Rhetoric and Writing Studies

RWS 1302

CRN: 24157

Meeting Time/Day: 4:30-5:50 Tuesdays

Place: UGLC 232

Instructor Information: N. A. Shaffer
Email: nshaf@utep.edu
Phone: 747-8955

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:30-4:00, Wednesdays 9:00-12:00 & 1:30-2:30. We can arrange other times by appointment—just email me with a proposed time or discuss it with me in class.

Office: Education Building (EDUC) 215B

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:

- 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:**

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

ISBN: 978-1-59871-803-4

ISBN: 978-0-692-75953-0

Additional readings will also be assigned and posted on Blackboard.

**MATERIALS:**

- *Notebook and Folder or Three–Ring Binder with folder pockets, for this course only*
- *Planner to use for all assignments this semester*
- *Flash drive or other reliable back-up for saving all digital coursework*
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.

### Course Assignments:

**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. **50 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. **30 pts.**

**Genre Analysis:** Students will identify two texts on the same subject, but in different genres, to write a comparative analysis. This will be submitted (rough and final drafts) to, and graded by, the instructor. **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 pts.**

**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. This will be submitted (rough and final drafts) to, and graded by, the instructor. **200 pts.**

**Advanced Visual Argument Outline Activities:** Students will submit an outline to show the persuasive purpose and argumentative structure for the project. Complete the persuasive purpose worksheet, the developing reasons for advocacy, and gathering evidence to support reasons. **30 pts.**

**Advanced Visual Argument:** **200 pts.**

Option 1: Documentary Film
Option 2: Open Education Resource

**E-Portfolio Reflection Website/Blog:** Students will create, design, and maintain an academic profile in the form of an e-portfolio website that includes reflections on their course work, major assignments and composing processes.
Option 1: Advocacy Website w/ Online Opinion Piece. **100 pts.**

**Class Presentation:** Students will present their visual argument to the class. The instructor will grade this presentation. **50 pts.**

**Participation in Class:** 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, 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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMESTER ASSIGNMENTS</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Topic Proposal for Semester:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Genre Analysis Outline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Genre Analysis</td>
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<td>Research Proposal Outline</td>
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<td>Literature Review / Primary Research Report</td>
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<td>Advanced Visual Argument Outline Activities</td>
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<td>E-Portfolio Reflection Website/Blog</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in Class</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
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**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 is taught as a **hybrid class**--with one face-to-face meeting for lecture and discussion, and the rest of the course utilizing the BLACKBOARD (Bb) management system. It is vital for you to
regularly check your UTEP email for course ANNOUNCEMENTS and the BLACKBOARD site for this course for course content.

**Out-of-Class Work:** Students should allocate sufficient time for the class projects and work. The general rule for all classes is that students *spend two to three hours working outside of class for each class credit*. Because this is a 3-hour class, *expect to spend 6-9 hours doing researching and writing each week*. In addition, since the class only meets face-to-face once a week, for 1.5 hours a week, add an additional 1.5 hours for the hybrid day to the total out-of-class time students should anticipate.

**Blackboard:** 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, make arrangements 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 is submitted through our Blackboard (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 on all campus computers and through the Cloud.

**Due Dates for Hybrid and Homework Assignments:** All hybrid and homework assignments are due on Mondays at midnight, unless otherwise indicated within the assignment and in the Weekly Coursework Calendar for this course, regularly posted (and updated as needed to meet the needs of our class) on Blackboard. It is essential that all reading and submissions be completed, as assigned, before the Tuesday class meeting which begins the next week of coursework assignments.

**Due Dates for Major Assignments:** All major assignments will be due on Mondays at midnight.
Late Work: It is important to submit work before deadlines for full credit and feedback. Check directly with your Instructor, via email or in person, for the policies on late submissions possibilities for individual assignments. Any assignments, if they can be submitted late, will be accepted with an automatic reduction in grade for lateness.

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 your instructor has 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 the 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.

- 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.) Students 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).

This class meets once a week face-to-face, on Tuesdays, for 1.5 hours. In addition, as a hybrid 3 hour course, students have an additional obligation to complete the hybrid/homework assignments assigned each week in lieu of face-to-face attendance in class. Therefore, if a student does not complete hybrid/homework assignments, this could be seen as an absence. With four absences, including hybrid assignment absences, a student may be dropped from this course for lack of engagement in coursework (excessive absence, neglect, or lack of effort). Missing a scheduled conference with the instructor also 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. Visit the Office of Dean of Students. 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:**

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:

Jan 22      First day of class
Jan 22-25   Late Registration
Feb 6       Spring Census Day
Mar 18-22   Spring Break
Mar 29      Cesar Chavez Holiday – No Classes
Apr 5       Spring Drop/Withdrawal Deadline
Apr 10      Spring Study Day – No Classes
May 9       Last day of classes
May 10      Dead Day
May 13-19   Final Exams -- Check the UTEP finals week calendar for your course
May 22      Instructor Submits Final Grades

Visit [https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/registrar/Academic%20Calendars/academic-calendar.html](https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/registrar/Academic%20Calendars/academic-calendar.html) for important dates.

Students,

So, now that you have read this syllabus, please make note of important information such as attendance and other expectations for the course, my office hours and email. Please reach out to me whenever you need to, and don’t hesitate to meet with me during my office hours, or arrange other times with me if you cannot make it during those. I look forward to helping you become stronger at all the skills we address this semester, and especially at analyzing and writing for success!

Sincerely,

N. Shaffer
Overview Weekly Schedule (Subject to change to meet class needs):


**RWS Handbook**= *The Undergraduate Rhetoric and Writing Studies Handbook (e-book)*

All major assignments will be submitted to Blackboard.

See your WEEK-BY-WEEK COURSEWORK calendars in BLACKBOARD, and the individual ASSIGNMENTS in Blackboard, for exact due dates. Note that dates will adhere, however, to this calendar by week as strictly as possible.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar</th>
<th>In class and Assignments for the next class</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week One</td>
<td>Introduction to class, review of syllabus, introduction of the E-Portfolio Project. <strong>Topic Proposal for Semester DUE/E-PORTFOLIO Shell DUE</strong></td>
<td><strong>WIT Reader</strong>= Ch. 1: Writing Transfer <strong>RWS Handbook</strong>= Ch. 5: Intro and Assignment 1 <strong>Interrogating Texts: Six Reading Habits to Develop in Your First Year at Harvard:</strong> <a href="http://guides.library.harvard.edu/sixreadinghabits">http://guides.library.harvard.edu/sixreadinghabits</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Reading Resources</td>
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<td>Two</td>
<td>Begin discussion on topic for the semester and Genre Analysis.</td>
<td>WIT Reader= Ch. 2: Research and Writing as a Process</td>
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<td>RWS Handbook= Ch. 5: Assignment 2 Overview and Guidelines</td>
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<td>Three</td>
<td>Genre Analysis draft continued</td>
<td>WIT Reader= Ch. 7: Analysis</td>
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<td>RWS Handbook=Ch. 5: Assignment 2, Student Models and Drafting and Putting it Together.</td>
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<td>Four</td>
<td><strong>Peer Review and Revision</strong></td>
<td>Peer Review and Revision:</td>
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<td><strong>Genre Analysis draft DUE.</strong></td>
<td>Eli Review. Feedback and Revision.</td>
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<td>RWS Handbook: Ch. 2 Revision</td>
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<td>Five</td>
<td>Begin Literature Review Research Report.</td>
<td>WIT Reader= Ch. 3: Posing Meaningful Questions</td>
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<td><strong>Final Genre Analysis DUE</strong></td>
<td>RWS Handbook= Ch. 5, Assignment 3 Overview and Assignment Guidelines.</td>
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<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PkcHstP6Hto">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PkcHstP6Hto</a>.</td>
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<td>Six</td>
<td><strong>Research Proposal Outline DUE (see instructor resources for research</strong></td>
<td>WIT Reader= Ch. 4: Reading</td>
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<td><a href="https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/01">https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/01/</a>.</td>
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<td>RWS Handbook= Ch. 3, Research, Library, and Technology</td>
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| Week Seven | Finding Sources and Determining your Primary Research | Primary Research WIT Reader, pp. 18, 67, 149  
RWS Handbook= Ch. 5, Assignment 3, Student Models |
|---|---|---|
| Primary Research Questions DUE  
(Conduct a quick peer review/online of questions for bias) | | |
| Week Eight | Summary and Synthesis of Research | WIT Reader= Ch. 5 & 6 Summary and Synthesis  
A Rhetorical Precis:  
[http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl201/modules/rhetorical-precis/sample/peirce_sample_precis_click.html](http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl201/modules/rhetorical-precis/sample/peirce_sample_precis_click.html)  
| Week Nine | Choosing and Integrating Evidence. | WIT Reader= Ch. 11: Choosing and Integrating Evidence  
RWS Handbook= Ch. 5, Assignment 3, Drafting and Putting Together the Lit. Review. |
| Week Ten | Literature Review Research Report draft DUE | Conduct Peer Review of LIT Review  
WIIT Reader=Ch. 12: Citing Resources  
|---|---|---|
| Week Eleven | Revision of Literature Review/Primary Research  
Begin: Advanced Visual Argument  
(Decide what option to complete)  
Group Contract DUE if applicable | RWS Handbook= Ch. 2, Revision; Ch. 5, Assignment 4,  
Overview and Guidelines; and Ch. 6, Sharing the Grade |
| Week Twelve | Literature Review / Primary Research Report final DUE.  
Advanced Visual Argument Outline Activities  
(STORYBOARD DUE) see instructor resources for storyboard assignment) | WIT Reader: Ch. 8 Framing Arguments;  
Ch. 9: Constructing Arguments;  
Ch. 10: Designing Arguments: Formats and Modalities |

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<tr>
<td>Week Fifteen</td>
<td>Presentations.</td>
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<td>Advanced Visual Argument Due</td>
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<td>Last Day of Class</td>
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<td>Dead Day</td>
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<td>Final Week</td>
<td>E-Portfolio Reflection Website/Blog</td>
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