

RWS 1302: Rhetoric and Writing Studies | *Spring 2020*

CRN: 23841

Time/Days: **Wed** 1:30-2:50 pm

Classroom: UGLC 232

Instructor: Dr. Maier

E-Mail: mmaier@utep.edu

For class correspondence use Blackboard email tool (preferred)

Office: Worrell 309; **Hours:** MW 10:30 am-12:30 pm (also available by appointment)

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 |

Bossie R. and LaPrade, P Ed. (2019). *The First-Year Composition Handbook*. (An e-book available through the bookstore or [through the publisher Follet/VitalSource/Redhshelf](#)). ISBN-13: 978-1-7326112-1-4



BryteWave Quick Start Guide:

The Student Guide Undergraduate Rhetoric and Writing Studies, 19th edition is a digital book. Students need to purchase an access code either from the UTEP Bookstore or online at: <http://www.brytewave.com/brytewave/>

Below are a few simple steps to get started. More information about reading and using your book will be provided.

Creating a BryteWave Reader user profile:

Creating an account with BryteWave is simple, quick and FREE!

- 1) Go to <https://reader.brytewave.com/app/index.html#/login>.
- 2) Click on "Create New Account" on the logon screen.
- 3) When creating a new account, the site may ask for information including name, email, username, password, and school. Please choose a username and password that is easily remembered.

Activating the digital textbook:

- 1) Visit <https://reader.brytewave.com/app/index.html#/login> and log in to the BryteWaveReader.
- 2) Click the "Activate Book(s)" button.
- 3) Enter the access code that was purchased through the bookstore or BryteWave and click the magnifying glass icon to lookup The Student Guide Undergraduate Rhetoric and Writing Studies, 17th edition. 2014 book.
- 4) Select the book, click "Activate Book(s)", and the book will be ready to use.

The digital textbook can later be accessed at the following address: <https://reader.brytewave.com>

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard or instructions will be provided for accessing them.

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.

A USB flash drive or cloud to save class work

Course Assignments |

(This syllabus only provides an overview of assignments for the class--specific assignment sheets will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard):

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. **20 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. **40 pts.**

Genre Analysis: Students will identify two texts on the same subject, but in different genres, to write a comparative analysis. **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. **40 points.**

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. **200 pts.**

Documentary Film Project: Students will plan, write, film and edit a documentary film advocating a position on a current issue. Students will be provided with opportunities to become more familiar with this software throughout the semester. This will be uploaded on Vimeo or YouTube, and the link copied and pasted on a Word Document. **200 pts.**

Class Presentation: Students will present their documentaries to the class. **50 pts.**

Advocacy Website: Students will create, design, and maintain an academic profile in the form of an e-portfolio website that includes their semester's work for the topic of their literature review/primary research report. Students should copy and paste the link on a Word Document. **150 pts.**

Participation: 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 score will include journal entries, attendance, homework, drafts, discussion postings, 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):

1000-900 = A

899-800 = B

799 -700 = C

699- 600 = D

599 and
below = F

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, 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.

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.

Instructor Policies |

Assignment Format: All projects must be word-processed and saved as a .doc file. They should be in 12 pt. font, have one-inch margins, and be double-spaced. Use a font style that is easily readable like Times New Roman, Arial, or Georgia.

Microsoft Word is available to students at all campus computers and can be purchased at the UTEP Bookstore using a current UTEP ID card at a discount. Students may also go to openoffice.org and download a free and compatible version of Word/Office.

For minor assignments, use the following header:

Name

RWS 1302

Name of the Assignment

Date

Title (Which may or may not be the same as the assignment)

Rough Drafts: Part of the participation grade will include the submission of rough drafts. In order to get the most useful feedback, rough drafts should be completed projects. They must also be submitted before or on the due date. The first two assignments (genre analysis and literature review/primary research report) both require rough draft submissions.

Rough Draft Feedback: On the rough drafts, students will receive marginal comments as well as comments at the end of the project. The purpose of this feedback is:

1. To be sure that the project is on the right track: that it meets the requirements of the assignment.
2. To comment on the “big issues.” Students will receive comments based on the most important elements of the assignment. Addressing these concerns should help students write a more effective project. The comments will NOT focus on grammar and such—so it is a good idea to get additional help from instructors and the Writing Center for this.

Participation/Attendance: Because this is a hybrid course, attendance is determined by class participation both in class and online. Students must be prepared, participate in online discussions, and attend the face-to-face class consistently to understand and incorporate the rhetorical strategies and processes used to complete the projects. Participation is worth 15 percent of the final grade.

All students are expected to attend and be on time to every class. Excessive lateness, 2 tardies, will result in an absence. You must attend each class period to participate in group activities, discussion and in-class writing. ***There are no excused absences*** (you will not receive credit for days missed). ***Do not miss more than four classes*** during the semester. It is your responsibility to drop if you have more than four absences, however, if a student accumulates a significant number of absences, I reserve the right to drop students from the class. If you do not officially drop the class yourself before the deadline for dropping with a “W,” then you will earn a grade of “F.”

If you know that you are going to be out on certain dates, it’s always helpful to let me know ahead of time so we can plan or make arrangements for assignments. Furthermore, calling me or getting in touch with me during an illness or emergency is always looked upon more favorably than showing up after a long period of time and trying to work things out.

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. When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor can drop the student from the class with a grade of W before the course drop deadline and with a grade of F after the course drop deadline.” (For further information regarding excused absences for university-recognized activities, absences for religious holy days, and military leave refer to UTEP’s Catalog Curriculum and Classroom Policies: <http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/curriculum-and-classroom-policies/>)

Please also be aware of the six-course drop limit. According to the Texas Education Code, “all first-year students enrolled for the first time at any Texas public college or university are limited to six drops during their academic career. This includes student and faculty initiated drops and courses dropped at other Texas public institutions. This policy does not apply to courses dropped prior to census day or to complete withdrawals.” So, be sure to start your college experience on the right track by attending class regularly.

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, UWC tutors will not hold a tutoring session fewer than 12 hours before the assignment is due.

Technology and RWS 1302: This course makes heavy use of technology and multimedia. It is strongly recommended that students 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 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 not be an excuse for incomplete or late assignments.

Technology problems are also not an excuse for work that is late or missing. Students need to get into the habit of completing assignments for this course well before the due date to allow time for dealing with technology problems. Expect that at some time, the network will be down, computers will go on the fritz, or some other small catastrophe will occur. If students are prepared ahead of time, they can go to plan B.

Instructions for Accessing Your Course Online: Students must have a UTEP email ID and password before they can access Blackboard. UTEP automatically generates an e-mail ID for students when they are officially admitted to the university. Any questions or problems can be directed to the **Helpdesk at 747-5257**.

All the course content will be delivered via Blackboard. Students can access Blackboard by the steps outlined below:

- Go to <http://my.utep.edu>
- Login is e-mail ID. Password is e-mail password.
- Click on the link to Blackboard
- Once logged into Blackboard, all the courses a student is registered for are listed under the appropriate semester.
- Click on the course title to access the course.

Classroom Etiquette:

- No checking email, typing assignments, or surfing the web during class.
- Absolutely no using the printer after class has started. It can be difficult to hear in this room; the printer only makes it that much worse.
- Absolutely no food or drinks in this classroom.
- Turn off cell phone ringers, and please do not text message or listen to iPods/MP3 players during class.

Online “Netiquette”:

- Always consider audience. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any postings.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates, and instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- When reacting to someone else’s message, address the ideas, not the person. 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 an ethical obligation to first request the permission of the writer(s).

Email Etiquette: Email is a useful tool if you have questions for me and emailing me using the Blackboard email tool found in the Blackboard course shell is generally the easiest and most efficient way to make contact outside class. Given that this is a university setting, you should recognize that your emails are documents that represent you professionally, and therefore should rise to certain standards of professional decorum.

There are some basic guidelines that you should follow, both in my class and in your other classes:

- All emails should have a clear subject heading.
- All emails should have a clear, courteous salutation. “Dear Dr. Maier” would be appropriate in the case of this class.
- All emails written for professional purposes should adhere to standard grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.
- All emails should be signed with your name (otherwise, your reader may not know who you are!).
- Emails should be sent from your Blackboard account. If you do use another account, be sure that the name on the account is appropriate for professional interactions.
- If there are any attachments, you should explain your reason for sending them and indicate the program in which they were written.
- You should consider your rhetorical context when emailing. What is the purpose of your email, and how can you most effectively accomplish that purpose? Three particularly important matters to keep in mind are brevity, clarity, and courtesy. If your email is not clear, specific, and to the point, you may not elicit the response you desire. If your email is discourteous, you diminish the professionalism of the persona you present to others. To cite just one example, some professors find emails that include calls for action “ASAP” to be discourteous or even presumptuous.

Grading, Assignments, & Deadlines: All assignments, announcements, emails, and workshop posts will be *sent and received via Blackboard unless otherwise specified*; it is your responsibility to check the page regularly. Also, it is the responsibility of each student to turn in all assignments by the due dates, regardless of any absence.

Late Work: I will not accept late work (or excuses). When appropriate, I do accept solutions. If necessary, you may turn in work early. In the event of a major emergency that causes you to fall behind in this class, I will accept make-up* work if you perform the following:

- Communicate with me immediately if you know you will fall behind based on a family or personal emergency.
 - Receive permission to turn in make-up work.
 - Communicate a reasonable time period in which you plan to be back on track with this class, as well as a reasonable grade penalty and make-up due date.
 - Continue to keep up with the assignments that we are currently working on.
- *Being allowed to turn in make-up work is not an excuse to turn in every other assignment late as well.

Nature of and Time Spent on Course:

RWS 1302 intends to help students develop a wide variety of strategies for communicating in a variety of media. To succeed in this course requires dedication and focus.

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. However, remember that the class only meets with the instructor and classmates for 1.5 hours a week.

Therefore, add the additional 1.5 hours to the 6 for a total of 7.5 hours. During some weeks, students may work more; some weeks they may work less. However, keep this average in mind.

Academic Integrity: The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence. In all matters of intellectual pursuit, UTEP faculty and students must strive to achieve excellence based on the quality of work produced by the individual. In the classroom and in all other academic activities, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty is an affront to the pursuit of knowledge and jeopardizes the quality of the degree awarded to all graduates of UTEP. It is imperative, therefore, that the members of this academic community understand the regulations pertaining to academic integrity and that all faculty insist on adherence to these standards.

Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline. 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. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP), and available in the Office of the Dean of Students and on the homepage of the Dean of Students at www.utep.edu/dos, may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to a failing grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others. (<http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=54418>)

Copyright and Fair Use: The University requires all members of its community to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies.

Group Assignments: Group work is a common practice with academic and workplace projects. Group assignments are valuable because they help students work together for a common goal. Students who are not doing their group work can be voted off of their groups and will have to complete the project on their own.

ADA: The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you suspect that you have a disability and need an accommodation, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu. The CASS is located in Room 106, Union East Bldg. Students are responsible for presenting the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions.