

**SCLA 102 Transformative Texts: Critical Thinking &
Communication II: Modern World
Distance Learning Sample Syllabus**

Instructor:
Term:
Office:
Email:
Virtual Office Hours:

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Course Description:

SCLA 102 is based on the fundamental premise that great texts -- whether famous speeches, essays, or poetry as well as film and digital media -- inform and inspire students, encouraging their creative and imaginative capacities, helping students see the world from different perspectives and broadening their worldview. In this class, we will examine a series of texts (including digital media); seeking to understand the contexts in which these texts were produced as well as what these texts mean to us today.

SCLA 102 is part of Level I of the Cornerstone certificate program. It fulfills the Oral Communication requirement in the University Core Curriculum. It is dedicated to developing and enhancing the ability of students to convey information through oral presentations, advancing their understanding of the importance of rhetorical situations and choices; analyzing and constructing presentations for different audiences; gathering and evaluating sources for presentations and using visual aids effectively.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students will:

1. Demonstrate effective, professional delivery, designing and adapting appropriate verbal appeals through vocal intonation and non-verbal cues.
2. Distinguish and apply appropriate informative, persuasive, explanatory, interrogatory and argumentative strategies and techniques in the discussions and in formal presentations.
3. Organize presentations with effective supporting materials.
4. Locate and evaluate effective sources of information.

5. Engage critically with transformative texts, drawing on multiple perspectives, including the individual, the historical, and the contemporary.

Theme of Our Section

We are focusing on governance and resistance in this course. Our transformative texts feature foundational ideas about the purpose of government and different models for what these could look like in practice. The novels and play focus on the motivations of people in power and how individuals within the society work to create structural change where they see problems. We will question different visions of “utopia” and how they accommodate different groups of people. We will also pay particular attention to the role of technology and religion in the government through these readings.

Required Texts (to be purchased):

1. Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* (1931)
2. George Orwell, *1984* (1949)
3. Arthur Miller, *The Crucible* (1953)
4. Octavia E. Butler, *Parable of the Sower* (1993) [also see the graphic novel adaptation]
5. Dan O’Hair, Hannah Rubinstein, and Rob Stewart, *A Pocket Guide to Public Speaking* (2003)

[Instructor Note: Other titles that could work here include, Thomas More, *Utopia* (1516), Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Herland* (1915), Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (1925), Lao She, *Cat Country* (1933), George Orwell, *Animal Farm* (1945), Robert Penn Warren, *All the King’s Men* (1946), Jean-Paul Sartre, *Dirty Hands* (1948), Albert Camus, *The Just Assassins* (1949), Kurt Vonnegut, *Harrison Bergeron* (1961), Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985), Julia Alvarez, *Before We Were Free* (2002)]

Other Readings (posted on Brightspace):

1. Thomas Hobbes, “Of the Natural Condition of the Commonwealth” from, *Leviathan* (1651)
2. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Of The Social Contract” from *The Social Contract* (1762)
3. Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation” (1919)
4. Emile Durkheim, Excerpts from *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912)

Grading

Grade Breakdown:

A Range:	A- (89.50-92.49%)	A (92.50-96.49%)	A+ (96.50% and above)
B Range:	B- (79.50-82.49%)	B (82.50-86.49%)	B+ (86.50-89.49%)
C Range:	C- (69.50-72.49%)	C (72.50-76.49%)	C+ (76.50-79.49%)
D Range:	D- (59.50-62.49%)	D (62.50-66.49%)	D+ (66.50-69.49%)
Failing:	F (59.49% and below)		

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Oral Presentations: 60%

One of the main goals of this course is to improve on your presentation skills. You will give four presentations and you will be graded using the “SCLA Oral Presentation Rubric,” located below.

[Instructor Note: Students can turn in their online presentations by uploading them as assignments on Brightspace (or any Learning Management System, LMS) that only you can see. Alternatively, they can upload them to their small discussion groups (see the note on groups below), so that everyone in their group can see them. They could also submit their work to the peer-review website [Circuit](#). For this last option, students are assigned three of their peers to review. Please adjust the presentation schedule to make room for these reviews.]

Speech #1 (10%)

[Instructor Note: This should be a short speech that helps students become familiar with presenting to the class and allows them to practice recording and posting their speeches online and giving feedback. We suggest one of the following two speeches for this assignment:]

Name Story Speech & Peer Feedback:

You will give a 1-2-minute speech on your name. Please see detailed instructions on Brightspace.

Object/ Text Story Speech & Peer Feedback:

You will introduce yourself to class through a text that is meaningful to you. The speech will be between 1-2-minutes long. Please see detailed instructions on Brightspace.

Speech #2 (20%)

[Instructor Note: This should be a medium-size speech wherein students are connecting to the themes or content of one of your transformative texts. We suggest one of the following speech assignments:]

Story Collider Speech & Peer Feedback:

You will tell us about a social or physical science topic using a story. This will be a 3-5-minute speech that you upload to Circuit as an audio file. You will turn in a draft of this speech in Week 2 (5% of your final grade) and the final speech will be due in Week 3 (15% of your final grade). Both portions of this speech require graded peer-feedback in Circuit, too. Please see detailed directions on Brightspace.

Reading Introduction Speech:

You will give a 3-5-minute speech on a major theme from the day’s reading—please do not merely summarize the text. Please see detailed instructions on Brightspace.

Speech #3 (30%)

[Instructor Note: This is the final and longest speech, requiring students use outside sources to support a major argument. If you would like to include a second high-stakes writing option (in addition to the discussion board reflection below), we suggest having a paper accompany the speech. We suggest one of the following speech assignments:]

Transformative Story Text Speech & Peer Feedback:

You will select any “text” that tells a story that you feel should be considered a “transformative text.” You will need to provide evidence to support your argument in an 8-10-minute persuasive speech. The speech must include a PowerPoint presentation. The recording you submit must feature both you and your PowerPoints (picture-in-picture format). Please see detailed instructions on Brightspace.

Final Presentation Speech

You will give an 8-10-minute speech that presents an original argument answering one of the pre-provided question. The speech should be engaging to the listener and clearly present your thesis as well as supporting argument and evidence. Please see detailed instructions on Brightspace.

Course Participation: 40%

Textbook Work: 10%

[Instructor Note: Consider using 10% of your final grade on activities pertaining to your speech textbook. You could assign short speech craft assignments from the text, short reflections on the chapters, quizzes on the content, or answering questions that may be included in the chapters of the textbook.

In the schedule, we have listed places for “Speech Textbook Work” due every Wednesday for weeks 2-6. You may wish to dedicate more weeks to this work, before the second speech is due, for students to work on a lot of the mechanics detailed in a text and then start focusing more on crafting and revising their final third speech.]

Discussion Boards: 20%

You will participate in at least one discussion board each week. They will require an initial reflection post and then at least two response posts a few days later. You will work in small discussion groups of 6 people that will remain the same throughout the semester.

[Instructor Note: about discussion boards – there is an option to conditionally open discussion threads on Brightspace (and this is probably true of other LMS as well). You may want to assign short quizzes on the readings that they have to take and earn a certain percent before they can post in the forum. We also suggest dividing your students into smaller groups of around 6 to help keep discussions vibrant and to help students get a better sense of belonging.]

Discussion Board Reflection: 10%

At the end of the semester, you will reflect on all of the work you have done in your transformative text discussion board. Your goal in this paper is to analyze your initial

posts and discussions with your peers for themes, just as we have done with the transformative texts this semester. Please see Brightspace for more detailed directions.

[Instructor Note: about low and high-stakes writing in the course – the initial posts and responses serve as low-stakes writing assignments that students are turning in each week. We suggest grading them for content and giving them tips for improving their argumentation and grammar. This final reflection paper is a high-stakes assessment of their writing ability.]

Extra Credit (up to 3% of your final grade)

The Cornerstone Program has launched the *Cornerstone Review* magazine. It will feature essays, short stories, poetry, and digital artwork inspired by the transformative texts we cover in class. Please submit any creative work you design or write over the course of the semester to earn up to 3% on top of your final course grade. I will assess submissions based on originality, creativity, and connection to the text. I will submit the top 3 pieces to the magazine at the end of the semester. Please see Brightspace for more detailed instructions.

SCLA Oral Presentation Rubric

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Introduction				
How well did the beginning grab the audience's attention?				
How effectively did the speaker introduce the topic?				
Body				
How effectively did the presentation flow? Was the body well organized?				
How well did the presentation utilize credible supportive evidence? Were there sufficient details (explanations, examples, illustrations, etc.) to support the principal ideas of the presentation?				
Was the central message clear? Was there a clear main point/thesis/"take away" that was easy to identify?				
Conclusion				
How well did the speaker bring the presentation to an end?				
Delivery				
How effective was the speaker's eye contact?				
How effective was the physical delivery? (posture, gestures, distracting movements, movement)				
How effective was the verbal delivery? (tone, rate, volume, vocal fillers)				
How well did the speaker use language (vocabulary, terminology if applicable, sentence structure)? Was the language appropriate for the audience and did it support the effectiveness of the presentation?				
Additional criteria:				

Adapted from AAC&U VALUE Rubric for Oral Communication

SCLA 102 Schedule

Lines in bold pertaining to speech work. This work accounts for 60% of your final grade in the course. Please make sure that you stay on-top of these deadlines!

Week #1

- Reading for the week:
 1. Syllabus
 2. Brightspace Page
 3. Thomas Hobbes, “Of the Natural Condition of the Commonwealth”
 4. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Of the Social Contract”
- Assignments:
 1. Introduction Discussion Board
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 2. Discussion Board on Hobbes and Rousseau
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 3. Syllabus Quiz due by 11:59pm EST Friday

Week #2

- Reading for the week
 1. *Brave New World*, pages 1-86.
- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 2. Speech Textbook Work due by 11:59pm EST on Wednesday
 3. **Speech #1 Due by 11:59pm EST on Friday**

Week #3

- Reading for the week:
 1. *Brave New World*, pages 87-171.
- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 2. Speech Textbook Work due by 11:59pm EST on Wednesday

Week #4

- Reading for the week:
 1. *Brave New World*, pages 172-259.
- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 2. Speech Textbook Work due by 11:59pm EST on Wednesday
 3. **Speech #2 Topic Reflection Due by 11:59pm EST on Friday**

Week #5

- Reading for the week:
 1. Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation”
- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 2. Speech Textbook Work due by 11:59pm EST on Wednesday

Week #6

- Reading for the week:
 1. *The Crucible*
- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 2. Speech Textbook Work due by 11:59pm EST on Wednesday
 3. **Speech #2 Outline First Draft Due 11:59pm EST on Friday**

Week #7

- Reading for the week:
 1. Watch a recording of *The Crucible* play [instructor note: there are several of these available on YouTube. You could also use the 1996 movie or have them rent the version on Digital Theatre.com]
- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 2. Speech Textbook Work due by 11:59pm EST on Wednesday

Week #8

- Reading for the Week:
 1. *1984*, Book I
- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 - 2. Turn in Speech #2 by 11:59pm EST on Friday**
 - 3. Turn in Speech #2 Revision Reflection by 11:59pm EST on Friday**

Week #9

- Reading for the week:
 1. *1984*, Book II
- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 - 2. Speech #3 Topic Due by 11:59pm EST on Friday**

Week #10

- Reading for the week:
 1. *1984*, Book III & Appendix
- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 - 2. Speech #3 Topic Due by 11:59pm EST on Sunday**

Week #11

- Reading for the week:
 1. Excerpts from Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*
- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 - 2. Speech #3 Outline Due by 11:59pm EST on Friday**

Week #12

- Reading for the week:
 1. *Parable of the Sower*, Foreward-page 99 (through chapter 9)
- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday
 - 2. Speech #3 First Draft Due by 11:59pm EST on Friday**

Week #13

- Reading for the week:
 1. *Parable of the Sower*, pages 100-213 (chapters 10-17)

- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday

Week #14

- Reading for the week:
 1. *Parable of the Sower*, Pages 214-329 (through the end)
- Assignments:
 1. Discussion Board:
 - a. Initial Post due by 11:59pm EST on Tuesday
 - b. 2 Replies due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday

Week #15

1. **Final Speech #3 due by 11:59pm EST on Thursday**
2. **Speech #3 Revision Reflection Due by 11:59pm EST on Friday**

Week #16

1. Discussion Board Reflection Due in Brightspace at 11:59pm EST on our University-scheduled final exam date

How to Succeed in This Course

[Instructor Note: The following policies are all recommended by Purdue University, but the specific wording is something you can change to fit your own teaching style.]

Attendance Policy: Please keep in contact with me throughout the semester about your ability to do your work for this course. I understand that you are a whole person with a life outside of this class. Please email me as soon as possible if something comes up that will keep you from coming to class so that we can come up with an alternative plan for you.

If something happens during the semester that will cause you to miss excessive amounts of coursework, you must contact the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) as soon as possible to begin working with them on a plan for all of your classes.

Email Etiquette: Please include “SCLA 102” in the subject of your emails and follow standard business email etiquette. Emails with salutations, full sentences, and sign-offs are much more likely to get an in-depth reply than those without. Check out [this essay](#) from *Inside Higher Ed* for some amusing tips!

Assignments: Assignments are accepted before or on the due date specified, and must be submitted via Brightspace. Late or make up assignments will not be accepted except in cases of personal illness/emergency (at the Professor’s discretion), university sponsored events, civic or religious obligations, or bereavement (in accordance with the University’s *Grief Absence Policy for Students*). Students wishing to challenge their grade or seek accommodation for a missed assignment must do so **within one class** of the assignment’s due date (for accommodation) or grade posting (for challenge). After that, all grades and completed assignments are final.

Preserving Class Integrity: In order to allow for a robust and open class experience, students are asked to refrain from posting any images, chats, or videos from our class—including, but not limited to, class discussions, presentations, and lectures--without prior consent of the instructor and every student in our class. Any student who posts images, chats, or videos from our class without permission will receive an automatic F (failure) for the semester and the Dean of Student's Office will be informed.

Due to COVID-19, please keep the Protect Purdue Pledge: <https://protect.purdue.edu/pledge/> and review the information for students regarding health and safety: <https://protect.purdue.edu/students/campus-2020/>.

- Do not come to class if you suspect you might be ill or if you think that you have been exposed to COVID-19. If you are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, all Purdue students, faculty members and staff are encouraged to immediately contact the Protect Purdue Health Center by calling the Purdue COVID-19 Information Center, which is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays at 765-496-INFO (4636) or toll-free at 833-571-1043.
- **You are required to wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose to attend in-person class.**
- **Please practice physical distancing in the classroom by following the posted guidelines in the building.**
- Help keep our class healthy by frequent hand washing and wiping down your seating area before/after class.
- It is possible to fully participate in the course via Brightspace if needed. Please notify the professor if you need to move to virtual participation in the course due to health concerns (you do not have to disclose the specific health concern).

Academic Professionalism: All class participants are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a respectful and sensitive manner towards others and the course material in accordance with the University's nondiscrimination policy. All students should familiarize themselves with and are responsible to adhere to Purdue Regulations, <http://www.purdue.edu/univregs/index.html>. Professional and respectful classroom demeanor also includes: regular attendance/virtual engagement, demonstrating careful preparation, thoughtful participation, appropriate contributions to group activities, and arriving punctually to class. Students using class time for non-class related activities (such as texting, instant messaging, social networking, sleeping, inattentiveness, or working on assignments for other classes), behaving in a disrespectful manner, and/or displaying excessive tardiness will not receive participation credit, and in more grievous instances may be asked to leave the classroom at the professor's discretion.

Please pay particular attention to the following two policies designed to further foster a respectful learning environment:

- 1) No auditors. Due to the pandemic, only students enrolled in the course are permitted to attend in person. If you have caregiving responsibilities during the scheduled class, please communicate with the professor and plan to participate virtually.
- 2) Class materials for class use only.

Academic Integrity: It is the student's responsibility to know what plagiarism is and to avoid it. Please familiarize yourself with Purdue's [student guide for academic integrity](#). Plagiarism is the use of work (either a series of words or sentences, or an idea) that is not his or her own without citation. Even unintentional plagiarism can be a serious academic offense. Incidents of academic misconduct in this course will be addressed by the course instructor and referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) for review at the university level. Any violation of course policies as it relates to academic integrity will result minimally in a failing or zero grade for that particular assignment, and at the instructor's discretion may result in a failing grade for the course. In addition, all incidents of academic misconduct will be forwarded to OSRR, where university penalties, including removal from the university, may be considered (<http://www.purdue.edu/odos/aboutodos/respondingtoacademicdishonesty.php>).

Academic ethics-accommodation: Purdue University strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, you are welcome to let me know so that we can discuss options. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: drc@purdue.edu or by phone: 765-494-1247.

Mental Health Information: If you find yourself beginning to feel some stress, anxiety and/or feeling slightly overwhelmed, try [WellTrack](#). Sign in and find information and tools at your fingertips, available to you at any time.

- If you need support and information about options and resources, please see the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) for drop-in hours (M-F, 8 am- 5 pm).
- If you're struggling and need mental health services: Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, services are available. For help, such individuals should contact [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) at 765-494-6995 during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or by going to the CAPS office of the second floor of the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours.