

## Rhetoric 102: Research Writing

Team A

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Professor John Regan

Office 509A

Phone 353-6108

E-Mail: jregan@bu.edu

### Course Description:

As in Rhetoric 101, Rhetoric 102 will give you the opportunity to practice critical thinking through reading and writing about academically challenging texts. Through this course, you will further improve your skills in reading comprehension, critical thinking, argument analysis, thesis development, organization, revision, and self-editing. Rhetoric 102 does differ from Rhetoric 101 in its emphasis on academic research skills and its greater attention to sentence-level concerns. You will actively encounter the fundamentals of academic research: choosing an appropriate topic and formulating a hypothesis, using library resources, reading and evaluating sources, taking notes, developing an outline, preparing a draft, revising and conducting further research, and preparing and proofreading a final draft.

Let me add that given that this course builds upon what was covered in Rhetoric 101, you will be held accountable for sentence-level aspects befitting the advanced nature of this course in relation to Rhetoric 101. In Rhetoric 101 many of you aggressively addressed your sentence-level concerns that I stressed last semester and will continue to stress this semester: using ample transitions, incorporating source material effectively, varying your sentence lengths/structures, editing for conciseness, to name a few key areas. In addition, we will focus on two key concerns: effective and accurate use of both paraphrase AND citation and documentation. Based on what we previously covered in Rhetoric 101, I think we need to spend more time on paraphrase and it should come as no surprise that a course titled "Research Writing" should emphasize appropriate use of citation and documentation.

### Required Materials

*We will use the same texts as we did in Rhetoric 101:*

Barnet, Sylvan and Bedau, Hugo. Current Issues and Enduring Questions, 9<sup>th</sup> edition  
Lunsford, Andrea. The Saint Martin's Handbook.

### Course Requirements/Grade Distribution:

Research Project #1: 40%

Research Project #2: 40%

Mid-Term Activity 5%

In-Class Work including E-Portfolio And Exercise Central: 15%

### Description of Course Requirements

**Research Projects:** You will complete two research projects. Paper Length: Approximately 8-10 pages. Please note that the second research project will include

multiple graded components. Research Projects will be typed, double-spaced in 12-point font. I will no longer accept papers that do not conform to these very basic standards.

**Mid-term Activity:** The mid-term activity will be announced well in advance of the activity date.

**In-Class Work:** In-class work consists of class participation, quizzes, exercises, etc.— what we do day- to-day in the classroom. In addition, you will be assigned a few short writing assignments to be posted on your e-portfolio and these will be factored in a part of your classwork grade. Finally, beginning the first week of Feb., you will be required to complete 10 exercises per week on Bedford's Exercise Central; I will provide you with full details on how to use Exercise Central before you are required to complete any exercises. Failure to complete a week's worth of exercises will result in a 1/3 letter grade reduction of your final classwork grade. One important note--regarding the second half of the course, a drawback of allowing students freedom and flexibility in topic selection is that the class; perhaps it's natural that when your topic is being discussed you perk up but when you sense something's not relevant, you zone out. I strongly encourage you to resist this urge and by keep an open-mind (and ears!) you will learn much about the critical reading, writing, thinking, and researching if you pay attention, ask questions, and participate. You will be assigned one "source summary" per research project: in class you will tells us what your source is about and why it is/is not relevant to your project.

**Attendance:** Attendance is crucial to your success in Rhetoric 102. Therefore, you are allowed two unexcused absences per term. (Keep in mind that two classes in a two-credit course constitutes a week of classes) More than two absences will lower your final grade by 1/3 a letter grade (three absences reduces a C+ to a C, four absences means a C-, etc.). If in the unlikely event that you miss a class, you are responsible for all assignments that are due for that class and the homework for the following class. Please remember that since in-class work cannot be made up, you will lose credit for that day's in-class work. If you have a legitimate reason for missing class, you must give me a note explaining your absence along with appropriate documentation before I will consider excusing the absence. You are expected to arrive to class **on time** and **prepared to work**. During my teaching career my students have consistently impressed me with their dedication and attentiveness, and I see no reason why this class should behave have any differently.

**Academic Honesty:**

Plagiarism is stealing someone's words or ideas and presenting them as your own, whether they are the words of a fellow student or a published author. I will spend ample class time on the proper protocols of academic research and integrity. Those caught plagiarizing an assignment will fail the assignment and/or the course, have a letter placed in their permanent academic file, and will face probation and possible suspension. Please see the CGS Academic Conduct Code on the CGS web site for full details of possible sanctions. Finally, please resist the urge to indulge in excessive "help" from others when writing your papers--given that this seems to be a disturbing trend nationwide, we will

discuss what constitutes an acceptable level of outside support--and what does not--before we begin your first writing assignment.

### **Syllabus**

Week of January 17: Course Introduction. Introduction to First Research Topic: Issues in Higher Education.

Week of January 24: Read Washington “Why Trials Should Not Be Televised” (313) in Current Issues. Read the unit “A College Education: What is its Purpose” (547) from Current Issues (Fish, Brooks, Allitt, Nemko, Murray, Menand, and all letters in response). Short e-portfolio assignment assigned.

Week of January 31: Introduction to Electronic Research: Wilson Web, Lexus-Nexus, and ERIC. Project Proposal format assigned. Read Tompkins “Indians” (on reserve reading). No Rhetoric classes on Feb. 3 or 4 (Instructor conference).

Week of Feb 7: Research Proposals Due. or Friday. Guidelines for Research Project #1 Distributed Review Research Writing Sections of Saint Martin’s Handbook—I’ll specify which ones.

Week of February 7: Library Tour. Read Chapter 17: Integrating Sources into Your Writing (SMH). E-portfolio writing assigned.

Week of Feb. 14: Draft of Research Project #1 Due. Read Chapter 18 and 19: Acknowledging Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism; Writing a Research Project (SMH).

Week of Feb 21: No Monday classes. Tuesday follows a Monday schedule. Drafts of Research Project Returned; Paraphrase Instruction Commences!

Week of Feb 28: Paraphrase and Documentation Instruction. Research Project #1 Due

Week of March 7: Mid-term Activity

Week of March 14: Spring Break

Weeks of March 21, 28; April 4, 11, 18, 25; May 2: Work on Research Project #2. An updated syllabus will be distributed to detail the work plan and due dates for components of Research Project 2. Boston University classes end on April 30. The final of Research Project #2 will be due by on that day. There is no final exam for the course.