

# English 102

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Jillian Schedneck, ENGL 102, Fall 2005

## Writing, reading and analyzing arguments about social issues

Ms. Jillian Schedneck

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Office Hours: T 11-1 & W 3-4 and by appointment

English 102 Section 73

T-TR: 8.30-9.45

Armstrong 120

Required Text:

Wood, Nancy V. *Essentials of Argument*. Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2006.

"You write in order to change the world, knowing perfectly well that you probably can't, but also knowing that literature is indispensable to the world...The world changes according to the way people see it, and if you alter, even by a millimeter, the way...people look at reality, then you can change it." – James Baldwin

While *Essentials of Argument* is our primary text, where we will read and learn the rhetoric of argument, you will also be reading another book for this course, as well as supplementary articles. These articles can be found on the course homepage. To get there, go to <http://vista.wvu.edu> then log in with your MIX user ID and password. Along with our reader and additional articles, I have chosen four argument books that loosely focus on social issues. In the beginning of the semester, you will choose which book you would like to read (giving me your top two choices) and I will assign each of you a book. Four or five of you will be reading the same book and will work together throughout the semester. You will meet during class time to discuss the book, peer edit each other's papers and present the argument of the book to the class. You will write papers dealing with the social issues that arise from your reading and group

discussions. At the end of the semester, your group will present your individual arguments in the larger context of your social issue.

**And the books are:**

*The Tipping Point* by Malcolm Gladwell

*The Argument Culture: Moving from Debate to Dialogue* by Deborah Tannen

*Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America* by Barbara Ehrenreich

*Lives on the Boundary* By Mike Rose

We will expand and broaden our understanding of social issues throughout the semester. Here's a quick definition to get you started.

Social issues: Human problems of the group, the community, and the nation, as well as the increasingly important problems that have no national boundaries.

"It is better to debate a question without settling it, than to settle a question without debating it."

--Joseph Joubert, *Grading and Assignments*

Please see the Grade Descriptors on p. 20 of *Entering Academic Conversations*.

I use a 12-point grading scale, which looks like this:

**12 = A+**

**11 = A**

**10 = A-**

**9 = B+**

**8 = B**

**7 = B-**

**6 = C+**

**5 = C**

**4 = C-**

**3 = D+**

**2 = D**

**1 = D-**

**0 = F**

For each assignment, you will be given a letter grade, which corresponds to a number (0-12) on the above scale. At the end of the semester, I will multiply each individual grade by the percentage of your final grade that the assignment is worth. These numbers, when added together, will be a number between 0 and 12, which will correspond to the letter grade that you have earned. Your grade at the end of the semester will be a combination of the following:

Assignment; Description; Number of Pages; % of Final Grade

**Argument style essay**; due: 9/8 & 11/29; What is your argument style? You will write and revise this paper throughout the course.; 3-5; 10

**Argument Analysis**; due: 10/11; Respond to and analyze the argument strategies of the book you have been assigned.; 6-8; 20

**Group presentation;** Present the argument of the book to the class. You will do this with your group members.; 10

**Exploratory issues paper;** due: 10/27; Exploration and evaluation of available resources. Placing your ideas in context. Understanding and using MLA guidelines.; 4-6; 10

**Researched Argument;** due: 11/10; Take an issue that struck you from your reading and write an informed, traditional argument.; 5-7; 15

**Rogerian Argument;** due: 11/29; Use that same issue and rearrange your ideas into a Rogerian argument, focusing on common ground.; 5-7; 15

**Group Presentation;** You will present your individual arguments with your group, focusing on the broader context of your social issue.; 10

**Participation;** Because this is a workshop course, participation is vital to your success.; 10

"The difficult part in an argument is not to defend one's opinion, but to know it." – Andre Maurois

## Policies:

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1. More than two absences will compromise your grade. 4 or more absences will result in a failing grade. NO EXCEPTIONS.
1. A missed conference counts as two absences.
2. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain any class handouts or assignments you've missed. If you are worried about missing a class, be sure you contact me before the class you may miss.
3. In case of an emergency, contact the Dean of Student Life immediately. The Dean will inform your professors of the emergency and will provide me with the certification I need. Contact the Office of Student Life, E. Moore Hall (293-5611).
4. I do not accept late work. NO EXCEPTIONS. If you are not in class, find someone to bring it for you or hand it in early. I will not accept assignments after class time – they must be in my hands by the end of your class.
5. Cheating and plagiarism – don't do it. If you have any questions about what qualifies, ask me.

6. Always use 12 point Times New Roman font. Leave one inch margins on all sides of paper (computers are usually set this way). Please do not adjust the margins or font size to make your paper appear longer – it does not work.
7. Any work done outside of class should be typed. I will not accept papers that are not typed.
8. Please do not come to class late. It disrupts the class. If you must come late, take your seat quietly. Tardies will affect your participation grade.
9. You are responsible for proofreading your papers for grammar, spelling, and mechanical errors. Always spell check your work. Remember: neither spell check nor grammar check will catch all of your mistakes. I encourage you to buy a good writer's manual to keep on hand for reference. Remember, I will not fix all of your mistakes – I expect you to do this yourself.
10. I have office hours for a reason – please visit with any questions or concerns.
11. If you need to get a hold of me beyond class time and office hours, e-mail me at [jschedne@mix.wvu.edu](mailto:jschedne@mix.wvu.edu). I will get back to you within 48 hours.
12. When I ask you to bring in a draft of a paper – bring in a full draft, not half a page. If you do not have a full draft, you will lose participation points, which will affect your final grade.
13. No cell phones. If you bring one to class, turn it off on your way in.
14. I will periodically be sending information and attachments via mix account emails. If you do not check or receive email through mix, you must forward your mix account mail to the account you check regularly.
15. If you neglect to hand in a paper, your grade will drop by one letter at the end of the semester.

## Schedule

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(Schedule subject to change as needed)

**T 8/23** Introductions; Home: Read Chapter 1 in Essentials of Argument and complete introduction letter.

**TR 8/25** What's your argument style? Discuss Chapter 1; Home: Read Chapter 2 in Essentials of Argument; decide on your top two argument book choices.

**T 8/30** Hand in your argument book choices. Argument style essay assignment sheet. Discuss Chapter 2.; Home: Begin drafting your argument style essay. Read Chapter 5 and "Big and Bad" by Malcolm Gladwell on the class homepage.

**TR 9/1** Groups assigned. Discuss Chapter 5 and "Big and Bad."; Home: Continue working on argument style essay. Bring copies of your draft for your group members. Purchase a copy of the book you've been assigned.

**T 9/6** Group introductions. Argument style workshop.; Home: Revise argument style essay. Read Chapter 6. Read argument book you've been assigned.

**TR 9/8** Hand in draft of argument style essay. Discuss Chapter 6.; Home: Read roughly halfway through your argument book. Come up with discussion questions for your group on the book you've been assigned. What are your initial reactions?

**T 9/13** Group meeting. Discuss your thoughts, ideas and reactions to the book. Presentation assignment sheet. Begin to think about how you will present the argument of your book to the class.; Home: Read Chapter 7 and chapter from "South Park Conservatives" on course homepage. Continue reading your argument book.

**TR 9/15** Discuss Chapter 7 and "South Park Conservatives."; Home: Finish your argument book. Read Chapter 10.

**T 9/20** Group meeting. Discuss book and presentation. We will talk about Chapter 10. Sign up for presentation dates. Introduce argument analysis assignment.; Home: Prepare for presentations. Begin argument analysis. Read example analysis papers on course homepage.

**TR 9/22** Analysis strategies. Discuss examples.; Home: Continue drafting argument analysis paper.

**T 9/27** 1st and 2nd presentation.; Home: Argument analysis paper.

**TR 9/29** 3rd and 4th presentation.; Home: Bring in copies of analysis draft for group workshop.

**T 10/4** Analysis workshop. Sign up for group conferences.; Home: Prepare for group conferences.

**TR 10/6** Group conferences in the downtown library.; Home: Finish analysis paper. Read chapters 3 and 4. Brainstorm issues related to your argument book that you would like to write your own argument papers about.

**T 10/11** Analysis paper due. Introduce exploratory paper.; Home: Brainstorm issues you would like to explore. Email me a brief topic proposal before Thursday's class. I will ok each topic.

**TR 10/13** Meeting in the downtown library for database tutorial.; Home: Begin researching your topic. Read Chapter 8 and "Flat Earth Society" on course homepage.

**T 10/18** Discuss Chapter 8 and "Flat Earth Society." Research strategies. Position paper assignment sheet. Sign up for individual conferences.; Home: Research.

**TR 10/20** Individual conferences to discuss your research and topics in my office.; Home: Draft exploratory paper. Bring in copies for your group members. Read example position papers on course homepage.

**T 10/25** Exploratory paper workshop. Discuss example papers.; Home: Complete draft of exploratory paper.

**TR 10/27** Exploratory paper due. Position paper writing activity. Home: Begin writing position paper.

**T 11/1** Position paper writing activity.; Home: Continue working on position paper.

**TR 11/3** Position paper writing activity. Sign up for group conferences. Home: Complete draft of paper. Bring copies for your group.

**T 11/8** Group conferences in the library. Home: Revise position paper. Read Chapter 9.

**TR 11/10** Position paper due. Introduce Rogerian argument assignment. Home: Begin writing your Rogerian argument.

**T 11/15** More on Rogerian arguments. Home: Continue writing Rogerian argument. Bring in copies of your draft for your group members.

**TR 11/17** Rogerian argument workshop. Argument style essay, 2nd draft. Discuss expectations. Home: Revise Rogerian argument and revise your argument style paper. ENJOY THANKSGIVING BREAK!

**11/29** Rogerian argument and revise argument style essay due. Introduce final presentations. Home: Work on presentations.

**TR 12/1** Work on presentations. Home: Work presentations.

**T 12/6 and TR 12/8** Presentations