

Rhetoric and Writing Studies RWS 1301 CRN: 22335

Instructor Information:

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Pronouns: They/them, She/Her

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Office Hours:

I'll be available to you all through office hours for questions or requests regarding the class. You can also always find my office hours schedule and place on Blackboard, on the table of contents on the left.

I'm also available any other day from Monday to Friday by appointment. Please, email me and let me know if you need to talk!

- Mondays, at 11am
- Wednesdays, at 3pm
- Fridays, 12pm (Fully online, through Zoom).

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 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.

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

RWS 1301 & 1302 Learning Outcomes

- 1) Students will reflect on and critically analyze their own language experiences.
- 2) Students will synthesize information about racial and ethnic biases and other social justice issues and confront these issues in their writing.
- 3) Students will demonstrate engagement with multiple media sources through their projects, including, but not limited to, digital resources.
- 4) Students will identify relevant research sources and opportunities from their lived experiences, their campus interactions, and their engagement within their communities.
- 5) Students will apply knowledge from local communities to research broader social issues demonstrating their critical awareness.

At the end of these FYC courses, 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: surveys, interviews, observations, case studies, 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

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

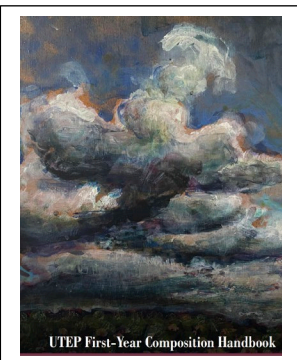
MODULE 4 – Social Issue Investigation

- 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

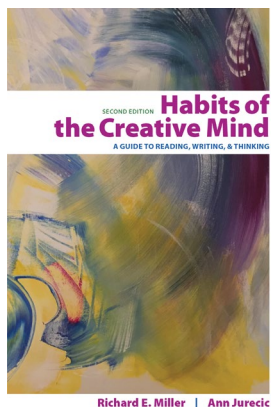
- Creating infographic, PSA, or alternative visual project
- Presentation of infographics and PSAs

Required Texts & Materials



1. UTEP First-Year Composition Handbook, Fall 2022 edition

An e-book [available through the UTEP Bookstore.](#)



2. Miller, R. E., & Jurecic, A. (2020). Habits of the Creative Mind: A Guide to Reading, Writing, & Thinking (2nd ed.) [Available at the UTEP Bookstore.](#)
3. Additional required readings may also be posted on Blackboard. Please, make sure to check Blackboard on a regular basis to see the required readings in the course calendar.

Technology

This course will make extensive use of basic technological tools. Please, make sure you have:

- A device with which you can access the Blackboard website. Preferably, a computer. Phones are not recommended for daily Blackboard use.
- Stable internet connection

- A word processor. Preferably, Microsoft Word. Remember, having an UTEP e-mail grants you access to many applications, Word is one of them!

If you have limited access to any of these tools, do not despair! Refer to the Course Delivery section in this syllabus for more information.

Course Assignments and Grading

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

I will consider the following grading criteria to gradually evaluate your work.

- Discussion participation: 100 points
- Activities and presentations: 200 points
- Major assignments: 600 points
- Attendance and etiquette/netiquette: 100 points

Discussion participation: We will engage in frequent conversations where you will converse with your classmates about differing topics. For further details, refer to the course schedule, where you'll find further details about each assignment.

Activities and presentations: Throughout the semester, I'll assign different small activities for you to complete and upload to Bb. Examples of these are brief essays or presentations you will design about a certain topic.

Major assignments: Each module will have a major assignment, making 5 of them. The first four assignments are worth 100 points each, while the last major assignment, the module 5 assignment, will be worth 200 points. You'll promptly receive information about each at least two weeks before the due date.

Attendance and etiquette/netiquette: For more information about attendance and etiquette/netiquette, refer to the next section of the syllabus.

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>)

The following are the applications we'll be using throughout the course. Pay attention to the Announcements section in Bb in case any of this change.

- Blackboard (Bb)
- Outlook, UTEP e-mail service
- Word processor (recommended: Microsoft Word)

Submitting Work: All work will be submitted through the Bb course shell for this class. Since Bb comment and grade function works best with Microsoft Word, please submit all assignments in Microsoft Word following APA or MLA format unless directed otherwise. Be sure to name each submitted assignment with your name and the title of the assignment.

Late Work: All course work you compose should be delivered by the dates written in the calendar. As a college student, it's expected of you to organize your time effectively and be responsible with your assignments. Having said this, we're in a pandemic, and your wellbeing and those of the people you love matter the most. Please, communicate with me if you ever feel like you won't be able to deliver the assignments on time. If you do this, we can always arrange something.

Participation:

In this class, we'll engage in numerous conversations about composition, our writing processes and other different aspects of writing. As your instructor for this course, I expect you all to raise your hand and share what you think. Do not worry if your input is

brief or if you're concerned that it won't contribute to the conversation. What matters for the participation is that we hear your thoughts and what you need to say.

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 (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, transphobic, 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.

As a general rule: always consider audience, in class and online. As Virginia Shea writes in *Netiquette*, the first, or "golden," rule of online practice is to "Remember the human." Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading your postings. 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. 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 your RWS classmates and instructor only. 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).

Small note:

The use of Microsoft Word to submit documents is mandatory. Please, do not submit any word documents made in Pages or any other word-processor software. Again, Microsoft Word is free for any UTEP student. Any document submitted in the wrong format will not be accepted.

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.

Please consult UTEP's [Curriculum and Classroom Policies](#) for more information regarding Excused Absences for University-Recognized Activities, Absence for Religious Holy Days, and Military Leave.

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.

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. 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.

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

Title IX	915-747-8358	Institutional Compliance
Dean of Students	915-747-5648	Dean of Students

UTEP Health & Wellness Center	915-747-5624	https://www.utep.edu/chs/shc/studenthealth@utep.edu
UTEP Police Department	915-747-5611	https://www.utep.edu/police/police@utep.edu
Counseling and Psychological Services	915-747-5302	https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/caps@utep.edu

Academic Calendar Spring 2023

Jan 17th	Spring classes begin
Jan 17th-20th	Late Registration (Fees are incurred)
Feb 1st	Spring Census Day Note: This is the last day to register for classes. Payments are due by 5:00 pm.
Mar 13th-17th	Spring Break
Mar 30th	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.
Mar 31st	Cesar Chavez Holiday - No classes
Apr 7th	Spring Study Day
May 4th	Spring – Last day of classes
May 5th	Dead day
May 8-12th	Spring Final Exams

Course Schedule

The course schedule will be posted weekly through Blackboard. The following is an overall summary of the contents of each week. It is subject to change, which is why it's recommended to check BB regularly.

Module 1

- Week 1: Course introduction, exploring the nature of text
- Week 2: Multimedia, taking inventory (writing tools)
- Week 3: Getting to know the rules before breaking them

Module 2

- Week 4: Our relationship with language, our vocabulary

- Week 5: Author and audience, the danger of the single story
- Week 6: The footnote, APA

Module 3

- Week 7: Genre analysis
- Week 8: Research, advanced searching
- Week 9: Rhetorical analysis, MLA

Module 4

- Week 10: Social concern, what do we write about
- Week 11: Bias
- Week 12: Annotated bibliography, CRAAP test

Module 5

- Week 13: Visual language
- Week 14: The outline, ekphrasis
- Week 15: Class review