# RWS 1301: Rhetoric and Writing Studies I

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## What Have Students Said?

- **Student A:** “…validat[ed] all opinions that were said…”
  
  “…was motivated to make us learn”

- **Student B:** “…if there was any issue, the instructor worked with you…”

- **Student C:** “…he does explain good, help out when we need help, and does answer questions we may have.”

- **Student D:** “…he doesn’t make class boring…”

- **Student E:** “…really good at making you feel welcomed and comfortable. He always answers questions even outside of class…”

- **Student G:** “He did really well understanding where each student is coming, while still being a firm teacher.”

- **Student H:** “Your course was the first English class where I learned...thank you”
### Course Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRN</th>
<th>11989</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Days</td>
<td>Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>8:30 am - 9:20 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>UGLC 236</td>
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### Instructor Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>David Tver</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dtver@miners.utep.edu">dtver@miners.utep.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours</td>
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If you cannot make office hours, we can meet through Zoom.

Just email me to set up a time and date!
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 1 and RWS 1302—Rhetoric and Composition 2.

These courses are intended to help students develop and reflect upon their rhetorical and writing knowledge including awareness of social and racial justice, and the implications of their language choices when they write, based on the understanding that language is never neutral.

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.

The FYC program reminds students that the primary purpose of these classes is 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.

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

“Writing is a physical work. It’s sweaty work. You just can’t will yourself to become a good writer. You really have to work at it.” – Wil Haygood
The First-Year Composition Program is geographically and discursively situated in the US-Mexico borderland and offers a binational and transnational experience through culture, language, and knowledge. We are committed both to learning from students and to building our program in a way that honors what they bring with them into the classroom and encourages them to make their voices heard in the university and beyond.

Our vision is to collectively journey toward the practice of self-reflexivity, listening carefully and empathically to the ideas and experiences that challenge our thinking, and to engage various rhetorical practices and genres of traditional and non-traditional writing. The program's curriculum design encourages students to imagine the possibilities of speaking, listening, and being heard through different literacies and compositions.

We invite students to explore topics from local, global, and disciplinary contexts that matter to them while learning effective writing skills and being mindful of their own situations and audiences.
RWS 1301 Learning Outcomes

1) Students will reflect on and critically analyze their own language experiences.

- or -

Think about the decisions you make each time you speak and what affects those decisions

2) Students will synthesize information about racial and ethnic biases and other social justice issues and confront these issues in their writing.

- or -

Think about the biases that exist both within us and the spaces we inhabit

3) Students will demonstrate engagement with multiple media sources through their projects, including, but not limited to, digital resources.

- or -

Think about how you will present information and why you would choose a certain medium

4) Students will identify relevant research sources and opportunities from their lived experiences, their campus interactions, and their engagement within their communities.

- or -

Think about how you can use academic research and your own lived experiences

5) Students will apply knowledge from local communities to research broader social issues demonstrating their critical awareness.

- or -

Think about how understanding local issues can inform larger societal issues
Rhetoric & Composition 1 (RWS 1301) Course Description

Rhetoric & Composition 1 (RWS 1301) is designed to help students in all disciplines reach their academic and professional goals as writers.

Course assignments invite students to explore cultural, political, linguistic, racial, and social issues through topics that appeal to their interests and sense of civic responsibility as members of various academic and non-academic communities.

The curriculum consists of these 5 modules:

**Module 1 – Taking Inventory**
- Exploring texts
- Experimenting with multimedia
- Collaborative project on studying texts, authorship, and the idea of composition

**Module 2 – Autoethnographic Study of Self and Language Experiences**
- Language and literacy—relationship to home and language
- Looking back on your linguistic identities
- How do linguistic and cultural experiences affect your ideas about what it means to write in college?

**Module 3 – Remixing the Self Study**
- Adapting to another audience—audience analysis
- Examining an alternative genre—genre analysis
- Composing in a new medium
- Rhetorical analysis

**Module 4 – Social Issue Investigation**
- Identifying an issue of personal and social concern
- Interrogating assumptions, biases, and representations through topic research
- Report with annotated bibliography for future study

**Module 5 – Visual Argument**
- Creating infographic, PSA, or alternative visual project
- Presentation of infographics and PSAs
**Required Texts & Materials**

**UTEP First-Year Composition Handbook, 2023-2024 Edition**

This is an electronic textbook or e-book and is only available through the UTEP bookstore.

To purchase, ask the person at the register about the handbook and they should have a scannable barcode.

You’ll then be given a purchase code. Go to this web address and redeem the purchase code given to you:


**Habits of the Creative Mind: A Guide to Reading, Writing, & Thinking 2nd Edition**

Authors: Richard E. Miller and Ann Jurecic

Year Published: 2020

The book should be available as a physical copy at the UTEP bookstore.

Any other things to read will be posted to Blackboard in the folders for that week.

You will need both books by the second week of class or Monday, September 4th.
Course Assignments and Grading

Grade Distribution

1,000 Total Points

- Module 1
- Module 2
- Module 3
- Module 4
- Module 5

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

For each module, except module 5, there will be a major assignment and a minor assignment due.

For each module, except module 5, there will also be assignments like writing journals, discussion posts, group activities, in-class activities and other assignments throughout the semester.

On Blackboard, at the start of each module there will be a document posted called “Point Distribution Breakdown” that will show what assignments are due during that module and the points assigned to them.
Course Delivery

While most classes are held face-to-face, there are a few sections that are designated as online. Those classes may meet synchronously or asynchronously through Blackboard. Whether face-to-face or online, the course is designed to engage students through discussions with your classmates and instructor using Blackboard (Bb).

In order to succeed in the course, you will need to have regular use of the internet and a stable connection regardless of whether your class meets face-to-face or online. 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. 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 by taking the Blackboard Student Orientation

(https://www.utep.edu/extendeduniversity/cid/student-resources/blackboard-orientation.html)

Did you know you each semester you get a printing allowance put on your miners card from the university? More information can be found here:

https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/ServiceCatalog/PRI_StudentPrinting.html
Submitting Work

All work will be submitted through the Blackboard course shell for this class.

Since Blackboard comment and grade function works best with Microsoft Word, please submit all assignments in Microsoft Word following APA or MLA format unless we discuss another format.

If the formatting guidelines aren’t followed or the submission is not a Microsoft Word file, points will be taken off for the assignment.

When saving your work and before submitting, make sure to name the assignment with your first and last name, an underscore, what the assignment is, an underscore, and then the title you have given the assignment.

The name of the file should look like this:

| File name: | DavidTver_MajorAssignment1_Title |
| Save as type: | Word Document |

If the naming guidelines aren’t followed, points will be taken off for the assignment.
Late Work

The deadline for every assignment will be given with the assignment.

Submitting work by the deadline is very important because not only will you have the ability to receive full credit, but I will also be able to leave more detailed comments and work with your writing.

If you need an extension on an assignment, let me know by emailing me at least 3 days before the assignment is due.

If you do not let me know that you need an extension within 3 days before the assignment, I will not accept the work.

However, if something really does happen that hinders your ability to turn in the assignment on time 2 days, 1 day, even hours before the assignment is due send me an email and we can negotiate how the work will be accepted and assessed.

Work done in class can not be turned in late.
Participation

I don’t expect everyone to speak up every class we have as I understand that people may have certain anxieties about speaking in class. I also understand that expecting 25 people to talk at least once in a 50 minute time period is not realistic.

However, this course and RWS 1302 are not built to be lecture driven, I speak you listen type of environments. For sure I will be trying to guide conversation and provide advice and information. But, the classroom is meant to be a collaborative environment where you can share your ideas and we can have a conversation.

To be a participant in this course:
- Complete writing assignments thoughtfully and honestly
- Contribute your thoughts, feelings, and labor during group activities or projects
- Share your ideas respectfully and thoroughly in online spaces (ex: discussion posts)
- Give your input during class discussion

For specific classroom etiquette or expectations for how discussions should be performed, 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 (whether face-to-face or online), and to surface through discussion board postings.

You are expected to demonstrate respect and courtesy for your peers and instructor when they express differing arguments, viewpoints, and/or experiences. Sexist, racist, homophobic, or other hateful speech will not be permitted.

Angry displays, whether in writing, online postings, or in class discussions will be handled as disruptions to the wellbeing of the class and responded to as negative participation.
University and Program Policies

**FYC Class Attendance Policy:** According to UTEP’s Curriculum and Classroom Policies:

The student is expected to attend all classes and laboratory sessions. 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 or with a grade of F after the course-drop deadline.


Attendance is mandatory for all freshman-level courses. Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to participate in discussions and workshops.

In addition, the First-Year Composition Program has developed the following policies that should be adhered to strictly by all instructors:

**For Face-to-Face Classes:** Students are entitled to a single week of unexplained absences without penalty (for example, 3 classes missed in a three-times-a-week class, 2 classes missed in twice-a-week class, 1 class missed in a once-a-week class).

After 2 total weeks of absence (not necessarily consecutive classes) the student’s grade is lowered by a full letter (A becomes B, etc.).

After 3 total weeks of absence (not necessarily consecutive), the student is automatically dropped from class.

Missing a scheduled conference with the instructor constitutes an absence.

**Hybrid Classes:** The attendance policy for hybrid courses aligns with the structure for face-to-face courses with each missed weekly class meeting constituting absence from a week of class.

The program recommends that the student contact the instructor to discuss the attendance policy and how it applies in cases in which it is not possible to attend a weekly class meeting, while continuing to maintain robust participation in class activities. [see also online courses]
**For Hybrid Classes:** The attendance policy for hybrid courses aligns with the structure for face-to-face courses with each missed weekly class meeting constituting absence from a week of class.

The program recommends that the student contact the instructor to discuss the attendance policy and how it applies in cases in which it is not possible to attend a weekly class meeting, while continuing to maintain robust participation in class activities. [see also online courses]

**For Online Classes:** 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.

**Drop Policy:** If you cannot complete this course for whatever reason, please contact your instructor ahead of the course drop deadline. Your instructor can help you with the drop process and you can contact the Registrar’s Office. If you do not drop, you are at risk of being dropped by the instructor and possibly receiving an “F” for the course.

**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 Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution page for more information on Academic integrity.

The First-Year Composition Program fundamentally trusts its students and strives to create dynamic classroom experiences and writing opportunities rooted in the values of inquiry and critical thinking.

We agree deeply with Anna R. Mills’ (2003) claim, in the Chronicle of Higher Education, that “writing practice continues to be intensely rewarding for students and central to intellectual growth in college.”
Because of the rapid pace of change represented by ChatGPT and similar programs, it is necessary to set clear program standards regarding their use in our classes.

Specifically, the FYC Program recognizes that language models hold educational value that can be explored in the classroom, such as narrowing down a topic idea or critically analyzing the quality of an AI-generated text.

However, our program maintains a clear expectation that all assignment submissions must constitute original pieces of writing composed by the student-author. By this standard, an acceptable use of ChatGPT (or a similar program) could take the form of:

- writing an introduction paragraph that openly describes how this language model offered possible approaches to researching a particular topic, with any direct quotes placed in quotation marks.

By contrast, an unacceptable use of ChatGPT (or a similar program) could take the form of:

- copying any amount of text from a language model without attribution, i.e. failure to include quotation marks around any directly quoted language, and an in-text citation for any paraphrased or quoted text (including text generated by ChatGPT or another language model).

FYC faculty are required to submit any assignment submissions that appear to include unacceptable uses of AI programs (or that are marked for further review by AI detection programs that our faculty are trained with) to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

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**Accommodations:** UTEP is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008.

Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Students are encouraged to visit CASS in room 106, Union East Building or contact them at 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu.
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. Go to University Writing Center - UTEP to make an appointment with a writing center consultant.

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.

Course Support Resources

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<tr>
<th>Title IX</th>
<th>915-747-8358</th>
<th>Institutional Compliance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>915-747-5648</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
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<td>UTEP Health &amp; Wellness Center</td>
<td>915-747-5624</td>
<td><a href="https://www.utep.edu/chs/shc/">https://www.utep.edu/chs/shc/</a> / <a href="mailto:studenthealth@utep.edu">studenthealth@utep.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>UTEP Police Department</td>
<td>915-747-5611</td>
<td><a href="https://www.utep.edu/police/">https://www.utep.edu/police/</a> / <a href="mailto:police@utep.edu">police@utep.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Counseling and Psychological Services</td>
<td>915-747-5302</td>
<td><a href="https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/">https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/</a> / <a href="mailto:caps@utep.edu">caps@utep.edu</a></td>
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Academic Calendar Fall 2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 28th</td>
<td>Fall classes begin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 28th-Sept 1st</td>
<td>Late Registration (Fees are incurred)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 4th</td>
<td>Labor Day Holiday - University Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 13th</td>
<td>Fall Census Day</td>
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Nov 3rd  
Fall 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.

Nov 23rd-24th  
Thanksgiving Holiday- University Closed

Dec 7th  
Fall – Last day of classes