

CO250 Course Overview

Here's a brief synopsis of writing assignments and **tentative due dates**. You will receive more detailed assignment sheets for each assignment several classes before the assignment is due.

Summary/Response Essay, 10%

In the Summary/Response Essay -- which will be based on the "Reading Arguments Critically" guidelines on page 25 in *Aims of Argument* -- you will apply your critical/analytical reading skills to summarize and respond to a written argument. Among other things, you'll be expected to fairly, accurately, and concisely summarize another author's main claim as well as the reasons and evidence in support of that claim. In crafting your personal response, you'll need to explain why you agree or disagree with the author (or perhaps disagree with some parts of the argument and agree with others). You'll also need to offer your own reasons and evidence for your response, consider the evidence offered by the author, note if there are any contradictions in the author's argument, and unearth and analyze the assumptions that underlie and drive his or her argument.

Due: Thursday, Feb. 4

Synthesis/Response Essay, 15%

In the Synthesis/Response Essay you'll inquire into a range of arguments on a central issue while establishing your own position in relation to that of three other authors' positions on the issue. You'll begin by introducing the topic and issue, paraphrase the basic positions of each author on the issue, and then move to examining the basic points of disagreement among the positions. You'll conclude with a statement of your own tentative position on the issue and explanation of why you think your position is the best. You may support one of the arguments you have analyzed, modify one of those arguments, or offer a different argument of your own.

Due: Thursday, March 4

Rhetorical Prospectus/Convincing and Persuading Argument Essay, 30%

In this essay, you'll attempt to convince a specific audience (this audience must not already agree with you) of the validity of your argument AND persuade them to take action based on their newfound conviction. As with the Synthesis/Response Essay, you'll be required to examine a range of positions on an issue. However, this essay will require outside research and investigation that takes you beyond the essays in *Aims of Argument*. In attempting to persuade your audience to assume your conviction and take action, you will be required to use a variety of appeals to reason, character, emotion and style. *Before* composing your larger argumentative piece, you will be required to turn in a **Rhetorical Prospectus** (guidelines are listed on page 13 in *Aims of Argument*) in which you briefly discuss your main claim, your purpose or aim, your specific audience, your relationship to that audience, your subject matter, and your organizational plan.

Rhetorical Prospectus Due: Thursday, March 18

Essay Due: Thursday, April 1

Rhetorical Prospectus/Mediating and Negotiating Argument Essay, 30%

Arguing to negotiate aims to resolve -- or at least reduce -- conflict to the mutual satisfaction of all parties involved. In this essay, you will work as a collaborative problem solver: you will

examine, analyze, inquire into, and ultimately aim to understand opposing points of view on an issue in an attempt to discover common ground between those opposing points of view. In searching for common ground, you will need to analyze and examine specific differences between parties that hold opposing points of view and determine, among other things, whether the opposing parties differences are the result of different sets of assumptions, principles, values, priorities, and interpretations. As an active, informed, and understanding intermediary your goal will be to find a mediating position or solution that accommodates at least some of the interests of all sides involved. As with the Convincing and Persuading Essay, you will be required to draw up a **Rhetorical Prospectus** *before* composing your larger argumentative piece.

Rhetorical Prospectus Due: Thursday, April 22

Essay Due: Monday, May 10 (Beginning of Finals Week)

Personal Journal, 10%

The best way to become a better writer is to write -- a lot. The goal of the Personal Journal is to give students as much practice writing as possible. Journal assignments will complement longer written assignments. For instance, throughout the semester students will be asked to write short, one-page responses to a variety of essays. Students will also be expected to compile all *dailies* written during class and hand them in each time journals are due. Journals will be collected twice during the semester and will receive a mark of Satisfactory+ (S+), Satisfactory (S), or Unsatisfactory (S-) **each time**. In other words, each journal collection and evaluation is equal to 5% of your overall grade.

Due: Journals to be collected Thursday, Feb. 18; Tuesday, April 27

Class Participation

The final 5% of your semester grade will be determined through workshop participation, homework assignments and in-class discussions. Simply showing up to class is **NOT** enough to earn the full 5% class participation percentage. You must consistently contribute to class discussions and workshops in a constructive manner. *Students who exhibit consistently disruptive behavior (talk in class, fail to respect the instructor's classroom preparation efforts, annoy or harass other students or the instructor) will be severely penalized on this portion of their grade.*