English 103 — Critical Thinking

Fall 2021 semester

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**Professor:** Jeffrey Diller

**Section #:** 98284

**Room: Canvas**

**Contact email:** **via Canvas inbox preferred (or** diller\_jeffrey@sac.edu**)**

**Email policy:** Please allow for a response time of up to two business days (48 hours).

**Remote office hours:** Use the following two links to join the meetings:

* [Mondays and Wednesdays, from 6:45 p.m.-8:00 p.m.](https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/94699906896)
* [Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 12:15 p.m.-1:30 p.m.](https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/98736675685)

# General information

## **Santa Ana College mission statement**

Santa Ana College inspires, transforms, and empowers a diverse community of learners.

## English Department’s mission statement

The Santa Ana College English Department provides numerous opportunities for our students to develop and improve the reading, critical thinking, and writing skills required to succeed at their chosen careers, to meet the rigors of the writing demands at four-year transfer institutions, and to foster lifelong learning and an appreciation of literature.

## Humanities and Social Sciences Division

SAC’s English Department is part of this division. The division office is located at D-435. The contact number is (714) 564-6500.

## SAC Learning Center

The Learning Center is open during the Fall 2021 semester. For writing and grammar help, visit SAC’s Learning Center, located at D-307. For remote tutoring, please visit the [Learning Center’s website](https://sac.edu/AcademicProgs/HSS/LearningCenter/Pages/default.aspx).

# Learning Management System (LMS)

## Canvas

The syllabus, handouts, essay prompts, supplemental materials, class assignments, grading rubrics, and course readings will be made available on Canvas.

## Turnitin

In order to ensure academic honesty in this course, all student work will be processed through Turnitin (via Canvas). All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. of the specified due date. It is each student’s responsibility to submit work on time. I suggest that all students try to submit work at least 30 minutes before the deadline in order to avoid a late-submission penalty (see “Late Work Policy” on p. 6 below).

## General Course Questions discussion board

This discussion board is an open and public forum where students may post any questions they have about the course. I will respond to questions within 48 hours of students’ posts. Also, students will be able to post responses to each other’s questions as well. Please follow the rules of netiquette (see pp. 5-6 below).

# Class details

## Open Educational Resources (OER)

This course requires no textbook. Instead, this course uses free and open texts found on the Internet.

## Course description

This course focuses on developing critical thinking, reading, and writing skills by studying established argumentative methods and models and applying them to contemporary issues. Emphasis will be on logical reasoning and analytical and argumentative skills necessary for critical writing.

## Prerequisite

English 101 or 101H with a grade of C or better.

## Student Learning Outcomes

* Students will use knowledge of the components of argument, rhetorical devices, and logical fallacies to respond critically to various texts.
* Students will be able to formulate sophisticated arguments and defend them with logical, persuasive evidence.
* Students will demonstrate proficiency in using standard written English.
* Students will demonstrate proficiency in integrating and documenting appropriately-chosen sources, in MLA format, in an academic research essay.

# Graded assessments

## Discussion Board

Every week, there will be a new topic posted on the course discussion board. Each discussion board post is worth **10 points**. To receive full credit, students must first make an initial post by Friday at 11:59 p.m. for 5 points; then, they will respond to two other students’ posts by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. for 5 points. Please follow the rules of netiquette (see pp. 5-6 below).

All students are required to complete the first week’s discussion board post (both the initial post and two responses). This post will count as students’ participation for the first week of class.

There will be approximately 15 discussions total, worth ≈**150 points**. (Please see Canvas for these dates.)

## Bluebook Journal entries

Every week, students will submit a Bluebook Journal entry. Each journal entry is worth **10 points**, and students will be required to submit all journal entries over the course of the semester. Ensure that each entry is typed in MLA format—including correct font, header information, title, double-spacing, etc.—according to the conventions of standard written English. Students will submit a Word document containing their journal entries by the specified 11:59 p.m. deadline.

There will be approximately 15 Bluebook Journal entries total, worth ≈**150 points**. (Please see Canvas for these dates.)

## Essays

Below are brief descriptions of each assignment. (For more specific instructions, please see the essay prompts that are posted on Canvas).

### Rhetorical Analysis

In a three- to four-page essay, analyze one manifesto: Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein’s “The Russell-Einstein Manifesto,” Aaron Swartz’s “Guerilla Open Access Manifesto,” Eric Hughes’s “A Cypherpunk’s Manifesto,” or Kathleen Hanna’s “Riot Grrrl Manifesto.” Worth **100 points**, with an extra-credit works cited page worth up to **10 points**.

### Occupy Wall Street Essay

Write a five- to six-page expository essay about Occupy Wall Street. Use a minimum of six sources to address six separate topics laid out in bullet points. Worth **100 points**, with an extra-credit works cited page worth up to **20 points**.

### Research Essay

Choose any organization that currently uses propaganda methods and techniques in its efforts to address one or more social issues. Write a seven- to ten-page research essay, complete with MLA documentation, analyzing the organization’s use of propaganda. Worth **200 points**.

## Peer Reviews (two steps)

Step one **(worth 10 points)**

For step one, students are required to meet with a [Learning Center](https://sac.edu/AcademicProgs/HSS/LearningCenter/Pages/default.aspx) tutor or [NetTutor](https://rsccd.instructure.com/courses/70558/pages/get-started-with-nettutor) for one-on-one help with their essays. To receive full credit, each student must 1) upload her or his rough draft as a Word document or PDF file; and 2) upload proof of meeting with a Learning Center tutor or NetTutor. Instructions for each peer review will be made available via Canvas at the beginning of the week when it is due.

Step two **(worth 15 points)**

For step two, students are required to read and annotate one classmate’s rough draft. Then, students will provide feedback by answering four questions related to their peer’s essay.

## Quizzes

Quizzes will be timed and may contain multiple-choice questions, fill-in-the-blank style questions, or some combination of both. Each quiz is worth **10 points**.

There will be approximately 15 timed quizzes throughout the semester, worth ≈**150 points**. (Please see Canvas for these dates.)

## Final Exam

There will be a final exam due on Friday, December 10th by 11:59 p.m. via Canvas. The final will be cumulative; in other words, it will cover most (or all) of the material discussed throughout the course. Each student will complete a series of multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank style questions. A final review will be provided to the class at least one week before the exam.

Once a student starts the exam, she or he will have two hours to complete the test. It is worth **100 points**.

## Propaganda Poster Project

After completing research about propaganda, each student has the option of creating her or his own digital propaganda poster for extra credit. Choose an organization (e.g., Black Lives Matter, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, etc.) and create a poster complete with rhetorically effective images and slogans. Utilize the rhetorical strategies that Edward Bernays, Jacques Ellul, Adolf Hitler, and others discuss in their writings.

Worth up to **20 extra-credit points**.

## Essay Rewrites

Each student will have an opportunity to rewrite the first two short essays. The purpose of an essay rewrite is to earn back points by correcting any substantial grammar and/or formatting errors. When submitting a rewrite, complete the following tasks:

1. Highlight each edit that was made to the essay (including edits made to the works cited page, if applicable).
2. Upload the essay rewrite on Canvas by 11:59 p.m. of the specified due date.

Each essay rewrite is worth up to **20 extra-credit points**.

# Grading

## Assignments and point values

| **Assignments** | **Points** |
| --- | --- |
| Discussion Board | ≈150 |
| Bluebook Journal entries | ≈150 |
| Rhetorical Analysis | 100 |
| Occupy Wall Street Essay | 100 |
| Research Essay | 200 |
| Peer Reviews | 75 |
| Quizzes | ≈150 |
| Final Exam | 100 |
| **Total** | ≈1,025 |

## Grade scale

| **Percent** | **Letter****Grade** |
| --- | --- |
| 90 - 100 | A |
| 80 - 89.99 | B |
| 70 - 79.99 | C |
| 60 - 69.99 | D |
| 0 - 59.99 | F |

# Class policies

## Netiquette

Netiquette (or Net Etiquette) refers to the acceptable standards of behavior when interacting in an online environment.

* It is expected that every class member will participate in a mature and respectful fashion.
* Participate actively in the discussions and other course activities, having completed the readings and thought about the issues.
* Pay close attention to what your classmates write in their online comments.  Ask clarifying questions, when appropriate.  These questions are meant to probe and shed new light, not to minimize or devalue comments.
* Think through and reread your comments before you post them.  Use appropriate language.  Check your writing for errors before posting, and refrain from using social media abbreviations.  Remember don't type in all capital letters, it is the online equivalent to yelling and is considered rude.  Be careful with the use of humor and sarcasm, as both can be easily misunderstood without the benefit of seeing facial expressions and hearing inflection or tone of voice.
* Assume the best of others in the class and expect the best from them.
* Value the diversity of the class.  Recognize and value the experiences, abilities, and knowledge each person brings to class.
* Disagree with ideas, but do not make personal attacks.  Do not demean or embarrass others.  Do not make sexist, racist, homophobic, or victim-blaming comments at all.
* Be open to be challenged or confronted on your ideas or prejudices.

The goal of these guidelines is to create the most supportive and inclusive learning environment possible for everyone in our class / learning environment.

## Extra credit disclaimer

Extra credit applies only when a student is in good standing in this course. In other words, a student must be passing the class with a C (or better) before any extra credit will be added to her or his overall score. If a student falls below a C, no extra credit will be given to her or him.

## Late work policy

All work is due at the specified day and time. (Please see weekly modules on Canvas for all due dates.)

Only the following assignments may be submitted late: Bluebook Journal entries and quizzes; the rhetorical analysis, Occupy Wall Street essay, and research essay; and the final exam.

Late penalties will be applied as follows:

* 1 day late (10% deduction)
* 2 days late (20% deduction)
* 3 days late (30% deduction)

After three days, students may no longer submit late assignments for credit.

**Important note:** discussion board posts, peer reviews (steps one and two), essay rewrites, and the propaganda poster project **will not** be accepted after their scheduled deadlines, so please do not ask.

## Academic dishonesty

SAC's official [Academic Honesty Policy](https://sac.edu/StudentServices/AdmissionsRecords/Pages/Academic-Honesty-Policy-.aspx) reads as follows: "Students at Santa Ana College are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. To falsify the results of one’s research, to steal the words or ideas of another, or to cheat on an examination, corrupts the essential process by which knowledge is advanced. Academic dishonesty is seen as an intentional act of fraud, in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic exercise. As institutions, we also consider academic dishonesty to include forgery of academic documents, intentionally impeding or damaging the academic work of others, assisting other students in acts of dishonesty or coercing students into acts of dishonesty."

In minor cases of plagiarism, students will be given a chance to revise and resubmit the assignment. In more serious cases, assignments that demonstrate academic dishonesty may receive an F grade, and the student may be referred to the dean of the division for further disciplinary action.

## Drop policy

Students will be dropped from this course for any of the following reasons:

* missing the first week’s assignments
	+ including Bluebook Journal entry #1, Quiz #1, and Week #1 Discussion (either the initial post or the two peer responses)
* failing to submit three or more consecutive class assignments at any time during the semester

## Starfish Student Success Platform

I use [Starfish](https://sac.edu/FacultyStaff/techUpdates/Pages/Starfish-Student-Success.aspx) to warn students about certain behavioral patterns that may work against their successful completion of this course. For instance, students may receive a Starfish alert for missing any assignments. If a student receives an alert, it does not mean that she or he is failing the course; instead, it means she or he is engaging in certain behaviors that have been known to hinder students from successfully completing this class.

## The syllabus

A syllabus is a binding contract between a professor and his students. Furthermore, this syllabus is subject to change. If I see a reason to update or revise this document, I reserve the right to do so at any time. (I will alert students to any changes when reposting the revised syllabus on Canvas.)

# College policies

## DSP&S mission statement

The Mission of [Disabled Student Programs & Services](https://www.sac.edu/StudentServices/DSPS/Pages/default.aspx) at Santa Ana College is to provide equal access to educational opportunities for students with verifiable disabilities. Through the utilization of specialized instructional programs and disability related services, DSP&S encourages and fosters independence and assists students in attaining their educational, personal, and vocational goals.

## Students with disabilities

Your success in this course is important to me. Santa Ana College and I are committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all individuals with disabilities. If you have a disability that may have some impact on your ability to do well in this course, I encourage you to speak with me as soon as possible. Also, please contact Disabled Student Programs & Services so that we can all collaborate on your classroom accommodations in a timely manner. DSP&S is located in the Johnson Student Center (JSC) 108, and its phone number is 714-564-6295. Video Phone: 657-235-2999. Fax: 714-285-9619. Email: DSPS@sac.edu. The DSP&S office requires documentation of your disability in order to receive reasonable accommodations. If you do not have documentation, they will work with you to acquire it. I look forward to supporting you to meet your learning goals.

## Nondiscrimination

The Rancho Santiago Community College District is committed to equal opportunity in educational programs, employment, and all access to institutional programs and activities. The District, and each individual who represents the District, shall provide access to its services, classes, and programs without regard to national origin, religion, age, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, color, medical condition, genetic information, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability, or because he or she is perceived to have one or more of the foregoing characteristics, or based on association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to District’s Title IX Officer and/or Section 504/ADA Coordinator. RSCCD Title IX Officer and Section 504/ADA Coordinator: John Didion, 2323 N. Broadway, Santa Ana, CA 92706, (714) 480‑7489.

## Sexual harassment

It is the policy of the Rancho Santiago Community College District to provide an educational, employment and business environment free of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct or communications constituting sexual harassment, as defined and otherwise prohibited by State and Federal law. The Rancho Santiago Community College District forbids any form of sexual harassment. Prompt disciplinary action will be taken against any student or employee engaging in sexual harassment. If you feel that you have been the victim of sexual harassment please contact the Human Resources Dept. at (714) 480‑7489, or the Associate Dean of Student Development at Santa Ana College at (714) 564‑6211.

## Title IX mandatory reporting

[Title IX](https://www.sac.edu/StudentServices/AdmissionsRecords/TitleIX/Pages/default.aspx) is a federal civil right law that prohibits sex discrimination in education. This includes sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape. Violations of Title IX, as well as violence or threats of violence on campus or online, are taken very seriously so that victims are provided with proper support and violators are properly disciplined. As a faculty member, I am required by law to report all such violations. If you have been a victim of sexual misconduct and would prefer to talk to someone confidentially, I encourage you to take advantage of the psychological services offered at SAC’s Health & Wellness Center. You can contact the Center at (714) 564-6216 or visit them in person in the Johnson Student Center (JSC) 110.​

Class schedule

(Please visit Canvas weekly modules to see each week’s readings and assignments.)

**Week #1**

begins on Monday, August 23rd

**Week #2**

begins on Monday August 30th

**Week #3**

begins on Tuesday, September 7th

**Week #4**

begins on Monday, September 13th

**Week #5**

begins on Monday, September 20th

**Week #6**

begins on Monday, September 27th

**Week #7**

begins on Monday, October 4th

**Week #8**

begins on Monday, October 11th

**Week #9**

begins on Monday, October 18th

**Week #10**

begins on Monday, October 25th

**Week #11**

begins on Monday, November 1st

**Week #12**

begins on Monday, November 8th

**Week #13**

begins on Monday, November 15th

**Week #14**

begins on Monday, November 22nd

**Week #15**

begins on Monday, November 29th

**Week #16**

begins on Monday, December 6th