ENGL 151H-010: RHETORIC AS ARGUMENT THE RHETORIC OF SCIENCE FALL 2012 MWF 8:30-9:20 AM ANDREWS HALL 27

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Office: Andrews 337E
Office Hours: MWF 9:30-10:15 am; MWF 11:30 am-12:30 pm and by appt.

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Class Description:

English 151 focuses on the study and practice of writing and rhetoric as rhetoric—that is, students will use writing and rhetorical concepts such as purpose, audience and context to pose and investigate problems that are meaningful in their lives or communities, explore open questions, and/or examine complex tensions. This course provides students with extended practice in writing and rhetoric as argument in a supportive, student-centered environment. We will be looking at different uses for argument and how it finds different expressions on the page.

This course is designed around a theme of scientific miniatures (a very broad definition of scientific), with a purpose to develop a greater understanding of the natural world and its effects not only on human beings, but the entire ecosystem. We will consider the ethics and context of various texts and arguments, we will discuss the role that society plays in how we interact and relate to insects, plants and animals, and human cells. We will start by reading Rachel Carson's Silent Spring in the 50th anniversary of its publication to provoke our discussion of the environmental movement, the effect of her book, as well as the role that gender, politics and history, and science began to shape the how the discussion was received—then, and now. From there, we will consider the contemporary effects and ethics of those actions, her book, and modern science respond to her ideas. As we read Michael Pollan's The Omnivore's Dilemma, we will consider the effect that our food choices have on our ecosystems, our politics, and our global security. For this project, we will also explore the local farmer's market located in the Haymarket and interview the farmers who participate there. Our goal is to become aware of—and articulate the complexities—the role that we play as consumers, the role that Nebraska plays as a state, the role that the United States plays in the global system. In our final project, we will read Rebecca Skloot's The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, about the woman whose cells became HeLa, the immortal cells used in nearly every scientific and medical advancement in the last sixty years. As we explore this project, we will discuss the ways that race, class, and gender played a role in Henrietta's cells being taken from her without her knowledge, used without her or her family's knowledge and without any compensation. There is much more to this discussion than simple ethics, the complexities of what we bring to the conversation are endless, considering the contemporary state of research.

This course is certified as an Achievement Centered General Education (ACE) Outcome 1 course. In addition to our own English 151 goals, this course will help you meet the following general education outcome: "Write texts, in various forms, with an identified purpose, that respond to particular audience needs, incorporate research or existing knowledge, and use applicable documentation and appropriate conventions of form and structure."

Goals for the Class: Aims and Scopes

- Learn to think outside the box—and then be able to write outside the box.
- ▲ Learn to be more aware of the world and the ideas around you—and then be curious enough to pursue them on your own.
- Reinforce that writing is a process—and how figuring out your own process and working through that process will make you a better writer.
- ▲ Master MLA formatting and documentation—and understand why it's necessary.
- Learn to critique (not criticize) your peers' writing—and discern how looking at others' work can benefit your own process.
- ▶ Recognize how writing—in all its forms—is a conversation and never happens in a vacuum.

Required Materials:

- **▲** Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*
- ▲ Michael Pollan, The Omnivore's Dilemma
- ▶ Rebecca Skloot, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks
- Articles, stories, essays, poems, posted on Blackboard, as assigned.
- **▲** Two or three two-pocket folders.
- A three-ring binder for class handouts and readings (recommended).
- ▲ A UNL Blackboard account and UNL email address.

Online Resources:

■ UNL Libraries Citing & Evaluating Web Resources: http://www.unl.edu/libr/inet/cite.shtml

Major Assignments:

Writing Project 1	15 pts	15%
Writing Project 2	20 pts	20%
Writing Project 3	20 pts	20%
Author Presentation	10 pts	10%
Drafts, Workshop Responses, Homework	10 pts	10%
Think Pieces	20 pts	20%
Participation (verbal, written, group work)	5 pts	5%
TOTALS	100 pts	100%

Writing Project 1: Rhetorical Analysis (15%)

For this 5-7 page writing project, you will analyze Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* through one of the rhetorical lenses we have been talking about (gender, class, war, etc.). You will identify where such rhetoric is being used and to what effect it is being used. Carson didn't write her book this way by accident, so we will analyze her argument, form our own opinions about how her rhetorical choices affected her audience (among other issues in argument and rhetoric that we are learning ourselves), and articulate them in the form of an academic essay. You may consider Noah Lukeman here to aid your analysis.

Writing Project 2: Food Systems Project (20%)

For this 5-7 page writing project, you will take as your guide Michael Pollan (and to some extent Jonathan Safran Foer and others) to examine the micro world of plants (and animals). The goal of

this project is not to glorify or demonize carnivores or vegetarians, but to more fully understand the role we, as individuals, play in the food system, how the choices we make matter. We are in Nebraska, a huge player in American—and global—agriculture, and we are in the midst of suffering an incredible summer of drought. You will explore the Lincoln farmer's market, held every Saturday in the Haymarket during the summer and fall, and you will interview two farmers/vendors to add primary research to your project. You may choose to focus on a small aspect of the food systems for your project (corn, meat, Slow Food, locally sourced foods, etc.) or you may choose something larger—ultimately, the choice of how you articulate the complication you find is up to you. (Choosing a smaller aspect of the system will allow you to ask more focused questions of those you interview.) Ultimately, you will put together an academic essay that complicates your own understanding of the role you play in the larger systems at work in agriculture.

Writing Project 3: Reorientation Credo (20%)

For this 7-10 page writing project, you will write an essay that explores the issues brought up by Rebecca Skloot's *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* through the form of a *This I Believe* essay. The goal of this Credo essay is to articulate the current orientation of your thinking as it has evolved—or not—through the course of this semester and your current understanding of *your place in the world*. We started the semester in a very local place, with the page in front of us, branched out into our participation in the food systems, and we are finishing the semester with a view towards the global. Not only will you explore your own position—physically, emotionally, politically, environmentally, etc.—but you will use at least one interview with an established figure in a relevant field to your topic, as well as secondary research to take this essay beyond your own thinking and place it in the larger world of thought.

Author Presentation: You will sign up for a presentation on one of the authors/works we will be discussing. The presentation should give background on the author, background on the text, and background on the natural disaster that the text is written about. The presentation should be about ten minutes; you will be graded on the thoroughness of your information as well as the presentation of the information. The presentation is worth 10 points, 10% of your final course grade.

Think Pieces: You will submit a weekly two-page, double-spaced Think Piece to the texts we have read. You may choose any of the pieces to respond to that we have read since the last response was due. The purpose of these Think Pieces is not to make sure that you're reading what I've asked of you, but the responses are designed for you to delve deeper into the work, which might provide a spark and a basis for the Writing Project you are working on. Mere summaries of a text (or purely personal reactions) will receive no credit: these are *Think* Pieces and they are graded on your level of analysis. Each Think Piece is worth 2 points, 2% of your final course grade, equaling a total of 20 points, 20% of your final course grade.

Peer Responses: You will also be asked to write one-page, single-spaced critical responses to your peers' work that we will use within our workshop. These will be graded on the same scale as above. Please address questions raised by the writer, offer support and encouragement, identify trouble spots, suggest strategies and ideas. If you are particularly intrigued by an idea that the writer brings up, mark that in the margins and write about why it affected you—and perhaps you want the writer to go further. We will be using these responses within our workshops, but they do not replace workshop feedback. Consider the type of feedback that you would like to get from your peers and give that kind of feedback yourself.

Reflections: Reflections are a place for you to tell the story of how your writing project has evolved and developed during the writing process. Your narrative should be at least two double-spaced pages. Look back over your drafts, workshop notes, and conference notes. Where did your initial idea come from? What changes did you choose to make in revising, and why? Who might you share the final piece with beyond our class? Describe where you struggled and what helped you. What are you proud of accomplishing?

Participation: Your participation is required. Your vocal participation in class discussions and group work is as important as your written participation. If your participation in these ways is causing you problems, please contact me and we can discuss how you can still earn these points.

Grading Scale:

$$A + = 98-100$$
; $A = 94-97$; $A - = 90-93$; $B + = 86-89$; $B = 83-85$; $B - = 80-82$; $C + = 76-79$; $C = 73-75$; $C - = 70-72$; $D + = 66-69$; $D = 63-65$; $D - = 60-62$; $F = less than 60$

Grading Rubric:

A = Goes beyond the demands of the assignment. Takes risks and succeeds. Has few or no mechanical errors. Is insightful and requires no substantial revision or restructuring. Shows significant attention to language and sentencing.

B = Does some work beyond the requirements of the assignment. Takes risks that might not succeed. Mechanical errors are few. Works toward deeper meanings. Does not require substantial revision or restructuring. Shows some attention to language.

C = Fulfills the assignment. Takes few or no risks. Mechanical errors may be common. Work deals solely with the topic and may need some revision or restructuring. Language may be pedestrian, little attention paid to larger implications of sentencing.

D = Comes close to fulfilling the requirements, but does not meet them. There are no risks. Mechanical errors are pervasive, but do not interfere with meaning. Work may not focus well on the topic. Substantial revision and/or restructuring are needed.

F = Woefully inadequate. Risks are not even on the radar. Mechanical errors interfere with meaning. Little or no focus. A complete overhaul and more writing are required. May not fulfill the basic requirements of the assignment, including not meeting page length, missing a Works Cited page, or the paper may not fit the parameters of the assignment at all.

Blackboard/Internet: The rest of our reading assignments will be posted on our Blackboard site or found on the internet. I strongly encourage you print out readings, annotate them, and bring them to class; be ready to discuss them. You may use an ereader as long as it does not prevent your participation in class discussion. If this does become a problem, I will ask you to bring the printed page to class instead.

Access: My goal is to make this class as accessible to all students as possible. Students with disabilities should meet with me privately to discuss any accommodations you may need to help with your success in this course. If you need such accommodations, it is most helpful for the both of us if you come talk to me in the first week of the semester. It is our policy here at UNL to be flexible and provide individualized accommodation if you have a documented disability that may affect your ability to fully participate in all of our class activities or meet the course's requirements. To receive accommodation services, you must be registered with the Services for Students



with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration. Their phone number is 472-3787 or TTY.

Attendance: You have responsibilities to the class and to your group members, which require your prompt and attentive attendance.

- You may miss three class without penalty; for every day you miss after three, your final course grade will be lowered by one full letter grade; an eighth absence constitutes a failure of the course, as stated by the English department policy.
- ▲ I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences.
- ▲ I do understand that illness and family emergencies can prevent you from coming to class. I'll work with you in the case of emergencies, but you need to show the initiative, which means keeping me informed as things are happening, not afterwards.

Late Work Policy: I do not accept late work. If you know you are going to be absent, you must make arrangements with me and turn in your work ahead of time. Pay attention to the due dates on your syllabus and do not wait until the last minute (like the morning a paper is due) to print your assignment. "My printer ran out of ink" is not an excuse. If you do not turn in a paper on time, you will receive a zero for that assignment.

Assignment Formatting: All assignments must follow MLA guidelines for manuscript formatting and citations. Consult handouts on this subject or refer to the Purdue OWL. All assignments (unless otherwise specified) must be type-written on a computer and double spaced. I will not accept handwritten work. All assignments over one page must be stapled. No paper clips, please.

A Note on Plagiarism: The Council of Writing Program Administration states plagiarism "occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas or other original (not common-

knowledge) material without acknowledging its source." For a full statement of UNL's plagiarism policy, refer to the website www.unl.edu/unlpub/undergrad/. You must produce your own work—and that means that getting too much help, having someone too-heavily edit your work, etc—can qualify as plagiarism. If you have any questions, please ask me.

Students committing academic dishonesty will be reported to the appropriate university officials and the penalties may result not only in a failing grade for that particular assignment, but also may result in a failing grade for the course. If you are falling behind and are tempted to plagiarize, DON'T. If you're struggling with any portion of your assignment, come talk to me—I can't help you if I don't know you're having trouble.

The Writing Center: The Writing Center is an excellent resource for you—and it's free—and you'll find that it's valuable for any stage of the writing, no matter what class you're enrolled in. The Writing Center is staffed with trained consultants who will meet with you one-on-one to discuss your writing. It's important to keep in mind that they are not proofreaders or editors, but they'll guide you through any stage of the writing process you need help with, from brainstorming to drafting to sentence-level revision. You can stop by or call their offices to make an appointment. You'll find them in Andrews 115, phone 472-8803, or online at www.unl.edu/writing.

Finally... I hope that through this course you will learn that writing doesn't happen in a vacuum, that writing is a relationship between writer and reader whose purpose is to communicate ideas. Writing is hard—it's hard even for those of us who write for a living. Though many of you may be uncomfortable with writing, understanding how to go through the writing process will help you achieve your writing goals. I am always available if you have questions—stop by my office or drop me an email. If you're serious about learning, I will do everything I can to help. If you have questions about anything, let me know. I look forward to working with you.

CALENDAR

Subject to Change

Week	Day	In-Class Activities	Homework
WEEK 1	Mon 8/20	 Welcome & Introductions Syllabus & Calendar Why are you here? Writing Exercises 	 □ Purchase Books. □ Print Blackboard readings. □ Sign up for Author Presentations □ Read Olsen, "Love of Maps" (Blackboard). □ Read Tredinnick, "Belonging to Here" (Blackboard).
INTRO TO PLACE STUDIES	Wed 8/22	 What is place? Why does it matter? How does it fit into what we're doing this semester? Discuss Olsen and Tredinnick. What does it mean to belong to a place? 	Read Armbruster, Lynch, and Glotfelty, "Introduction" (Blackboard).
INTRO TO MICRO/MACRO	Fri 8/24	 How does the way we look at something matter? How does changing our scope help us to understand differently? 	 □ Read Silent Spring: "Introduction," "A Fable for Tomorrow." □ Read Fresonke, "Is Nature Necessary?" (Blackboard). □ Think Piece 1 Due.
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WEEK 2 MICRO/MACRO: INSECTS	Mon 8/27	 Rachel Carson Author Presentation. Think Piece 1 Due. 	☐ Read Silent Spring, Chapters 2-6. ☐ Read Ian Tyrell, "What is American Exceptionalism?" (Blackboard).
AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM	Wed 8/29	Post WW2 American Exceptionalism: where do we see war-language being used?	☐ Read Silent Spring, Chapters 7-11. ☐ Read Foote, "The Narrative Interactions of Silent Spring" (Blackboard)
GENDERING NATURE	Fri 8/31	Discuss Carson, Foote. In-Class Writing.	□ Read Silent Spring, Chapters 12-17. □ Morrill Hall Excursion: Please visit Morrill Hall with an eye to what we have been talking about in class. What micro/macro applications can you see? Please use this experience as the basis for your Think Piece 2. □ Think Piece 2 Due.
WEEK 3	Mon 9/3	NO CLASS, LABOR DAY	
WHY DO INSECTS MATTER?	Wed 9/5	 Think Piece 2 Due. Discuss Carson, Morrill Hall. In-Class Writing 	 □ Read Noah Lukeman, A Dash of Style (Blackboard). □ Sign up for Week 4 Conferences.
PAYING ATTENTION TO SENTENCES	Fri 9/7	Discuss Lukeman.	Rough Draft WP1 Due. Please bring enough hard copies of your draft for yourself, your group, and me.

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WEEK 4	Mon 9/10	 Rough Draft WP1 Due. The Rhetoric of Beginnings. 	 □ Peer Responses Due—please remember that you need two copies of each (one for me, one for your group member). □ Conferences this week will take place in my office, 337E. Please bring with you the latest draft of your paper.
	Wed 9/12	Workshop.	
	Fri 9/14	Workshop.	 □ Final Draft WP1 Due, with Reflection. Please include in your folder: your rough draft that I commented on, each of your peer drafts, your final draft, and your reflection. □ If you have a laptop, please bring it to class on Monday.
WEEK 5 THE BOTANY OF DESIRE	Mon 9/17	 WP1 Final Due. Watch: The Botany of Desire (apples). 	Read Michael Pollan, The Omnivore's Dilemma: Introduction (1-11).
MACRO/MICRO: PLANTS	Wed 9/19	Michael Pollan Author Presentation.	Read Michael Pollan, The Botany of Desire: Potatoes. (Blackboard).
THE RHETORIC OF CONTROL	Fri 9/21	Discuss Pollan.	 □ Read Michael Pollan, The Omnivore's Dilemma: Corn, 1-3. □ Think Piece 3 Due. □ Remember the Farmer's Market in the Haymarket on Saturday.
WEEK 6	Mon 9/24	Think Piece 3 Due.Discuss Pollan.	☐ Read Michael Pollan, <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> : Corn, 4-7.
THE RHETORIC OF CORN	Wed 9/26	Discuss Pollan.	 □ Read Michael Pollan, The Omnivore's Dilemma: Grass, 8-11. □ Read Jonathan Safran Foer, excerpt from Eating Animals (Blackboard).
THE RHETORIC OF MEAT	Fri 9/28	 Transcript of Interview Due. Discuss Pollan. 	□ Read Michael Pollan, The Omnivore's Dilemma: Grass, 12-14. □ Remember the Farmer's Market in the Haymarket on Saturday.
WEEK 7	Mon 10/1	Think Piece 4 Due.Discuss Pollan.	Read Michael Pollan, <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> : The Forest, 15-17.

	Wed 10/3	Discuss Pollan.	Read Michael Pollan, <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> : The Forest, 17-20.
	Fri 10/5	Transcript of Interview Due.	□ Remember the Farmer's Market in the Haymarket on Saturday. □ If you want to schedule a conference with me for WP2, keep in mind Fall Break.
WEEK 8	Mon 10/8	 Think Piece 5 Due. Watch Food, Inc. 	
WHAT IS OUR PLACE IN THE SYSTEM?	Wed 10/10	• Watch Food, Inc.	Rough Draft WP2 Due. Please bring enough copies of your draft for yourself, for your group, and for me.
	Fri 10/12	 Rough Draft WP2 Due. Workshop. 	☐ Peer Responses Due (Wednesday).
WEEK 9	Mon 10/15	NO CLASS—FALL BREAK HAVE FUN, STAY SAFE!	
	Wed 10/17	Workshop, Peer Responses Due.	
	Fri 10/19	• Workshop.	☐ I am out of town this weekend at a conference and I may or may not have email. Should you need assistance before I return, please go to the Writing Center—they're awesome. ☐ WP2 Due, with reflection. Please include in your folder: your rough draft that I commented on, each of your peer drafts, your final draft, and your reflection.
WEEK 10	Mon 10/22	• WP2 Due. • Start WP3.	Read Skloot, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, pp. xiii-9.
HELA	Wed 10/24	Rebecca Skloot Author Presentation.	Read Skloot, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Ch. 1-5.
BIOETHICS OF RACE, CLASS, GENDER	Fri 10/26	Discuss Skloot.	□ Read Skloot, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Ch. 6-11. □ Read Jay Allison, Introduction (Blackboard).

			☐ Think Piece 6 Due.
WEEK 11	Mon 10/29	 Think Piece 6 Due. Discuss Skloot. In-Class Writing. 	Read Skloot, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Ch. 12-17.
	Wed 10/31	Discuss Skloot.	Read Skloot, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Ch. 18-22.
	Fri 11/2	Discuss Skloot.	 □ Read Skloot, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Ch. 23-29. □ Read Jay Allison, Introduction (Blackboard). □ Read Sarah Adams, "Be Cool to the Pizza Dude" (Blackboard). □ Read Phyllis Allen, "Leaving Identity Issues to Others" (Blackboard). □ Think Piece 7 Due.
WEEK 12	Mon 11/5	 Think Piece 7 Due. Discuss Skloot. In-Class Writing: This I Believe bio. 	 □ Read Skloot, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Ch. 30-34. □ Read Albert Einstein, "An Ideal of Service to Our Fellow Man" (Blackboard). □ Read Eve Ensler, "The Power and
			Mystery of Naming Things" (Blackboard).
WHAT DO WE Believe? And What Complicates	Wed 11/7	Discuss Skloot.	Read Skloot, <i>The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks</i> , Ch. 35-38; pp. 311-315. Read Brian Grazer, "Disrupting My Comfort Zone" (Blackboard).
WHAT WE BELIEVE?			Read Brian Greene, "Science Nourishes the Mind and the Soul" (Blackboard).
			 □ Read Penn Jillette, "There Is No God" (Blackboard). □ Think Piece 8 Due: Please write a two-page <i>This I Believe</i>. Please also include the bio you constructed on Monday (though, feel free to revise that if you choose).
WHERE DO WE Go from Here?	Fri 11/9	 Think Piece 8 (Credo/This I Believe) Due. Discuss Skloot. 	Read Skloot, <i>The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks</i> , Ch. 35-38; pp. 311-315.
			Read Jane Hamill, "A Grown-Up Barbie" (Blackboard).
			Read Joy Harjo, "Talking With the Sun" (Blackboard).
			Read Alan Lightman, "The Power of Mysteries" (Blackboard).
			☐ Think Piece 9 Due.

		• Think Piece 9 Due.	☐ Read Rick Moody, "The Joy and
WEEK 13	Mon		Enthusiasm of Reading" (Blackboard).
	11/12		Read Michael Mullane, "The Rule of Law" (Blackboard).
			☐ Read Cecilia Muñoz, "Getting Angry
			Can Be a Good Thing" (Blackboard).
			☐ Read Frederick Reamer, "The Real
			Consequences of Justice" (Blackboard).
			(Sinons our d).
		Discuss Moody, Mullane,	☐ Think Piece 10 Due. Please
WHAT IS OUR	Wed 11/14	Muñoz, and Reamer. • In-Class Writing.	specifically address the complications
PLACE IN THE WORLD?	11/14	- III-Class Witting.	in your own Credo, where what you believe is gray area. What
WORLD:			contributes/has contributed to this
			gray area?
			Read Colleen Shaddox, "Jazz is the
			Sound of God Laughing" (Blackboard).
			Read Jason Sheehan, "There Is No
			Such Thing as Too Much Barbeque"
		7711 1 70 40 70	(Blackboard).
	Fri	Think Piece 10 Due.	☐ Rough Draft WP3 Due. Please bring enough copies of your draft for
	11/16		yourself, your group, and me.
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WEEK 44	Mon	Rough Draft WP3 Due.Workshop.	
WEEK 14	11/19	workshop.	
	Wed	NO CLASS—	
	11/21	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
	Fri	NIO CLASS	☐ Peer responses due.
	11/23	NO CLASS— Thanksgiving Break	
		TITE (ROGIVE OF BILLIE	
WEEK 15	Mon	Workshop.	
WEEK 15	11/26		
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	1177 1	Workshop	Read Annie Dillard (Blackboard)
	Wed 11/28		☐ Read Walter Mosley (Blackboard).
	11/20		
	т.	In-Class Reflection Work.	
	Fri 11/30		
	11/30		
	3.5	No Class—Conferences.	☐ WP3 Due, with reflection. Please
WEEK 16	Mon		include in your folder: your rough

12/3		draft that I commented on, each of your peer drafts, your final draft, and your reflection.
Wed 12/5	• Final WP3 Due w/ Reflection.	
Fri 12/7	Final wrap-up: Credo.	