

**ENGL 212: Topics in Critical Writing**  
Spring 2017 – Online  
May 8-June 24

**Professor:** Dr. Kim Lacey (please, call me Kim!)  
**In-person office hours:** Monday, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.  
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**Considerations before we begin this course:**

- This is a 16 week course crammed into 7 weeks. There will be a lot of work.
- ENGL 212 is a Category 10 course, meaning you will be writing a lot.
- This is an asynchronous course, meaning we will not be “meeting” for a virtual lecture nor will be meeting in person. You are responsible for completing each week’s module on time.
- Except for Week 7’s work and Paper 3, all assignments are due on Sundays by 11:59 pm EST. If you are living in a different time zone, please make sure you take careful note of this requirement. No late assignments will be accepted. If you know there’s a conflict, submit your work early.

**Very Important:** Ask yourself this question: “What will happen to my participation in this course if my computer goes down?” If the answer is “I am doomed,” then you should withdraw and register for a face-to-face section another time. You need to have backup technology plans, because a down computer will not excuse you from the work in this course.

**Course Goals**

This semester, we will investigate several different techniques that lead to effective persuasion and argumentation. We will place ourselves in persuasive situations to more completely understand how the techniques we discuss are actually utilized, effectively or not. As a member of this course, you are encouraged to keep an eye out for persuasive situations you see on tv, read about in various locations, or witness in your daily lives.

**Class procedures**

This course is divided into modules. You are expected to complete the activities in each module by the due dates (Sunday evening) unless otherwise noted. While all of the modules are available “on demand,” the modules are **NOT** self-paced—that is, you are expected to respond to others on the discussion boards in a timely fashion. You must complete all the activities in each module to earn credit. Please be aware that some modules will require you to comment on others’ discussion posts. Just as you would in a face to face class, you are expected to be active and participate in discussion with your classmates. Failure to do so will result in a lower grade.

Participation in this course is asynchronous. You are not expected to be online at the same time as the professor or as your peers, as long as you complete the assignments. Each week, all instructions and assignments, along with a description of the week's activities, are made available to you in the "Modules" tab. We use "Discussions" for most work unless otherwise noted.

I check the course site daily and will generally respond to questions within 24-48 hours, so feel free to post any questions you have in the "Questions for Kim" discussion board. Please note, however, that email is the easiest way for me to respond. Oftentimes, I will repost questions I receive via email on the "Questions for Kim" discussion board (with your name removed). Many students have the same questions, so this saves time for everyone. Please consider checking the "Questions for Kim" discussion board before emailing me—someone may have already asked the same question!

Although Canvas is not a new tool at SVSU, I so expect you to be well versed in using Canvas. If you need help, please refer to the extensive library of Canvas how-to videos and help pages: <http://guides.instructure.com/>

### **Participation**

For this class, I strongly suggest you log on at least once a day, if for no other reason than just to keep up with what is going on in the course. I also want to reinforce that you should try to check the course at least one weekend day, even if you have met your participation requirements for the week.

As in a face-to-face class, attendance does not equal participation. Merely logging in does not mean that you are participating in class.

### **Tone**

The objective of the discussions we will have is to be collaborative rather than combative. Remember that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be easily misconstrued. Some suggestions to combat this are to carefully proofread your responses and to remember that humor online is sometimes difficult to carry off. Sarcasm is particularly difficult to get across in written form, so be careful. You will see some "emojis" in the writings of others that you can use to add electronic "gestures" to your words.

### **Our Classroom**

We will spend most of our time in class in following places:

- **Modules (access via "Modules" tab):** The entire semester is built around 7 weekly modules. In each module, you'll find all the work to be completed that week. You should follow these in order.
- **Assignments and Discussions (access via "Assignments" and "Discussions" tabs):** This is where you will post responses to individual assignments such as your Study Questions, Critical Reading and Writing responses and other writings. You will also

be completing some group work here, too. Paper descriptions are available in the “Assignments” tab.

- **Quizzes (access via “Quizzes” tab):** Some of your book work will be completed as quizzes. Since everything is “open book” in our class, these are not actually quizzes, but I am using this tool to keep your answers organized and hidden from your classmates.
- **Weekly Updates (access in weekly “Module”):** At the start of each week I will post a short video discussing some of the issues of the week. These include, but are not limited to: reviewing assignments, tricky theories, points of interest and confusion, answers to questions, etc. I will post the weekly update in each weekly module and also e-mail it to everyone.
- **Questions for Kim (access via “Discussions” tab):** Use this to post any questions that you have about the course, modules, etc. I generally check here first when I enter Canvas, so post any questions or problems (can't see links, when are things due, etc) here. Others are free to answer in this forum as well.

### **Required Texts to Purchase**

(This text has been ordered at the bookstore, but feel free to shop around online for the cheapest price.)

*How to Think about Weird Things, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition (ISBN: 978-0078038365)*

### **Course Requirements (detailed below)**

Discussions and Assignments: 44%

Paper 1: Logical Fallacies: 14%

Paper 2: Experiencing Persuasion: 16%

Paper 3: SEARCH Formula: 16%

Professionalism: 10%

*Discussions and Assignments (44%):* All Discussions and Assignments are included in the modules. You will be prompted to complete these assignments each week. Often there will be several Discussions and Assignments in one week. Please note: Certain Discussions do not let you see others’ responses until you post. Do not simply post a “fake” post just to see others’ responses. As the professor, I see all of your posts—even ones you delete. In general, you will be assessed for the detailed understanding of the texts, connections to other texts and conversations, and style.

*Papers 1, 2, 3 (46% total):* Paper descriptions can be found in the “Assignments” tab.

*Professionalism (10%):* As a member of this course, you are responsible for participating responsibly. Being a professional member of a community means sharing ideas, confusion, and helping others understand information. Confusion is welcomed! Don’t feel that you have to understand everything—being a professional member of a group includes understanding that learning is a process. Remember, too, that while this is an

online course, it is still an English course so refrain from too much “text language” in your posts (a little is ok, though). In addition, you should respect others’ opinions while in class. Opinions of all kinds are welcome, but disrespect will not be tolerated.

### **Grading Scale**

↑95%: A  
↑90%: A-  
↑87%: B+  
↑83%: B  
↑80%: B-  
↑77%: C+  
↑73%: C  
↑60%: D  
0%: F

Please note: SVSU does not give out C- grades. Any grade lower than 73% automatically defaults to a D. Any grade lower than a 60% automatically defaults to an F. There are no “pluses or minuses” in that range.

ENGL 212 courses use a common rubric, which can be found in the “Syllabus” tab.

### **Course Policies**

The decision to take this course is yours, but once you make that decision, you have responsibilities to everyone else in this community of learners. It is your responsibility to abide by the following course policies in order to contribute to our classroom’s productivity.

**Access:** Check your e-mail daily. It’s SVSU’s official mode of communication, and there is no excuse why you shouldn’t check it often. This is an online course, and you must have consistent internet access for this course. Not having access is not an excuse. Please make arrangements in advance if you know you will have difficulties getting online.

**Grade postings:** All grades will be posted on Canvas.

**Late Work: Late work is unacceptable.** Please ensure that your work is submitted on time. The deadlines are clearly marked on all paper descriptions and on the course calendar. If you know a due date conflicts with something outside of class, plan ahead and submit your assignment early. If Canvas is not working, please email me your paper. Regardless of how you submit your paper, I will send a confirmation e-mail by 9 am the next morning. If you do not receive a confirmation e-mail, I did not receive your paper.

**Disability and Non-Discrimination Clause:** Students with disabilities which may restrict their full participation in course activities are encouraged to contact the SVSU Office of

Disability Services, Wickes Hall 260, Phone: 989-964-7000. SVSU does not discriminate based on race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, physical impairment, disability, or veteran status in the provision of education, employment, and other services.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** According to the *SVSU Student Handbook*, “Academic integrity is undermined whenever one is dishonest in the pursuit of knowledge. Dishonesty takes many forms, including cheating, plagiarism, and other activities for undermining the educational process.

“Cheating occurs whenever one attempts to gain an advantage through a violation of rules regarding the relevant behavior. It should be assumed that collaboration is cheating unless explicitly authorized” (16).

“Plagiarism involves intentionally or unintentionally presenting another person’s expressions – ideas, opinions, illustrations, data, style – as one’s own expression” (16).

Forms of plagiarism include directly transcribing (copying) without quotation and attribution, summarizing without attribution, paraphrasing or patchwork paraphrasing without attribution, patching electronic materials (including pictures, graphs, and/or charts) without attribution.

Please see the full Academic Integrity Policy here:

<http://www.svsu.edu/studentconductprograms/policies/academicintegritypolicy/>

*In ENGL 212 deliberate plagiarism or cheating in any form will result in the grade of zero (0) for the entire assignment and will be reported to the Academic Conduct Board for further sanctions.*

**Writing Center Information:** One of the many advantages of this University is the Writing Center. You are strongly encouraged to meet with a tutor to discuss your writing. Sessions at the Writing Center are available on a first come, first serve basis. Please stop by the Writing Center anytime you need additional help.

Writing Center Hours Spring/Summer Semester

Tuesdays: 11:00 a.m.-3 p.m.

Wednesdays: 12:00 p.m.-5 p.m.

Location: Zahnow 205 (2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the library)

Phone: 989-964-6061

Website: [www.svsu.edu/writingcenter](http://www.svsu.edu/writingcenter)

## Course Calendar

Important notes:

- This schedule is subject to changes. If changes are made, you will be notified in writing via e-mail. Changes will also be posted as an “announcement” on Canvas.
- Make sure you read through and complete the entire module for each week. The “module work” listed below is simply a checklist of weekly requirements. Each part of the modules has very specific directions.
- Weekly work that needs to be completed is underlined each week.

<b>WEEK/MODULE</b>	<b>MODULE WORK</b>	<b>MAJOR PAPER DUE DATES</b> <i>(Reminder: Unless otherwise noted, all assignments in the modules are due by Sundays at 11:59 pm EST)</i>
<p>I recommend you complete this module before the semester begins</p> <p>Module 0: Getting to Know our course</p>	<p>0. Take a look around</p> <p>0. <u>Quiz</u>: Module Zero Quiz</p>	
<p>5/8-5/14 Module 1: Introductions and Kinds of Argumentation</p>	<p>1. Welcome!</p> <p>2. Weekly update #1</p> <p>3. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Introduce yourself!</p> <p>4. Reading: <i>Weird Things</i> (WT): chapters 1-2 (p. 1-32)</p> <p>5. Prezi: Subjective argumentation v. Objective argumentation</p> <p>6. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Subjective v. Objective</p> <p>7. Flight v. Invisibility: Audio or Transcript</p> <p>8. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Flight v. Invisibility</p> <p>9. <u>Assignment</u>: Critical Reading and Writing</p>	
<p>5/15-5/21 Module 2: Logical Fallacies</p>	<p>1. Weekly Update #2</p> <p>2. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Weekly Response #2</p> <p>3. Paper 1: Paper Description</p> <p>4. Reading: Three Sample Papers</p> <p>5. Reading: WT: chapter 3 (p. 33-61)</p>	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Videos: What are logical fallacies?</li> <li>7. <u>Discussion Post</u>: What are logical fallacies?</li> <li>8. Examples of logical fallacies</li> <li>9. <u>Quiz</u>: Chapter 3 Study Questions (from <i>WT</i> p. 57-58)</li> </ol>	
<p>5/22-5/28 Module 3: Power of Persuasion</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Weekly Update #3</li> <li>2. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Weekly Response #3</li> <li>3. <u>Assignment</u>: Field Problem pg. 60</li> <li>4. <u>Responses</u>: Week 2 Questions</li> <li>5. Reminder!</li> </ol>	<p>P1: DUE (logical fallacies) Sunday, 5/28/17 11:59 p.m. EST</p>
<p>5/29-6/4 Module 4: More Logical Fallacies</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Weekly Update #4</li> <li>2. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Weekly Response #4</li> <li>3. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Review P1 Examples</li> <li>4. Paper 2: Paper description</li> <li>5. Reading: Paper 2: Three Sample Papers</li> <li>6. Reading: Part 1</li> <li>7. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Reading: Part 1 response</li> <li>8. Reading: Part 2</li> <li>9. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Paper 2 Topic approval</li> </ol>	
<p>6/5-6/11 Module 5: Looking for Truth in Personal Experiences</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Weekly Update #5</li> <li>2. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Weekly Response #5</li> <li>3. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Topic Approval</li> <li>4. Reading: <i>WT</i>: ch. 5 (p. 96-157)</li> <li>5. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Discussion Questions: 1-4 (p. 151)</li> <li>6. Reminder!</li> </ol>	<p>P2: DUE (experiencing persuasion) Sunday, 6/11/17 11:59 p.m. EST</p>
<p>6/12-6/18 Module 6: SEARCH Formula</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Weekly Update #6</li> <li>2. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Weekly Response #6</li> <li>3. Paper 3: Paper Description</li> <li>4. Reading: Paper 3: Three Sample Papers</li> <li>5. Reading: <i>WT</i>: ch. 7* (p. 220-294): *only read the section pertaining to the topic you will write about for P3 (your choice)</li> <li>6. <u>Assignment</u>: Evaluating Claims</li> <li>7. <u>Assignment</u>: Critical Reading and Writing</li> </ol>	

<p>6/18-6/24 Module 7: Relativism, Truth, and Reality</p> <p><i>**Please note: assignments in this module are due Saturday, June 24**</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Weekly Update #7</li> <li>2. <u>Discussion Post</u>: Weekly Response #7</li> <li>3. Course Evaluation</li> <li>4. Reading: WT: ch. 8 (pg. 295-318)</li> <li>5. <u>Assignment</u>: Critical Reading and Writing</li> <li>6. <u>Quiz</u>: Chapter 8 Study Questions 1-5 (p. 316)</li> <li>7. Reminder!</li> <li>8. Bye and Thank You!</li> </ol>	<p>P3: DUE (SEARCH formula paper) Saturday, 6/24/17 11:59 p.m. EST</p>
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