I. Instructor and Course Information:

Instructor: Carolyn Rhea Drapes, M.A.  
Office: Room 110, Worrell Hall  
Text/cell: 915-478-2675

II. Course Description

The goal of RWS 1301 is to develop students’ critical thinking skills to facilitate effective communication in all 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.

RWS 1301 is designed to prepare you for the writing you will do throughout your university experience as well as in professional and civic environments. Through these assignments, you will learn how to write to explore, to inform, to analyze, and to convince/problem solve. 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.

It emphasizes the use of technology through a variety of assignments and activities. One important piece of technology utilized is the Blackboard system. Blackboard provides students with permanent access to the syllabus, supplemental reading materials, e-mail, and discussion groups. It is vital that students check and participate in Blackboard consistently as it is an integral part of the course.

Ultimately, this course is meant to teach you the skills necessary for RWS 1302. It is designed with four major types of writing in mind. These are:

- Writing to Explore, Writing to Explain
- Writing to Analyze, and
- Writing to Convince/Solve Problems.

Mastering these writing types will be needed for success in RWS 1302 and beyond.

III. Learning Outcomes

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

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

Required Texts:

Biswas, M. and Crnkovic Padon D. Eds. 2016 The Undergraduate Rhetoric and Writing Studies Brytewave Handbook. This is an eBook available through the bookstore or through the publisher Follet/VitalSource.

Additional readings will be posted with citations to access them.

Assignment guidelines are in the Brytewave Handbook with additional instructions on Blackboard.
IV. 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/Reflections assignment (100 points):** Design, create, and maintain an ePortfolio and an adjoining reflection blog.

- **Assignment #2: Discourse Community Ethnography, Option 2 (200 points)

- **Assignment #3: Proposal for Semester Topic (30 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 Community Problem Report (200 pts), Option 1 (in tandem with Assignment #5)

- **Assignment #5 Annotated Bibliography (150 pts) (in tandem with Assignment #4)

- **Assignment #6: Rhetorical Analysis » Visual Analysis (150 points)
  - Option 2: Website Analysis paper (both text and visual in one assignment, 100 points)

- **Participation in Class (200 points):** Because this is a 100% online class, participation online is mandatory. The activities included here 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 and earn up to 200 points.

VI: 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 (Helvetica, Helvetica Neue, or Arial). Note: The Microsoft Word default fonts Calibri (sans-serif) and Cambria (serif) are also acceptable. However, do not use Courier.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Distribution (Students can earn a total of 1000 points for the course):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000-900 = A</td>
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<tr>
<td>899-800 = B</td>
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<tr>
<td>799 - 700 = C</td>
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<tr>
<td>699 - 600 = D</td>
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<td>599 and below = F</td>
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Each or 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.

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 OSX), please save your documents as a docx.

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

**Rough Drafts:** Part of your participation grade will include the submission of rough drafts. Rough drafts should be as complete as possible with partial essays receiving a lower score. Submit drafts before or on the due date.

**Rough Draft Feedback:** Students will receive comments in their documents as well as comments at the end of the project. The purpose of this feedback is:

- That your paper is on the right track; that it meets the requirements of the assignment.
- That you comment on the “big issues.” Your peers will comment on your papers and will focus on a handful of concerns. Address these concerns and this will help you write a more effective analysis. Your peers will NOT focus on grammar and such—so it is a good idea to get additional help from the Writing Center for this.

**POLICIES CONTINUE ON PAGE 5**
Course Calendar (dates and readings subject to change):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>March 12 – 16</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to class</td>
<td>Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. E-Portfolio Project</td>
<td>Class Introduction in the Blackboard discussion area</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Topic Proposal for Semester</td>
<td>Submit your Semester Topic to Blackboard assignment for approval by Wednesday, March 16 at 11:30 PM.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Review syllabus</td>
<td>Assignment #3: Proposal for Semester Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>(30 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 30 participation points.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brytewave Handbook Chapters 1 &amp; 4, Introduction and Assignment 1</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>March 19 – 23</th>
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<tr>
<td>Begin Assignment #2: Discourse Community Ethnography, Option 2 (a possible 200 points)</td>
<td>Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>First Draft, Assignment #1, Discourse Community Ethnography Report, Option 2 on Saturday, March 24 at 11:30 PM.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brytewave Handbook Chapter 4, Assignment #1, pages 65 - 88</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>March 26 – 30</th>
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<tr>
<td>Begin reading for Assignment #4: Community Problem Report</td>
<td>Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Final Draft, Assignment #1, Discourse Community / Ethnography Report, due Wednesday, April 4, at 11:30 PM.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brytewave Handbook Chapter 4, Assignment 4, pages 90 - 105</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>April 2–6</td>
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<td>Note: The next two assignments (Community Problem Report and the Annotated Bibliography Report) work together. The sources you research and refer to in Assignment #4 are the sources you will reference and annotate in Assignment #5.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #4: Community Problem Report</td>
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<td>Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Draft, Assignment #4, Community Problem Report, Saturday, April 7, at 11:30 PM.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>April 9–13</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #5: Annotated Bibliography</td>
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<td>Readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brytewave Handbook Chapter 4, Assignment 5, pages 106 - 121</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography First Draft due Wednesday, April 11 at 11:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generally, for a first draft, you should have at least ½ of the writing done and most of the paper in APA format.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit Community Problem Report Final Draft by Saturday, April 14 at 11:30 PM.</td>
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<th>Week 6</th>
<th>April 16 –20</th>
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<tr>
<td>Begin Assignment #6: Visual Analysis (a possible 150 points):</td>
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<td>o Option 2: Website Analysis paper (both text and visual in one assignment, 100 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit Visual Analysis First Draft by Saturday, April 21, at 11:30 PM.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit Annotated Bibliography Final Draft due Wednesday, April 18, at 11:30 PM.</td>
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<th>Week 7</th>
<th>April 23 – 27</th>
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<tr>
<td>Submit Visual Analysis, Option 2 Final Draft by Saturday, April 28 at 11:30 PM.</td>
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| Week 8, final day is Sunday, April 29 |
|--------|-----------|
| Due |
| Submit the ePortfolio/Website final link by Sunday, April 29 at 11:30 PM. |
Participation/Attendance: Because this is a 100% online course, attendance is determined by online class participation. Students must be prepared, participate in online discussions, and if required, attend any face-to-face meetings scheduled to understand and incorporate the rhetorical strategies and processes used to complete the projects. Participation is worth 15% of the final grade.

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, UWC tutors will not hold a tutoring session fewer than 12 hours before the assignment is due.

Technology and RWS 1301: This course makes heavy use of technology and multimedia. Therefore, we strongly recommended that students have access to the Internet from home and are comfortable using a computer.

If home access to a computer or Internet access is not possible, students should arrange to regularly use a computer on campus to complete the work. Student computer labs (such as ATLAS on the 2nd floor; UGLC) remain available until midnight, but schedules do vary. Most work, however, will be done online; therefore, having no computer access is not an excuse for incomplete or late assignments.

Technology problems are also not an excuse for work that is late or missing. Students should get into the habit of completing assignments for this course well before the due date; allow time for dealing with possible technology problems. Expect that at some time, the network will be down, computers will go on the fritz, or some other small catastrophe will occur. If students are prepared ahead of time, they can go to plan B.

Instructions for Accessing Your Course Online: Students must have a UTEP email ID and password before they can access Blackboard. UTEP automatically generates an e-mail ID for students when they are officially admitted to the university. For questions or problems, please call the Helpdesk at 915-747-5257.

Course Delivery of Course: Blackboard delivers all course content.

Classroom Etiquette:
- Do not check mail, type assignments for other courses, or surf the web during class.
- Do not use the printer after class has started without asking permission.
- Do not bring food or drinks into the classroom.
- Do not text message, listen to iPods/MP3 players during class; also, turn off cell phone ringers.

Online “Netiquette”:
- Always consider audience. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any postings.
- Respect and be courteous to classmates and to instructor at all times.
- No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- Respond to someone message; address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in real life (IRL).
- Blackboard is not a public Internet venue; therefore, all postings are private and confidential. Posts to Blackboard spaces are intended only for classmates and your professor only.
- 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. When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor can drop the student from the class with a grade of W before the course drop deadline and with a grade of F after the course drop deadline.” (For further information regarding excused absences for university-recognized activities, absences for religious holy days, and military leave refer to UTEP’s Catalog Curriculum and Classroom Policies: http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/curriculum-and-classroom-policies/)

Students should attend all class meetings and to participate in discussions and workshops. 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). This is part of the work of the course. Please be in class on time, with the books, and your work. Note the following in particular:
- Missing a scheduled conference with the instructor constitutes an absence.
- Be aware of the six-course drop limit. According to the Texas Education Code, o “All first-year students enrolled for the first time at any Texas public college or university are limited to six drops during their academic career. This includes student, faculty initiated drops, and courses dropped at other Texas public institutions. This policy does not apply to courses dropped prior to census day or to complete withdrawals.”
- Be sure to start your college experience on the right track by attending class regularly.

Late Work: Major projects submitted to Blackboard will be due on Fridays at 11:30 p.m. A late window is open until Sunday at 11:30 p.m.
Nature of and Time Spent on Course:

RWS 1302 intends to help students develop a wide variety of strategies for communicating in a variety of media. To succeed in this course requires dedication and focus.

Students should allocate sufficient time for the class projects and work. The general rule for all classes is that students spend two hours working outside of class for each class credit. Because this is a 3-hour class, expect to spend 6 hours doing researching and writing each week. However, remember that the class only meets with the instructor and classmates for 1.5 hours a week. Therefore, add the additional 1.5 hours to the 6 for a total of 7.5 hours. During some weeks, students may work more; some weeks they may work less. However, keep this average in mind.

Academic Integrity

The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence. In all matters of intellectual pursuit, UTEP faculty and students must strive to achieve excellence based on the quality of work produced by the individual. In the classroom and in all other academic activities, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty is an affront to the pursuit of knowledge and jeopardizes the quality of the degree awarded to all graduates of UTEP. It is imperative, therefore, that the members of this academic community understand the regulations pertaining to academic integrity and that all faculty insist on adherence to these standards.

Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline. 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. Proven violations of detailed regulations, as printed in the Brytewave Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP), and available in the Office of the Dean of Students and on the homepage of the Dean of Students at http://www.utep.edu/dos may result in sanctions. Sanctions may range from disciplinary probation, a failing grade on the work in question, a failing grade in the course, and/or suspension or dismissal, among other outcomes. (http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=54418)

Copyright and Fair Use: The University requires all members of its community to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies.

Group Assignments: Group work is a common practice for academic and workplace projects. Group assignments are valuable because they help students work together for a common goal. Students who are not doing their group work can be voted off of their groups and will have to complete the project on their own.

ADA: The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you suspect that you have a disability and need an accommodation, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu. The CASS is located in Room 106; Union East Bldg. Students are responsible for presenting the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions.

Technology

Technology problems are also not an excuse for work that is late or missing. Students need to get into the habit of completing assignments for this course well before the due date to allow time for dealing with technology problems. Expect that at some time, the network will be down, computers will go on the fritz, or some other small catastrophe will occur. If students are prepared ahead of time, they can go to plan B.

Instructions for Accessing Your Course Online: Students must have a UTEP email ID and password before they can access Blackboard. UTEP automatically generates an e-mail ID for students when they entered into the system. For questions or problems, call the Helpdesk at 747-5257.

Submit assignments Blackboard by following the following steps:

- Go to http://my.utep.edu
- Login is e-mail your ID. Password is the same as your e-mail password.
- Click on the link Blackboard
- Once logged into Blackboard, all a student’s courses are listed.
- Click on the course title to access the course.

Classroom Etiquette

- Turn off cell phone ringers, and please do not text message or listen to iPods/MP3 players during class.
- Do not check email, type assignments for other classes, or surf the web during class. Please turn the computers if not being used for class-related activities.
- Absolutely no printing after class has started.
-
Online “Netiquette”

- Always consider your audience and remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any posts.
- Respect and be courteous to your classmates and to the instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate posts will be tolerated.
- Address ideas, not the person when replying to another’s message. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face (F2F) situation.
- Read everyone’s responses before posting; this will avoid repetition of what has been written (stated). Add something new to the discussion.
- Demonstrate that you read the assignment and your classmates’ comments carefully and thoughtfully. Simply writing Yes and No answers will not get you credit. Therefore, posts should justify positions and provide specific examples.
- Post answers in a timely manner to receive credit for the discussion. Late postings will not receive credit. Pay close attention to the posted deadlines.
- Consider posts private and confidential on Blackboard; it is not a public Internet venue. Blackboard content is confined to this class experience. The intended audiences for posts, therefore, are your classmates and professor.
- Copying documents and pasting them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space is prohibited, without consent of the original writer’s or Writers’ permission(s).

Drop Policy

- To preserve a student’s GPA, he/she may be dropped from the course after missing four classes.
- To be considered present in face-to-face classes, one must be prepared as well as physically in class.
- Missing a scheduled conference with the instructor constitutes an absence.

Each semester has a drop date beyond which an instructor can no longer drop a student with a “W.” Students who fail to attend or fulfill assignments after the drop date must necessarily receive an “F.” The drop date for this Fall Semester course is October 28.

Be aware of the six-course drop limit. According to the Texas Education Code, “all first-year students enrolled for the first time at any Texas public college or university are limited to six drops during their academic career. This includes student, faculty initiated drops, and courses dropped at other Texas public institutions. This policy does not apply to courses dropped prior to census day or to complete withdrawals.” Start your college experience on the right track by attending class regularly and not dropping classes without thorough consideration.

Late Work (non-participation)

- It is important to submit work before deadlines for full credit and feedback.
- Assignments submitted one class day after the due date would be penalized up to one letter grade.
- Assignments submitted more than one day late may not be acceptable to the instructor for credit.
- Be sure to submit all major assignments in order to pass this class. While late work may adversely affect a grade, a zero can adversely affect enrollment.
- If a major assignment is over two class days late, the student faces failure for this section.

Composition (Quality)

Aim to produce high-quality and sophisticated documents by giving your assignments the attention needed to create accurate, professional, and thorough assignment requirements. Neatness, visual appeal and usability, as well as, mechanical and grammatical correctness do matter. However, these features do not completely guarantee that your text functions or communicates. Therefore, you should:

- Compose class assignments in a high-quality format (edited, revised, proofed, well-designed)
- Write documents with the required specifications (voice, margins, space, pagination, etc.)
- Create well-designed media productions.
- Use current APA standards for all documents (http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/)

Group Assignment

Group assignments can sometimes create tricky situations. Sometimes, students may not “pull their weight,” which will upset the group dynamic and those who are contributing, and producing valid, original work for the project. Despite this, group assignments greatly help students by encouraging collaborative work aiming towards a common goal. In future or current “professional life” reality, group work helps each student learn to navigate the challenges of working together, and is central to one course project. Although unfortunate, the reality does exist that a team may have to fire a student not doing their share, or not producing original work. If this happens, the fired student must complete an entire project on his or her own. However, such situations rarely occur, and while challenging, students come to appreciate their group project experience.
Academic Dishonesty

UTEP and the English Department NEVER tolerate academic dishonesty.

Instructors must and will report academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students for Academic Sanctions. Sanctions may result in expulsion from the university. Refer to the Dean of Students, Student Conduct page for more information: http://sa.utep.edu/studentlife/student-conduct-2/. All work must be original and students may not submit previously graded work from other courses. Academic dishonesty includes:

- Collusion—lending your work to another for submission as his or her own work;
- Fabrication—creating deliberate false information or test results, or inventing works cited; and
- Plagiarism—using another person’s work and saying it is your own, whether done intentionally or not (i.e., copying parts or whole information or papers from the Internet, or not referring to information that you summarized or paraphrased).

Remember, if not your original work, be sure to include the source. (If unsure, ask or consult those at the University Writing Center.)