

**SCLA 102 Transformative Texts: Critical Thinking & Communication II: Modern World**

*Purdue University – Spring 2022*     **FOUR SECTIONS:**

*MWF 10:30-11:20 (151) in UNIV 201*

*MWF 11:30-12:20 (152) in UNIV 201*

*MWF 2:30-3:20 (153) in UNIV 201*

*MWF 3:30-4:20 (154) in UNIV 201*

*Professor William White: Office: UNIV 110 Office Hours: MWF 12:45-2:00 and by appointment  
e-mail --- white660@purdue.edu phone 765-494-3680*

**“I hope you’re proud of yourself for the times you’ve said ‘yes,’ when all it meant was extra work for you and was seemingly helpful only to somebody else.” Mr. Rogers...**

**“If you’re an inch off on landing, no big deal. If you’re an inch off on takeoff, you miss the moon by a million miles.” Neil Armstrong, quoted in *ESPN The Magazine*, page 31, July 2019**

**“I wasn’t born in the spotlight. Nah, I had to grind to shine, like a star on a hot night.” Lil Baby in Rockstar Energy Drink Super Bowl ad -- February, 2021**

**“But our everyday exchanges, and indeed the life of our republic, would be greatly improved by the more common utterance of those three magical words: *I was wrong.*” Mitch Daniels, op. ed. in *The Washington Post*, 12/6/17**

**“The people to fear are not those who disagree with you, but those who disagree with you and are too cowardly to let you know.” Napoleon Bonaparte quoted by Deborah Grayson Riegel, *Chicago Tribune*, 2/22/18**

- 1) COURSE DESCRIPTION:** OUR class will ask us to reflect, discuss, and occasionally disagree about issues raised in 5 texts (ranging from August Wilson’s challenging play *Radio Golf* to a futuristic novel, *Oryx and Crake*, by Margaret Atwood. The best way to discuss our books, pod casts, speeches, etc. is to actually read/listen to them rather than getting a shorthand version from *Spark Notes*. **We will focus on oral communication.** Sometimes I will ask you to simply summarize; other times you will be giving formal thesis/debate presentations. Part of speaking is listening. We will often meet in small groups as we discuss the assigned reading for the day. I hope that our readings keep you questioning what you believe in – not to change your values but to make sure you truly understand why you believe what you do. Many Supreme Court cases have involved Justices arguing that the best way to support your side is to have it challenged.

**SCLA 102** is based on the fundamental premise that great texts -- whether books, essays, poetry, speeches, film or digital media -- inform and inspire students, encouraging their creative and imaginative capacities, helping students see the world from different perspectives and broadening their worldview. In this class, we will examine a series of texts, speeches, videos etc. and **TRY TO RELATE THEM TO US TODAY!!**

**SCLA 102** is part of Level I of the *Cornerstone Certificate Program*. It fulfills the Oral Communication requirement in the University Core Curriculum. It is dedicated to developing and enhancing the ability of students to convey information through oral presentations, advancing their understanding of the importance of

rhetorical situations and choices; analyzing and constructing presentations for different audiences; gathering and evaluating sources for presentations and using visual aids effectively.

## 2) LEARNING OUTCOMES: Oral Communication

By the end of the semester, students will:

1. Demonstrate effective, professional delivery, designing and adapting appropriate verbal appeals through vocal intonation and non-verbal cues.
2. Distinguish and apply appropriate informative, persuasive, explanatory, interrogatory and argumentative strategies and techniques in the discussions and in formal presentations
3. Organize presentations with effective supporting materials.
4. Locate and evaluate effective sources of information.
5. Engage critically with transformative texts, drawing on multiple perspectives, including the individual, the historical, and the contemporary.

## 3) REQUIRED TEXTS

If you choose to read online editions or editions other than those listed below, please check with me in advance on the pages due for each day. The pages listed in my syllabus may not correspond to the pages in your edition. Additional reading will be something you can access online or through Brightspace. Please bring the assigned reading to class. **Make-up procedure for missed/EXCUSED quizzes is outlined below.**

Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, (Anchor Books)

August Wilson, *Radio Golf*, (Theatre Communications Group)

Jeannette Walls, *The Glass Castle* ((Scribner, Reprint Edition)

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, (Dover Thrift Edition)

Sherman Alexie, *Flight*, (Grover Press)

READING PROVIDED by Professor White

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, excerpt

## 4) GRADING IN SCLA 102

First class presentation – **SPEECH # 1 -- Impromptu speech** – 10 points

Second class presentation – **SPEECH # 2 -- Persuasive speech/ “Debate”**– 40 points

Third class presentation --- **SPEECH # 3 -- Informative speech** -- 40 points

One research paper – **30 points**

6-10 quizzes on the day's **assigned reading or what we watch, hear, or read in class** – **3-10 points each** –

**Excused quizzes -- to get an excused quiz you must document your illness with a Dr.'s note or PUSH and notify me that you will not be attending class in advance of the class. Other recognized excused absences are Purdue Quarantine, family emergency, car wreck, school trips, etc. All excused quizzes will be made up by inserting your subsequent quiz % into the excused slot. There are no class participation points.**

### **GRADING SCALE: %**

Excellent: A (94-100), A- (90-93)

Above Average: B+ (87-89), B (84-86), B- (80-83)

Average: C+ (77-79), C (74-76), C- (70-73)

Below Average: D+ (67-69), D (64-66), D- (60-63)

Below 60 is failing

\*\*\* Note – I round up from .5, thus 86.5 = B+, etc. When you realize what your final grade is going to be, **please do not ask me for an extra credit project. MAKE HULK ANGRY!!**

5) Class Policies – I expect you to attend every class, wear a mask if required by Purdue, reading done and reading in hand. We will follow the syllabus as closely as feasible. I will often give you verbal reminders of what is coming up. **Quizzes are NOT announced in advance** and oral presentations are due on the assigned

date – grade = 0 if you do not deliver your speech. Reason will prevail in enforcing this policy – e. g. car wreck, family emergency, etc. – you must notify me in a timely fashion if you miss a graded assignment. If you have special scheduling needs for religious observances see me during the first two weeks of class so that we can find alternative times for you to fulfill your course obligations. **“Ultimately students are responsible for all required coursework and bear full responsibility for any academic consequences that may result due to absences.”** (Purdue University Senate Document 6-5, March 19, 2007)

You may leave your cell phones and tablets on during class in the event that a Purdue ALERT text or other urgent message is sent, **but use them only for class discussion when I have you read material online.**

## GRADED SPEECHES

*Please consider making an appointment to use the Purdue Presentation Center in Beering 2294 in the Lamb School of Communication to practice your last 2 graded speeches (you cannot practice your impromptu – hence the name). You will receive 1-on-1 help from trained tutors and a video recording of your speech to assist you.*

**Formal Presentation – SPEECH # 1 – IMPROMPTU – VALUE 10 POINTS** – I will give you 2-3 prompts and a brief period to think. Fill your impromptu with examples/details!!!!!!!!!!  
Time -- 3 minutes maximum.

**Formal Presentation – SPEECH # 2 – VALUE 40 POINTS** -- Persuasive “debate” – teams of 2 – *Each graded separately* --Each of you defends a different position on a policy issue. **Begin by introducing the topic, the sides, and why it is important**, e.g. **Should there be a free market for human organs?** I will provide a wide variety of policy issues. Time – 7 minutes minimum-10 minutes maximum per person. One-minute video clips per person during the debate are OK.

**Formal Presentation -- SPEECH # 3-- VALUE 40 POINTS --** Brief informative presentation --Your last graded speech is about a topic of your choice related in some way to our class material, what we watched or read – *other than Wilson’s play.* Time -- 6 minutes minimum-8 minutes maximum.

## RESEARCH PAPER – VALUE 30 POINTS

Examine a city anywhere in the world undergoing “revitalization/gentrification” over the last 20 years. What arguments were/are made for and against such projects and how do they echo discussions raised in August Wilson’s *Radio Golf*? You must use at least two direct quotes from Wilson’s play in your paper. You will use primarily newspapers and magazines but do not over quote from your sources – paraphrase (2-3 brief quotes per page is about right). Every sentence with a fact needs a citation. Thus, almost every paragraph in your paper will have 1 or more citations. For citations use Purdue OWL and please consider taking a draft of your paper to the Purdue Writing Lab for advice. **The paper is due at the start of class on Wednesday, March 9, 2022.**

**You will lose 3 points for every increment of 4 hours late.**

**Mechanics for the Paper --- 12 font, double-spaced, with just your name and class time on the 1<sup>st</sup> page (no cover page or filler). Turn the paper in as a hard copy at start of class on the date due. It should be a minimum of 4 full pages plus a works cited page.**

## Daily Schedule:

- Jan. 10 M** Introduction to the course and each other – watch/discuss Todd Rose: *The Myth of Average* at TedxSonomaCounty
- 12 W** Discuss Lon Fuller’s **Harvard Law Review** article, *The Case of the Speluncean Explorers*, read online or in Brightspace before class and pick two Justices that you will paraphrase. Pick 2-3 Malcolm Gladwell podcasts, *Revisionist History* to summarize Friday and Wednesday Jan. 14 & 19) – You will only summarize one but come to class with 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> choices in case someone else takes your 1<sup>st</sup> choice.

- 14 F 6-minute summaries of Gladwell – **NOT GRADED** ---- **RELAX**
- 17 M **No classes – Martin Luther King Day**
- 19 W 6-minute Gladwell summaries cont.
- 21 F Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, pages 3-92, chapters 1-4
- 24 M Atwood, pages 95-144, chapters 5 and 6
- 26 W Watch in class and discuss, PBS, **NOVA**, *Picture A Scientist*
- 28 F Atwood, pages 147-238, chapters 7-9
- 31 M Atwood, pages, 241-306, chapter 10-part of 12 (to “Crake in Love”)
- Feb.** 2 W Atwood, pages 307-end of book and **Review Debate Topics List for Speech # 2**
- 4 F Discuss an excerpt from Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* **handed out this day in class**
- 7 M Wilson, *Radio Golf*, ACT One
- 9 W Wilson, *Radio Golf*, ACT Two (end of the play) and **Choose/draw dates for SPEECH # 2**
- 11 F **SPEECH # 1 – IMPROMPTU SPEECHES**
- 14 M **SPEECH # 1 --IMPROMPTU SPEECHES** continued
- 16 W Alexie, *Flight*, pages 1-65
- 18 F Alexie, pages 66-130
- 21 M Watch **in class** and discuss PBS – **Frontline**, *In the Age of AI*
- 23 W Alexie, pages 131-end
- 25 F **SPEECH # 2 – DEBATE – 2 TEAMS**
- 28 M **SPEECH # 2 – DEBATE – 2 TEAMS**
- Mar.** 2 W **SPEECH # 2 – DEBATE – 1 TEAM** and peer review your research paper – bring the first 2 pages to class
- 4 F **SPEECH # 2 – DEBATE -- 2 TEAMS**
- 7 M **SPEECH # 2 – DEBATE – 2 TEAMS**
- 9 W **Research Paper Due** and Gary Smith, “Higher Education,” *Sports Illustrated*, first published March 5, 2001 and reprinted December 12, 2014 – **read online before class**
- 11 F **SPEECH # 2 – DEBATE – 2 TEAMS** \*\*\*\*Last day to withdraw with a W or WF\*\*\*\*
- 21 M **SPEECH # 2 – DEBATE – 2 TEAMS**
- 23 W **SPEECH # 2 – DEBATE – 2 TEAMS**
- 25 F Walls, *The Glass Castle*, pages, 3-72 and **Choose/draw for dates for SPEECH # 3**
- 28 M Walls, pages, 73-125
- 30 W Watch in class and discuss, PBS – **Frontline**, *A Class Divided*
- Apr.** 1 F Walls, pages, 129-217
- 4 M Walls, pages, 218-288
- 6 W Watch (**in class**) Nicholas Carr’s speech at 2018 *Dawn or Doom* and **read online before class** – Gary Smith, “Lying in Wait” *Sports Illustrated*, April 8, 2002
- 8 F **SPEECH #3** – 6 students
- 11 M **SPEECH # 3** – 6 students
- 13 W **SPEECH # 3** – 3 students and Discuss Eli Saslow, “Breaking America: Nothing on This Page is Real” **read in Brightspace or online before class**
- 15 F **SPEECH # 3** – 6 students
- 18 M Douglass, *Narrative*, pages vii-34
- 20 W **SPEECH # 3** – 6 students
- 22 F Douglass, *Narrative*, pages 34-69 (end of book)
- 25 M **SPEECH # 3** – 3 students and youtube TedX Talk exercise – **TO BE EXPLAINED IN CLASS**
- 27 W Watch **in class** and discuss, PBS – **Frontline**, *The Facebook Dilemma, Part 1*
- 29 F **Read online in class** and discuss Robert Frost’s poem, *The Road Not Taken* and Gwendolyn Brooks’s poem, *Sadie & Maud*

“Purdue University prohibits discrimination against any member of the University community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age. National origin or ancestry, genetic information, marital status, parental status,

sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, or status as a veteran.” (See Purdue “Nondiscrimination Policy Statement” – please familiarize yourself with this policy. See [https://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea\\_eou\\_statement.php](https://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea_eou_statement.php)). We will conduct class based on the precept of universal human dignity.

\*\*\*\* Purdue University strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, you are welcome to let me know so that we can discuss options. Please provide me with a “letter of accommodation” at your earliest opportunity. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: [drc@purdue.edu](mailto:drc@purdue.edu) or by phone: 765-494-1247.

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Academic Integrity – It's really pretty simple – do your own work. Read the Purdue Honor Pledge and University Senate Document 72-18, December 15, 1972 which reads, in part, “cheating, lying, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest.... Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest.” **Any dishonest behavior will result in a 0 for that assignment and, at my discretion, may result in a failing grade for the course and referral to the Office of the Dean of Students for further action. Students can report issues of academic integrity that they observe either through the Office of the dean of Students, call 765-494-8778 or email: [integrity@purdue.edu](mailto:integrity@purdue.edu)**

**If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 765-494-6995 and <http://www.purdue.edu/caps/> during and after hours, weekends and holidays. Counselors are available during business hours in the Purdue University Student Health Center on the second floor of Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH).**