, as well as individual attention from your classmates and me. All of your work will be collected in MCL. These various assignments will be assigned a separate grade. These assignments help to track your progress as we move through the semester. They indicate your willingness to be a part of the course, and to collaborate with others in the class. As with any course, you will get out of it what you put into it. Your goal is to demonstrate your development toward mastery of four course strands (rhetoric/ critical thinking, research, technology, and collaboration). These goals will be discussed throughout the course.

While each writing situation may call for some adjustment in the overall criteria based on the rhetorical situation, the following descriptive rubric is consistent with the values of first-year composition at Clemson and describes very general indicators that both you and your instructor may take into consideration when assessing your work and progress in the course. While the final interpretation and assessment of your grade remains the responsibility of your teacher, the work that earns the grade falls entirely to you, the student.

**\*Our course will be unique from most freshman writing courses in its grading system. Please see the Grade Point Calculator Excel Spreadsheet for calculating your course grade based on a point system with stratified levels.**

## A Generalized Rubric for Most Assignments

**A:** Represents *excellent* participation in all course activities (including attendance and promptness); all assigned work completed *on time*, with very high quality in *all* work produced for the course. Evidence of *significant* and *sustained* development across the five dimensions of learning and five course strands.

- Responds fully to topic and thoroughly addresses issues.
- Shows unusual or substantial depth and complexity of thought, including strong analysis.
- Demonstrates clarity, focus, organization, and unity throughout.
- Thoroughly investigates the topic; shows full development with supporting detail.
- Documents ideas, information, and questions according to convention.
- Demonstrates superior control of diction, shows appropriate variety of sentences, and incorporates smooth, well-integrated transitions.
- Evidences mastery of mechanical and technical aspects of writing.

**B:** Represents *good* participation in all course activities (including attendance and promptness); all assigned work completed *on time*, with consistently high quality in course work. Evidence of *marked* and *above average* development across the five dimensions of learning and five course strands.

- Clearly and directly responds to topic and to issues.
- Shows depth and complexity of thought; investigates issues and addresses basic counterarguments.
- Demonstrates effective organization and adequate development.
- Incorporates a wide range of sources; uses plenty of detail to support ideas and conclusions.
- Documents sources correctly, with occasional minor errors.
- Contains only minor mechanical errors and exhibits no pattern of errors.

**C:** Represents *average* participation in all course activities; all assigned work completed, with generally good quality overall in course work. Evidence of *some* development across the five dimensions of learning and five course strands.

- Addresses question or topic and explores issues but draws no clear conclusion.
- Shows clarity of thought and organization but fails to show sufficient complexity or depth of thought.
- Uses only a few basic sources.
- Attempts to include adequate detail and development but may leave out obvious counterarguments.
- Attempts to document correctly.
- Demonstrates competence in mechanics; avoids major errors.

**D:** Represents *weak and uneven* participation in course activities; some gaps in assigned work completed, with inconsistent quality in course work. Evidence of development across the five dimensions of learning and five course strands is partial or unclear.

- Consistently strays from topic; is oblique or irrelevant.
- Reflects simplistic, reductive, or stereotypical thinking; relies heavily on generalization; shows little evidence of research.
- Shows poor or confusing organization; is too short.
- Contains garbled paraphrases; words or passages are nearly plagiarized.
- Documentation is careless, incorrect, or missing in some cases.
- Exhibits consistent flaws in language, syntax, or mechanics.
- Exhibits inadequate research or reading.

**F:** Represents minimal participation in course activities; serious gaps in assigned work completed, or very low quality in course work. Evidence of development is not available.

- Distorts topic or assignment; fails to address assignment; fails to establish topic.
- Provides no development.
- Contains obvious or deliberate plagiarism; lacks documentation of some or all sources.
- Displays gross technical or mechanical incompetence and repetitive errors.
- Exhibits inadequate research or reading.

### **Due Dates**

All assignments are due on the due date, unless otherwise specified. Any extensions need to be documented in writing. Late work without a valid excuse will negatively affect your grade. If a paper is turned in after the due date, I will subtract one letter grade per day late. The instructor determines the validity of excuses for late work, **NOT** the student. All work may be turned in early for evaluation or pre-planned absences. Periodically, the instructor might revise the tentative course schedule; students are responsible for formally announced changes in the schedule.

### **Quizzes**

I will sometimes give quizzes on the readings and class discussions in order to ensure that everyone is on the same page. Quizzes are a simple way to ensure participation and should be an easy grade. Without reading, our discussions will be fairly lame. While quizzes can be lame, boring class discussions are even lamer.

### **Blogs**

You will set up and keep blogs for this class to conduct specific assignments, but also to keep up with your thinking, to come up with new ideas, and work together to hear each other's ideas. We will be using Google's blogging platform, Blogger. For each required blog post, you should write approximately 500 words. Keep in mind though, that these are your spaces, and you are welcome to decorate, and post other things of interest.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty**

The following is Clemson's official statement on "Academic Integrity":

"As members of the Clemson University community, we have inherited Thomas Green Clemson's vision of this institution as a 'high seminary of learning.' Fundamental to this vision is a mutual commitment to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of others. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of a Clemson degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form."

A simple definition of plagiarism—one that we will expand upon this semester—is when someone presents another person's words, visuals, or ideas as his or her own. The instructor will deal with plagiarism on a case-by-case basis. The most serious offense within this category occurs when a student copies text from the Internet or from a collective file. *This type of academic dishonesty is a serious offense that will result in a failing grade for the course as well as the filing of a formal report to the university.*

See the Clemson site below for information about Academic Integrity and procedures regarding the violation of Clemson policies on scholastic dishonesty:

[http://www.cs.clemson.edu/html/academics/academic\\_integrity\\_2002.html](http://www.cs.clemson.edu/html/academics/academic_integrity_2002.html)

### **MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS**

NOTE: ALL major assignments must be e-mailed to me in an ELECTRONIC format, and will be uploaded to your blog; however, I may also ask that some assignments be turned in to me in hard copy.

**Visual Rhetoric Assignment:** This assignment requires students develop proficiency in rhetorical analysis and argument by developing a writing piece that examines a visual text. The aim of your argument is to support a thesis—using the tools of persuasion—concerning how your chosen visual text itself offers a persuasive argument. Using the assigned readings in *Envision in Depth* and the models available on Envision Online (the Companion Website), make an argument that persuades readers of your thesis. The form of this assignment is an integrated *textual and visual* essay that utilizes visual images and the rhetorical elements of composition, presentation, intended audience, and effect. (See EID, Ch 7) This assignment should include a Works Cited page, be formatted according to MLA standards, and be a minimum of 1500 words.

**20% of Final Grade**

**First draft due: 9/13**

**Final draft due: 9/22**

**Test on Rhetorical Terms and Concepts**

**10% of Final Grade**

**Research Argument Assignment:** This assignment requires you to broaden the topic from one visual text to the larger cultural, social, or political issues raised by the visual in order to bring in research sources. This assignment emphasizes research skills, including library sources, interviews, and other forms of academic inquiry. Students should put forth an argument using both writing and images. Using readings from *Envision in Depth* and your own library field research, make an argument that offers a new perspective on the topic at hand. MLA format, minimum 2000 words.

**25% of Final Grade**

**First draft due: 11/8**

**Final draft due: 11/15**

**Multimedia assignment:** This assignment requires students to collaborate in groups and develop an extended argument using multimodal composition strategies such as an op-ad, photo-essay, website, video, podcast, mp3 file(s), blog, or other multi-media combination. Each student will write his or her own report detailing your project's rationale and process, which should accompany the final product. The report should be in MLA format and a minimum of 500 words. The project will be showcased to the class the day it is due.

**25% of Final Grade**

**Outline/Storyboard due: 11/22**

**Final draft due: 12/8**

**Portfolio & Participation:** This is a resource for managing and documenting the work and learning you do in this class. Various assignments will be due throughout the semester, and all drafts and essays must be included in the portfolio on the date due. The portfolio is reflective and helps students to understand their progress as writers while learning how to present ideas in multiple media. Additionally, participation, which includes quizzes, blog posts, and attendance, is critical to success in this course, will be weighed as part of the portfolio grade.

**20% of Final Grade**

**Final collection of work due to be uploaded by: 12/14**

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**SYLLABUS ITINERARY (subject to change)**

[Assignments listed are due by the next class period unless noted otherwise]

Readings and Resources, Key to Abbreviations:

*EID = Envision in Depth*EOL = Envision On-Line companion website (available at [http://wps.ablongman.com/long\\_alfano\\_envision\\_2/](http://wps.ablongman.com/long_alfano_envision_2/))DK= *The DK Handbook*

			Class Content	Assignment
1	8/26/11	Thursday	<p>Introductions</p> <p>What is Rhetoric? What is an Essay?</p> <p>Introduction to Blogger</p>	<p>Read EID Ch 1</p> <p>Create your blog and send me the URL. Also, for your first blog post pick a photo of yourself and write a short bio paragraph to describe yourself.</p>
2	8/30/11	Tuesday	<p>What is Visual Rhetoric?</p> <p>Making a Comic</p> <p>Discussion of EID Ch 1.</p> <p>Analyze ads together</p> <p>Discussion of visual rhetoric assignment</p>	<p>Read Chapter 2</p> <p>Blog Post: Consider messages you constantly see around you about identity and culture in cartoons, ads, comics, and other visual texts. Find an interesting ad or picture and write up a little paragraph thinking about it.</p>
3	9/1/11	Thursday	<p>Discussion of EID Ch 2 and sharing blogs</p> <p>Is rhetoric to be trusted?</p> <p>Invention Dissoi Logoi</p> <p>Thesis Statements: Describing</p> <p>Look at one of the following photo banks for class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative Challenge, p. 58, on historical photobanks through EOL</li> <li>• Collaborative Challenge, p. 61, on collections of hoax or fake photos</li> <li>• Collaborative Challenge, p 72, on “Week in Pictures” newspaper photo essays</li> </ul> <p>Discuss the visual rhetoric assignment and review Jason Benhaim’s visual rhetoric assignment in EID (p. 24-27), paying careful attention to the marginal annotations in blue concerning what makes for an effective essay</p>	<p>Read/Skim through EID Ch 3</p>
4	9/6/11	Tuesday	<p>Observation: Using Description</p> <p>Discuss in groups your work in progress on the visual rhetoric assignment.</p> <p>Discuss Ethics</p>	<p>ACADEMIC INTEGRITY PLEDGE</p> <p>Read essay by Orbach</p>

5	9/8/11	Thursday	<p>ACADEMIC INTEGRITY PLEDGE DUE What is the thesis of Orbach's piece? Assess it in class</p> <p>Adding a personal story.</p> <p>The Five Paragraph Essay, What to Do In an Introduction, Conclusion, Making it Personal, and other Structural Concerns.</p> <p>Anne Lamott: First Drafts</p> <p>Discuss models of visual rhetoric assignments Each group analyzes three model papers and offers a short presentation on the papers to the class: discuss thesis, choice of visual rhetoric for analysis, introduction and conclusion strategy, explicit or implicit use of rhetorical terms and strategies of persuasion from Ch 1-3 of EID.</p>	
6	9/13/11	Tuesday	<p>MLA Overview</p> <p>FIRST DRAFT of visual rhetoric assignment DUE, worth 100 points of final paper.</p> <p>Peer review</p>	<p>Decide on your research essay topic, or how you will broaden out your focus from one visual text to a larger research paper.</p> <p>Read "Writing is Easy" by Steve Martin</p> <p>Revise your visual rhetoric assignment. Include an effective title, intro, and conclusion</p>
7	9/15/11	Thursday	TEACHER CONFERENCES	
8	9/20/11	Tuesday	<p>Groups work through Creative Challenge: "Narrowing your Topic"</p> <p>Who, What, Where, Why, and How?</p> <p>Picking a Topic: Play Does it Suck?</p> <p>Analyze Tanner Gardner's paper, p. 252-262, as example of completed assignment</p>	<p>Read/Skim EID Ch 4</p> <p>Visit the Writing Center</p>
9	9/22/11	Thursday	<p>FINAL DRAFT of visual rhetoric assignment DUE Discuss EID Ch 4 and Research Topic Ideas</p> <p>Mindmapping</p> <p>Discuss how to apply what you learned to your own research topic idea</p> <p>Discussion of research argument assignment</p> <p>Review for test</p>	Study for TEST
10	9/27/11	Tuesday	<p>Freewrites in class: Finding a topic. Writing about your writing.</p> <p>Share the result of your freewrite and where you are for your next topic.</p> <p>Review Ch. 1-4</p> <p>TEST on rhetorical terms and concepts</p>	Read/Skim EID Ch 5

11	9/29/11	Thursday	Discuss Ch 5 and Iceberg of Research.  The Adventuresome Book Scavenger Hunt.	
12	10/4/11	Tuesday	Handling sources: agreeing and disagreeing. Incorporating quotations. Focus on integrating, not inserting sources. EID p. 154-155  “Cover Stories” with citation	
13	10/6/11	Thursday	Digital Rhetorics  Design: Websites that Suck, and some that don't.	Read EID, “Cultural Differences” (p. 293-296)
14	10/11/11	Tuesday	Discuss interviews and surveys  How to get good interviews  Analyze “Cultural Differences” (EID p. 293) as an interview. Is it serious? Humorous? Reliable?	Think of two questions that you could use for your paper.
15	10/13/11	Thursday	Recap: Forms of Rhetoric  Immersive rhetoric, Crafting an Experience  Class Field Trip to a Rhetorical Place	
16	10/18/11	Tuesday	FALL BREAK	
17	10/20/11	Thursday	Discuss Chapter 6  Boxing  Organization: Look at Movie trailers in class as examples of outlines and organizational strategies  Compare outlines by Lee-Ming Zen p.144-147 to Dexian Cai (p. 149-151)	Read Kozol article
18	10/25/11	Tuesday	The Elements of Style  What we mean when we talk about “grammar.”  Revision  Find revisions Sunthar Premakumar's two drafts	Read the essay by Susan Sontag.  Work on draft of visual rhetoric assignment  Blog Post: Write about what you think reality is.
19	10/27/11	Thursday	Active Verbs: “He Noticed”  Discuss the readings in Ch 14 How do cameras capture social identity? What is reality? Fur Trailer  Writing Tips from Writers  In class: Discuss the readings in Ch 14, “Images of Crisis” (p. 560-561). How does each one offer a distinct voice? What research evidence makes the argument of each article? Work in small groups; each group should offer a short report on a different article in this case study.	Fill in Logical Fallacies Wiki



20	11/1/11	Tuesday	The Rhetoric of a Street Preacher. My 5 Best Writing Tips Final discussions on research argument assignment	
21	11/3/11	Thursday	Logical Fallacies: Wiki Using Sync.in	
22	11/8/11	Tuesday	FIRST DRAFT of research argument assignment DUE, worth 100 points of final paper.  Peer reviews in class: Blitzkrieg Criticism  Revision techniques and elevating style; writing of revisions of first draft of research argument assignment	Read/Skim Ch 11 on Gaming and our Culture.  Blog Post: Put a link to your favorite game on your blog.
23	11/10/11	Thursday	Conjunction Junction  Culture, Games, and Rhetoric.	Work on revisions of research argument assignment.  Read/Skim EID Ch 12 on Copyright and Creativity. Why is it important to avoid plagiarism in digital spaces?  Read Ch. 9, p. 234-262
24	11/15/11	Tuesday	Peanuts: Writing Peter Rabbit FINAL DRAFT of research argument assignment DUE Discuss Ch. 7 and 12 Digital Resources and Copyright  Lawrence Lessig  Multimedia Argument Assignment	
25	11/17/11	Thursday	Watch "Televison" and other Multimedia Arguments Review multimedia argument assignment  Group Up  In groups, brainstorm ideas for the project. Look at Ad layout on p.188; analyze a few visual layouts, get a refresher on rhetorical appeals and strategies of development. Small group work: have each group mock-up an ad for a different cause. Share ads and discuss strategic use of appeals and strategies of development  p. 205, Collaborative Challenge, p. 197  Work in groups on multimedia argument assignment.	Blog Post: Create a Minimovie about your writing experience and post it to your blog.
26	11/22/11	Tuesday	More Working With Multimedia	
27	11/24/11	Thursday	THANKSGIVING. NO CLASS!	
28	11/29/11	Tuesday	More Working With Multimedia	
29	12/1/11	Thursday	Conference with Instructor on Multimedia Assignment	

30	12/6/11	Tuesday	<p>Watch Sir Ken Robinson's TED talk: <a href="http://ted.com">ted.com</a></p> <p>Talk about why we're here. Have a Crisis Moment...</p> <p>Work in groups on multimedia argument assignment.</p>	
31	12/8/11	Thursday	<p>Final Projects Due</p> <p>Portfolio</p> <p>Course Evaluations</p> <p>"So You Want to be a Writer"</p>	