Rhetoric and Writing Studies

RWS 1302     CRN: 16828
Meeting Day/Time: F 12-1:20 pm
Place: UGLC 232

Instructor: Irma Leticia Nikicicz
Email: ilnikicicz@utep.edu
Office and Hours: M 9-11 am, T 12-2 pm, F 10-11 am

Course Description

The primary goal of RWS 1302 is to develop students' critical thinking skills in order to facilitate effective communication in all educational, professional, and social contexts. This 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.

The class presents an approach to communication that helps students determine the most effective strategies, arrangements, and media to use in different rhetorical contexts. It teaches students a systematic approach for analyzing rhetorical situations and then producing a variety of documents and presentations while gaining more confidence and fluency in visual, oral, and written communication. In addition, because communication is central to being an active and engaged member of society, the course also provides a space for informed advocacy.

Learning Outcomes:

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

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

Students will also have the opportunity to strengthen skills sets in the following areas:
• Think, read, and write critically;
• Formulate research questions and perform primary and secondary research to answer those questions;
• Become familiar with the contents of the UTEP Library, in a variety of forms and areas of professional study (e.g. the arts, humanities, sciences, nursing, social sciences, business, engineering, and education);
• Analyze and synthesize material from outside sources;
• Develop a sensitivity to the significance of data and how it can be rhetorically applied to various genres; and,
• Apply research to various genres;
• Master documentation within a discipline (APA);
• learn writing strategies for integrating source material into your own prose (quoted, paraphrased, and summarized material); write analytical and argumentative papers appropriate to genres and larger discourse communities.

This course is also designed to promote your overall success, inside and outside the classroom. Our coursework will help you to improve in key areas such as communication, confidence, critical thinking, leadership, problem solving, social responsibility and teamwork. To find out more about the university’s plan to improve student engagement and learning, visit the UTEP Edge.
Required Texts & Materials:


Additional readings may also be posted on Blackboard. Refer to the program for more information.

The next section consists of an overview of assignments. The icons relate to relevant UTEP Edge learning outcomes. Read more about those here: [https://www.utep.edu/edge/about/index.html](https://www.utep.edu/edge/about/index.html).

Specific assignment guidelines can be found in the *Handbook*. Further instructions are posted on the Blackboard course content.

Course Assignments:

**Topic Proposal for Semester:** Students will write a proposal to identify the subject/issue/topic they will be working with for the semester. This will be submitted to, approved, and graded by the instructor. **50 pts.**
**Genre Analysis Outline:** Students will complete the following activities to prepare them for the Genre Analysis Essay assignment: Choosing your genres; analyzing specialized genres; and analysis outline assignment. **25 pts.**

**Genre Analysis:** Students will identify two texts on the same subject, but in different genres, to write a comparative analysis. This will be submitted (rough and final drafts) to, and graded by, the instructor. **100 pts.**

**Research Proposal Outline:** As part of this assignment you must generate 3-4 research questions and begin to find sources for the Literature Review/Research Report. Students will complete Activities 1-4 for Literature Review. **25 pts.**

**Literature Review / Primary Research Report:** Students will conduct primary and secondary research on a social, political, or ethical issue to become well-informed experts on the issue. Students will then write a literature review of these sources to summarize and synthesize the arguments and ideas of the research sources. This will be submitted (rough and final drafts) to, and graded by, the instructor. **200 pts.**

**Advanced Visual Argument Storyboard:** Students will work in groups to submit an outline to show the persuasive purpose and argumentative structure for the project. Complete the persuasive purpose worksheet, the developing reasons for advocacy, and gathering evidence to support reasons. **50 pts.**
Advanced Visual Argument: 200 pts.

Option 1: Documentary Film

Class Presentation: In their groups, students will present their visual argument to the class. The instructor will grade this presentation. 50 pts.

E-Portfolio Reflection Website/Blog: Students will create, design, and maintain an academic profile in the form of an e-portfolio website that includes reflections on their course work, major assignments and composing processes.

Option 1: Advocacy Website w/ Online Opinion Piece
Option 2: Extended Professional E-Portfolio 100 pts.

Participation in Class: Because this is a hybrid class, participation in-class and online is mandatory. The activities included in this category ensure that students learn the material and help them to compose effective projects. This will include attendance, reading quizzes, and scaffolding assignments, such as proposals, drafts, Bb discussions, peer reviews, and other work the instructor assigns. These points will be determined and distributed by the instructor. 200 pts.

Grade Distribution (Students can earn a total of 1000 points for the course):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000-900</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>899-800</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>799-700</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>699-600</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>599 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
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University and Instructor Policies
This course is designed to engage you through reading and discussions both in class and Bb. **Students are expected to read all assigned texts** and actively participate in all face-to-face and online interactions. Failure to do so will adversely affect your grade.

Course Delivery:
This course is taught as a **hybrid class**—with one face-to-face meeting for lecture and discussion, and the rest of the course utilizing a management system such as Blackboard, a Wiki, or a class website depending on the instructor. It is vital for you to regularly check your UTEP email and course content.

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, but since the class only meets for 1.5 hours a week, add the additional 1.5 hours to the 6 for a total of 7.5 hours.

This course is technology enhanced, and all of the supplementary material for the class will be delivered via Blackboard. It is strongly recommended that students have access to Internet from home and are comfortable using a computer. If home access is not possible, arrangements can be made to use a computer regularly on campus in order to complete the work. Student computer labs such as ATLAS (http://issweb.utep.edu/) are often available until midnight, but schedules do vary. A great deal of work will be done online, and not having access to a computer will affect your ability to turn in assignments on time.

Assigned Reading: All students are expected to **read assigned texts before class**. Quizzes will be deployed without notice to assess preparation and comprehension.

Submitting Work: All work will be submitted through our Bb course shell. Since Bb comment and grade function works best with Microsoft Word, please submit all assignments
in Microsoft Word following APA format, unless directed otherwise. Microsoft Word is available to students at all campus computers and through the Cloud.

**Due Dates for Major Assignments:** All major assignments will be due by Friday before the start of class. Check the Bb for exact dates for each project.

**Late Work:** Not accepted. It is important to submit work before deadlines for consideration of full credit and feedback.

### Classroom Etiquette:

- Electronic devices can be very helpful in the classroom whether a smartphone, tablet, or computer. However, if their use does not contribute to the conversation or tasks in the classroom, then I have the right to ask you to put it away or turn it off, even if it is a personal device. A student who refuses to comply with this policy will be asked to leave.

- 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, and to surface through our social media activity. You are expected to demonstrate the utmost respect and courtesy for your peers with differing arguments, viewpoints, and/or experiences. Sexist, racist, homophobic, or other hateful speech will not be tolerated.

- As a general rule, always consider audience, in class and online. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any postings. When reacting to someone else’s message (verbal or written), address the ideas, not the person.

- 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 classmates and professor 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).
**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. (For further information regarding excused absences refer to UTEP’s Catalog Curriculum and Classroom Policies.

Students are expected to attend all 13 class meetings, to read all assigned texts, and participate in discussions and workshops. The 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). Since this class meets once a week, if you are absent from more than two classes, you may be dropped from the course. Missing a scheduled conference with the instructor constitutes an absence.

**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.

Additionally, please be aware that you may not submit work for this class that was produced for another class. You must produce original work. Instructors are required to report suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of Student Affairs. Refer to the Office of Dean of Students for more information.

**Accommodations:**

Your success in this class is important to me. We all learn differently, and if there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together, we’ll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of
the course. I strongly encourage you to visit the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) in room 106, Union East Building or contact them at 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu. If you need official accommodations, you have a right to have these met. There are also a range of resources on campus, including the Writing Center, Counseling Center, Military Student Success Center and Academic Advising Center.

**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, I encourage you to visit the writing center at least 12 hours before the assignment is due.

**Military Students:**

Thank you for your service! 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.

**Important Dates for this Semester:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 26</td>
<td>First day of class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 26-30</td>
<td>Late Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 2</td>
<td>Labor Day-No classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 11</td>
<td>Census Day</td>
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<td><strong>Freshmen mid-term grades due</strong></td>
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Important Dates for this Semester Cont’d:

- Nov 1: Fall drop/withdrawal deadline
- Nov 28-29: Thanksgiving Holiday
- Dec 5: Last day of classes
- Dec 6: Dead Day
- Dec 9-13: Final Exams. Check the UTEP finals week calendar for your course.
- Dec 18: Final grades are due

Visit [https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/registrar/Academic%20Calendars/academic-calendar.html](https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/registrar/Academic%20Calendars/academic-calendar.html) for other important dates.

Please make note of office hours and email, and reach out to me if you need to. I look forward to helping you become better writers this semester!
Course Program (Subject to change):

*WIT Reader* = *Writing in Transit*

*FYC Handbook* = *The First-Year Composition Handbook (e-book)*

All assignments will be submitted to Blackboard. See the course program and/or Bb for exact due dates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings &amp; Assignments</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wk 1:</td>
<td>Class introduction</td>
<td><em>WIT Reader</em>: Ch. 1 Writing Transfer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 26</td>
<td>Syllabus review</td>
<td><em>FYC Handbook</em>: Introduction to RWS 1302 &amp; Assignment #1 Extended Professional E-Portfolio Website</td>
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<td></td>
<td>E-Portfolio Project</td>
<td>Interrogating Texts: Six Reading Habits to Develop in Your First Year at Harvard:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>introduction</td>
<td><a href="http://guides.library.harvard.edu/sixreadinghabits">http://guides.library.harvard.edu/sixreadinghabits</a></td>
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<td><strong>E-Portfolio Shell due</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Bb Discussion #1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wk 2:</td>
<td>Begin semester topic discussion</td>
<td><em>WIT Reader</em>: Ch. 2 Research and Writing as a Process</td>
<td>Labor Day: No classes on Mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 2</td>
<td>Genre Analysis introduction</td>
<td><em>FYC Handbook</em>: Choosing a Topic for the Semester &amp; Assignment #2 Genre Analysis</td>
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<td><strong>Semester Topic Proposal due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wk 3:</td>
<td>Genre Analysis</td>
<td><em>WIT Reader</em>: Ch. 7 Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 9</td>
<td>Outlining &amp; Drafting</td>
<td><em>FYC Handbook</em>: Outlining Your Genre Analysis, Drafting Your Genre Analysis</td>
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| Wk 4: Sep 16 | Peer Review & Revision | **Genre Analysis Outline due**  
**Bb Discussion #2**  
**FYC Handbook**: Revision, Style, & Grammar p. 14  
Optional: Eli Review. Feedback and Revision.  
[http://elireview.com/content/td/feedback/](http://elireview.com/content/td/feedback/)  
**Peer Review of Genre Analysis Draft**  
Draft due in class and Bb (apply revisions after peer review in preparation for final submission) |
| Wk 5: Sep 23 | Begin Literature Review Research Report | **WIT Reader**: Ch. 3 Posing Meaningful Questions  
**FYC Handbook**: Assignment #3 Literature Review/Research Report  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PkcHstP6Hto](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PkcHstP6Hto).  
**Bb Discussion #3**  
**Assignment #2 Genre Analysis due** |
| Wk 6: Sep 30 | Stasis Theory & The Research Process | **WIT Reader**: Ch. 4 Reading  
Stasis Theory:  
[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/the_writing_process/stasis_theory/index.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/the_writing_process/stasis_theory/index.html)  
**Bb Discussion #4**  
**Research Proposal Outline due** |
| Wk 7: Oct 7 | Finding Sources & Determining Your Primary Research | Primary Research **WIT Reader**: pp. 18, 67, 149  
**FYC Handbook**: Research, Information Literacy, and the Library p. 44  
**Primary Research Questions due for a quick peer review of questions for biases** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wk 9: Oct 21</td>
<td><strong>Choosing &amp; Integrating Evidence</strong></td>
<td><em>WIT Reader: Ch. 11 Choosing and Integrating Evidence</em></td>
<td><em>FYC Handbook: Assignment #3 Drafting the Literature Review &amp; Putting It All Together</em></td>
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<td>Wk 10: Oct 28</td>
<td><strong>Documenting Sources &amp; Peer Review</strong></td>
<td><em>WIT Reader: Ch. 12 Citing Resources</em></td>
<td><em>FYC Handbook: Collaboration in Undergraduate Writing</em> <strong>Peer Review of Lit. Review Draft</strong> Draft due in class and Bb (apply revisions after peer review in preparation for final submission)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wk 11: Nov 4</td>
<td><strong>Advanced Visual Argument &amp; Storyboards</strong></td>
<td><em>WIT Reader: Ch. 8 Framing Arguments</em></td>
<td><em>FYC Handbook: Assignment #4 Advanced Visual Argument &amp; Group Proposal</em> Begin Group Work: Advanced Visual Argument Proposal <strong>Assignment #3 Literature Review Report due</strong> <strong>Group Contract DUE if applicable</strong> Poss. iMovie workshop</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Wk 12: Nov 11 | Advanced Visual Argument Cont’d | WIT Reader: Ch. 9 Constructing Arguments & Ch. 10 Designing Arguments: Formats and Modalities  
Group Work Continued  
**Advanced Visual Argument Proposal due** |
|---|---|---|
Web. 1 Nov. 2015.  
**Advanced Visual Argument Storyboard due**  
Last F2F class |
| Wk 14: Nov 25 | Begin Presentation discussion online  
NO F2F CLASS ON FRIDAY | *FYC Handbook*: Assignment #5 Advanced Visual Argument Presentation  
Finish editing Advanced Visual Arguments in preparation for Presentations  
Thanks -giving  
UTEP Closed 28-29 |
| Wk 15: Dec 2 | Presentations | **Assignment #5 due: In-class group presentations of Visual Argument**  
**Assignment #4 Advanced Visual Argument Due**  
*(WE HAVE TO DISCUSS THIS WEEK)*  
Dead Day on Friday |
| Wk 16: Dec 9 | Finals Week | **Assignment #1 Extended Professional E-Portfolio Website Due on Dec 11, before midnight**  
Final grades are due by Dec 18  
**HAPPY WINTER BREAK!** |