English 101.42—Composition
Ms. Jessica Stanley
Spring 2016, TTh, 10:30-11:45 am, Robinson B103

Office: Robinson A455
Office Hours: T 11:45-12:45
Email: jstanl20@gmu.edu

Course Description and Goals

Welcome to English 101! Throughout the semester, we will explore and write critically about current and pop culture, and learn how everything from the latest song to the 6 o’clock news is grounds for exploration and analysis. Using this lens, we’ll work together to sharpen and expand the skills you already have as critical thinkers, readers, and writers. We’ll explore a variety of writing styles and genres, and learn the best ways to inform and persuade different audiences. We’ll learn to use research to back up arguments, and practice presenting that research to an audience. This course is designed to help you improve your abilities to read, write, and think at a college level. In English 101, we’ll develop strategies to use writing and technology as tools for exploring and reflecting on ideas, as well as for informing and persuading your readers. Along the way, we’ll look at writing as a process by breaking it into smaller steps, all the way from generating ideas to seeking feedback and revising.

This course is also part of The Mason Core, (General Education) Program, which is designed to help develop “A Mason Graduate [that is] an engaged citizen, a well-rounded scholar, and someone who is prepared to act for the world” (Mason Catalog). For more information on the mission of the Mason Core, visit the Provost’s Mason Core page.

Required Textbooks and Materials:
- Maasik, Sonia and Jack Solomon. *Signs of Life in the USA*, 8th ed. (Bedford)
- Readings and handouts available on Blackboard
- Flashdrive or online cloud/data storage containing current work for the course
- An active GMU email account that you check regularly. Per university policy, I will only respond to emails sent through your GMU account.
- A spiral notebook or composition book (this notebook will serve as your course journal, so it should be set aside for use only in this course)
- A laptop or tablet with word processing software for use in class. If you do not have one or don’t want to bring yours to class, please contact me for a Netbook Check Out Card during the first week of the semester.

Methods of Instruction and Classroom Decorum: Most class meetings of English 101 will be interactive and will involve a significant amount of student discussion and writing. Students may be asked to work individually as well as collaboratively as they investigate issues, practice writing strategies and techniques, learn research and critical
reading approaches, and review their own and their peers’ writing. Students who
attend regularly and stay engaged in class activities, who keep up with all of the
assignments, and who block off sufficient time each week for thoughtful drafting and
revising usually succeed in this class.

All students are expected to behave civilly both to each other and to the instructor.
Further, students will conduct themselves in a manner that encourages learning in the
classroom. Some of our discussion topics might be controversial or uncomfortable for
some students. At the very least, we will not all agree. Show respect for others’
opinions and arguments. All communication, including email, Blackboard messages,
and voice mail, may be considered part of class engagement, so students should think
carefully about the tone and content of such messages. You may use laptops or tablets in
class for class related work, but bear in mind that drifting around online, using social
media, and texting or surfing on your phone aren’t effective classroom behaviors, and
they will lower your participation score if you engage in them. There is no reason for
your cell phone to be on your desk or in your lap. In fact, please turn off your cell
phone during class meetings.

**Class Cancellations & Inclement Weather:** We’ll do our best to stay on track and
engaged in the research and writing process even if our face to face meeting is
interrupted. If I must cancel class for weather or another emergency, I will inform you
through email and Blackboard. Check your GMU e-mail and Blackboard for
instructions and schedule modifications. You will likely be asked to complete an online
class or activities that will help us stay on track.

**Course Requirements and Grading Percentages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Assignment Description</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Major Project 1: Annotated Bib and Favorites Essay</td>
<td>Feb. 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Major Project 2: Advertisement Analysis Essay</td>
<td>Feb. 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Major Project 3: Researched Argumentative Essay</td>
<td>April 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Major Project 4: Going Public!</td>
<td>May 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Homework, Journals, and Short Asgts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Class Participation (includes peer review)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Completing English 101:** You must receive a C (73%) or higher to fulfill the ENGH 101
requirement. Students who do not earn at least a C grade must retake the course.
Furthermore, you must complete all major projects, and the required drafts, to earn a C.

**Final course grades** are assigned as follows:

A+ 100-97.5%  |  A 97.4-93%  |  A- 92.9-90%  |  B+ 89.9-87.5%  |  B 87.4-83%  |  B- 82.9-80%  |
Midterm Grades: In English 101, students receive a midterm letter grade based on the work of the first seven weeks of the course. The purpose of this grade is to help students find out how well they are doing in the first half of the course in order to make any adjustments necessary for success in the course as a whole. The work in the second half of the semester may be weighted more heavily, and so the midterm grade is not meant to predict the final course grade. Students may view their grade online as soon as it is recorded.

Course Grading Policy:

In grading essays, I use the following general criteria:

A “C” level grade (70-79%) denotes average college-level writing and achievement. The essay is a competent response to the assignment: it meets, to some degree, all the assignment requirements, and demonstrates that the author has put significant time and effort into communicating his/her ideas to his/her targeted audience. It has a thesis, presents some support, and moves from point to point in an orderly fashion; sentence-level errors do not significantly prevent comprehension. Essays that do not meet these criteria will not earn a “C.”

A “B” level grade (80-89%) highlights a strong example of college writing and thinking. In addition to meeting the “C” level requirements, such an essay goes further in some way(s): it demonstrates some insight into the “gray areas” of the topic, provides original or very thorough support that is tightly woven into the overall argument, reads smoothly at both the sentence and paragraph levels, and/or exhibits a personal “voice” or style. It has few sentence-level errors.

An “A” level grade (90-100%) marks an essay that engages the reader in a provocative conversation. Even more than in a “B” essay, its author anticipates and responds to possible reader questions, uses a wide range of supporting evidence, structures arguments and analyses to create a fluid reading experience, provides unexpected insights, and/or uses language with care and facility.

“D” and “F” level essays do not meet the basic expectations of the assignment.

Submitting Class Work: All major assignments must be submitted through Blackboard, so please be sure to have access to an internet-enabled laptop or tablet to submit your class work. Homework, in-class work, and journals should be handed in during class on the assigned due date. We will discuss how to submit assignments via Blackboard early on in the semester.
**Late Work Policy:** Late assignments are those submitted to Blackboard any time after the due date/time. If you will be absent when homework is due in hard copy, you can e-mail your homework to me before class starts to have it accepted for full credit. Please do not put work on or under my office door or on my desk if I am not there.

Homework will be accepted late for one week after the due date for half credit. Late projects will lose 10 points for each calendar day that they are late, and they will not be accepted after the third calendar day. Late-work penalties cannot be changed through revision.

**Get Out of Jail Free Cards:** You have a total of three (3) Get Out of Jail Free cards to use this semester. Each card allows you to submit the work one calendar day late, without grade penalty, without permission or offering an explanation. You may use multiple Get Out of Jail Free cards at once. For example, you could submit your advertisement analysis three calendar days late and receive no late penalty, but you would have no more cards left for the semester. If using a card (or cards) on an assignment, type the number of cards used at the top of the first page in ALL CAPS (e.g. I'M USING 3 GET OUT OF JAIL FREE CARDS). If you do not indicate that you are using a Get Out of Jail Free card when you submit your work, the late penalty will be applied. Cards cannot be used retroactively.

**Class Participation:** Most classes will begin with a Ticket-In. Ticket-Ins are short, in-class writings designed to help you think about the topics we will cover that day. Ticket-Ins will be scored on a 0-3 scale; there are no make-ups for these assignments. Your average score for the semester will count for a quarter of your participation grade. Participation in peer-review workshops will count for one-quarter of your participation grade. The remainder of your participation grade will consist of regular attendance, general attentiveness during class, and completion of in-class work. Strong participation (preparation for class, participation in discussions, turning in in-class work, support for peers in group work) will raise that grade; absences, frequent tardiness, or lack of engagement in class (including reading non-class materials, checking email or cell-phone messages, holding private conversations, or sleeping) will lower that grade.

**Revision Policy:** Essays #1, #2, & #3 may be revised for a grade up to 10 points higher than your original grade. Revisions must demonstrate substantial change to the focus, support, approach, and/or organization of the essay in addition to comprehensive error correction, or they will be returned with no grade change. Revisions must be submitted with all previous drafts and completed within two weeks of the essay’s return to you OR you have one weeks to arrange a required revision conference and two weeks from that conference to revise and resubmit your paper.

**Composition Statement on Plagiarism:** Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another source without giving that source credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or end notes; a simple listing of books, articles, and websites is not sufficient.
This class will include direct instruction in strategies for handling sources as part of our curriculum. However, students in composition classes must also take responsibility for understanding and practicing the basic principles listed below.

To avoid plagiarism, meet the expectations of a US Academic Audience, give their readers a chance to investigate the issue further, and make credible arguments, writers must

- put quotation marks around, and give an in-text citation for, any sentences or distinctive phrases (even very short, 2- or 3-word phrases) that writers copy directly from any outside source: a book, a textbook, an article, a website, a newspaper, a song, a baseball card, an interview, an encyclopedia, a CD, a movie, etc.
- completely rewrite – not just switch out a few words—any information they find in a separate source and wish to summarize or paraphrase for their readers, and also give an in-text citation for that paraphrased information
- give an in-text citation for any facts, statistics, or opinions which the writers learned from outside sources (or which they just happen to know) and which are not considered “common knowledge” in the target audience (this may require new research to locate a credible outside source to cite)
- give a new in-text citation for each element of information—that is, do not rely on a single citation at the end of a paragraph, because that is not usually sufficient to inform a reader clearly of how much of the paragraph comes from an outside source.

Writers must also include a Works Cited or References list at the end of their essay, providing full bibliographic information for every source cited in their essay.

While different disciplines may have slightly different citation styles, and different instructors may emphasize different levels of citation for different assignments, writers should always begin with these conservative practices unless they are expressly told otherwise. Writers who follow these steps carefully will almost certainly avoid plagiarism. If writers ever have questions about a citation practice, they should ask their instructor!

Instructors in the Composition Program support the George Mason Honor Code, which requires them to report any suspected instances of plagiarism to the Honor Council. All judgments about plagiarism are made after careful review by the Honor Council, which may issue penalties ranging from grade-deductions to course failure to expulsion from GMU.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a disability and require accommodations, please meet with me early in the semester to discuss your learning needs. If you wish to
request reasonable accommodations (note taking support, extended time for tests, etc.), you will need to register with the Office of Disability Resources (703-993-2474). The office will require appropriate documentation of disability. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. All information is kept confidential.

**GMU Nondiscrimination Policy**
George Mason University is committed to providing equal opportunity and an educational and work environment free from any discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or age. GMU shall adhere to all applicable state and federal equal opportunity/affirmative action statutes and regulations.

**Important Dates**
- Last Day to Add a Course: Jan. 26
- Last Day to Drop a Course: Feb. 19
- Selective Withdrawal Period: Feb. 22- Feb. 25

**The University Writing Center**: Since you will be writing several papers in this course, you may want to visit the University Writing Center (http://writingcenter.gmu.edu), located in Robinson A114, for assistance. The Writing Center is one of the best resources you will find on campus. They have an outstanding website that offers a wealth of online resources for student writers. You can schedule a 45-minute appointment with a trained tutor to help with any phase of the writing process. You can even obtain assistance with papers by visiting the online writing center at http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/owl/index.html, but please plan ahead and allow yourself at least 23 days to receive a response. Make an appointment via their website.

**Using the Library**: Librarians in the Fenwick and Johnson Center libraries (and at the libraries on our Arlington and Prince Williams campuses) are available to help you with your research. Show up with your assignment and specific questions or assistance needs or contact the library by phone or online. The library’s website offers tutorials and research resources and databases that we’ll use throughout the semester.

**Major Assignments**

**Major Assignment 1: Annotated Bibliography and Favorites Essay**
Creating an annotated bibliography calls for several skills such as analysis, summary, making connections among your sources, and citation. In this assignment, you will use all of these skills to analyze your favorite things. You should choose your favorite song, book, film, television show, website, and art piece, and provide a citation and an annotation for each. In your annotation, you should include an MLA citation, a brief summary of your source, a brief analysis of the source (why it is your favorite), and a brief statement on how your sources connect to one another. Then, you will complete a short narrative essay describing how your sources related to one another and what
those connections say about you as an individual.

**Major Assignment 2: Advertisement Analysis**
This assignment will help you continue to develop the strategies you will need to rhetorically analyze and use different types of advertisements and to explore the ways in which advertisements function in our lives and in various texts. For this assignment, you will choose an advertisement for a product you may be interested in purchasing. This product could be anything from a new pair of tennis shoes to a vehicle you might one day like to own. Then, you will examine this advertisement and think about how the ad uses rhetoric to encourage consumers to purchase a product. Finally, you will develop an essay in which you share your ad, analyze its effectiveness based on audience, purpose, context, and genre, and comment on the effectiveness of the ad.

**Major Assignment 3: Propose a Better Way**
Choose a problem that’s close enough to “home” that you can see it, or see a piece of it, from your breakfast table or your steering wheel or your grandmother’s garden. Make a judgment, present an out-on-a-limb analysis, or offer a recommendation for change to a single reader or identifiable group of readers that is/are likely to question or resist your arguments. Focus your attention on key elements that need, deserve, and can be affected by your efforts; locate supporting data or information; anticipate, respond to, and move readers past their intelligent questions or resistances. You’ll need to support your arguments with information from multiple secondary sources credible to your target audience; you’ll need to include two instances of non-text information (visuals/diagrams, documentaries, or data from interviews/surveys). This project also includes a proposal.

**Major Assignment 4: Going Public!**
Persuade a real, public audience—with limited time and limited resources—to take an interest in, care about, and perhaps take action regarding one or more issues related to your arguments from Project 3. Choose an appropriate genre that the audience you need to contact would actually attend to: lawyers don’t read poetry in the courtroom, mayors don’t read 10-page MLA-cited essays at their desks, high-school students don’t read, um, much of anything on paper, anywhere. Your text (webpage, video, poster, presentation, animation, brochure, protest demonstration, etc) should be accompanied by a one-page rationale that explains who your audience is and why you chose to reach them in this particular manner.
**Weekly Schedule**

*I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule by informing you in class or through a Blackboard announcement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>In-Class Agenda/Discussion Topics</th>
<th>Readings (To be completed by the beginning of class)</th>
<th>What's Due/Reminders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Jan. 21(Th)| - Introductions  
- Syllabus  
- Why Writing Matters                                                |                                                        |                                                          |
| Jan. 26 (T)| - Reading Critically  
- Entering into Academic Conversation                                  | USA: 20-24 TS/IS: Preface and Intro                   |                                                          |
| Jan. 28 (Th)| - Writing About Pop Culture  
- Summary  
- Introduce Major Project 1                                               | USA: 1-8 TS/IS: Chapter 1                             |                                                          |
| Feb. 2 (T) | - Citation and Plagiarism  
- Annotated Bibliographies                                                 | USA: 62-66                                            |                                                          |
| Feb. 4 (Th)| - Successful Peer-Review  
- Work on Annotated Bibliography                                            |                                                        | Draft of MP1 Due                                        |
| Feb. 9 (T) | - Audience & Purpose  
- Introduce Major Project 2                                               | USA 218-229                                           | Major Project 1 Due                                     |
| Feb. 11 (Th)| - Context & Genre  
- Logos, Pathos, Ethos                                                   | USA 177-181                                           |                                                          |
| Feb. 16 (T)| - Rhetorical Analysis                                                  | USA: 31-34 and 183-193                                | Bring an advertisement for a product you might like to buy |
| Feb. 18 (Th)| - Peer Review Groups Meet  
- Rhetorical Analysis  
- Introduce Major Project 3                                               | USA: 325-251                                          | Draft of MP2 Due                                        |
| Feb. 23 (T)| - Developing Research Questions                                         | USA: 403-409                                          | Major Project 2 Due                                     |
| Feb. 25 (Th)| - Developing Research Questions/Pre-Research  
- Library Activity                                                        |                                                        | Bring a list of potential topics for MP3                |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>In-Class Agenda/Discussion Topics</th>
<th>Readings (To be completed by the beginning of class)</th>
<th>What’s Due/Reminders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| March 1 (T) | -Writing Research Proposals  
              -Challenger Speech Analysis                                  | USA: 87-100                                          | Bring your chosen topic for MP3         |
| March 3 (Th)| -Incorporating Research into Your Writing                             | TS/IS: Chapter 5                                     | Proposal for MP3 Due                    |
| March 7-13  | Spring Break                                                           |                                                      |                                          |
| March 15 (T)| -Quoting, Paraphrasing, Summarizing                                   | TS/IS: Chapters 2 & 3                                | Bring sources from MP3                  |
| March 17 (Th)| -Virtual Class: Peer Review                                            |                                                      | Draft of MP3 Due                        |
| March 22 (T)| -Revision Strategies                                                   | TS/IS: Chapter 11                                    | Bring Draft of MP3 and Peer Review Comments |
| March 24 (Th)| -Arguments and Counterarguments                                       | TS/IS: Chapter 4 & 14                                |                                          |
| March 29 (T)| -Logical Fallacies Activity                                            | USA: 531-538                                         |                                          |
| March 31 (Th)| -Peer Review Groups Meet                                               | USA: 361-372                                         | Draft of MP3 Due                        |
| April 5 (T) | Individual Conferences                                                |                                                      | Bring your MP3 Draft to the conference  |
| April 7 (Th)| Individual Conferences                                                |                                                      | Bring your MP3 Draft to the conference  |
| April 12 (T)| -Review Audience/Purpose/Context/Genre                                 | USA: 372-377, 477-485                                | Major Project 3 Due                     |
| April 14 (Th)| -Audience Awareness Activity  
               -Final Project Brainstorming Activity                        | USA: 235-251                                         | Bring a copy of MP3                     |
| April 19 (T)| -Writing for the Web  
               -Work on MP4                                                         |                                                      | Bring a link to your favorite (appropriate) website |
| April 21 (Th)| -Business Writing  
               -Work on MP4                                                         |                                                      | Bring MP4                               |
| April 26 (T)| -Television Analysis                                                   | USA: 334-342                                         | Bring MP4                               |
| April 28 (Th)| -Peer Review Groups Meet  
               -Work on MP4                                                         |                                                      | Draft of MP4                            |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>In-Class Agenda/Discussion Topics</th>
<th>Readings (To be completed by the beginning of class)</th>
<th>What’s Due/Reminders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 3 (T)</td>
<td>No Class- Optional Peer Review Sessions or Drop-In Hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>Final Exam Scheduled 10:30-1:15 (No Meeting/Exam: Final Project Due)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Major Project 4 Due by 1:15 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>