

## **English 3340—Rhetoric of Science**

### **Overall English Department Mission Statement**

The English Department at Dixie State College strives to instill in students an appreciation for the centrality of language and literature in human culture, particularly their function in social, historical, and political contexts. Students who major in English master skills in analyzing and evaluating texts and other media, as well as learning how to produce focused critical essays.

### **Emphasis Mission Statement (Professional and Technical Writing)**

The Professional and Technical Writing program at Dixie State College of Utah prepares students for careers in technical, scientific, medical, legal, and business writing environments. Courses introduce students to the procedures and practices that professional writers and editors use regularly, including grant writing, freelance writing, interactive media development, magazine production, technical editing, and document design. To further enhance their understanding of language and verbal communication, students in our program investigate areas such as composition theory, visual rhetoric, and the history of rhetoric, as well.

### **Course Description:**

Fulfills a requirement for English majors pursuing an emphasis in Professional & Technical Writing, and open to other interested students. Focuses on rhetorical principles that influence writing in scientific professions. Students will study the writings of influential scientists-rhetoricians. Successful completers will demonstrate through theory and application an understanding of these principles through these types of scientific writing: environmental impact statements, the scientific report, and articles from contemporary scientific journals. Students also will examine current controversies in scientific debate. Prerequisite: ENGL 2010 (Grade C or higher). SP

### **Course Goals:**

By the end of English 3340, students will have significantly improved their ability to do the following:

- Critical thinking and clarity of expression in both written and oral form;
- Critical reading of scientific documents;
- Awareness of and sensitivity to professional and public audiences;
- Awareness of the impact of technology on scientific writing;
- Awareness of different types of formats – and purposes – in scientific writing (research reports, research proposals, scientific articles, etc.);
- Recognition of respect for thoughts contrary to one's own;
- Recognition of ethical dilemmas in scientific communication;
- Recognition of techniques in rhetorical analysis and argument.

## **Course Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of English 3340, students will have significantly improved their ability to do the following:

- Write clearly and analyze critically several types of scientific documents;
- Compose active and direct sentences in grammatically correct English;
- Focus, organize, and develop thoughts for scientific documents (both short and long) and analyses of scientific documents;
- Utilize a wide variety of research sources;
- Synthesize research with their own ideas and writing;
- Document research in rhetorical analysis of scientific documents, formal reports and/or proposals on scientific topics;
- Engage in peer-critique and revision of their own written work;
- Utilize computers and the Internet to improve their writing and knowledge of scientific groups;
- Give at least one oral presentation of research and/or final report, accompanied by an appropriate electronic presentation or science poster (i.e. PowerPoint or some other media).

## **Methods of Assessment:**

### ***Formative Assessment Methods***

Complete regular homework assignments that meet the professional standards of successful scientific and technical writing.

### ***Summative Assessment Methods***

Final Exam: Perform satisfactorily on exams and writing assignments that measure retention of course material (as well as original analysis and interpretation).

Oral Presentation: Give at least one oral presentation of research and/or a final project, accompanied by an appropriate electronic presentation or science poster presentation (i.e. PowerPoint or some other media).

### ***Value-Added Assessment Methods***

Pre/Post Test: Students will complete a course-specific pre- and post-test, to assess the ways in which their learning has increased during the semester. This activity will be in the form of a multiple-choice test or short answer format.