Welcome to Fall Semester — Term B, RWS 1302 Online!

I hope your Fall Semester is going well so far. My name is Carolyn Rhea Drapes and I will be teaching RWS 1302-01 online for this short, 7-week session. Note that not only am I here to teach, but I’m also here to assist you with understanding the writing and research processes covered in this course.

Overview

The aim of the RWS First Year Composition program is to introduce writing processes that you can use going forward in future projects and assignments. The skills and projects here will assist you with writing and researching, whether it be for an academic, business, community-based, or a personal writing project.

Text and Course Requirements

First, you must obtain access to the required eBook available from the UTEP bookstore or online at Brytewave.com. It is imperative that you have the eBook by Tuesday, October 23. Search for the course at RWS 1302, Section 01 on the bookstore website.

Again, this is a short course and something is assigned each day; all assignments use the eBook content. Contact me immediately if you cannot obtain the eBook by Tuesday, October 23, or if you have trouble accessing Blackboard at any time.

You will be completing several main assignments with their associated or tangential activities. These activities are just as important as the assignments as they help complete the main assignments and earn participation points.

To successfully complete the course, ALL assignments must be turned in and graded. The activities will help add value and understanding of these assignments.

Aside from the Introduction #1 discussion, there may be two or more discussions to write responses. Discussions and activities add to your participation grade and the assignments will receive grades.

Note that for this first reading assignment, it will require also reading about Assignment #4, the Advanced Visual Argument Assignment. These first assignments must be completed as soon as possible so that we can start the first graded analysis report, the Genre Analysis (Assignment #2)

Activity A: Introduction discussion

Using the Blackboard discussion area, introduce yourself to the others in this class and reply to them writing their introductions. This should be completed by Wednesday, October 24 at 11:30. If you introduce yourself say, Monday, go back Tuesday or Wednesday to reply to others who have introduced themselves. Read the directions for this discussion, located off the left-hand menu on Blackboard.

I am available via text, phone, or face-to-face meetings, on or off campus.

- Mobile number: 915-478-2675 (please text your name and class section before calling)
- Email: For quickest response, email me at: carolynrhea.drapes@gmail.com

If at any time you are lost, concerned, worried, or just having a good day, let me know.
Assignment #B: Course Topic for Research and Writing, Brytewave online manual pages 183 (199) – 185 (201)

Due to time constraints, you will need to decide on your course research topic quickly. Your topic should concern an area of interest important to you, and something you see that needs a positive change or outcome, such as further research or policy change. Topics may be locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally important, and may concern an area you are academically involved.

For example, engineering students may know of an area needing change or further research regarding water, energy, environmental or municipal public projects. Nursing, kinesiology, pre-med, or physical therapy students may know of an issue affecting these disciplines that can benefit from change or research, particularly considering changes to the Affordable Care Act. Or, student athlete injuries, methods of rehabilitation for disabled, whether children, veterans, or the elderly. A history, psychology, communication, political science, or fine art student probably knows of issues that affect society and needing either further funding or more research.

With the challenges facing citizens at the local, state, or national level today, important current issues that may be approved include, but are not limited to:

- Affordable Health Care Act and alternatives, improvements, single payer health care aka “Medicare for All”
- Alternative energy sources
- Climate change (current research and environmental impacts)
- Credible news sourcing and challenges to the first amendment and freedom of the press
- Election laws and gerrymandering, voting rights act, changes to voting rights age and dates of national elections are tangential subtopics
- Gentrification of neighborhoods
- Marijuana policy changes (This topic was once listed as non-productive, but times change. This topic is solely for researching cannabis policies, as a medication, and not to advocate for recreational use.)
- Opioid epidemic, reasons, and possible solutions
- Plastic pollution in the oceans (Great Gyres, Ocean Gyres, Plastic Garbage Patch(es)
- Rising levels of hate speech and challenges to the First Amendment on either side of the aisle, openly harassing or threatening people of color, elected officials
- Same sex couple adoption and marriage (due to current challenges these laws currently face.)

Non-productive topics that will not be approved:

- Abortion
- Animal cruelty (circuses, puppy mills, animal fighting, etc.) or paid safari hunting
- Death penalty
- Euthanasia or right to die
- Gun control, concealed, or public carry laws

This list of topics may not be researched and written about due to their being researched too often, or too entrenched because of a person’s personal faith or religion—no room for stasis or a starting point to begin a discussion.

If you cannot decide your topic by end of Day 4 (Thursday, October 25, 5:00 PM), I can help assist you. If you are in town and on campus, you can also receive brainstorming help from the University Writing Center. In any event, everyone must decide quickly what to research this short session and submit their topic to the Blackboard topic assignment. I will in turn approve your topic no later than October 26.
The following Projects (with their associated activities) are assigned for this short course. Due dates will be forthcoming Monday, October 22.

Assignment #1: Semester-long. Choose between Option A, Extended Professional ePortfolio, or Option B, an Advocacy Website based on your topic and Literature Review and Research. (The final draft for this assignment is due Sunday, December 9 at 11:30 PM).

- **Read Assignment 1**, Extended Professional E-Portfolio/Advocacy Website, in the online handbook (Brytewave) pages 188 (204)-210 (226) for Tuesday, October 23, and the associated information on Blackboard.

- Submit a short activity explaining whether you intend to create Option A (ePortfolio) or Option B (Advocacy website.) You may redesign or reuse your ePortfolio created for RWS 1301 if you’d like. This first activity for this assignment is due Friday, October 27 at 11:30 PM.

- Discussion #2 for Visual Design: This reading linked below which ties into the semester-long assignment for Assignment #1, Assignment and Assignment #4, the Advanced Visual Argument.
  
  
  - Next, respond to the writing prompt for this reading under discussions: Discussion #1, Visual Design.

Assignment #2: Genre Analysis, short analysis paper where two different genres are analyzed. Paper length between 5 – 8 pages. Due dates to follow.

- Read the Brytewave chapter for Assignment #2, pages 211 (227) – 223 (239).

- Provide a title, reference page for citing the two different genres.

- All reports for this course will be in APA format. Refer to [Purdue Online Writing Lab](https://www.purdue.edu/writing/) for assistance in formatting your papers, or you can get help from the University Writing Center in the Main Library. Of course, you may schedule an online or in-person meeting (text or call 915-478-2675).

- More information will be provided on Blackboard.

Assignment #3: Literature Review and Research Report, a longer APA formatted paper with your primary research information and secondary sources. Paper length between 10-14 pages with at least 8 sources and one primary researched source. Due dates to follow.

- Read the Brytewave chapter for Assignment #3, pages 224 (240) – 250 (266).

Assignment #4: Advanced Visual Argument, Documentary (Option A) or Open Education Resource (OER) (Option B). Each will be based on your Literature Review and Research Report. Documentary length: 4-6 minutes, OER length: 2-3 minutes. Due dates to follow.

- Read the Brytewave chapter for Assignment #4, pages 251 (267) – 266 (282).

More information will be provided on Blackboard in content areas and announcements.