Rhetoric and Writing Studies RWS 1301
CRN: 14380  
Meeting Times/Days: TR 1:30 – 2:50  
Place: UGLC 230

Instructor Information: Marco Rodriguez  
Email: marodriguez16@utep.edu  
Phone: 915-217-3106  
Office and Hours: Hudspeth Hall 211  
T/TH: 12 noon – 1:30 pm. Online office hours will be held through blackboard: M/W: 10am – 3pm.

Course Description
The goal of RWS 1301 is to develop students’ critical thinking skills in order to facilitate effective communication in 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.
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.

The next section is 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.

### Course Assignments

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment #1: (100 pts.)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Option 1: E-portfolio Website/Blog</strong></td>
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<td>Maintain a reflection blog and develop an E-Portfolio</td>
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<th>Assignment #2: (100 points)</th>
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<td><strong>Option 1: Discourse Community Ethnography</strong> You will explore the following six defining characteristics of discourse communities as they relate to the communication within a particular group.</td>
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<th>Assignment #3: Choosing a Topic for the Semester (50 points)</th>
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<td>At the beginning of the semester, you will choose a topic that you will focus on for the entire semester (duh!)</td>
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<th>Assignment #4:</th>
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<td><strong>Rhetorical Analysis</strong> (100 points)</td>
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Option 2: Website Analysis paper (both text and visual in one assignment, 100 points) The goal of a rhetorical analysis is not to analyze what a writer is arguing, but to analyze how the writer is presenting the argument.

Assignment #5 Annotated Bibliography (100 points)
To prepare for the global issues report, you will need to conduct research on your topic.

Assignment #6 Global Issues Report (100 pts)
Option 1: Global Issues Report,
The report genre is a tool that serves many uses in academic, professional, and civic contexts.

Assignment #7 Visual Argument (150 points) You will apply what you have learned thus far to the writing of an original multimodal project suitable for public consumption.
Option 1: Infograph(ic)
Option 2: Public Service Announcement

Assignment #8 Visual Argument Presentation (50 points) The purpose of this presentation is to present your Visual Argument to the class (duh!).

Participation in Class and Online (20 points). Class Participation/Attendance and other work as assigned by the instructor.

Rhetorical Journal/Blogs (10 points each): Students will write a response on their blogging website that should be at least 250 words. These blogs will be about the readings assigned this semester and
blog prompts are listed in the calendar. Each blog should be on each student’s website and URL submitted to blackboard before midnight the day before. This means that if a blog is due on Wednesday, it should be turned in Tuesday night before midnight. (13 blogs total)

Extra Credit: Students have the option of earning extra credit by visiting the University Writing Center and turning in the appropriate document. Each visit to the writing center is worth ten (10) extra credit points.

HOWEVER! Only one (1) visit per assignment will be counted. While it is encouraged to visit the writing center as many times as you see fit, only the first visit per assignment will receive credit. You can visit the writing center online at www.uwc.utep.edu.

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

University and Instructor Policies

This course is designed to engage you through discussions in class and Bb. I hope you actively participate in this course because I have found it is the best way to engage you in learning.

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 (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.

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.

Be sure to name each submitted assignment with your first initial, last name, and an abbreviation of the assignment.

For example:
BE SURE TO TURN IN THE CORRECT DRAFT! Throughout the semester, you will turn in your work through blackboard. Keep in mind that you MUST submit the appropriate draft EVEN IF THE DUE DATE HAS NOT YET PASSED! Keep in mind that haste makes waste.

Due Dates for Major Assignments: All major assignments will be due on Friday before midnight and each student will have at least a week to turn in their paper.

Late Work: It is important to submit work before deadlines for full credit and feedback. The submission link to turn in said assignments will open one (1) week prior to the due date. Generally, late work will NOT be accepted, especially given how fast paced this class will be. However, you can appeal for your work to be accepted but keep in mind that appealing does not mean it will be accepted. Successful appeals may have additional requirements or points reduced.

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 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 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). 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. 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. Instructors are required to report the suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of Student Affairs. Visit the Office of Dean of Students page for more information on Academic integrity.

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 - 30** Late Registration
- **Sept. 3** Labor Day Holiday
- **Sept. 12** Census Day
- **Oct 24** Freshmen mid-term grades due
- **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!

**Weekly Schedule (Provisional -- Subject to change)**

WAW: Writing about Writing;
HANDBOOK: The First-Year Composition Handbook

**Week 1 Aug 28 / 30**

**Tuesday:** Class Introduction, Review Syllabus, Blackboard and Introduce E-Portfolio Assignment.

**Thursday:** Continue working on E-Portfolio Assignment;
**Readings:** Writing about Writing: 1) “Introduction to the Conversation”; 2) Victor Villanueva, “Excerpt from Bootstraps: From an Academic of Color”

**HANDBOOK:** Ch.1 & Ch. 4, Intro and Assignment 1

**Writing:** Blog 1: After reading the chapters and the articles, what expectations did you have signing up for the class. Due BEFORE AUG 31 BEFORE MIDNIGHT.

**Week 2 Sept 4 / 6**

**Tuesday:** Introduction to discourse communities.

**Reading:** Writing about Writing: 1) Donna Kain & Elizabeth Wardle, “Activity Theory: An Introduction to the Writing Classroom”; 2) “Individual in Community: How Do Texts Mediate Activities?” (chapter introduction)

**Blog 2:** After reading, what kind of communities do you belong to? Due SEP 3 BEFORE MIDNIGHT!

**Thursday:** Introduction to Discourse Community Paper


**HANDBOOK** Ch. 4, Assignment 2; Ch. 2

**Blog 3:** Write about your thoughts/ideas/musings over the Swales article? Due before Sep 5 before midnight.

**Week 3 Sep 11 / 13**

**Tuesday:** Writing about Writing: James Porter, “Intertextuality and the Discourse Community”

**Blog 4:** What do you borrow from other people when you write your papers? Due before Sep 10 before midnight.
Thursday: Discussion on the writing process.

**Discourse Community Due before midnight Sep 16**

**Week 4 Sep 18 / 20**

Tuesday: Discussion on Choosing a Topic for the Semester

Readings: HANDBOOK Ch. 4, Assignment 3 & 6

Thursday: Introduction to Rhetorical analysis

**Readings:** *Writing about Writing*: Amber Leigh Turner “The guide to crafting an amazing online portfolio”


HANDBOOK Ch. 4, Assignment 4; Ch. 3

Blog 5: After reading the article, how do you critically analyze visuals?

Writing: Topic for the Semester due Sep 19 before midnight

**Week 5 Sep 25 / 27**

Tuesday: Rhetorical Analysis Assignment

Readings: *Writing about Writing*: Maria Post, “Obama's Speech at Howard: Becoming King” (First-Year Student Text)

HANDBOOK Ch. 4, Assignment 4

Blog 6: Review the article and describe its ethos, pathos, logos. Due Sep 24 before midnight.

Thursday: Work on Draft of Rhetorical Analysis

**Week 6 Oct 2 / 4**


Eli Review. Feedback and Revision. [http://elireview.com/content/td/feedback/](http://elireview.com/content/td/feedback/)

Thursday: Peer Review

Blog 7: How do you draft and what is your thought process? Due Oct 1 before midnight.

Writing: Rhetorical Analysis Assignment DUE Oct 7 before midnight.

**Week 7 Oct 9 / 11**

Tuesday: Global aspects

*Writing about Writing*: Christina Haas & Linda Flower, “Rhetorical Reading Strategies and the Construction of Meaning”

Blog 8: After reading the articles, what would you do if you were the President? Due Oct 10 before midnight.

Thursday: Introduction to the Global Issues Report
Readings: HANDBOOK CH. 4, Assignment 5

Week 8 Oct 16 / 18

Tuesday: Researching
Writing about Writing: Margaret Kantz, “Helping Students Use Textual Sources Persuasively”

Wikipedia as a Site of Knowledge Production: pp. 765-771


Language and Learning Across the Disciplines, 4(3), 43-55.

Blog 9: How do you research and how do you decide what is included in your final draft? Due Oct 15 before midnight

Thursday, introduction to the Annotated Bibliography
HANDBOOK Ch. 4, Assignment 5

Week 9 Oct 23 / 25

Tuesday: Discussion on Plagiarism

Thursday: Final discussion on plagiarism and APA format

Writing about Writing: Brian Martin, “Plagiarism: A Misplaced Emphasis”


Blog 10: Intentionally or not, how have you plagiarized? Due Oct 24 before midnight.

Writing: Annotated Bibliography DUE Oct 28 before midnight

Week 10 Oct 30 / Nov 1

Tuesday: Argument / Opinion

Readings: Writing about Writing: Lucille McCarthy “A Stranger in Strange Lands”

Thursday: Writing about Writing: Stuart Greene, “Argument as Conversation”

Writing: Work on Global Issues Report Draft

Blog 11: After reading the two articles, what will be your plan for the Global Issues Report? Specifically, what ideas do you have that can make your topic a global issue and how will you convey that idea in your writing? Due Oct 31 before midnight.

Week 11 Nov 6 / 8

Tuesday: Global Issues Report draft.
Thursday: Introduce Visual Argument Assignment

Readings: **Writing about Writing**: “Rhetoric: How is Meaning Constructed in Context?” (chapter introduction)

HANDBOOK CH. 4, Assignment 7; Ch. 6: Sharing the Grade.

Blog 12: After reading the article, consider how has technology positively and/or negatively impacted writing, composition, and what rhetoric. Due Nov 7 before midnight.

**Global Issues Report Due NOV 11, before midnight!**

**Week 12 Nov 13 / 15**

Tuesday: What is visual rhetoric?

Readings: **Writing About Writing**: Dennis Baron “From Pencils to Pixels: The Stages of Literacy Technologies”

Blog 13: Pick a meme and analyze how/what makes the meme entertaining or just how does it make sense? Due Nov 12 before midnight.

Thursday: Storyboard or Outline for Visual Argument

HANDBOOK CH. 4, ASSIGNMENT 8

**Week 13: Nov 20 / 22 - Thanksgiving**

No class! Work on your Visual argument

Visual Argument DUE Nov 25 before midnight.

**Week 14: Nov 27 / 29**

Tuesday: Review for the Final.


**Week 15 Dec 4 / 6**

Tuesday: Presentations

Thursday: Presentations

**Finals Week**: E-Portfolio DUE Dec 13 before midnight.