

**SCLA 102 Transformative Texts:
Critical Thinking & Communication II: Modern World
Fall 2019 MWF 12:30-1:20 PM UNIV 101**

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Office hours: MWF 10:30-11:30 AM and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

SCLA 102 is based on the fundamental premise that great texts -- whether famous speeches, essays, or poetry as well as film and 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 (including digital media); seeking to understand the contexts in which these texts were produced as well as what these texts mean 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.

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.

Means of achieving these outcomes are as follows:

1. Class discussion and activities
2. Small group discussion and collaboration
3. Individual and group presentations
4. Watching and listening to selected speeches
5. Research activities

REQUIRED TEXTS (students must acquire these particular editions in paperback format)

George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, New York: Berkley, Penguin Random House, 2003

Malala Yousafzai, *I Am Malala*, Back Bay Books, Little Brown and Company, 2015

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, Penguin, Random House, 2017

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard, available online, or distributed in paper versions

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Discussion participation and attendance 30%

Participation and attendance are mandatory components of the class. Students are expected to show up for each class with the relevant text in hand and prepared to discuss the assigned reading material and any additional assignment for that class. The rubric for grading participation and attendance is in the syllabus.

***Nineteen Eighty-Four* today group presentation 10%**

In small groups students will make a pitch for their idea of how to turn the novel *Nineteenth Eighty-Four* into an advertising campaign, video game, an app, a movie, cartoon, poem, music, Youtube channel, television series, Twitter feed, etc. You will make a pitch to the class about why this novel is relevant today, what is the best format to translate its message to the broader public, and how you propose to do this. Specific directions and the rubric for grading this presentation are on Blackboard.

Journal assignments 20%

A 500-word journal entry that answers reading questions posted on Blackboard is due on Blackboard by 8:00 AM on designated days through the semester (marked on the syllabus). The grade for this will be P/F. If you have a thoughtful response that answers the question, then you will receive a passing grade for that journal entry. If you do not, then you will fail. If you fail more than three journal responses, then you will fail this assignment and risk failing the course.

Poetry recitation 10%

On designated poetry days students will select and recite dramatically (extra credit for memorizing) a poem, and present their reasons for selecting that particular poem and what the poem means to them. Students must submit their selected poem for my approval by the due date, and will be assigned a poetry day for presenting it. Students in the audience must listen critically and be prepared to ask a question about the poem or indicate what the poem meant to them. Examples of poems are on Blackboard, and students may choose from them, or select another poem.

“Telling your story” in-class presentation 20%

The formal individual oral communication presentation will be during the weeks 11 and 12. You will be expected to present “your story” to the class in a 6-8-minute presentation, drawing on the discussions and insights we learn on how Malala Yousafzai told her story as part of her advocacy for girls’ education worldwide. The specific assignment and the rubric for grading this presentation are posted on Blackboard.

Maintaining humanity against dehumanizing threats analysis 10%

This short paper is a response Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* and may include other works covered in class addressing different ways that individuals and groups maintain their humanity when confronting dehumanizing forces. The prompt and rubric are posted on Blackboard.

COURSE POLICIES

Students must complete all assignments to be eligible to pass the course. This includes participation in class discussion. Late papers/projects will be penalized 1/3 grade per day (for example a B paper that is one day late becomes a B-). Plan on submitting all assignments on the due dates and times.

Unless otherwise indicated, no electronic devices are allowed in class; once class begins at 12:30 students must turn off and put away all cell phones, computers, tablets, i-pads, in short, all electronic devices. I encourage students to take notes on paper during class.

Minor changes to the syllabus are possible, and will be announced in class or via email as circumstances allow. Such changes would be for the benefit of students.

Students should regard this class as a site for open, informed discussion, and I intend to foster an atmosphere that encourages this. Respect and tolerance are the standard for all classroom discussions. Please feel free to ask questions you may have on this topic either in class or during office hours.

Email will be the preferred mode of contact outside of regular classroom hours and office hours. Please feel free to contact me directly (i.e., not via Blackboard's email option) at any time. I will also create a class email list which I will use to send course-related announcements as needed. For this reason, students should check Purdue email accounts at least once a day.

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to changes as necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Any necessary changes will be announced via email and/or the class Blackboard page.

During the last two weeks of the semester, you will have the opportunity to evaluate this course and my teaching. You will receive an official email from evaluation administrators with a link to the online evaluation site, and you will have two weeks to complete this evaluation. I consider your feedback important, as does Purdue University. Your professors have access to these online evaluations only after grades are due.

I adhere to Purdue's policies regarding bereavement and military leave absences, and to the general expectation that students and faculty will address absence issues in a manner that is **reasonable**. To that end, students who are sick or must be absent for other reasons should contact me in advance when possible, and in most cases some accommodation will be possible. "Ultimately students are responsible for all required coursework and bear full responsibility for any academic consequences that may result due to absence."

http://www.purdue.edu/studentregulations/regulations_procedures/classes.html

Students with disabilities. 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. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: drc@purdue.edu or by phone: 765-494-1247.

<http://www.purdue.edu/drc/faculty/syllabus.html>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As a student in this class and at Purdue, you are expected to uphold the standards of academic integrity suggested in the Honor Pledge as written by Purdue students: “As a boilermaker pursuing academic excellence, I pledge to be honest and true in all that I do. Accountable together - we are Purdue.” Plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty will result automatically in an F for the course, and I will report such behavior to the Dean of Students. For more information on academic integrity, see: <http://www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/academic-integrity/index.html>. Students are encouraged to consult with me at any time in order to avoid academic dishonesty.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

- Week 1:** Introducing the course and the class; being human despite dehumanizing forces
M Aug 19 Read and discuss the syllabus; “The Art of Communication” online
W Aug 21 Assignment: Bring to class a speech, poem, music, or short video that has inspired you, and be prepared to discuss it with the class.
F Aug 23 Continue discussion and presentations of inspiring and effective communications
- Week 2:** Three As’s (author, audience, agenda) of analyzing a text
M Aug 26 Read and discuss Orwell, 1-29 (foreword recommended); discuss slogans on p. 4
W Aug 28 Read and discuss Orwell, 30-65; what is history?
F Aug 30 Read and discuss Orwell, 65-106
*Journal assignment due 8:00 AM
- Week 3:** Power and rebellion
M. Sep 2 Labor Day – no class
W Sep 4 Read and discuss Orwell, 107-183
*Journal assignment due 8:00 AM
F Sep 6 Read and discuss Orwell, 183-230
- Week 4:** Dehumanization and being human
M Sep 9 Read and discuss Orwell, 231-269
W Sep 11 Read and discuss Orwell, 269-296
*Journal assignment due 8:00 AM
F Sep 13 Campus field trip – history and resources
- Week 5:** What does *Nineteen Eighty-Four* mean today?
M Sep 16 Read and discuss Orwell, 297-323
W Sep 18 Different representations of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*
F Sep 20 Prepare for presentations: practice often, and visit the Presentation Center, BRNG 2294
https://cla.purdue.edu/academic/communication/purduepresentationcenter/index.html?_ga=2.133211981.2141007393.1565717865-1356013341.1542496128
- Week 6:** Group presentations on Orwell
M Sep 23
W Sep 25
F Sep 27

- Week 7:** Who is Malala?
M Sep 30 Read and discuss Yousafzai, xii-26
W Oct 2 Read and discuss Yousafzai, 27-57
F Oct 4 Read and discuss Yousafzai, 69-101
*Journal assignment due 8:00 AM
- Week 8:** Terrorism, politics, survival, and resistance in the 21st century
M Oct 7 Fall Break – no class
W Oct 9 Read and discuss Yousafzai, 111-146
F Oct 11 Yousafzai, 205-226, 236-271
*Submit selected poem
- Week 9:** Activism and public speaking: Pankhurst and Yousafzai
M Oct 14 Read and discuss Pankhurst, “Why We Are Militant” on Blackboard
*Journal assignment due 8:00 AM
W Oct 16 Read and discuss Yousafzai, 303-313
- Extra credit Preshow presentation and performance of *1984*
W Oct 16 and Th Oct 17 7:30 PM Loeb Playhouse
Preshow presentation and discussion 6:30 PM, STEW 310
- F Oct 18 Poetry Day
- Week 10:** Different types of public speaking and responses to them
M Oct 21 Poetry Day
W Oct 23 Poetry Day
F Oct 25 Yousafzai’s Nobel Peace Prize speech; Prepare for presentations
- Week 11:** Tell Your Story Presentations
M Oct 28
W Oct 30
F Nov 1
- Week 12:** Tell Your Story Presentations
M Nov 4 No class
W Nov 6 Tell Your Story Presentations
F Nov 8 Tell Your Story Presentations
- Week 13:** War, dehumanization, and being human
M Nov 11 Read and discuss Sassoon and/or Jünger on World War I
W Nov 13 Field trip to exhibit “Ministry of Truth”
*Journal assignment due Thursday noon
F Nov 15 Read and discuss Levi, “The Story of Ten Days” and “Conversation”
- Week 14:** Igbo culture and life
M Nov 18 Read and discuss Yeats (on blackboard) and Achebe, 3-45
*Journal assignment due 8:00 AM
W Nov 20 Read and discuss Achebe, 46-94
F Nov 22 Read and discuss Achebe, 95-125
- Week 15:** Characters and perspectives in *Things Fall Apart*

M Nov 25 What can Westerners learn from *Things Fall Apart*?
W-F Nov 27-29 No class – Thanksgiving Break

Week 16: Europeans in Africa
M Dec 2 Read and discuss Achebe, 129-161
W Dec 4 Read and discuss Achebe, 162-209
 *Journal assignment due 8:00 AM
F Dec 6 Wrap up: Dehumanizing forces and responses, and the art of communication

Final paper analyzing maintaining humanity due beginning of exam week

Discussion Grade Criteria

Excellent (A):

- Exhibits excellent preparation: has analyzed assigned reading, relating it to readings and other material (e.g., other course material, discussions, experiences, etc.).
- Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of reading material: puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further.
- Contributes in a significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused; responds thoughtfully to other students' comments; contributes to cooperative argument building; suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc.
- Demonstrates ongoing active involvement.
- Brings assigned reading to class.

Good (B):

- Reveals good preparation: knows assigned readings well; has thought through implications of them; offers interpretations and analysis of reading material (more than just facts) to class.
- Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points; thinks through her/his own points; questions others in a constructive way; offers and supports suggestions that may challenge the majority opinion.
- Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement.
- Brings assigned reading to class.

Fair (C):

- Exhibits adequate preparation; knows basics of assigned readings, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them.
- Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the reading), without elaboration or volunteering very infrequently (perhaps once a week).
- Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but shows preparedness when called on.
- Demonstrates sporadic involvement.

Poor (D):

- Present; not disruptive; tries to respond when called upon but does not show adequate preparation.
- Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion.

Failing: Absent