Instructor and Course Information

**Instructor:** Carolyn Rhea Drapes, M.A.
Office: Worrell Hall, Room 110
(subject to change)
Text/cell: 915-478-2675

**Class instruction:** UGLC 234
Office Hours: TR 2:00 – 3:00 PM; 12:30 – 2:00 PM online
In-person, and by appointment

Course description

The goal of RWS 1301 is to develop students’ critical thinking skills in order to facilitate effective communication in educational, professional, and social contexts. Effective communication is based on an awareness of and appreciation for discourse communities as well as knowledge specific to subject matter, genre, rhetorical strategy, and writing process. It is designed to prepare you for the writing you will do throughout your university experience as well as in professional and civic environments. This course offers you a curriculum that empowers you to determine the most effective rhetorical strategies, arrangements, and media to use in different rhetorical contexts.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will:

- Understand a theory of discourse communities.
- Engage as a community of writers who dialogue across texts, argue, and build on each other’s work.
- Draw on existing knowledge bases to create “new” or “transformed” knowledge.
- Develop a knowledge of genres as they are defined and stabilized within discourse communities.
- Address the specific, immediate rhetorical situations of individual communicative acts.
- Develop procedural knowledge of the writing task in its various phases.
- Engage reflection about their own learning.

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


This is an eBook available through the bookstore or through the publisher: BryteWave.

Additional readings will be posted with citations to access them.

Assignment guidelines are located in the Handbook with additional instructions on Blackboard.
Course Assignments (an overview of assignments with suggested additional readings. Specific assignment sheets will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard):

The Undergraduate Rhetoric and Writing Studies Program at UTEP uses Blackboard. Submit projects for grade through Blackboard. Each assignment includes a rubric.

- **Semester-long Assignment #1: E-portfolio Website/Blog assignment (100 points):**
  Design, create, and maintain an ePortfolio and an adjoining reflection blog.

- **Assignment #3: Proposal for Semester Topic (20 participation points):**
  Write a proposal identifying the subject/issue/topic you will research and write about this semester. Submit your topic proposal to Blackboard for approval for a 20 participation points.

- **Assignment #4: Advanced Visual Analysis (200 points) (Student groups may choose one of the following options):**
  - Option 1: Textual/Rhetorical Analysis and Visual Analysis assignments (two separate assignments, 50 pts each)
  - Option 2: Website Analysis paper (both text and visual in one assignment, 100 points)
  - Option 3: Website Analysis presentation & response (both text and visual in one assignment, 100 points)

- **Assignment #2: Discourse Community Ethnography / Map (100 points)**

- **Assignment #5 Annotated Bibliography (100 points)**

- **Assignment #6 Community Problem Report (100 pts)**
  - Option 1: Community Problem Report, OR
  - Option 2: Community Problem Report Presentation & response

- **Participation in Class (200 points):**
  Participation mandatory. Activities included 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 as assigned. Points determined and distributed by the instructor, which students can earn up to 200 points.

- **InQuizitive / Norton Program in Blackboard (100 points)**
  The following pages include weekly outline and is subject to change.

- **(NFG) The Norton Field Guide to Writing with Readings (ebook or softbound)**

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<tr>
<th>Calendar / Topic</th>
<th>Classroom Work &amp; Reading Assignments</th>
<th>Writings</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> August 26 – 30</td>
<td><strong>Introduction to class</strong>&lt;br&gt; 1. Review syllabus&lt;br&gt; 2. E-Portfolio Project&lt;br&gt; 3. Topic Proposal for Semester&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Readings</strong>&lt;br&gt;NFG: Part 2 Rhetorical Situations, Chapters 5-9&lt;br&gt;Part 8 Media/Design Chapters 56-59&lt;br&gt;HANDBOOK Chapter 1 &amp; Assignment 1&lt;br&gt;Hocks, M. (2003). Understanding visual rhetoric in digital writing environments. <em>College Composition and Communication</em>, 54(4), 629-656. Retrieved from <a href="http://0-www.jstor.org.lib.utep.edu/stable/3594188">http://0-www.jstor.org.lib.utep.edu/stable/3594188</a>&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Due</strong>&lt;br&gt;Class Introduction in the Blackboard discussion area by Saturday, August 31 at 11:30 PM.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>EPortfolio project</strong>&lt;br&gt;Ongoing semester project: The e-portfolio that displays your work for this class. Begin investigating which web content site you would like to use to construct your e-portfolio website this semester. A couple choices are:&lt;br&gt;a. Wix: <a href="http://wix.com">http://wix.com</a>&lt;br&gt;b. Weebly: <a href="http://weebly.com">http://weebly.com</a>&lt;br&gt;c. Other management software or website you are familiar with, such as Google Pages or Dreamweaver.&lt;br&gt;d. <strong>Note</strong>: Tumblr is not an appropriate choice for this project.</td>
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| 5 September 23 – 27 | Continue and complete Assignment #4: Rhetorical Analysis, Final draft revisions | Proposal Due  
Choose your option, submit your proposal, and begin to draft your analysis.  
Submit your Rhetorical Analysis proposal to Blackboard assignment by Saturday, September 17 at 11:30 PM  
Students will peer-review their drafts in-class on September 22.  
Due  
Submit your Ethnography / Community map to the Blackboard assignment section by Saturday, September 28 at 11:30 PM |
| **6**  
September 30 – October 4 | **Begin Assignment #5**  
Annotated Bibliography (100 points)  
Readings  
NFG: Chapter 15, 47 - 53; 55  
HANDBOOK Chapter 4, Assignment 5 | In APA format, start drafting your Annotated Bibliography. There are two ways to draft:  
• Aim to find 5-6 sources with drafts of their annotations, OR  
• Locate, format the citations and submit the required 8-10 sources. |
| **7**  
October 7 – 11 | **Begin Assignment #6**  
Community Problem Report (100 points)  
• Option 1: Community Problem Report  
• Option 2: Community Problem Report Presentation & response  
Readings  
Annotated Bibliography peer-review draft, in class on Thursday, October 10  
Due  
Submit Community Problem proposal by Sunday, October 13 at 11:30 PM. |
| **8**  
October 14 – 18 | **Readings**  
Annotated Bibliography final draft due Sunday, October 20 at 11:30 PM |
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<tr>
<td>October 21 – 25</td>
<td>Introduce Visual Argument: Group Assignment #7 Visual Argument: Infographic (150 points) and, Visual Argument Presentation (50 points):</td>
<td>Due: Community Problem Report peer-review draft</td>
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<td>Readings NFG Chapters 60 HANDBOOK Assignment 7</td>
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<td>October 28 – November 1</td>
<td>Visual Rhetoric</td>
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<td>November 4 – 8</td>
<td>Work in class for Visual Argument Group Assignment and/or ePortfolio</td>
<td>Due: Community Problem Report final draft due Saturday, November 9 at 11:30 PM</td>
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<td>November 11–15</td>
<td>Work in class for Visual Argument Group Assignment and/or ePortfolio</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 18–22</td>
<td>Work in class for Visual Argument Group Presentation</td>
<td>Due: Visual Argument Group peer-review draft in class on Tuesday, November 19 Submit one draft of your Visual Argument by one person in the group</td>
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<td>November 25–29</td>
<td>Presentations of Visual Argument: Tuesday, November 26 Present and submit final copy of your presentation file by one person in the group</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Day, November 28 &amp; Friday Holiday, November 29</td>
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University and Instructor Policies

This course is designed to engage you through discussions in class 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

This course uses extensively the online learning platform Blackboard. All of the supplementary material for the class will be delivered via Blackboard. It is strongly recommended that you have access to the Internet from home and are comfortable using a computer. If home access is not possible, arrangements can be made to use a computer regularly on campus in order to complete the work. Student computer labs such as ATLAS (http://issweb.utep.edu/) are often available until midnight, but schedules do vary. A great deal of work will be done online, and not having access to a computer will affect your ability to turn in assignments on time.

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

Unless otherwise stated, major assignments will be due (and submitted to Blackboard) Sundays at 11:30 PM.

Late Work

It is important to submit work before deadlines for full credit and feedback.

Grading and Policies

Projects Format: Word-process all projects using Microsoft Word (doc), 12-point (pt.) font, one-inch margins, and double-spaced. Use a font/typographic style designed for print and online readability with either a serif font (Times New Roman, Garamond, Georgia), or sans-serif font (Helvética, Helvética Neue, or Arial). Note: The Microsoft Word default fonts Calibri (sans-serif) and Cambria (serif) are also acceptable. However, do not use Courier.

Grade Distribution (Students can earn a total of 1000 points for the course):
Each of your projects will be assessed by how well you complete the assignment and the general quality of your writing. Final grades will be determined using the 1000 pt. scale below, with conversions from the percentages above.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000-900</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>899-800</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>799 -700</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>699- 600</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>599- below</td>
<td>F</td>
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Microsoft Word is available to students on all campus computers; you may purchase Microsoft Office (and the Windows operating system) at a discounted price from the UTEP Bookstore. To obtain your copy of these and other software packages (Windows and Mac OS X), take your current UTEP ID card and go to the software desk on the first floor. If you use Pages (Apple OS X), please save your documents as a docx.

Classroom Etiquette

Electronic devices can be very helpful in the classroom whether a smartphone, tablet, or computer. However, if their use does not contribute to the conversation or tasks in the classroom then I have the right to ask you to put it away or turn it off, even if it is a personal device.

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 the audience, in class and online. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any posts. When reacting to someone else’s message (verbal or written), address the ideas, not the person and post only what anyone would comfortably state in a f2f situation.

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.

You 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).

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. Instructors are required to report the suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of Student Affairs. Visit the Office of Dean of Students page for more information on Academic integrity.

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.

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, 915-747-5148 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.

**Please make note of my office hours and email, and reach out to me if you need to ask questions or clarifications about the assignments. Have a great semester. I look forward to guiding your learning here!**