Dear Students,

As you begin what for many of you will be your first online, university-level course, I want here to welcome you and provide you with a few tips for success! First, it will be important for you to realize that taking an online course is much like taking a face-to-face course in a classroom, with one major exception. Can you guess what that exception is? Ah, for those of you said responsibility, well, you were right! Showing up and doing the course work on time takes, perhaps, even more self-discipline and responsibility than showing up to a class and
physically turning in assignments. That is why one of our first assignments is a look at time management. Please take it seriously. Get a planner to help organize your schedule, and if possible “show up” to your online course at a relatively consistent time each day. Yes, in order to be a successful student in this course, you must, as in a face-to-face course, show up to your online course on Blackboard regularly and keep up with the work in a sequential manner.

MORE ABOUT TAKING AND PASSING THIS ONLINE COURSE

All assignments appear on our course Blackboard shell. Students need to locate and use the Assignments Calendar to identify all assignments and due dates, then go to the appropriate Content Module to complete that assignment.

Many students underestimate the amount of time they need to spend on an online course. The course is designed to require the combined equivalent of the time you would spend in class plus the time you would spend studying and completing assignments outside of class. Therefore, you should plan to spend from six to nine hours a week on this course.

Another mistake that inexperienced students make is to think that can study very little in a course for a week and then make up ground by concentrated effort. This is not a good idea in any course and it can be deadly in an online class.

The Blackboard™ LMS displays course announcements, which your instructor frequently updates. Students are required to check for new announcements frequently. (Many announcements are simultaneously loaded in the course and sent to your UTEP email.)

Again, online students are expected to access and work with their course on an essentially daily basis during the instructional period. It is essential for you to develop a method for keeping track of assignments and getting them done and done on time. A weekly school planner journal is often the best way. Another option that often works for my students is a big calendar, with plenty of space to write down not only assignment due dates but also when to start to get it done on time. You all have busy lives, and planning is an essential element for academic success, and so is studying and completing assignments.

I will post a brief 1-2 minute Introduction at the start of each module to give you an overview of aspects of the assignments for the week. PLEASE DON’T SKIP THIS! Then use the HELP Discussion Forum to post any questions you have during the week, or email me directly at nshaf@utep.edu.
The HELP forum in DISCUSSIONS is a place for all of you to go to ask and answer questions about assignments. I will visit it regularly but so should you.

Feeling at all lost about Blackboard and how it works? Don’t worry. Take a look at Blackboard FAQs for Students, where you can find answers to your questions about using this online Learning Management System (LMS). DON’T MISS THIS PREPARATORY STEP if you are new to Blackboard.

In fact, don’t miss doing any assignment this semester either. Missing even one assignment can mean being confused, mystified, or puzzled by subsequent assignments. Learning is about building knowledge piece-by-piece. If we miss even a piece here or there of learning, our whole tower of learning can tumble. Who wants to construct a tumbling tower? Not me. Do you?

Again, welcome. I look forward to working with you this semester. And I always welcome questions.

Figure 1 - Above is a photo of Professor Shaffer

Professor Shaffer

General ENGLISH 0312 Course Description

The goal of Integrated Reading and Writing is to have students understand the close relationship between active reading and purposeful writing.

This course stresses the reading and writing skills needed for success in college-level course work. The course emphasizes essential reading skills used to derive meaning from text, including focused reading with a purpose, as well as approaches to vocabulary comprehension and to critical analysis. Students are taught how to employ effective reading strategies at all stages of the reading process and how to recognize and apply appropriate reading techniques for reading across the disciplines.
As students learn to derive meaning from text, they will learn how to apply this knowledge to construct texts for specific audiences and purposes. Using the various stages of the composing process—prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing—students compose summaries and essays for specific audiences and purposes.

Students also analyze and evaluate professional and student documents to improve their reading and composition skills and are asked to respond to readings. Students are asked to strengthen their comprehension of written texts through understanding how writers compose texts. In addition, in order to become effective communicators in writing, students are taught ways to improve clarity in their writing through such things as sentence structures and grammatical usages.

The course, overall, is designed to improve students' communication skills so that they can communicate effectively in writing and comprehend their college-level texts.

Successful completion of this course will satisfy Texas Success Initiative (TSI) requirements for developmental reading and developmental writing.

### REQUIRED Course Textbook and Materials

**MindTap** Developmental English for Kemper/Meyer/Van Rys/Sebranek's Fusion: Integrated Reading and Writing, Book 2, 3rd Edition

You must access and purchase this textbook and online program through the site listed in the **Welcome Module** in our Blackboard shell.

**Purchase:** After registering for your course, you will need to pay online for access: You can pay online using a credit or debit card, or PayPal.

**Free Trial:** If you are unable to pay at the start of the semester you may choose to access MindTap until 11:59 PM on 09/10/2018 during your free trial. After the free trial ends you will be required to pay for access.

**Please note:** At the end of the free trial period, your course access will be suspended until your payment has been made. All your scores and course activity will be saved and will be available to you after you pay for access.

System Check
To check whether your computer meets the requirements for using MindTap, go to
http://ng.cengage.com/static/browsercheck/index.html

Please Note: the System Check is also accessible in the drop down box next to your name located in the upper right corner of your MindTap page.

This is a core element of this course and must be purchased within the first few days of the course. If it takes you a bit of time to effect the purchase, Cengage offers you a free ten days of access, so there is no reason to fall behind in assignments.

Note: Students who do not have funds for their books during the first week can apply for an emergency book loan. For more information on emergency book loans, go to https://loans.utep.edu/.

**Major Course Assignments**

The major assignments descriptions below give you a brief explanation of the learning opportunities. The total possible earned points for the course is 1400.

Final grades will be determined by performance in the following areas:

- **MindTap Assignments:**
  This fully online textbook and the included computer learning activities provide students with in-depth learning opportunities in the reading and writing processes. It is a structured approach designed to help students master the concepts of reading and generate thoughtful writing concurrently. 350 points

- **Reading for Enrichment:**
  The various weekly assignments in this segment of the course actively involve students in real-life application of their increasing reading and critical analysis skills. 150 points

- **Writing for Enrichment:**
  The various weekly assignment in this segment of the course actively involve students in real-life application of their increasing writing and critical analysis skills. 75 points

- **Weekly Class Discussions:**
  In this online course the weekly discussion replaces the types of discussions that would normally occur in face-to-face course meetings. Weekly full participation in these discussions is required of all students participating in this course. Students are also encouraged to also initiate and engage in other online discussions of topics presented in the course. 150 points
**Weekly Class Notes:**

At the end of the week, students are required to submit notes they took on topics of learning presented during that week. These are submitted as an assignment in Blackboard, and may include notes made as a word document, or if handwritten may be submitted as scanned documents or as clearly readable photos taken of those handwritten notes. This weekly assignment is designed to facilitate long-term learning of the concepts and skills presented in this course. 75 points.

**Summary Project:**

This assignment is designed to help students learn to identify the components of effective academic writing, including main and supporting ideas, organization strategies, and the roles of coherence and voice. This assignment requires deep analytical reading of an assigned text, followed by a clear and ordered written presentation of its major ideas.

100 points

**Essay Project on Argumentation:**

Students will learn to employ skills essential to understanding elements of argumentation essays, including the use of main and supporting ideas, organization strategies, and creation of coherence, voice, ethos, pathos, and logos, through analytical reading assignments focused on the acquisition of active reading skills. These skills are then applied to writing an academic argumentation essay, which requires taking a position, or defending a point-of-view, on an arguable, assigned topic, developing supporting arguments for it, and supporting those arguments with solid evidence and solid academic essay principles. Students will read and analyze several argumentative essays and will compose an argumentation essay to satisfy the requirements for this assignment.

150 points

**Comparison Project:**

Critical thinking involves making comparisons. Students will learn to employ skills essential to understanding elements of comparison essays, including strategies and purposes for comparisons, the use of main and supporting ideas, organization strategies, creation of coherence, voice, ethos, pathos, and logos, through analytical reading assignments focused on the acquisition of active reading skills. Students will also understand that a comparison should be developed as a result of a valid reason for comparison and the reason should be included in
the essay. These skills are then applied to writing an academic a comparison essay using an appropriate essay structure to achieve clarity for readers.

150 points

**Midterm Exam:**
Students are required to take a midterm reading exam.

100 points

**Final Exam:**
Students are required to take a final exam.

100 points

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Students must submit all major assignments listed below, and with an overall course average of 70% or above, in order pass this course.

**Grade Distribution (Students can earn a total of 1400 points for the course):**

- 1400-1260 = A*
- 1259-1120 = B*
- 1119-980 = C*
- 979-840 = D*
- 839 and below = F*

To earn a passing grade ("A*," "B*," or "C*"), students must have completed all exams and all major writing assignments and achieved an average of 70% (980 points) or better for the complete course.

If students have not met course requirements or do not have an average of at least 70 percent (980 points) for the complete course, students will need to retake this course.

**NOTE:** In order to satisfy TSI requirements for developmental reading and developmental writing, students must earn a “C*” or better in this course.

**Deadlines**
All assignments are due by the time posted in the assignment. Work not submitted by the time posted as due may receive a zero or may be subject to a lowered grade potential.

All assignments and exams that are completed late will be penalized by point deductions or a zero. Deductions vary according to the type of assignments and the length of lateness. Consult the assignment directions, or your instructor directly, for clarification on any assignment you anticipate submitting late.

Course/Instructor Policies

Computers

1. As an online student, make sure you have consistent access to computer. This course cannot be fully completed using a smart phone or a tablet.

2. Students must get and use a UTEP e-mail account. Students may contact the Help Desk on the UTEP campus at 747-5257 or 747-HELP for help with technical problems.

Online “Netiquette”

Always consider audience when posting online. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any postings.

Show respect and courtesy to classmates and instructors at all times. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.

When responding to someone else’s message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would state comfortably in a face-to-face situation.

Blackboard is not a public Internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on 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. Students who wish to do so have the ethical obligation to first request the permission of the writer(s).

Some of the materials on the Blackboard Shell may be in .pdf format. If you have trouble opening a file, you may need to download the most recent version of Adobe Reader, which will allow you to read files in .pdf format. To get Adobe Reader, go to http://get.adobe.com/reader and follow the directions for the download.
**Attendance**

Students are responsible for becoming familiar with class functionality and for consistent engagement with assignments and activities. You are also responsible for working with the online learning materials as scheduled. Be aware that success in an online course requires at least as much total time as a traditional class. Most successful students participate in the course five to seven days a week. Having routine times for day-to-day engagement helps.

Be sure to check your UTEP mail and/or the course for course announcements daily. Don’t miss out on course updates. I expect you to be in the course often, as shall I.

**Communicating with your professor**

In addition to the HELP forum already discussed above, I will also be available for questions at my email address: nshaf@utep.edu. I should get back to you with an answer within 6 hours between 8 am and 6 pm Mountain Time seven days a week. If you need answers to questions at other times, post them on the HELP forum. Perhaps another student in the course will answer it more quickly than I.

I will be a daily presence on our Blackboard shell, checking and responding to your assignments. Please be sure to check daily for feedback, Announcements, and grading comments. (How to use all of these options is covered in the Using Blackboard for Learning Module.)

**Grading**

Writing assignment projects will be graded according to a Grading Rubric for that assignment project, which will be available from the opening day of that project.

Reading and other assignments are graded based upon their degrees of completion and accuracy.

Questions about expected outcomes for assignments are always welcome in the HELP blog, or if you feel it is necessary, in a personal email to your instructor.

**Scholastic Dishonesty**

[From the Handbook of Operating Procedures: Student Affairs]

It is the official policy of the University that all suspected cases or acts of alleged scholastic dishonesty must be referred to the Dean of Students for investigation and appropriate disposition. It is contrary to University policy for a faculty member to assign a disciplinary grade such as an "F" or zero to an assignment, test, examination, or other course work as a sanction.
for admitted or suspected scholastic dishonesty in lieu of normally charging the student through the Dean of Students. Similarly, students are prohibited from proposing and/or entering into an arrangement with a faculty member to receive a grade of "F" or any reduced grade in lieu of being charged with scholastic dishonesty. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline.

Scholastic 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, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

Plagiarism

"Plagiarism" means the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own academic work offered for credit, or using work in a paper or assignment for which the student had received credit in another course without direct permission of all involved instructors.

**Student Conduct**

[From the Handbook of Operating Procedures: Student Affairs]

Each student is responsible for notice of and compliance with the provisions of the Regents Rules and Regulations, which are available for inspection electronically at <http://www.utsystem.edu/bor/rules.htm>.

**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.

**DISABILITY STATEMENT**

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If a student suspects that he/she has a disability and needs an accommodation, he/she should contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148 or <cass@utep.edu>. CASS is located in Room 106, Union East Building. Students are responsible for presenting to the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions.