



# NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY

## Course Syllabus

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### Division of University Studies

#### UNST 221: Thematic Speaking and Writing: Honors Fall 2009

“The production of too many useless things results in too many useless people.”  
~ Karl Marx

“It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity.”  
~ Albert Einstein

“Technology is a queer thing. It brings you great gifts with one hand,  
and it stabs you in the back with the other.”  
~ C. P. Snow

“Man’s guilt in history and in the tides of his own blood has become complicated by  
technology, the daily seeping falsehearted death.”  
~ Don DeLillo

#### Course Description

Thematic Writing is designed to improve students’ abilities to write, speak, and think critically about important issues in the contemporary world by focusing on the rhetoric of science, technology, and progress. Students examine rhetoric as represented in fiction and nonfiction: essays, short stories, drama, poetry, novels, film, popular culture (including popular science writing and journalism), and speeches.

#### Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Thematic writing meets UNST objectives 1-5, 12, 14, 15.

1. Effectively use information technology to find, interpret, and evaluate information discerningly.
2. Effectively communicate in diverse settings and groups using written, oral, and visual means.
3. Effectively employ critical thinking skills in written and oral communication.
4. Effectively relate ideas and concepts, as well as modes of inquiry, across disciplines.
5. Use analytical thinking skills to evaluate information critically.
12. Understand the role of social, political, and economic institutions and processes in the development of societies and the factors that lead to dynamic change in societies over time.
14. Understand and apply ethical reasoning to resolve moral, social, and professional issues.
15. Understand the role that markets, governments, and other social institutions can play in reducing social and economic inequality.

#### Thematic Writing Course Objectives

- **Critical Writing Skills:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in writing across disciplines.
- **Communication:** Students will demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively and informatively (in writing, orally, and through visual materials).

- **Research:** Students will identify, evaluate, and secure pertinent information for class distribution.
- **Technology:** Students will use Blackboard, Turnitin.com, PowerPoint, etc. to demonstrate competency in writing technologies.

### Required Textbooks and Materials

Easton, Thomas A. *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Science, Technology, and Society*. 8th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009.

*Serious scholarship requires procurement of essential course materials. Students will purchase all books and materials required for UNST courses within the first two weeks of the semester. Sharing of books thereafter is prohibited.*

### Clickers

Sharing of clickers is never appropriate and constitutes academic dishonesty. Students must replace lost or stolen clickers for class use. Replacements may be purchased at the university bookstore for \$35.00.

### Grading Policy

15%	Quizzes
10%	Participation
10%	Final Paper
35%	2 Group Presentations
10%	Individual Presentation
20%	Informal writing

Grading in this course will follow the typical ten-point system, where an A falls between 90 and 100, a B between 80 and 89, a C between 70 and 79, and a D between 60 and 69. Falling below 60% is a failing grade.

Grading rubrics will be distributed for presentations and the final paper. Participation grade will be earned through regular contributions to the daily discussion and thoughtfully engaging the reading for each and every class period.

### Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is absolutely essential. Cheating, plagiarism, sharing of clickers or other academic misconduct will not be tolerated. If you are caught cheating, you will not pass this course and will be subject to any and all penalties specified in the student honor code.

### Turnitin.com

All formal written assignments in UNST courses will be turned in electronically via Turnitin.com. Access to this web site will be given to you by the instructor. Turnitin.com compares your writing with virtually every reference that exists on the Internet, as well as a bank of student papers that has been submitted from all over the world. Its purpose is to help students learn the difference between proper citation and quotation of an author's work versus plagiarism (copying others writing without citation). Students who do not own a PC will submit their work via one of the computer labs on campus. The URL for Turnitin.com is: <http://www.turnitin.com>

### Supplemental Instruction Policy

No supplemental instruction is offered for UNST 221.

### Course Policies

#### *Makeup Coursework and Exams*

The administration, faculty and staff recognize that there are circumstances and events that require students to miss classes and required course work due on the day of the absence. Also, they recognize that required course work is needed to give each student an adequate performance evaluation. Therefore, whenever reasonable (and more specifically described below), students should be allowed to make up required work. Instructors should schedule make-up work at a time that is convenient to both the instructor and the student.

#### *Policy Regarding Makeup of Required Coursework*

- Student may petition an instructor to make up required coursework whenever the student has a permissible reason for requesting make up of required coursework.
- Student will be required to present documentation, which verifies absence constituting permissible reason.
- Whenever possible, a student should consult with the instructor prior to an absence that will involve the failure of submission of coursework. Arrangements for makeup should be discussed and agreed upon at this time.
- A student must petition for makeup of required coursework on the first day that he/she returns to class.
- If permission is granted to make up required coursework, the instructor and the student should agree on an acceptable date for accomplishing the makeup of missed required coursework.

Failure to comply with the above may result in the denial to make up required coursework.

### *Required Documentation*

- Verification of Illness: Requires signed statement of a physician or a duly authorized staff member of the Sebastian Health Center.
- Verification of Death: Requires signed statement from the Minister or Funeral Director.
- Verification of Participation in University-Related Activities: Requires signed statement/letter from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- Verification of Other reasonable Circumstance (e.g., court appearance, family emergency, etc.): Requires a signed statement from an appropriate official (e.g., Court Official, parent or guardian, etc.).

### *Late Work*

All assignments are due on the dates indicated in your syllabus. **No late work will be accepted in any UNST course.** Exceptions will be made only in cases of documented medical or family emergency or religious observance. Please notify your instructor by e-mail before the assignment is due should an acceptable absence occur. Employment, child care, or other academic pressures do not constitute a valid excuse for late work. There is no provision for additional assignments or extra credit to substitute for missed course requirements.

### *Class Attendance*

University Studies strives to professionalize its students; therefore, regular attendance and punctuality are mandatory in all UNST courses. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Tardiness will not be tolerated. Absent or tardy students are responsible for any missed class work, including any changes to the syllabus or assignments announced in class. In short, absences and tardiness can/will diminish your grade. If you suffer prolonged illness or misfortune, you should consider dropping the course. Persistent tardiness and failure to observe established classroom etiquette will lead to failure of the course. Student athletes must submit a schedule of days they will be absent within the first week of classes.

Students will automatically receive an "F" for missing beyond the equivalent of two weeks of class:

- M, W, F Schedule: Six (6) unexcused absences
- T, R Schedule: Four (4) unexcused absences
- 1-Class Per Week Schedule: Two (2) unexcused absences

At half the allotted absences (three (3) absences for M, W, F schedule; two (2) for T, R schedule; and one (1) for 1-class per week schedule), students are required to meet with their instructor(s) for a mandatory one-on-one conference concerning his/her performance in class.

Absence or tardiness is only excused for emergency situations. Students are responsible for submitting acceptable documentation for the excused absence within one week of the absence. Examples of acceptable documentation include:

### *Required Documentation*

- Verification of Illness: Requires signed statement of a physician or a duly authorized staff member of the Sebastian Health Center.
- Verification of Death: Requires signed statement from the Minister or Funeral Director.
- Verification of Participation in University-Related Activities: Requires signed statement/letter from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- Verification of Other reasonable Circumstance (e.g., court appearance, family emergency, etc.): Requires a signed statement from an appropriate official (e.g., Court Official, parent or guardian, etc.).

### *Student Athletes (and other school group participants)*

Students participating in school athletics are held to the same attendance and performance expectation as non-athletes. Hence, they should coordinate their course schedules so that team practices and games do not conflict with class meetings and group work. Student-athletes should identify themselves to their instructors, submit a schedule of days you will miss class as well as the name and contact information for their coach within the first week of classes.

### *Classroom Citizenship*

All cell phones, pagers, and personal communication devices must be **turned off** for the duration of the class period. Students who fail to comply with this rule will be asked to leave the class and will be marked absent. Campus security will be asked to escort from the classroom those students who fail to leave as requested.

There will be no eating or drinking in class (other than bottled water). Students will be respectful of their professor and colleagues. Any behavior that distracts (i.e., eating, talking while others are talking, etc.) or is disrespectful (i.e., personal attacks, studying for other courses during class, etc.) is unacceptable. Differences of opinion should be met with intellectual curiosity and rigor rather than insult, contumely, or discord.

Student success in this course depends upon the development of scholarly habits. Participation in class discussion and group work is mandatory. Collegial responsibility and respect are also compulsory.

## Technical Support

If you experience any problems with your A&T account you may call Aggie Tech Support (formerly Help Desk) at 336.334.7195.

## Field Trip Policies/Off-Campus Instruction and Course Activities

- Student Affairs Website: [www.ncat.edu/~staffair/](http://www.ncat.edu/~staffair/)
- Student Handbook: [www.ncat.edu/~deanofst/Handbook.htm](http://www.ncat.edu/~deanofst/Handbook.htm);
- Student Travel Procedures and Student Travel Activity Waiver: [businessfinance.ncat.edu/policies%20and%20procedures%20index.htm](http://businessfinance.ncat.edu/policies%20and%20procedures%20index.htm)

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at [businessfinance.ncat.edu/policies%20and%20procedures%20index.htm](http://businessfinance.ncat.edu/policies%20and%20procedures%20index.htm).

Additional information is available from the office of Student Affairs: [www.ncat.edu/~staffair/](http://www.ncat.edu/~staffair/)

## Other Policies (e.g., copyright guidelines, confidentiality, etc.)

- Student Handbook: <http://www.ncat.edu/~deanofst/Handbook.htm>
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act: [www.ncat.edu/~registra/ferpa\\_info/index.htm](http://www.ncat.edu/~registra/ferpa_info/index.htm)

## Student Conduct & Discipline

- North Carolina A&T State University has rules and regulations that govern student conduct and discipline meant to ensure the orderly and efficient conduct of the educational enterprise. It is the responsibility of each student to be knowledgeable about these rules and regulations.
  - Undergraduate bulletin: [www.ncat.edu/~acdaffrs/Bulletin\\_2008-2010/2008-2010\\_Undergraduate\\_Bulletin.pdf](http://www.ncat.edu/~acdaffrs/Bulletin_2008-2010/2008-2010_Undergraduate_Bulletin.pdf)
- For detailed information about specific policies such as academic dishonesty, cell phones, change of grade, disability services, disruptive behavior, general class attendance, grade appeal, incomplete grades, make up work, student grievance procedures, withdrawal, etc.
  - Student Handbook: [www.ncat.edu/~deanofst/Handbook.htm](http://www.ncat.edu/~deanofst/Handbook.htm)

## E-mail Policy

Instructors will reply to student e-mail within 48 hours, **Monday-Friday only**. In order to ensure a reply, students **must** only use NCAT e-mail accounts (no hotmail, gmail, AOL, etc.). Each e-mail message must include the course number and section (if sent through Bb, it will be added automatically) as well as a concise and clear statement of purpose in the subject line (i.e., UNST 100:17 – Death in Family). You must include your name, as it appears on the course roster, at the end of your message. All messages must be conveyed using standard English.

Please make sure you consult the course syllabus, other handouts, and the course website **BEFORE** submitting inquiries by e-mail. When a question cannot be easily or briefly answered by e-mail, please visit your instructor during their office hours.

## Disabilities

Students with documented learning disabilities should identify themselves to their instructor and present appropriate documentation during the first week of classes. The Office of Veterans and Disability Support Services is located in Murphy Hall, Suite 01, and the contact number is (336) 334-7765.