



## Syllabus for English 2A: Critical Thinking and Writing

“Education is not the learning of facts but the training of the mind to think.”  
–Albert Einstein

### Course Information

Semester & Year: Spring 2022

Course ID & Section #: Engl-2A-D2967

Instructor's name: Professor Ruth Rhodes

Day/Time of required meetings: T/TH 10:05-11:30

Location: DM 34

Course units: 3

1. *Thinking in Bets*, Annie Duke, Portfolio/Penguin. 2018. ISBN# 9780735216365
2. *Easy Writer* (8<sup>th</sup> edition) by Andrea Lunsford, Macmillan, 2022. ISBN# 978-1-319-24422-4

### Instructor Contact Information

Office location: E7

Office hours: Before class, after class, or by appointment

Phone number: 707-465-2336 (email or Canvas message is best)

Email address: [ruth-rhodes@redwoods.edu](mailto:ruth-rhodes@redwoods.edu)

### Catalog Description

Study argumentation and critical thinking in this second-semester composition course focused on reading and writing across multiple academic communities. Practice critical reading and research strategies, examine and evaluate primarily non-fiction texts, and craft responses through argumentative writing. Strengthen your information literacy and documentation skills and satisfy both the full-year composition and the critical thinking transfer requirements.

### Course Student Learning Outcomes

1. Write logical, well-developed, thesis-driven essays that respond to questions at issue raised primarily by non-fiction works.
2. Evaluate, use, and document evidence from primary and secondary sources to support, develop, or validate judgments.
3. Evaluate, use, and document evidence from primary and secondary sources to support, develop, or validate judgments.
4. Write logical, well-developed, thesis-driven essays that respond to questions at issue raised primarily by non-fiction works.

## Prerequisites

English 1A

## Accessibility

College of the Redwoods is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability or believe you might benefit from disability-related services and accommodations, please contact your instructor or [Disability Services and Programs for Students](#) (DSPS). Students may make requests for alternative media by contacting DSPS based on their campus location:

- Eureka: 707-476-4280, student services building, 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- Del Norte: 707-465-2324, main building near the library
- Klamath-Trinity: 530-625-4821 Ext 103

If you take online classes, DSPS will email approved accommodations for distance education classes to your instructor. In the case of face-to-face instruction, please present your written accommodation request to your instructor at least one week before the needed accommodation so that necessary arrangements can be made. Last-minute arrangements or post-test adjustments usually cannot be accommodated.

## Student Support

Good information and clear communication about your needs will help you be successful. Please let your instructor know about any specific challenges or technology limitations that might affect your class participation. College of the Redwoods wants every student to be successful.

## Primary Focus

In English 2A, you build on the foundation “muscles” you build up in English 1A. You read, analyze, compare, and evaluate complex, interesting, and cutting-edge non-fiction texts as part of a vibrant learning community (your peers and professor). Through discussions, both written and face-to-face, you will ask and answer questions at issue about the ideas you encounter, and then write essays and other texts to move those ideas forward and share with the wider world.

## Before Class

You will be assigned **readings** nearly every week as homework. You will take **critical reading notes** in preparation for class. You will post your notes, handwritten or digital, to Canvas as evidence of your preparation *before* class begins. It is vital that you be prepared when you come to class. Class is only interesting when students have done the reading in advance, even if they don't fully understand it and are ready to play with the ideas.

## During Class

We will **discuss** the readings and engage in **critical thinking activities**. We will examine and debate the purpose, style, logic, evidence, meaning, and implications of the ideas we read. We may ask, “How do these ideas apply to you and your experience of the world? Why might those ideas matter? What can be done with them to change your life? Your community? The world?”

## After Class

Most weeks, you will complete a **formal writing practice** related to what we've learned. You may also take a **quiz** to cement your understanding. Written work like writing practices (usually turned in through the Canvas discussion tool), quizzes, and critical reading notes will serve as low-stakes assignments (frequently given and worth a small number of points). These are skill-building assignments. I grade these assignments based on whether they are completed (3), partly completed (2), or not attempted (0) rather than on more complex quality measures. Effort is what counts here, as well as timely completion. Skill-building assignments close automatically. I do not accept late skill-building work.<sup>1</sup>

## Essays

During the semester, you will write three (3) **formal essays** addressing ideas in our readings and discussions. You will carefully research and craft responses to these ideas. For the most part, you will decide what to respond to based on your interests. In preparing to write the essays, we will cover APA and MLA styles. We will also explore writing strategies to create clear, organized, convincing arguments. This will include some review of Standard American English and other conventions expected in college. Often, we will look at student examples and practice revising and editing together.

I grade essays differently than skill-building assignments. They are graded for achievement of student learning outcomes rather than completion. In other words, the grade reflects the overall quality. I use a three-tiered system: Exceeds Expectations (40), Meets Expectations (30), and Does Not Yet Meet Expectations / Revise (25).

All essays (except Essay 3) can be revised for a passing grade if they do not initially meet expectations. Revision in response to feedback is an important part of the class. It is *normal* to revise an essay if it doesn't meet expectations the first time.

While I don't accept late skills work, I do accept late essays. Ask and you shall receive.

## Evaluation & Grading Policy

Student work is evaluated in two ways: completion (skill-building activities) and quality (essays). Grades are updated regularly in Canvas. I calculate overall grades by percentage in two areas:

- **Skill-building Activities:** 40%
- **Essays:** 60% (3 Essays, 20% each)

The following are general expectations for earning the grade you want:

**A (100-90%)** To earn an A, write three essays. All must meet expectations; two should exceed expectations. Complete nearly all your skill-building activities. Earn 90-100% collectively.

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<sup>1</sup> Emergencies happen. Don't worry about missing one or two skill-building assignments. I will drop 1-2 of your lowest grades in this category by the end of the semester so that everyone gets a "pass" if they miss a few.

**B (89-80%)** To earn a B, write three essays. All must meet or exceed expectations. Complete nearly all your skill-building activities. Earn 80-89% collectively. B is a respectable grade. Sometimes, you can't do it all. You undoubtedly did a lot to get to a B, so be proud!

**C (79-70%)** To earn a C, write three essays; at least two should meet or exceed expectations. Complete nearly all your skill-building activities. Earn between 70-79% collectively and pat yourself on the back. You dared to keep going even though you experienced some setbacks.

**D (69-60%)** D is not a passing grade at CR, but it shows you are not a quitter. You did not give up. When you win the Pulitzer Prize, we will all have a good laugh about all those skill-building activities you missed because you were working three jobs and taking care of your kids while going to college. If you would like a D instead of an F, turn in at least two essays that meet or exceed expectations. Earn between 60-69% on your assignments collectively.

**F (59-0%)** Your assignments totaled between 0-59%. Something went wrong. You lost interest. You ghosted. Maybe life gave you lemons. Contact me. I probably can't make the F go away, but I can provide you with advice about applying for an incomplete or academic renewal so that the F grade won't delay or derail your future plans. Remember that road to a college degree is long. A low grade in this class is not a life sentence. It's just a setback. *Illegitimi non carborundum*. Don't let the bastards grind you down.

**Exception:** If you feel you have achieved the student learning outcomes, but your achievement is not reflected in your scores for some reason, please feel free to *negotiate* your grade. Make an argument that you deserve a higher grade than you earned. Often, this happens when a student has experienced a long illness or stressful life event that kept them from attending class or turning in work. The last thing I want to do is make you repeat the class; if you achieve the skills, you need to move on. Send me an email, and we can talk about it.

## **COVID-19 Sucks**

We are in the middle of a global pandemic. It is making our lives difficult in many different ways. And yet, here you are, bravely getting an education in the middle of an event shaping history.

Be good to yourselves. Think of our class as an oasis from stress, a chance to learn new skills, and an opportunity to grow. I will do all I can to make learning fun and enriching—far beyond ticking the box on a required class for your degree. I will need your help to do this, though.

Do your best to help one another. Reach out. Make friends. Try not to obsess over grades. Focus on building skills. Understand that many parts of life are hard right now, so as the young folks say, “embrace the suck.”

Speak up when something isn't working, if you're confused, uncomfortable, or have an idea to improve things. It is *normal* to feel depression, anger, and anxiety right now. I am feeling it, too. Don't let's not let COVID-19 keep you from achieving your goals. Take this opportunity to expand your mind and build meaningful relationships. Show up each day so that you can tell

your grandkids you went to college during the great COVID-19 epidemic—and it changed your life for the better.

## **Inclusion, Respect, and Robust Discussion**

My primary goal is to facilitate learning for everyone. That includes monitoring discussions to ensure that we treat each other with respect (see the Code of Conduct link). In English 2A, we will practice intellectual virtues like humility and fair-mindedness.

All students should feel welcome, and no one should treat another student with disrespect. But what do we mean by “respect” and “tolerance”?

Part of your task in becoming a better critical thinker is to recognize that your experience shapes your values—and that experience is limited. Other people see the world differently because they experience it differently. They have much to tell us, even when we initially find their ideas wrongheaded or distasteful. Our task is to understand different perspectives and *together* discover what is true and right and just and good.

Tolerance does not mean that “everyone is right in their own way.” Tolerance is the process we use to find common ground. Critical thinking involves holding ideas up to the light of reason through “the checking of each by each.” We build relationships, listen, and also speak our minds courageously. Only then can we explore the strength of our ideas and become aware of our prejudices and faulty assumptions.

I will strive to protect free expression in this class. It’s okay to bungle your words, to have ideas come out awkwardly, or to be dead wrong as long as you come from a place of intellectual humility and respect for your fellow learners.

Every semester I learn from students’ ideas and reshape my view of the world. Expect to be introduced to new ways of seeing things! Understand in advance that your ideas, values, and beliefs may be respectfully challenged in this class as part of the learning process.

## **Admissions deadlines & enrollment policies**

Spring 2022 Dates

- *Classes begin: 01/15/22*
- *Last day to add a class: 01/21/22*
- *Martin Luther King, Jr’s Birthday (all campuses closed: 01/17/22*
- *Last day to drop without a W and receive a refund: 01/28/22*
- *Census date (or 20% into class duration): 01/31/22*
- *Last day to file P/NP (only courses where this is an option) 02/11/22*
- *Lincoln’s Birthday (all campuses closed): 02/18/22*
- *Presidents Day (all campuses closed): 02/21/22*
- *Last day to petition to graduate or apply for certificate: 03/03/22*
- *Spring Break (no classes): 03/14/22-03/19/22*
- *Last day for student-initiated W (no refund): 04/01/22*
- *Last day for faculty-initiated W (no refund): 04/01/22*

- *Final examinations: 05/07/22-05/13/22*
- *Semester ends: 05/13/22*
- *Grades available for transcript release: approximately 05/30/22*

## **Academic dishonesty**

In the academic community, the high value placed on truth implies a corresponding intolerance of scholastic dishonesty. In cases involving academic dishonesty, determination of the grade and of the student's status in the course is left primarily to the discretion of the faculty member. In such cases, where the instructor determines that a student has demonstrated academic dishonesty, the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment and/or exam and may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [College Catalog](#) and on the [College of the Redwoods website](#).

Academic dishonesty is rare at College of the Redwoods, but when it does occur, it is often the result of plagiarism. **Plagiarism** is taking the words and/or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. We will learn how to cite the ideas of others in this class. We will also use Turnitin.com (an app already integrated into Canvas) to guide us. Accidental plagiarism is common and is never punished. Students are invited to revise their work. But deliberate plagiarism will result in a zero for the assignment and possible removal from the class. So please do not buy a paper online or copy information and/or words from websites to present as your own.

## **Disruptive behavior**

Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include but is not limited to: unwarranted interruptions; failure to adhere to instructor's directions; vulgar or obscene language; slurs or other forms of intimidation; and physically or verbally abusive behavior. In such cases where the instructor determines that a student has disrupted the educational process, a disruptive student may be temporarily removed from class. In addition, the student may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [College Catalog](#) and on the [College of the Redwoods website](#).

## **Setting Your Preferred Name in Canvas**

Students have the ability to have an alternate first name and pronouns appear in Canvas. Contact [Admissions & Records](#) to request a change to your preferred first name and pronoun. Your Preferred Name will only be listed in Canvas. This does not change your legal name in our records. See the [Student Information Update form](#).

## **Canvas Information**

Log into Canvas at <https://redwoods.instructure.com>  
 Password is your 8-digit birthdate

For tech help, email [its@redwoods.edu](mailto:its@redwoods.edu) or call 707-476-4160  
Canvas Help for students: <https://webapps.redwoods.edu/tutorial/>  
Canvas online orientation workshop: [Canvas Student Orientation Course \(instructure.com\)](https://instructure.com)

## **Community College Student Health and Wellness**

Resources, tools, and training regarding health, mental health, wellness, basic needs, and more designed for California community college students, faculty, and staff are available on the California Community Colleges [Health & Wellness website](#).

[Wellness Central](#) is a free online health and wellness resource that is available 24/7 in your space at your pace.

Students seeking to request a counseling appointment for academic advising or general counseling can email [counseling@redwoods.edu](mailto:counseling@redwoods.edu).

## **Emergency procedures / Everbridge**

College of the Redwoods has implemented an emergency alert system called Everbridge. In the event of an emergency on campus, you will receive an alert through your personal email and/or phones. Registration is not necessary in order to receive emergency alerts. Check to make sure your contact information is up-to-date by logging into WebAdvisor <https://webadvisor.redwoods.edu> and selecting 'Students' then 'Academic Profile' then 'Current Information Update.'

Please contact Public Safety at 707-476-4112 or [security@redwoods.edu](mailto:security@redwoods.edu) if you have any questions. For more information, see the [Redwoods Public Safety Page](#).

In an emergency that requires an evacuation of the building anywhere in the District:

- Be aware of all marked exits from your area and building
- Once outside, move to the nearest evacuation point outside your building
- Keep streets and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and personnel

Do not leave campus unless it has been deemed safe by the campus authorities.

## **Del Norte Campus Emergency Procedures**

Please review the [Crescent City campus emergency map](#) for campus evacuation sites, including the closest site to this classroom (posted by the exit of each room). For more information, see the [Redwoods Public Safety Page](#).

## **Student Support Services**

The following online resources are available to support your success as a student:

- [CR-Online](#) (Comprehensive information for online students)
- [Library Articles & Databases](#)
- [Canvas help and tutorials](#)
- [Online Student Handbook](#)

[Counseling](#) offers assistance to students in need of professional counseling services such as crisis counseling.

Learning Resource Center includes the following resources for students

- [Academic Support Center](#) for instructional support, tutoring, learning resources, and proctored exams. Includes the Math Lab & Drop-in Writing Center
- [Library Services](#) to promote information literacy and provide organized information resources.
- [Multicultural & Diversity Center](#)

Special programs are also available for eligible students, including

- [Extended Opportunity Programs & Services \(EOPS\)](#) provides services to eligible income disadvantaged students including textbook award, career academic and personal counseling, school supplies, transportation assistance, tutoring, laptop, calculator and textbook loans, priority registration, graduation cap and gown, workshops, and more!
- The TRiO Student Success Program provides eligible students with a variety of services, including trips to 4-year universities, career assessments, and peer mentoring. Students can apply for the program in [Eureka](#) or in [Del Norte](#)
- The [Veteran's Resource Center](#) supports and facilitates academic success for Active Duty Military, Veterans, and Dependents attending CR through relational advising, mentorship, transitional assistance, and coordination of military and Veteran-specific resources.
- Klamath-Trinity students can contact the CR KT Office for specific information about student support services at 530-625-4821



Week	Lecture Topics & Readings
1	Academic Reading, Writing, and Thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Introduction &amp; Community Building Activities</li> </ul> Critical Reading and Notetaking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read for Thursday: “How to Read the News Like a Scientist” (article)</li> </ul>
2	Introduction to Unit One & Writing Processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read/take the quiz for Tuesday on Writing Processes, <i>Easy Writer</i> 8<sup>th</sup>, 2-23 (alternatively, <i>EW</i> 6<sup>th</sup> 14-36)</li> </ul> The “Conventions” of College Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read (in class) “Wind Farm” and “Online Learning”</li> </ul>
3	<i>Thinking in Bets</i> : Life is Poker, Not Chess <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and take notes for Tuesday: <i>Thinking In Bets</i> Introduction &amp; Chapter 1</li> </ul> Contexts for Writing, Reading, and Speaking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and take the quiz for Thursday: <i>Easy Writer</i>, “Contexts for Writing, Reading, and Speaking,” pp. 39-78</li> </ul> <p>Note: Census Week. Attend class or contact me so you won't be dropped</p>
4	Wanna Bet? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and take notes for Tuesday: <i>TIB</i> Chapter 2</li> </ul> Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and take the quiz for Thursday: <i>EW</i>, “Research,” pp. 84-118</li> </ul>
5	Bet to Learn: Fielding an Uncertain Future <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and take notes for Tuesday: <i>TIB</i>, Chapter 3</li> </ul> Citation Style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scan for Thursday: “Documentation” (your choice—either the MLA or APA sections), <i>EW</i>, pp. 120-169</li> </ul>
6	Prewriting & Drafting Essay One <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Come prepared to work on Essay One</li> </ul> Top Twenty Tips <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read for Thursday: <i>EW</i>, Top Twenty Tips, pp. 26-38</li> </ul>
7	Writing Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post a draft of Essay One and come ready to provide feedback to others</li> </ul> Introduction to Unit 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read for Thursday: “Outsmart Your Own Biases” (online article)</li> <li>• <b>Essay One is due Sunday by midnight</b></li> </ul>
8	Introduction to Unit 2 and The Buddy System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read for Tuesday: <i>TIB</i>, Chapter 4</li> </ul> Effective Sentences

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and take the quiz for Thursday: <i>EW</i>, “Style: Effective Language,” pp. 243-267</li> </ul>
<b>Spring Break, March 14-18</b>	
9	Dissent to Win <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and take notes for Tuesday: <i>TIB</i>, Chapter 5</li> </ul> Exploring Cognitive Biases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading To Be Announced (TBA)</li> </ul>
10	Adventures in Mental Time Travel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read for Tuesday: <i>TIB</i>, Chapter 5</li> </ul> Note: No class on Thursday / Professor Rhodes’ on leave
11	Exploring Logical Fallacies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading TBA</li> </ul> Effective Sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and take quiz for Thursday: “Style: Effective Sentences,” <i>EW</i>, pp. 270-283</li> </ul>
12	Prewriting & Drafting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading TBA</li> </ul> Essay Two Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading TBA</li> <li>• <b>Essay Three is due Sunday by midnight</b></li> </ul> Note: Our class will likely be online this week due to DNUSD’s Spring Break
13	Introduction to Unit Three and Applying What You Have Learned <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading TBA</li> </ul> More on Cognitive Biases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read for Thursday: TBA</li> </ul>
14	Research Week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readings TBA</li> </ul>
15	Prewriting & Drafting Essay Three Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Essay Three is due Sunday by midnight</b></li> </ul>
16	Finals Week / Course Evaluations Due