Rhetoric and Writing Studies RWS 1301
CRN: 25098  Meeting Days/Time: TR 12-1:20  Place: UGLC 236

Instructor: Irma L Nikicicz  Email: ilnikicicz@utep.edu
Office: Worrell Hall 303  Hours: MW 12-2 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. 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. 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.
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

Available at the UTEP Bookstore.


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:** (700 points in total)

- **Assignment #1:** E-portfolio Website/Blog assignment (100 points)
- **Assignment #2:** Discourse Community Ethnography / Map (100 points)
- **Assignment #3:** Rhetorical Analysis (100 points)
- **Assignment #4:** Annotated Bibliography (100 points)
- **Assignment #5:** Global Issues Report (100 pts)
- **Assignment #6:** Visual Argument/PSA & Presentation (200 points)

**Participation in Class and Online** (300 points in total)

- 1 E-Portfolio shell (25 points)
- 2 Rough drafts (50 points)
- 2 Proposals (50 points)
- 1 Outline (25 points)
- 10 Blackboard discussions (100 points)
- 2 Proposals (50 points)
- 1 Presentation (50 points)

**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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<tr>
<td>1000-900</td>
<td>A</td>
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<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 &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) 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, this is how you would name your file:

ehemingway rhetanalysis draft
ehemingway rhetanalysis final

**Due Dates for Major Assignments:** All major assignments will be due on Monday at 12pm, unless otherwise stated.

**Late Work:** Avoid submitting work late. It is important to submit work before deadlines for full credit and feedback. Late assignments will be accepted and considered for only a maximum of half their total value until the second class day, which is Wednesday. After Wednesday, 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 30 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-policies/). 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 to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. 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: 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:**

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>Spring classes begin</td>
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<td>Jan 21-24</td>
<td>Late registration period</td>
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<td>Feb 5</td>
<td>Spring Census Day</td>
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<td>Mar 16-20</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<td>Apr 3</td>
<td>Drop/withdrawal deadline</td>
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<td>Apr 10 Spring Study Day—No Classes</td>
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<td>May 7 Last day of classes</td>
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<td>May 8 Dead Day</td>
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<td>May 11-15 Final Exams</td>
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<td>May 20 Final grades due</td>
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Please make note of office hours and email, and reach out to me if you need to. I look forward to being your instructor this semester!
# Program (*Provisional -- Subject to change)


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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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<tr>
<td>Week 1 1/20-1/24</td>
<td>Class Introduction &amp; Semester Topic</td>
<td>Class introductions &amp; Review syllabus</td>
<td>Choosing a Semester Topic</td>
<td>First Day of class Work on: Semester topic proposal</td>
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<td>RWS Handbook: pp. 133-36 NFG: Ch 20</td>
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<td>Bb discussion 1 Due at the beginning of Wk 3: Semester topic proposal</td>
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<td>Week 3 2/3-2/7</td>
<td>Discourse Communities (DCs) &amp; DC Map</td>
<td>Swales, J. “The Concept of Discourse Community”</td>
<td>Assignment #2 Discourse Community Map RWS Handbook: p. 113 Info Timeline session</td>
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<td>Bb discussion 2 Due at the beginning of Wk 4: E-portfolio shell</td>
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<td>Week 4 2/10-2/14</td>
<td>Library Day &amp; DC Map Workshop</td>
<td>Library: Ref Works Session 2 NFG: Ch 5-8</td>
<td>DC Map Workshop</td>
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<td>Bb discussion 3 Due at the beginning of wk 5: Discourse Community Map Happy Valentine’s Day</td>
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<td>Bb discussion 4</td>
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<td>Week</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>The Writing Process Cont’d</td>
<td>Stasis Theory</td>
<td>Thesis Statements</td>
<td>Bb discussion 5 Due at the beginning of wk 7: Rhet Analysis rough draft</td>
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<td>2/24-2/28</td>
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<td>NFG: Ch 27</td>
<td>Body Paragraphs</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Peer Review &amp; Research</td>
<td>Peer Review of RA drafts</td>
<td>Assignment #5 Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>Due at the beginning of wk 8: Rhetorical Analysis final draft</td>
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<td>NFG: Ch 15</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>APA Style</td>
<td>Annotated bibliography workshop</td>
<td>APA style: Documenting Sources</td>
<td>Bb discussion 6 Due at the beginning of wk 10: Annotated Bibliography</td>
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<td>3/9-3/13</td>
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<td>NFG: Ch 55</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td>No classes</td>
<td>No classes</td>
<td>Enjoy your break!</td>
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<td>3/16-3/20</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Argument</td>
<td>Assignment #6 Global Issues Report</td>
<td>Fallacies</td>
<td>Bb discussion 7</td>
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<td>3/30-4/3</td>
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<td>NFG: Ch 51</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Synthesis &amp; Peer review</td>
<td>Synthesis of ideas</td>
<td>GIR peer review</td>
<td>Bb discussion 8 Due at the beginning of Wk 13: GIR final draft</td>
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<td>4/6-4/10</td>
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<td>NFG: Ch 50</td>
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| Week 13  
4/13-4/17 | Visual Argument & Outlining | Visual rhetoric Assignment #7  
Visual Argument Presentation & PSA  
RWS Handbook: p. 173 | Outlines/Storyboard Workshop  
NFG: Ch 59 | Bb discussion 9  
Due at the beginning of wk 14:  
Outline/Storyboard of PSA |
| Week 14  
4/20-4/24 | Media/ Design & Workshop | PSA Workshop  
NFG: Ch 56-59 | PSA Workshop | Bb discussion 10  
Work on PSAs! |
| Week 15  
4/27-5/1 | Visual Argument Group work | PSA Presentation Prep  
NFG: Ch 60 | PSA Presentation Prep | Due at the beginning of wk 16:  
PSA  
Prepare to present next week! |
| Week 16  
5/4-5/8 | Visual Argument presentations & Finish E-portfolios | | | Last day of class  
Due May 10: E-Portfolio Website |

*Syllabus subject to change!* More details will be provided in class.

**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
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