

**RWS 5318/RWS 6318 - Community Literacy Internship**  
**Spring 2024 \*CEL**  
**Section 22936/Section 25291 TTH 3-4:20 p.m. Hudspeth 313**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**Instructor:** Dr. Isabel Baca  
*Pronouns: she, her, hers, ella*

**Office:** Hudspeth Hall 314

**Office Hours:** TTH 2-3 p.m. and by appointment  
**Virtual Office Hours:** Through Zoom and by appointment

**Telephone #:** (915) 747-6245

**E-mail:** [ibaca@utep.edu](mailto:ibaca@utep.edu)

**REQUIRED READINGS**

All required readings will be provided on Blackboard.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

RWS 5318/RWS 6318 – The Community Literacy Internship (\*CEL) consists of you completing an internship with a non-profit organization. You will serve as writers, researchers, presenters, and in other capacities dealing with writing studies and literacy in its different aspects (e.g. computers, reading, writing, speaking, communication, social media, workforce skills, and language). You have the option of selecting your own agency or choosing one from the list provided in class. In this course, you will apply what you have learned in your graduate classes and/or practice what you hope to learn or be doing in your future career in a workplace setting while serving and helping fill the literacy/communication needs of the El Paso/Juárez border community. You will learn and practice service-learning and community engagement as it applies to literacy, rhetoric, and writing studies. A secondary goal for this course is to help you become aware of the gaps and needs for social justice and/or social change in and beyond the community and to identify venues and tools to address inequities and resistance.

\*The “CEL” designation for this course stands for “Community Engagement & Leadership” and is part of a new certificate program in the College of Liberal Arts. The purpose of this CEL course is to strengthen students’ understanding of their role in society as engaged citizens and to build the knowledge and competencies that will enable them to be socially responsible and participating community leaders. Please also note that course assignments and assessments are developed in line with UTEP’s “Edge Advantages” goals. You will find that CEL is integrated throughout this internship course.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Apply your Rhetoric and Writing Studies (RWS) knowledge in a real workplace setting (*EDGE Advantages: Critical Thinking, Communication, Problem Solving*);
2. Create a contract with an agency mentor and practice workforce skills, such as negotiation and time and project management (*EDGE Advantages: Critical Thinking, Communication, Problem Solving, Leadership, Confidence*);

3. Explore the role of community engagement in RWS (*EDGE Advantages: Communication, Critical Thinking, Social Responsibility*);
4. Identify and help meet your community's literacy needs (*EDGE Advantages: Critical Thinking, Social Responsibility, Problem Solving*);
5. Examine different community literacies (*EDGE Advantages: Critical Thinking*);
6. Make clear connections between your internship and RWS scholarship (*EDGE Advantages: Critical Thinking*);
7. Understand the structure, purpose, and benefits of service-learning in higher education (*EDGE Advantages: Critical Thinking*); and
8. Reflect on your internship work, its relation to the field of RWS, and its impact on your community (*EDGE Advantages: Critical Thinking, Social Responsibility, Communication, Confidence*).

## **COURSE STRUCTURE**

For the most part, this will be an independent study course in that the major component is the internship itself. We will meet as a class, have internship days, hold individual conferences, and communicate via e-mail. We will use Blackboard as our learning management system. When we meet as a class, we will give progress reports on internships, workshop documents/texts produced for your agencies, discuss the assigned readings, and address concerns, challenges, questions, and/or successes that may arise in the course of your internships. You will also be giving presentations during our class days and engage in different class activities.

All assignment sheets and readings are provided in the course modules. Sample contracts and required evaluation forms are also provided in the course modules. Be sure to review the course calendar and refer to it on a weekly basis to ensure you attend class when you are expected to be present and to ensure you meet all deadlines. The course calendar will guide you throughout the semester. Check Blackboard Announcements for important messages from me.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

In order to complete this course successfully, you must meet both the agency's requirements and the class requirements.

### ***Agency Requirements***

Your agency requirements will vary depending on your agency selection. You will draw up a contract with your agency mentor outlining the duties you will perform, projects you will complete, deadlines you will meet, and other responsibilities you will have in your internship with the non-profit organization. This contract will be signed by you and your mentor, and when approved, by me. Be sure to complete all training, attend orientations, and meet all the agency's requirements needed for your internship. Communication between your agency mentor and you is crucial to the success of your internship. **Be sure to give a copy of the course syllabus to your agency mentor.**

### **The Internship Contract**

You must first negotiate the projects/tasks you will be completing for your agency mentor. Then you will submit a complete draft of your contract with no signatures during individual conferences with me. Upon my approval, you will revise the contract accordingly and will get it signed by all three parties. You

will also include the signed contract in your internship portfolio. **Make sure to give a copy of the signed contract to your agency mentor and keep a copy for yourself.**

***Class Requirements***

Though one of the primary goals for this course is to complete the community literacy internship successfully, you must also meet other class objectives which include reading, writing, and presentation assignments. I will give you more details and specific guidelines for these assignments during our class meetings and individual conferences. **All assignments, both major and minor, must be completed to pass the course! The internship must be completed to pass the course!** Each assignment will be explained in a separate handout and discussed in class. The following is a tentative list of class assignments and their probable weight in points.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>
<i>Internship Contract – without signatures</i>	15
<i>Internship Contract – with signatures, final draft</i>	15
<i>Workshop #1</i>	15
<i>Workshop #2</i>	15
<i>Progress Report</i>	15
<i>Nonprofit Organization, Agency Mentor, and Contract Presentation</i>	15
<i>Final Reflection</i>	15
<i>Community Literacy Internship Final Presentation</i>	15
<i>Internship Portfolio</i>	45
Including: Contract, Introductory Memo, Texts Produced, Self-Evaluation	
<i>*Mentor Evaluation - Due by May 2, 2024</i>	*
<i>Class Participation and Attendance</i>	15
<b><i>Community Literacy Internship</i></b>	<b>200</b>
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	<b>TOTAL: 380</b>

**FINAL GRADE SCALE**

**342-380 = A**

**304-341 = B**

**266-303 = C**

**228-265 = D**

**227 and below = F**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your internship and/or progress and performance in this course, speak with me.

**CLASS POLICIES**

You are expected to adhere to the following class policies.

### ***Attendance and Punctuality***

As graduate students, you are expected to attend class and participate in all class discussions and activities. As ethical and professional writers/communicators, you are expected to be responsible and committed to your internship with your selected non-profit organization and agency mentor. We will hold class meetings, individual conferences, and internship days. Attendance in the course is determined by participation in the learning activities of the course. Your participation in the course is important not only for your learning and success but also to creating a community of learners. Thus, missing class days and/or individual conferences is unacceptable and will affect your final grade for this course. Please be on time and be prepared. This holds true for your internship as well. Be professional and responsible. Treat your internship as you would a job.

### ***Note:***

Please stay home if you have symptoms of a communicable illness. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations.

### ***Technical Requirements and Support***

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. You should have a UTEP e-mail account and have access to the Web. You may use any of the primary Web browsers—Explorer, Google Chrome, Firefox, Safari, etc. **When having technical difficulties, try switching to another browser.**

Once you log into the course, you can click on the links “**Blackboard Help**” and “**UTEP’s Blackboard Help**” to access Blackboard tutorials that will help you navigate the Blackboard learning system. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course. **If, during the course of the semester, you can’t log in or have any other technical problems, call Tech Support at 915-747-5257.**

### ***Online Communication and Online Learning- Blackboard***

In addition to the course materials (syllabus, calendar, assignments, readings, etc.), you will find the following links available to you.

Course Announcements – I will post updates, any changes to lessons/assignments, deadlines for assignments, discussion boards (if any), activities, and emergencies/important notifications. **Read the Course Announcements!** Make it your routine to check announcements.

Submission Links – You may be submitting some of your assignments via Blackboard (follow instructions). Use the links provided for these submissions. Should you experience technical difficulty submitting your assignments via the Blackboard system, use regular UTEP e-mail (Outlook) as the alternate plan.

Course Zoom Meetings – If you wish to meet with me virtually, we will use the Zoom link located on the left sidebar. Remember to schedule an appointment with me.

### ***Make-up and Late Work***

All deadlines are listed in the course calendar. Please adhere to these. You may always submit work before the due date. As a professional, you must meet all deadlines with your agency mentor and for your internship. All internships must be completed by **Monday, April 22, 2024**. Please follow the course calendar, and when in doubt about assignments, deadlines, and/or course material, contact me.

### ***Academic Dishonesty***

You are expected to maintain professional ethics by giving credit freely where it is due and acknowledging the inclusion of material from an outside source in your documents and writing. In other words, plagiarism and any other form of cheating will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

### ***Using AI for Brainstorming***

Some AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as [ChatGPT](#) or [DALL-E](#), can be beneficial during the early brainstorming stages of an activity, and you are welcome to explore them for that purpose. However, keep in mind that AI-generated ideas are not your own and may hinder your ability to think critically and creatively about a problem. It is also important to remember that these technologies often “hallucinate” or produce materials and information that are inaccurate or incomplete—even providing false citations for use.

That said, you are not allowed to submit any AI-generated work in this course as your own. If you use any information or materials created by AI technology, you are required to cite it like you would any other source. Consider how this will affect your credibility as a writer and scholar before doing so. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

## **RESOURCES**

The following resources may be helpful to you as a student.

### ***University Writing Center (UWC)***

If you want to improve your writing and/or get feedback on your writing, you may visit the University Writing Center (UWC). The UWC offers workshops and one-on-one consultations, both in person and virtually. For more information, visit their website: <https://www.utep.edu/uwc/>

### ***Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS)***

If you have or believe you have a disability and need specific accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 915-747-5148, or by e-mail to [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu). You may also visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at [www.utep.edu/CASS](http://www.utep.edu/CASS). CASS staff are the only individuals who can validate, and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities. Students who become pregnant may also request reasonable accommodations, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and University policy. Accommodations that constitute undue hardship are not reasonable. For more information on this policy, visit <https://www.utep.edu/hoop/section-2/student-pregnancy-and-parenting-nondiscrimination-policy.html>

### ***Counseling and Psychological Services***

As a student, you may seek counseling services at UTEP. Visit the Counseling and Psychological Services website for more information: <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/counseling-services/>

### ***Food Pantry***

The UTEP food pantry offers support and assistance to UTEP students who are dealing with food insecurity. Items available to students include cereal, crackers, peanut butter, jelly, rice, pasta, Ramen

noodles, tea, dry beans, canned soup, canned vegetables, canned fruit, canned tuna, canned chicken, toiletries and more. The food pantry is located in Memorial Gym, Room 105. For more information, visit their website: <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/foodpantry/>

### **CLASS CALENDAR**

Review the provided class calendar for deadlines. Class calendar is subject to change.