

ENGL 3349: Multimodal and Hybrid Forms in ELA (CRN 23473)

Dr. Brad Jacobson

Spring 2024

Class Schedule: M/W 1:30-2:50

Location: Hudspeth Hall (HUD) 200

Office hours: W 10:30-12:30, by appt

Office: HUD 318

Phone: 915-747-6623

Text: 915-412-6646

Accommodations for Disabilities: If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 915-747-5148, by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass.

Students who become pregnant or have parenting responsibilities may also request reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. The UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) will process requests for accommodations based on a disability, pregnancy, or parenting. Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal at www.sa.utep.edu/cass.

Please inform me about specific accommodation needs at the start of the course. Students without documented disabilities who may need specific accommodations should contact me to set up a conference to discuss specific needs.

Basic Needs Policy

Your health, safety, and well-being are more important than anything going on in class. Feel free to reach out to me if you need to talk. Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing or personal safety is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Please also notify me if you are comfortable doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources I can.

Dean of Students: <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students-office/>

Course Description

This class examines current theory in multiple literacies and multi-modality related to English Education. Participants will examine their own experiences and beliefs, the challenges associated with technology integration, and develop lessons and products that support instruction in multiple modes and the fostering of student skills/learning in the digital, audial, visual, and textual modes.

Prerequisite: ENGL 1312 or ENGL 1313 or ESOL 1312.

Our work is grounded in core principles of the National Writing Project (www.nwp.org), a research-based and teacher-centered network dedicated to the teaching of writing. These principles include:

- The best teachers of writing are writers themselves
- Teachers provide the best instruction for other teachers
- Anyone, no matter their ability level, can improve their writing in a supportive context with other practicing writing
- Teachers, students, and communities benefit when teachers form networks with other teachers and draw on collective experience

This course therefore immerses emerging teachers in the theory and practice of teaching writing by grounding the course in experience: be prepared to write extensively, invest deeply in the writing of El Paso high school students in our partner classroom, and use these experiences as a starting point for questioning, extending, and applying scholarship from leading thinkers on literacy and writing pedagogy.

***Community Engagement & Leadership (CEL) Designation**

The “CEL” designation is part of a new certificate program in the College of Liberal Arts (full details to be provided in class). The purpose of this CEL course is to strengthen students’ understanding of their role in society as engaged citizens and to build the knowledge and competencies that will enable them to be socially responsible and participating community leaders. Please also note that course assignments and assessments are developed in line with UTEP’s “Edge Advantages” goals.

Throughout the syllabus I have identified specific CEL tasks and assignments, but you will find that CEL is integrated throughout the course. You should expect to contribute at least 20 hours to our school partnership through online interactions. This engagement will be implemented through our class assignments and activities so it will not feel like 20 *extra* hours. If and when we are able to meet synchronously with our school partners, there will be an asynchronous option for any student unable to attend. Because this engagement will be integral to your digital product, blog posts, and peer assessments, approximately 50% of your final grade will be CEL-related.

Learning Goals (and EDGE Advantages)

This class will challenge you to:

- Define, examine, and utilize different discourse modes (aural, visual, spatial, verbal, & linguistic) in a range of texts with attention to rhetorical context (*EDGE: Communication; Critical Thinking; Confidence*)
- Develop your own identity, practices, and passions as a writer, as the best teachers of writing are writers themselves (*EDGE Advantages: Confidence; Communication*)
- Identify multimodal and genre-based approaches you might bring to your teaching (*EDGE Advantages: Confidence; Communication; Critical Thinking*)

- Synthesize current scholarship with your experience writing and working with high school students (*EDGE: Leadership; Critical Thinking; Problem Solving; Teamwork; Social Responsibility*)

You will have ample opportunity to engage with these TExES standards:

- Understand the differences and applications of multiliteracies and multimodalities. (TExES DIV.011) (*EDGE: Critical Thinking; Confidence; Communication*)
- Examine practices and prejudices in relation to literacy. (TExES DIV.011) (*EDGE: Critical Thinking; Problem Solving; Social Responsibility*)
- Create/revise lessons to include multiple modalities. (TExES DIV.011) (*EDGE: Critical Thinking; Confidence; Problem Solving*)
- Analyze current theory in the field. (TExES DIV.011) (*EDGE: Confidence; Critical Thinking*)

Course Texts

Required Texts

Noah, Trevor. *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood*. One World Books, 2021

Additional Required Materials

- UTEP email account and computing account
- An active [Microsoft OneDrive](#) account (using your UTEP login you can access from [MyUTEP](#))
- A blog on EduBlogs: <https://edublogs.org/?join-invite-code=10226772-3349spring2024-6595654188e67>
- A PDF reader that allows annotation: free tools include [Preview \(Mac\)](#), [Adobe Reader](#), [Mendeley](#). OR \$10-20 for printing course readings
- I highly encourage you to sign up for [Blackboard notifications](#) so you can be sure to receive announcements via text message or email

Professional Resources:

- National Council of Teachers of English: <http://www.ncte.org>
- National Writing Project: <http://www.nwp.org>.
- Modern Language Association: <http://www.mla.org>
- Rethinking Schools: <http://www.rethinkingschools.org>
- Digital Writing, Digital Teaching (Troy Hicks): <https://hickstro.org/>
- Connected Learning Alliance: <https://clalliance.org>
- The Current (Educator Innovator): <https://thecurrent.educatorinnovator.org/>
- Links to teaching resources can be found on our course blog: <https://multimodalspring21.edublogs.org/>

Major Components of the Course

Working with Student Writers

We will be partnering with an 11th grade English Language Arts course at [Young Women's STEAM Research & Preparatory Academy](#) in EPISD. This partnership is designed to offer you a chance to interact with a range of “real” high school students and an award-winning teacher and UTEP alum. You will be working with the STEAM Academy students both online and face to face. You will read and write with high school students and offer feedback on their writing. You will reflect frequently on this partnership and will be expected to write in order to prepare for our class discussions.

We will (tentatively) be visiting STEAM on **Monday, February 12th from 12-2:30 pm**, and the STEAM students will be visiting our class and spending time on campus on **Wednesday, March 27th**. We may also have a final presentation/celebration during the week of finals (TBD). **Please put these dates on your calendar now so you can make any necessary arrangements.**

Exploring the Writing You Want to Teach

Given that the best teachers of writing are writers themselves, you will have opportunities to experiment with writing in a range of genres and modalities to help you explore which kinds of writing you are most energized to teach. You will meet regularly in writing groups to share and respond to colleagues' writing.

Reading and Discussion

Course readings cover pressing issues and diverse assignments in writing pedagogy, and they are designed to have clear applications to the 6-12th grade classroom. You will post weekly responses on our class blog addressing the readings, and you will be expected to respond to comment on these blogs on a regular basis.

Major Course Projects

Digital Testimonio: *Digital testimonio* focuses on personal storytelling for social change. For this project, we will use digital tools and multiple modes to “bring to light a wrong, provide a point of view, or provide an urgent call for action” about issues affecting our communities. You'll have opportunities to give and receive feedback throughout the development of this project. More detailed information can be found in the guidelines here:

<https://bit.ly/testimonio24>

Blog Posts: You will compose a weekly post to our class blog engaging with our class texts. As these blog posts are intentionally ideas in progress, please know that “correctness” is less important than your willingness to engage with the ideas in our readings. More detailed information can be found in the guidelines here: <https://bit.ly/BlogSpring24>

Digital “Play”: There will be other, short assignments required of you throughout the semester that encourage you to engage with different modalities. These short, exploratory tasks will be posted to your blog.

Peer Assessments: You will offer extensive, readerly feedback to your writing group members for each of our major writing tasks, and you will offer extensive feedback to at least two YWA students

Short Assignments: There will be other, short assignments required of you throughout the semester, many of which will be posted to your blog.

Self-Assessments: You will complete two self-assessments in this course: One in week 8 and once for your final project. These assessments will offer you an opportunity to reflect on your learning and assess your work. Guidelines will be posted to Blackboard

Grading and Assessment

"If we believe that we are *teaching* writing instead of *assigning* writing, then we must focus on the progress students make from draft to draft rather than focus on the final product."

—Linda Christensen, *Teaching for Joy and Justice*, p. 132

This class will likely be graded differently than many other courses you have experienced. In all of my courses I use a form of assessment called "contract grading." The goal of contract grading is to place the focus on your labor (your time and effort) and learning rather than on a subjective measure of quality. Like Linda Christensen, I believe I am teaching writing and teachers of writing, not assigning or grading writing. I want to reward your progress and learning instead of whether or not you meet a certain preconceived standard. At the end of the course, you will assess your efforts using the chart you see below as a guideline. We will have opportunities to negotiate these criteria throughout the semester. Please note: All major assignments must be completed and submitted to receive a passing grade for this course.

By taking conventional grades out of the day-to-day activities of the class, I hope you will have the freedom to take risks and work hard, and to try something new even if you're not sure if it will work. And since I won't attach a numerical grade to any individual project based on its quality (even though I will give you plenty of feedback), this allows you the chance to rely more authentically on your colleagues and on your own assessment and revision advice. You'll have the opportunity to listen carefully to different judgments and ideas, assess those judgments for your work and its purposes, express why one idea is more workable and better than others, and most importantly, make informed, careful decisions that you can explain to others. In short, you have opportunity in this class to fail *productively*. Good, deep, important learning often happens because of risking failure, so it's really not failure at all. Many entrepreneurs claim that failure is necessary for success and world-class surgeons schedule [meetings to discuss and analyze what goes wrong in their practice](#). In our class, failure (in the typical schooling "F" sense) really only happens when you do not do the work, or when you do not engage with the processes of the work in the ways that are expected of you.

Even though you will not receive numerical grades from me, always know that I will read everything and shape our classroom activities and discussions around your work. I will offer lots of feedback, but sometimes I may not comment directly on your work, except in class when we

use it or discuss it. I want you not only to rely on your colleagues and yourself for assessment and revision advice, but to build strategies of self-assessment that function apart from a teacher's approval.

Disclaimer: If you're interested in doing the least amount of work to get the highest possible grade, I'm sorry to say this is not going to be the class for you. You'll probably get frustrated, and you may even think the class is unfair. But if you want to learn and improve yourself as a writer, reader, and teacher, and you are willing to accept the idea that your hard work will be rewarded and not the perceived quality of your work (although we will discuss the importance of *quality*), then stay and grow and learn with us.

	A range	B range	C range	F range
Attendance*	Attends every class but 1	Misses 2-3 classes	Misses 4-6 classes	Misses 7 or more
Student Writing Partnership (YWA) YWA partners will have opportunity to provide feedback	Provides all writing and reading responses in a timely manner. Engages with a positive attitude and meets all guidelines.	Provides all writing and reading responses, mostly on time. Engages with a positive attitude and meets all guidelines.	Patterns of incompleteness or lateness in responses. May not meet guidelines.	Responses are not completed and/or do not meet the guidelines
Blog	Completes all assigned blog tasks on time and meeting guidelines, including “aspirational” criteria	Completes all assigned blog tasks, on time, meeting most guidelines	All blog tasks are complete, but may have patterns of lateness or meeting guidelines; Inconsistent completion of dialogue tasks	Most blog tasks are not completed or do not meet the guidelines
Digital Testimonio	Completes all drafts of digital testimonio in a timely manner and meets all guidelines, including “aspirational” criteria	Completes all drafts of digital testimonio and meets most guidelines	Completes all drafts of digital testimonio, but may be late or miss guidelines	Does not complete digital testimonio project
Self-Assessments	Self-assessment is complete, on time, and supported with evidence of learning		Self-assessment is incomplete, underdeveloped, or late	Does not meet A, B, or C-level guidelines
In general, meeting each criterion but three in a category will go to the majority category. For example, if you have 4 in the “B” range and 2 in “A”, your grade should be a B, and vice versa. If your assessment is split across three grade categories (A-B-C, for example), your final grade should likely be in the middle.				

Policies

Attendance

Attendance and participation are necessary for this course. As we will discuss, writing is a social act and writers develop by practicing with and for others. To this end, we will be reading, writing, and workshopping during class time, and it is essential that you are there to learn with and support your colleagues. As defined in the grading contract chart above, incurring absences, regardless of the reason, will negatively affect your grade, and **more than 6 absences** will result in failure of the course. Consistent with [university policy](#), *there are no excused absences other than for university-recognized activities or religious holy days.*

What does attendance mean in this course? Over the last few years, we have learned to be flexible when it comes to attendance and participation. Due to illness or other circumstances outside of our control, we are likely to have disruptions individually or collectively that impact attendance and participation. There remains a chance we may not be meeting together face to face for every class session. And, given our need to protect ourselves and each other from communicable diseases, it's understandable if you are not able to make it *every* time. So how can we make this equitable? Here's a beginning idea:

Live Meetings: We will plan to meet in HUD 200 every Monday and Wednesday from 1:30-2:50pm. All class meetings will have a digital component that we work on in class.

- If you miss a live meeting, you *can* still earn credit for the class. This will include you working through the digital component, connecting it to our class reading(s) for that week, and contributing to our class discussion by posting to your blog. In order to “make up” your absence, you should plan to post these notes *within one week* of your return to class. ([click here for more](#))

Asynchronous Meetings: In the event of asynchronous meetings, you will still have “class” expectations that will include some combination of viewing, reading, writing, and/or discussing. Any *preparation* tasks (homework) should be complete *before* our class time on the day of the asynchronous meetings. All activities should be completed by noon of the following day. For example, if we have an asynchronous meeting on Wednesday, you should complete the preparation activities by noon that day. Your Wednesday tasks will be due by noon on Thursday. Completing these tasks on time will count as attendance for that day.

Assignment Expectations

All out of class assignments (other than Writing Notebook) must be typed unless otherwise stipulated. Work is considered late if it is posted or submitted after the deadline (usually the beginning of class). You should keep a copy of all assignments, class notes, and handouts in an organized notebook and/or digital file for easy access.

Assigned writing tasks are due at the beginning of class, unless otherwise noted. If you miss a class (or an assignment instruction due to tardiness) you are still responsible to submit any

assignments and for getting the missing information/handouts from the Blackboard page or another student in class.

Academic Integrity

At this point in your academic careers, you are all likely familiar with the expectations for academic integrity. You can find the university policy here: <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/osccr/student-conduct/academic-integrity.html>

I am aware that teachers often gain ideas from other teachers. Generosity, sharing, and reflective practice are part of the ethos of the profession. At the same time, it is our obligation to give due credit to others when they influence our ideas. I will do so explicitly in our class discussions and in class materials, and I expect you will do the same. When you borrow ideas or materials from others, from the web, or from library databases (as you should!), it is your responsibility to give appropriate credit to the original creator. This is important for you as a scholar *and* as a teacher; this is one of many ways we can model attribution for our students.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools

As literacy instructors, we need to be aware of the ways changes in technology impact our work and the potential literacy experiences of our students and communities. To this end, we will explore generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Dall-E, etc.) and their affordances and limitations. While you may end up using generative AI to brainstorm ideas, fine tune a question, or even check your grammar, you *should not* use such tools to draft entire assignments, or even to write complete sentences or paragraphs to complete class assignments. You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within university policies on academic integrity. When in doubt, please ask.

Illness Precautions

Please stay home if you have symptoms of a communicable illness. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations.

There is free COVID-19 testing on campus for active students. For more information, click here: <https://www.utep.edu/chs/covid-testing/index.html>.

Course Schedule

The linked [schedule](#) is subject to change at my discretion to meet instructional needs and/or to accommodate time constraints. I will do my best to alert you promptly of any changes. **Please check Blackboard regularly for any Announcements or updates related to the course schedule.**

- <https://bit.ly/3349Spring24>