Rhetoric and Writing Studies RWS 1301
CRN: 15852  Meeting Days/Time: TR 4:30-5:50  Place: UGLC 236

Instructor Information: Irma L Nikicicz  
Email: ilnikicicz@miners.utep.edu
Office and Hours: Library, W 10 am-2 pm

Course Description
The goal of RWS 1301 is to develop students’ critical thinking skills in order to facilitate effective communication in all educational, professional, and social contexts. 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. It is designed to prepare you for the writing you will do throughout your university experience as well as in professional and civic environments. This course offers you a curriculum that empowers you to determine the most effective rhetorical strategies, arrangements, and media to use in different rhetorical contexts.

Learning Outcomes
At the end of this course, students will:

- 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 stabilized 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.
Learning Community Description

This class is part of a Learning Community (LC) with Professor Kathleen Key’s UNIV 1301 11701, Greek Mythology in Art. You must remain registered in all sections of your learning community through census day (September 12). Some readings and assignments in this class will be integrated with the work you do in UNIV 1301, as we explore this LC’s common theme “Learning from the Ancients: Greek Mythology & The Art of Modern Rhetoric.”

LC Objectives

1. Students will form academic and social communities with their peers by
   a. participating in curricular small group activities within the classroom
   b. attending/participating in one or more co-curricular activities (social, cultural, or intellectual events) at UTEP, preferably in small groups consisting of other class members
   c. participating in collaborative and cooperative learning experiences

2. Students will make interdisciplinary connections by
   a. being involved in a minimum of one interdisciplinary assignment/project
   b. applying ideas, strategies, skills learned in one learning community course to another learning community course
   c. reflecting on how integration of ideas leads to new insights

3. Students will strengthen their academic performance by
   a. practicing oral, written, and electronic communication
   b. engaging in critical thinking and problem-solving activities
   c. developing academic skills (e.g., conducting electronic and library research, seeking needed assistance) to become an independent learner
   d. applying academic success strategies

4. Students will interact with instructors frequently by
   a. meeting outside of class with instructors on an individual basis
   b. attending group meetings such as review or discussion sessions
   c. interacting with instructors as necessary in person, by e-mail or through other electronic communications
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


(An e-book available through the bookstore or through the publisher Follet/VitalSource.)

ISBN: 978-0-692-75953-0

Additional readings may also be posted on Blackboard.

You will also need a flash drive.
In the next section, I provide an overview of the assignments we’ll cover in this course. Specific assignment guidelines can be found in the Handbook. I’ll also post further instructions on our Blackboard course content.

**Major Course Assignments:**

- **Assignment #1:** E-portfolio Website/Blog assignment (100 points)
- **Assignment #2:** Discourse Community Ethnography / Map (100 points)
- **Assignment #3:** Choosing a Topic for the Semester (participation points)
- **Assignment #4:** Rhetorical Analysis (100 points)
- **Assignment #5:** Annotated Bibliography (100 points)
- **Assignment #6:** Global Issues Report (100 pts)
- **Assignment #7:** Visual Argument (150 points)
- **Assignment #8:** Visual Argument Presentation (50 points)

**Participation in Class/Online/Groups (300 points).** Class participation/attendance and other work as assigned by the instructor.

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

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<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<td>1000-900</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>899-800</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>799 -700</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>699- 600</td>
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<td>599 &amp; below</td>
<td>F</td>
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**University and Instructor Policies:** This course is designed to engage you through discussions in class and Bb. Active participation is required, since it is the best way to engage you in learning. Failure to participate will result in loss of points, affecting your grade unfavorably.

**Course Delivery:** This course uses extensively the online learning platform Blackboard. All of the supplementary material for the class will be delivered via Blackboard. It is strongly recommended that you have access to the 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 ([https://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=74319](https://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=74319)) 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.

**Submitting Work:** All work will be submitted through our Bb course shell. Since the Bb comment and grade function works best with Microsoft Word, you are required to submit all assignments in Microsoft Word, using a 12 pt. font, with one-inch margins and double-spaced, following APA format unless directed otherwise. **I will not accept assignments any other way.** Microsoft Word is available to students at all campus computers and through the Cloud. Be sure to name each submitted assignment with your first initial, last name, and an abbreviation of the assignment. For example, if your name is Ernest Hemingway, and you’re submitting your Rhetorical Analysis (RA), this is how you would name your file:

- ehemingway RA draft
- ehemingway RA final
Due Dates for Major Assignments: All major assignments will be due on Sundays, by midnight, unless otherwise stated.

Late Work: Avoid submitting work late. It is important to submit work before deadlines for full credit and feedback. Late assignments may be submitted and considered for a maximum of half their total value until the beginning of the first class day following the Sunday when it is due, which is Tuesday. After Tuesday, they will no longer be accepted. If you miss a presentation on a day you are scheduled, it cannot be made up.

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.

- 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 and post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face (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 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. Since this class meets twice a week, if you are absent from more than four classes (two weeks), you may be dropped from the course.

Curriculum and Classroom Policies:
You are expected to attend all class meetings and to 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). If you did not read an assigned chapter/article, you are not prepared for class and will be considered absent. 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 (http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/curriculum-and-classroom-
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. Visit the Office of Dean of Students (https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/). Instructors are required to report the suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of Student Affairs.

**Accommodations:** Your success in this class is important. 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 also 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:** 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:**

- **Aug. 27** First day of class
- **Aug. 27 - 31** Late Registration
- **Sept. 3** Labor Day Holiday
- **Sept. 12** Census Day
- **Nov. 2** Drop Date, last day to drop a student with a W deadline
- **Nov. 22 - 23** Thanksgiving Holiday
- **Dec. 6** Last day of classes and complete withdrawal from the University
- **Dec. 7** Dead Day, day between last class day and start of finals, no class
- **Dec. 10 - 14** Final Exams, Check the UTEP finals week calendar for your course
- **Dec. 19** Instructor Submits Final Grades

Please make note of office hours and email, and reach out to me if you need to. I look forward to guiding your learning this semester!
## Program (*Provisional -- Subject to change*)

**WAW** = *Writing About Writing: A College Reader*, **FYC** = *The First-Year Composition Handbook*

### Holidays  Major Assignments

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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| Week 1 8/27-8/31 | Class Introduction          | Class introductions, Bb & syllabus overview. Reading: WAW pp. 1-6. Assignment: In-class Syllabus Quiz. | **Assignment #1** E-Portfolio Project  
FYC pp. 92-96  
Assignment: E-portfolio Shell | Work on e-portfolio  
Read Swales over the weekend |
| Week 2 9/3-9/7   | Discourse Communities      | **Assignment #2** Discourse Community Map  
FYC pp. 117-122  
Reading: Swales, J. “The Concept of Discourse Community” on Bb | Reading: WAW pp. 397-405. Assignment: Introduction video | Labor Day Holiday is on Monday—No Classes  
Due Next Week: E-Portfolio Shell  
Read Lamott over the weekend |
| Week 3 9/10-9/14 | The Writing Process:  
Prewriting/Invention | Stasis Theory  
Reading: Lamott’s “Shitty First Drafts” in WAW p. 852 | **Assignment #3** Semester Topic  
FYC pp. 124-127 | Due Next Week: Intro Video  
Due Next Week: DC Map  
Read Stedman over the weekend |
| Week 4 9/17-9/21 | Rhetoric                | Reading: Stedman’s “Why Study Rhetoric?” on Bb | Ethos, Pathos, Logos  
Assignment: DC Map Reflection | Work on RA  
Due Next Week: DC Map Reflection |
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>The Rhetorical Analysis</td>
<td>Reading: WAW pp. 484-507</td>
<td>Purpose, Audience, Tone</td>
<td>Work on RA draft</td>
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<td>9/24-9/28</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Peer Review</td>
<td>Feedback &amp; Revision</td>
<td>Peer Review of Rhetorical Analysis Rough Draft</td>
<td>Work on RA draft</td>
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<td>10/1-10/5</td>
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<td>Reading: WAW pp. 44-55 &amp; Eli Review on Bb</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Reading: WAW pp. 858-869</td>
<td>Reading: Eli Review Part 2 on Bb</td>
<td>Due Next Week: RA final draft &amp; RA Reflection</td>
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<td>10/8-10/12</td>
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<td>Workshop: Revising the RA</td>
<td>Workshop: Revising the RA</td>
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<td>10/15-10/19</td>
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<td>Assignment: Global Issues proposal</td>
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<td>Read Devoss &amp; Rosati over the weekend</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Research, Plagiarism, &amp; The Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>Library Day</td>
<td>DeVoss D., &amp; Rosati A. C., “It wasn’t me, was it? Plagiarism and the Web”</td>
<td>Work on annotating sources &amp; Global Issues Report</td>
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<td>10/22-10/26</td>
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<td>Assignment #5 Annotated Bibliography FYC: p. 142</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>APA Style</td>
<td>APA format</td>
<td>Peer Review of Annotated Bibliography Rough Draft</td>
<td>Work on Global Issues Report</td>
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<td>10/29-11/2</td>
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<td>Assignment: AB Reflection</td>
<td>Due Next Week: Annotated Bibliography &amp; AB Reflection</td>
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<td>Week</td>
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<td>11/5-11/9</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Visual Argument (VA)</td>
<td>Assignment #7</td>
<td>Assignment: Story board</td>
<td>Work in groups on the Visual Argument</td>
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<td>Assignment #8</td>
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<td>Visual Argument Presentation FYC: p. 172</td>
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<td>Reading: WAW pp. 654-669</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Visual Argument cont’d</td>
<td>Visual rhetoric &amp; Story board due in class</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Day</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holiday is on Thursday &amp; Friday—No Classes</td>
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<td>11/19-11/23</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Technology &amp; Media/ Design</td>
<td>Work in groups</td>
<td>Recap of E-portfolio elements</td>
<td>Due Next Week: Visual Argument</td>
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<td>11/26-11/30</td>
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<td>Assignment: E-Portfolio &amp; Readings Reflections</td>
<td>Get ready to present next week!</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Presentations of Visual Argument</td>
<td>Visual Argument presentations</td>
<td>Visual Argument presentations &amp; Assignment: VA Reflection Last day of class</td>
<td>Finish E-portfolios</td>
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<td>12/3-12/7</td>
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<td>Due Next Week: VA &amp; Reading Reflections</td>
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<td>Week 16</td>
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<td>Finals Week</td>
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<td>Due Dec 10: E-Portfolio Website</td>
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<td>12/10-12/14</td>
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*Syllabus subject to change!*
UTEP Edge Experiences include:

**FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE**
Make the most of your first year through experiences uniquely designed to support your transition to UTEP.

**LEARNING COMMUNITIES**
Build friendships, gain academic support, and connect ideas across linked classes by joining a learning community.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
Serve the community through structured academic teaching and learning opportunities.

**CREATIVE ACTIVITIES**
Showcase your creative abilities through experiences that highlight your talents.

**RESEARCH & SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES**
Team-up with faculty to gain experience and make intellectual and creative contributions to your field.

**STUDENT EMPLOYMENT**
Work on campus to develop professional experience, earn money, and enhance your résumé.

**STUDENT LEADERSHIP**
Develop professional values by assuming leadership roles in your campus experiences.

**STUDY ABROAD / STUDY AWAY**
Expand your horizons with international or domestic academic experiences.

**INTERNSHIPS**
Gain professional experience through on and off campus work or service opportunities related to your major and career goals.

**CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE**
Culminate your undergraduate studies with an experience that prepares you for the next step.
Edge Advantages:

**COMMUNICATION**
Reach mutual understanding through effective exchange of information, ideas, and feelings

**CONFIDENCE**
Be self-assured through appreciating your own talents, abilities, skills, and qualities

**CRITICAL THINKING**
Analyze and evaluate issues in order to solve problems and develop informed opinions

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP**
Develop, organize, and manage ideas and opportunities turning them into new products, services, firms, or industries

**GLOBAL AWARENESS**
Understand and appreciate people, cultures, and ideas from around the world that impact our community

**LEADERSHIP**
Step up, think, and act critically and creatively to bring others together to accomplish a common task

**PROBLEM SOLVING**
Find solutions to difficult or complex issues

**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**
Act ethically and responsibly for the benefit of society and the public good

**TEAMWORK**
Participate as an effective, efficient member of a group in order to meet a common goal