Description and Objectives:

We are surrounded by writers and speakers who want us to be, do, or not do something. Especially in the realm of politics, speakers are eager to classify their audience and their opponents in broad strokes, sometimes inaccurately identifying who these people actually are and what they believe. In English 1127, the second half of the freshman writing curriculum for honors students we will be investigating who we are as a people, what labels can we accept or not accept, and how we can articulate our identity in well-reasoned prose. We will examine our own cultural identity as it is constructed by the media. Second, we will study the construction of arguments and issues of style. Third, we will explore how to do research and to incorporate it into our writing.

Our objectives will be:
To become more critical readers and writers,
To understand the principles of argument,
To develop ability to think critically,
To develop skills in library and on-line research and the use of this research in writing thoughtful and intelligent prose.

We will begin the term by developing a rhetorical vocabulary. We will read Plato's Gorgias; this text explores the impact that rhetoric and the skills of argumentation have on society, still relevant almost 2500 years after it was written.

Our cultural emphasis will be contemporary and will focus primarily (though not exclusively) on how the media interprets our culture. For this reason, our primary reading text will be the Newsweek. Delivery of this magazine will be from the instructor for the first couple weeks. Class members will then need to order the magazine on-line. Instructions for doing so will be forthcoming. If you already receive Newsweek, please inform the instructor. If you receive Time or another news magazine, also inform the instructor to arrange that your purchasing Newsweek will be waived. We will be using the Newsweek as well as other news sources throughout the term as the bases of our inquiry into the media's depiction of twenty-first-century American culture.
Expectations:

- **This term we will produce four papers which will treat different kinds of expository writing. All papers will require a topic proposal which will outline your writing plan to me and at least one rough draft. No papers will be accepted without an approved topic proposal or submitted rough drafts.**

- **Promptness:** Please turn your work in on time. All work is due at the beginning of the class on the dates indicated in the syllabus. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade per day! If you think that you are going to be late with a draft, let me know at least a day ahead. I hate surprises in any form and would be less willing to allow an extension on the day that a draft is due.

- **Appearance:** All work should be neatly typed, using standard margins and spacing. Since computers come with spell-checking features, my expectation is that your draft will not have any typos or misspelled words. Finally, always prepare a back-up copy of each assignment so that if one of us misplaces a draft or there is a hungry dog in the vicinity your work is not forever lost.

- **Collaborative work is a key aspect to the writing process and is as important on the peer level as on the student-instructor level. Therefore, I encourage you to come to my office should you have any questions you have with the assignments, your grade, or any other matter concerning the course. You should also feel free to consult with me on questions concerning your individual projects or drafts.**

- **Conferences:** I will schedule a few individual conferences during the term, and I will count our meeting as a class meeting; the missing of which will constitute an absence. The class as a whole will not meet on conference days.

- **One last issue on Attendance. You are expected to attend class everyday and I will take attendance daily. FOUR unexcused absences could result in a failure due to absences. You are also expected to attend every class and be prepared to participate. I define Participation as Contribution, which, in other words, means actively engaging in class discussions, peer workshops, critiquing, and other assignments that we will be doing. I cannot force you into this role but understand that passive participation (showing up but remaining silent and unhelpful) will be rewarded accordingly. The whole class benefits from a lively and total contribution situation. For further information on the general attendance policy consult the Tiger Cub.**

- **Students who need special accommodations in class should make an individual appointment with me as soon as possible.**

- **The expected grading scale will be as follows:**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93 and above</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
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- **E-mail is probably the most efficient way to get in touch with me. While I will endeavor to respond to your e-mail as soon as I can, I do not get e-mail at home. So, if you post me over the weekend, I will not get your message until Monday morning. When posting me, please make clear on the subject line the topic of the e-mail. Check your Auburn e-mail regularly because this address is the way that I will contact you.**
Requirements:
Instruction sheets will be distributed over the course of the term which will clarify the paper assignments. There will also be occasional homework assignments.

Paper #1: Refutation: Find an article with which you disagree and construct an argument based on facts researched elsewhere (3-5 pages).

Paper #2: Who Are We Paper: Using four different news sources, create a picture of what the media believe you as a young American reader is (4-6 pages).

Paper #3: Issue Analysis Paper: Find an issue, idea, concept, or object and argue that it defines your contemporaries as you understand them (4-6 pages).


Tentative Schedule: (I reserve the right to augment this schedule when needed.)

Th 8/16 Introduction. Review of Audience and Writing Process. Assign Paper 1

T 8/21 Plato. Gorgias

Th 8/23 Plato. Gorgias Responses to Plato.


T 9/4 Refutation essays. Topic Proposal for Paper 1

Th 9/6 Newsweek. Assign Paper 2.


Th 9/13 Newsweek. Topic Proposal for Paper 2 (e-mailed)

T 9/18 Library Session #1. Meet in Library Classroom. Paper 1 Due.

Th 9/20 Conferences. Rough Drafts for Paper 2 due

T 9/25 Newsweek


T 10/2 Newsweek.


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T 10/9 Newsweek

Th 10/11 Library Session #2. Meet in Library Classroom.

T 10/16 Newsweek.

Th 10/18 Conferences. Rough Drafts Due.

T 10/23 Newsweek.


T 10/30 Newsweek

Th 11/1 Newsweek.


Th 11/8 Library Session #3. Location to be announced.

T 11/13 Newsweek

Th 11/15 Conferences. Rough Drafts Due

T 11/20-Th 11/22 THANKSGIVING NO CLASS

T 11/27 Newsweek. Assign Final Essay
Th 11/29 Style & Rhetorical Devices. Paper 4 Due
T 12/4 Final Topic Proposals. Newsweek
Th 12/6 Conferences. Final Essay Drafts

*Final Exam: Saturday 8 December 2-4:30 pm*

Texts:
- Plato, Gorgias. (New York: Penguin)
- Newsweek