Rhetoric and Writing Studies

RWS 1302

CRN: 24553

Meeting Time/Day: Friday, 9-10:20 am

Place: Blackboard and Zoom

Instructor Information:
Brita Arrington (Ms. B)

Email: bmarrington@utep.edu

Phone: n/a

Office and Hours: On Wednesdays 2-4pm you can reach me at REMIND (see details about REMIND in my Blackboard Instructor info)

To join, send a text to 81010 and text this message: @rws1302
I will respond to you outside these hours by email or REMIND within 24 hours, 48 hours on weekends. We can schedule a Zoom meeting by appointment as well.

Program Overview

At UTEP, the First-Year Composition (FYC) program in the English department offers two first-year courses that are typically taken as a sequence, RWS 1301—Rhetoric and Composition I and RWS 1302—Rhetoric and Composition II. These courses are intended to help students develop their rhetorical and writing knowledge and skills within these five knowledge domains: writing process knowledge, subject matter knowledge, rhetorical knowledge, genre knowledge, and discourse community knowledge. Therefore, we teach writing as a complex activity through which students are given guidance and often collaborate. Drawing on the rich scholarship of Rhetoric and Writing Studies, we have designed our courses to help students address the challenges of 21st century composing. In these courses, students are empowered to determine the most effective strategies, arrangements, and media to use in different rhetorical contexts.
In spring 2021, all sections of RWS 1301 and 1302 will be taught online. Regardless of the delivery system, the FYC program reminds students that the primary purpose of these classes are the learning and practice of writing. The Conference on College Composition and Communication together with the Council of Writing Program Administrators state:

Writing classes teach writing: Principally, writing classes foreground writing itself as a complex, distributed activity premised upon sociality and community formation, processes and materials, flexibility, and ethical communication. Writing classes may involve participants in purposeful interpersonal interactions (discussions and conversations), writing-related activities (peer review, studying features in model texts), and interpreting texts (making meaning individually or together with others); however, the activity of writing itself continues to be central to what a writing class sponsors.

CCCC and CWPA Joint Statement in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Course Description

Rhetoric & Composition 2 (RWS 1302) aims to develop your critical thinking skills in order to facilitate effective communication in all educational, professional, and social contexts. This effective communication is based on awareness of and appreciation for discourse communities as well as knowledge specific to subject matter, genre, rhetorical strategy, and writing process. The class presents an approach to communication that helps students determine the most effective strategies, arrangements, and media to use in different rhetorical contexts. In addition, because communication is central to being an active and engaged member of society, the course also provides a space for informed advocacy.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

Critical thinking and reading

- Think, read, and write analytically and reflectively
- Address specific, immediate rhetorical situations and their effects on individuals and communities
- Read a diverse range of texts and apply these texts to different audiences, contexts, and situations.
Composing practices

- Read and compose in several genres to understand how genre conversations shape and are shaped by readers’ and writers’ practices and purposes
- Develop composing processes appropriate to writing style, audience, and assignment
- Use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas, generate writing, and make meaning
- Engage with a community of writers who dialogue across texts, argue, and build on each other’s work
- Develop writing projects through multiple drafts by learning flexible strategies for reading, drafting, reviewing, collaborating, revising, rewriting, rereading, and editing
- Give, receive, and act on productive feedback from peers and instructors to work in progress

Research

- Learn to formulate research questions, methods for research, and analyze and synthesize material
- Develop 21st century technological literacies and modalities needed for researching and composing
- Locate and evaluate primary and secondary materials, such as: journal articles and essays, books, scholarly and professionally established and maintained databases and archives, and informal electronic networks and internet sources.
- Learn writing strategies for integrating source material into your own prose (quoted, paraphrased, and summarized material)
- Apply research to various genres and cite sources in American Psychological Association Style (APA) or Modern Language Association Style (MLA)

Assessment

- Use reflective learning strategies to self-assess and understand one’s processes and products
- Collaborate
- Integrate and act on critical feedback from peers and instructors
- Understand and examine critically the reasons behind writing conventions in fields and disciplines
This course is also designed to promote your overall success, inside and outside the classroom. Our coursework will help you to improve in key areas such as Communication, Confidence, Critical Thinking, Leadership, Problem Solving, Social Responsibility and Teamwork. To find out more about the university’s plan to improve student engagement and learning, visit the UTEP Edge.

Required Texts & Materials


ISBN:978-1-59871-803-4

Additional readings WILL also be posted on Blackboard (we will be working the the National Geographic Website as well), so check for them.

In the next section, I provide an overview of the assignments we’ll cover in this course. Specific assignment guidelines can be found in the Handbook. I’ll also post further instructions on our Blackboard course content.

Course Assignments

**Topic Proposal for Semester:** Students will write a proposal to identify the subject/issue/topic they will be working with for the semester. This will be submitted to, approved, and graded by the instructor. **20 pts.**

**Genre Analysis Outline:** Students will complete the following activities to prepare them for the Genre Analysis Essay assignment: Choosing your genres; analyzing specialized genres; and analysis outline assignment. **60 pts.**

**Genre Analysis:** Students will identify two texts on the same subject, but in different genres, to write a comparative analysis. This will be submitted (rough and final drafts) to, and graded by, the instructor. **100 pts.**
Research Proposal Outline: As part of this assignment you must generate 3-4 research questions and begin to find sources for the Literature Review/Research Report. Students will complete Activities 1-4 for Literature Review. 40 pts.

Literature Review / Primary Research Report: Students will conduct primary and secondary research on a social, political, or ethical issue to become well-informed experts on the issue. Students will then write a literature review of these sources to summarize and synthesize the arguments and ideas of the research sources. This will be submitted (rough and final drafts) to, and graded by, the instructor. 200 pts.

Advanced Visual Argument Outline Activities: Students will submit an outline to show the persuasive purpose and argumentative structure for the project. Complete the persuasive purpose worksheet, the developing reasons for advocacy, and gathering evidence to support reasons. 30 pts.

Advanced Visual Argument: 200 pts.
Option 1: Documentary
Option 2: Advocacy Website w/ Online Opinion Piece
Option 3: Research Poster

E-Portfolio Reflection Website/Blog: Students will create, design, and maintain an academic profile in the form of an e-portfolio website that includes reflections on their course work, major assignments and composing processes. 100 pts.

Class Presentation: Students will present their visual argument to the class. The instructor will grade this presentation. 50 pts.

Participation in Class: Because this is a hybrid class, participation in-class and online is mandatory. The activities included in this category ensure that students learn the material and help them to compose effective projects. This score will include, attendance, homework, drafts, discussion postings, peer reviews, and other work the instructor assigns. These points will be determined and distributed by the instructor. 200 pts.
Grade Distribution (Students can earn a total of 1000 points for the course):

1000-900 = A 
899-800 = B 
799-700 = C 
699-600 = D 
599 and below = F

University and Instructor Policies

This course is designed to engage you through discussions over Zoom and Bb. I hope you actively participate in this course because I have found it is the best way to engage you in learning.

Course Delivery:

In spring 2021, RWS 1302 will be held fully online. Some classes will meet synchronously, meaning that there will be virtual class sessions on video (Zoom, Blackboard Collaborate, or MS Teams), while others will meet asynchronously through Blackboard. The course is designed to engage students through discussions with your classmates and instructor through Blackboard (Bb), UTEP’s Learning Management System (LMS). The course will rely extensively on Blackboard, though your individual instructor may supplement it by incorporating other platforms and various media. In order to succeed in the course, you will need to have regular use of the internet and a stable connection. Although you can use the Blackboard App on your phone, it is highly recommended that you compose your work for class, and perform class activities, via a computer. If you don’t have a computer or reliable internet at home, the university can help you with resources: Technology Support - UTEP. Please speak with your instructor immediately if you will need assistance. We want you to have the opportunity to succeed in class without concern about access. There are also computers available for you to use in the library on campus.

Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome are the most supported browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications with the LMS. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser. If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the Help Desk as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students.
Students can prepare for the course by familiarizing themselves with the “Ready for Online Learning” guides to acclimate to online learning.

Follow these links for more:
Rules of Netiquette
Ways to Thrive in Your Online Classes
https://www.utep.edu/extendeduniversity/utepconnect/blog/january-2017/4-ways-to-thrive-in-your-online-classes.html

Submitting Work: All work will be submitted through our Bb course shell. Since Bb comment and grade function works best with Microsoft Word, please submit all assignments in Microsoft Word following APA format unless directed otherwise. Microsoft Word is available to students at all campus computers and through the Cloud.
Be sure to name each submitted assignment with your first initial, last name, and an abbreviation of the assignment.
For example:
jmartinez rhetanalysis draft
jmartinez rhetanalysis final

Due Dates for Major Assignments: All major assignments will be due on Mondays at midnight.

Late Work: It is important to submit work before deadlines for full credit and feedback. Late work will only be considered on a very limited basis and may not be acceptable. At best, it will only be worth 80% of original points, so strive for timeliness.

Classroom Etiquette:

- Debate, critical inquiry, and intellectual diversity are essential elements to higher education and a process of learning. There is the potential during this course for controversial and sensitive topics to be discussed during small group or whole class interaction, and to surface through our social media activity. You are expected to demonstrate the utmost respect and courtesy for your peers with differing arguments, viewpoints, and/or experiences. Sexist, racist, homophobic, or other hateful speech will not be tolerated.
• As a general rule, always consider audience, in class and online. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any postings. When reacting to someone else’s message (verbal or written), address the ideas, not the person.

• Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on in these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. That being said, be mindful that all online communication has the potential to be copied and made public. Nevertheless, please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space. If students wish to do so, they have the ethical obligation to first request the permission of the writer(s).

Attendance:

According to The University of Texas at El Paso’s catalog: “The student is expected to attend all classes and laboratory sessions and attendance is mandatory for all freshman-level courses (1XXX).” It is the responsibility of the student to inform each instructor of extended absences. (For further information regarding excused absences refer to UTEP’s Catalog Curriculum and Classroom Policies. Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to participate in discussions and workshops. The class discussions will help you learn to improve your writing, often through the discussion of a sample student project (sometimes yours, sometimes one written by a classmate). Since this class meets only once a week, if you are absent from more than two classes (= two weeks), you may be dropped from the course. Missing a scheduled conference with the instructor constitutes an absence. Going on a trip or meeting with friends for coffee constitutes an absence, so please don’t miss out on our very limited time in class.

For Online courses

In an online class, attendance is measured by participation in class activities. The attendance policy for online courses aligns with the structure for face-to-face courses, with each missed week of class activities constituting absence from a week of class.

The instructor can measure participation through various pathways, such as completion of scaffolded activities and discussion posts, and responding to other students’ posts and feedback. We also recommend measuring course activity by using the Course Reports feature on Blackboard, particularly the Course Activity Overview.
When it becomes evident that it is not possible to participate in class, the program recommends that the student contact the instructor to discuss the attendance policy and how it applies, before resuming robust participation in class activities.

Academic Integrity:

The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence. In the classroom and in all other academic activities, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Visit the Office of Dean of Students. Instructors are required to report the suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of Student Affairs.

Accommodations: Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we’ll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to visit the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) in room 106, Union East Building or contact them at 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu. If you need official accommodations, you have a right to have these met. There are also a range of resources on campus, including the Writing Center, Counseling Center, Military Student Success Center and Academic Advising Center.

University Writing Center: UTEP’s University Writing Center (UWC) offers free writing tutoring assistance for all UTEP students. The tutors are undergraduate and graduate students who can help with all parts of a writing assignment, including prewriting, organizing, revising, and editing. They can also help to understand any writing assignment and help work on comprehending difficult textbook material. Note: To facilitate revision, I encourage you to visit the writing center at least 12 hours before the assignment is due.

Military Students:

If you are a military student (veteran, dependent, active) please visit the Military Student Success Center. I also recognize the complexities of being a student veteran. If you are a student veteran, please inform me if you need special
accommodations. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, complications with GI Bill disbursement, and other unforeseen military and veteran-related developments can complicate your academic life. If you make me aware of a complication, I will do everything I can to assist you or put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you.

Important Dates for Spring 2021 Semester

Jan 18th  
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday – University Closed

Jan 19th  
Spring classes begin

Jan 19th–22nd  
Late Registration (Fees are incurred)

Feb 3rd  
Spring Census Day
  Note: This is the last day to register for classes. If payment is not received by this day, students will be dropped.

Feb 15th  
20th Class Day
  Note: Students who were given a payment deadline extension will be dropped at 5:00 pm if payment arrangements have not been made.

Feb 19th  
Graduation application deadline for degree conferral

Mar 21st  
Midterm Spring 2021 Grades Due

Mar 15-19th  
Spring Break

Mar 26th  
Cesar Chavez Holiday – no classes

Apr 1st  
Spring Drop/Withdrawal Deadline
  Note: Student-initiated drops are permitted after this date, but the student is not guaranteed a grade of W. The faculty member of record will issue a grade of either W or F.

Apr 2nd  
Spring Study Day

Apr 16th  
Deadline to submit candidates’ names for degree conferral

May 6th  
Spring – Last day of classes

May 7th  
Dead day

May 10-14th  
Spring Final Exams

Please make note of my REMIND office hours and email, and reach out to me if you need to. I look forward to helping you become better writers this semester!