

GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE SYLLABUS

- Course Title: **Junior Seminar - Addressing Cultural Divides through Writing and Argumentation**
- Required Texts (3):
- Graff, G. & Birkenstein, K. (2013). *They say, I say: The moves that matter in academic writing*. (3rd ed.). New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Hacker, D., & Sommers, N. (2011). *A pocket style manual*. (6th ed.). New York, NY: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Johnston, M. R. (2013). *Word Up! How to write powerful sentences and paragraphs (and everything you build from them)*. Portland, OR: Northwest Brainstorms Publishing.
- Additional Texts:
- DeWolf, T. N. & Morgan, S. L. (2013). *Gather at the table: The healing journey of a daughter of slavery and a son of the slave trade*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Heinrichs, J. (2013). *Thank you for arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson can teach us about the act of persuasion*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- Hours: <http://www.doodle.com/edutrotea>

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Junior Seminar is designed as a general education capstone course to be taken by all College students as a requirement for graduation. Its purpose is to insure that students have achieved acceptable performance in the practical application of skills taught in the basic courses: 1) critical reading, 2) critical thinking, 3) critical writing, 4) information literacy, 5) quantitative analysis, and 6) public speaking. Each section of JRSM 301 focuses on a particular topic. Students research and respond to various aspects of the selected topics and give multiple presentations in written and oral form. Students can register for the course after completing 60- 90 credits. The Junior Seminar is a three-credit course.

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

In this particular junior seminar, you will learn how to strengthen aspects of own identity by isolating your abilities, and creating a coherent argument to substantiate what you **can** do. Your abilities may spring from the folds of the core competencies addressed in the learning goals below. When you can identify and enhance your own abilities, you may eventually understand how you distinguish yourself culturally from others in your contribution to the greater whole. The 'greater whole' can be a company you are striving to work for, your own family, or the community that you live in.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. All the texts must be obtained.
2. Respect for students and lecturer must be maintained at all times when we meet. Respect is a basic human characteristic that entitles each person to their own right and identity. It also helps to nurture a healthy learning environment. If you recognize that respecting others may be a problem, please be courteous and alert me or more suitable personnel (e.g. College psychologists, family members, lecturers, close friends).

COURSE LEARNING GOALS:

The learning goals of the course are to engage students in the process of assessing their proficiencies in the general education competencies by providing a thematic context to do so. The six general education competencies are a foundation, when mastered, for future academic and professional success. The course serves as a capstone experience where competencies may be assessed and enhanced by further instruction, as needed.

Written Communication

Written communication involves the ability to communicate clearly and effectively through writing. Students are expected to demonstrate the following skills:

- ❖ Choose and narrow a subject
- ❖ Identify a purpose and formulate an appropriate thesis statement
- ❖ Organize ideas effectively and develop them within a logical paragraph structure
- ❖ Support points clearly with specific and adequate evidence
- ❖ Demonstrate command of English sentence structure and grammar
- ❖ Revise and edit according to Standard English practice, including attention to punctuation and appropriate vocabulary
- ❖ Acknowledge all sources by documenting research according to a recognized format

Oral Communication

Oral communication involves the ability to comprehend and to speak in American English with precision and clarity. Students are expected to demonstrate the following skills:

- ❖ Demonstrate an understanding of the responsibilities of the listening audience
- ❖ Listen, hear, interpret, and evaluate information and accurately respond to instructions
- ❖ Express information orally, extemporaneously in natural, energetic and vocally varied phrases
- ❖ Incorporate the responses of listeners into the oral communication process
- ❖ Speak in phrases that conform to the conventions of accurate English pronunciation, articulation (diction), grammar and syntax
- ❖ Employ appropriate non-verbal face and body movements, posture, dress, and visual aids to reinforce the oral/verbal message
- ❖ Select and narrow a subject plus clarify a purpose/objective
- ❖ Structure information into purposeful, recognizable units (opening, body, closing) and support ideas using appropriate data and referenced documentation

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking involves the ability to analyze and interpret a subject insightfully and in depth. Students are expected to demonstrate the following skills:

- ❖ Place subject matter in context
- ❖ Identify patterns and relationships
- ❖ Identify positive and negative aspects of an issue
- ❖ Explain the significance of an issue
- ❖ Provide evidence for positions taken by using relevant data accurately
- ❖ Support these positions with arguments that are clear, precise, logical and carefully qualified
- ❖ Identify the assumptions, reasoning and conclusions of different positions on an issue
- ❖ Recognize strengths and weaknesses in opposing positions

Critical Reading

Critical reading involves the ability to read and understand primary and secondary sources. Students are expected to demonstrate the following skills:

- ❖ Demonstrate an understanding of basic vocabulary pertaining to a subject
- ❖ Recognize and distinguish main ideas from supporting ideas in various printed materials
- ❖ Outline and summarize the content of printed material
- ❖ Distinguish facts, interpretations, and opinions in printed material
- ❖ Analyze and evaluate the value and validity of printed material
- ❖ Draw conclusions and make inferences based on content of printed material

Quantitative Reasoning

Quantitative reasoning involves the ability to use established methods of computation and contemporary technology to analyze issues and answer questions germane to their environment. Students are expected to demonstrate the following skills:

- ❖ Apply quantification as a problem-solving strategy to real world situations
- ❖ Perform arithmetic computations necessary to solve common mathematical problems
- ❖ Critically evaluate information presented in tabular and graphic form
- ❖ Demonstrate computer literacy through the use of software applications
- ❖ Recognize the reasonableness of numeric answers
- ❖ Employ quantification and quantitative techniques both in generalization from data or observed facts, and in deriving predictions from generalizations
- ❖ Demonstrate an understanding of sampling and its validity in statistical claims

Information Literacy

Information literacy involves the ability to identify, retrieve, evaluate, organize, cite properly and use a wide range of resources including print, graphic and electronic for independent learning and practical problem solving. Students are expected to develop an appreciation for the role of Information literacy in fostering lifelong learning, and to demonstrate the following skills:

- ❖ Recognize and articulate the need for information
- ❖ Access information from appropriate sources
- ❖ Critically analyze and evaluate information and its sources
- ❖ Organize, synthesize and integrate information
- ❖ Apply information to the development of a specific purpose using effective and creative decision-making
- ❖ Generate and effectively communicate information and knowledge
- ❖ Apply information technology skills
- ❖ Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical, legal and sociopolitical aspects of information and information technology
- ❖ Demonstrate an understanding of the role of information literacy in fostering lifelong learning

COURSE OUTLINE

(This schedule and the topics listed below are subject to modification by the instructor.)

UNIT 1 – THEY SAY ‘THEM OR US’, I SAY ‘IT DEPENDS’ – ENGAGING DIFFICULT WRITTEN & VERBAL EXCHANGES

Learning Objectives: After this unit, you should become familiar with...

1. Showing you care and controlling your mood
2. The Lizard Brain – Psychological Effects of Trauma
3. Recognizing the fragility of outcomes and seeing the shades of gray
4. Interweaving threads of truth, justice, mercy and peace

Day	Content
	Introductions (Identity Map) Reading article to discover how an argument is constructed.
Homework	Choose a topic and write an argument (one paragraph) – bring the written page to class Group discussion of responses; APA Review
Homework	APA Exercises
	Group discussion of responses Focusing on ‘The Lizard Brain’; Review of controlling mood and argument
Homework	Mapping causes and events exercise; Use rhetoric to guise the exercise on page 51 (DeWolf & Morgan) and post online (1st) as a persuasive piece
	Group discussion of exercise Introduce the canons for a persuasive essay
Homework	Use the canons to write your persuasive essay and/or find one piece of evidence to support your essay post online (2nd)
	Peer review of essay by teams; Review of Logos, Pathos & Ethos Connecting our persuasions with intellect and emotion
Homework	Read article on statistics

UNIT II: THEY SAY ‘WHAT?’ I SAY ‘WHAT?’ – USING EFFECTIVE TOOLS & NUMBERS FOR ARGUMENT

Learning Objectives: After this unit, you will interact with...

1. Setting realistic goals
2. Learning the English language, controlling your tense and recognizing the power of numeracy to enhance your arguments
3. Persuasion on your own terms and controlling the argument
4. Spotting logical fallacies and knowing whom to trust

Day	Content
	Statistics – how do arguments appear statistically?
Homework	Identify tense and type of argument and post re-write online (3rd)
	Team formation and peer review of arguments
Homework	Rewrite argument focusing on an issue that you feel most passionate about
	Peer review of arguments by teams Review the extent of persuasion and argument control
Homework	Identify the fallacies in your argument from last week and post re-write online (4th)
	Peer review of arguments by teams Focusing on logical fallacies and practice on generating stronger evidence for arguments
Homework	Reflection – return to your argument to reflect on its origin... what influenced you to write about those issues in your argument?

UNIT III: THEY SAY ‘HOW’, I SAY ‘WITH MY WRITING!’ – APPLYING YOUR CONSTRUCTIONS TO PAPER

Learning Objectives: After this unit, you will learn...

1. The art of summarization
2. The art of quotations
3. Saying why it matters...
4. Setting your own voice

Day	Content
	Team review of essays and evidence The art of summarization and quotation and APA
Homework	Add one or two new pieces of evidence to your persuasive essay and transform into APA and post online (5th)
	Team review of persuasive essays – APA Distinguishing your contribution from <i>their</i> contribution
Homework	Respond to your four pieces of evidence with your contribution

	Team review of persuasive essays – Integrating your response Connecting the parts in academic writing
Homework	Smoothing your academic essay combining your story and persuasion and post online (6th)
	Team review of persuasive essays – Polishing Writing for specific disciplines
Homework	Revise your essays

UNIT IV: CONCLUSION

Learning Objectives:

After this unit, you can... Focus on writing your final papers

Day	Content
	Team review of persuasive essays – Making changes Providing feedback
Homework	Final Papers are due
	Portfolios are due Team review of essays with grades (Possible make-up day) Providing feedback and initial grades

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Cheating and plagiarism are contrary to the purpose of any educational institution and must be dealt with most severely if students; work is to have any validity. An instructor who determines that a student has cheated on a test or assignment will at a minimum give a zero for that item and may give a failure for the course. Normally the matter is dealt with by the instructor and the student but the division chairperson or Assistant Provost for the Academic Affairs may be consulted by either party to ensure fairness.

Plagiarism, which is the appropriation of words or ideas of another without recognition of the source, is another form of cheating. **An instructor who determines that a student has plagiarized will give a zero for the paper or project and will give a failure for the course.** Both cheating and plagiarism are grounds for dismissal from the College. Any action taken regarding cheating or plagiarism is subject to the Academic Grievance Policy outlined in the Student handbook (As passed by the Faculty Senate, March 2002).

EVALUATION:

MINUTE PAPERS – These are short answer or multiple choice questions you'll be asked to answer or a paragraph you'll be asked to write **IN CLASS** to ensure that you have read the required chapters and understand the most pertinent concepts. Also, it works as a check for your comprehension. These are graded by the next class so you will get immediate feedback.

ONLINE DISCUSSION POSTS – **There is an online discussion post every other week!** Instructions for posts are highlighted in the homework sections above. These posts are designed to gauge mostly your written communication and critical thinking skills. The posts must be submitted in Blackboard. However, they can be also submitted in an e-portfolio format using Digication. Your posts should be at least 500 words per response and the deadline is the **Friday morning BEFORE Saturday's class.** Points will be deducted for late work.

PORTFOLIO PROJECT

The goal of this assignment is for students to complete the course with an individual, online collection of materials related to this course, which are relevant to them and/or their field. The portfolio will relate the information from class to life beyond JRSM 301 and encourage you to reflect, experience, and critique diversity in the real world. Obviously, people take away different things from the class and your portfolios will display this. This project must include your final paper and an introduction to yourself. You may also include your online posts as well. No late portfolios will be accepted unless due to illness and with documented proof.

Final Paper: This is the paper you would have worked on throughout the course. The length must be at least 8 pages. All papers must be typed and follow the appropriate APA style format. Your paper must be included in your portfolio and can be posted to Blackboard by the due date.

CLASS PARTICIPATION – This is a course that requires in class and online experiences and discussion. Class attendance IS REQUIRED and participation is important. When online, you need to post at least twice during class discussion. Not posting online is equivalent to missing a class. Class participation and attendance will be worth 12% of the final grade. If you are unable to attend a class session, please discuss the reason with me and make arrangements with another student to obtain any notes, handouts or assignments you may have missed. Excessive unexcused absences (more than 2 missed class sessions) will result in a failing grade for the course. You are expected to be on time for each class session. Late arrival for class will be counted as one-third (1/3) of an absence. Repeated lateness for class may result in a failing grade for the course.

GRADING

Students are expected to complete reading assignments prior to class sessions and to engage in thoughtful discussions in light of these assignments. In addition, students will take an in-class midterm and an in-class final exam (objective short answer, multiple choice and/or essay).

Grading:	600 points total	Final Grade
Minute Papers	90 (9 @ 10 points each)	15%
Online Discussion Posts	300 (6 @ 50 points each)	50%
Attendance/Participation:	60 points total (15 @ 4 points each)	10%
Portfolio (& Final Paper):	150 points	25%

Grading will be based on the following grading system.

96 – 100	=	A
90 – 95	=	A-
87 – 89	=	B+
83 – 86	=	B
80 – 82	=	B-
77 – 79	=	C+
73 – 76	=	C
70 – 72	=	C-
65 – 69	=	D
Below 65	=	F
Participation	=	10%
Assignments	=	65%
Portfolio	=	25%
TOTAL	=	100%

EVALUATION OF JUNIOR SEMINAR COMPETENCIES

Competency	Description	Percentage of Course
Written communication	You will be writing arguments, essays and reflections throughout this course	(All 15 days) 100%
Oral communication	You will be asked to defend the arguments you wrote after reading the Heinrichs book	Mars, Pluto Neptune & Sun (4 days) 20%
Critical thinking	You will be reviewing arguments, essays and reflections that encourages you to recognize patterns and relationships, and strengthen significance	(All 14 days) 100%
Critical reading	You will be reading primary and secondary sources to include as your transform your persuasive essay into an academic paper	Uranus, Jupiter, Venus & Eris (4 days) 20%
Quantitative reasoning	You will be using this type of reasoning as you scrutinize your arguments and logical fallacies	Earth, Moon & Ceres (3 days) 15%
Information literacy	You will be accessing primary and secondary sources to include as your transform your persuasive essay into an academic paper	Uranus, Jupiter, Venus & Eris (4 days) 20%