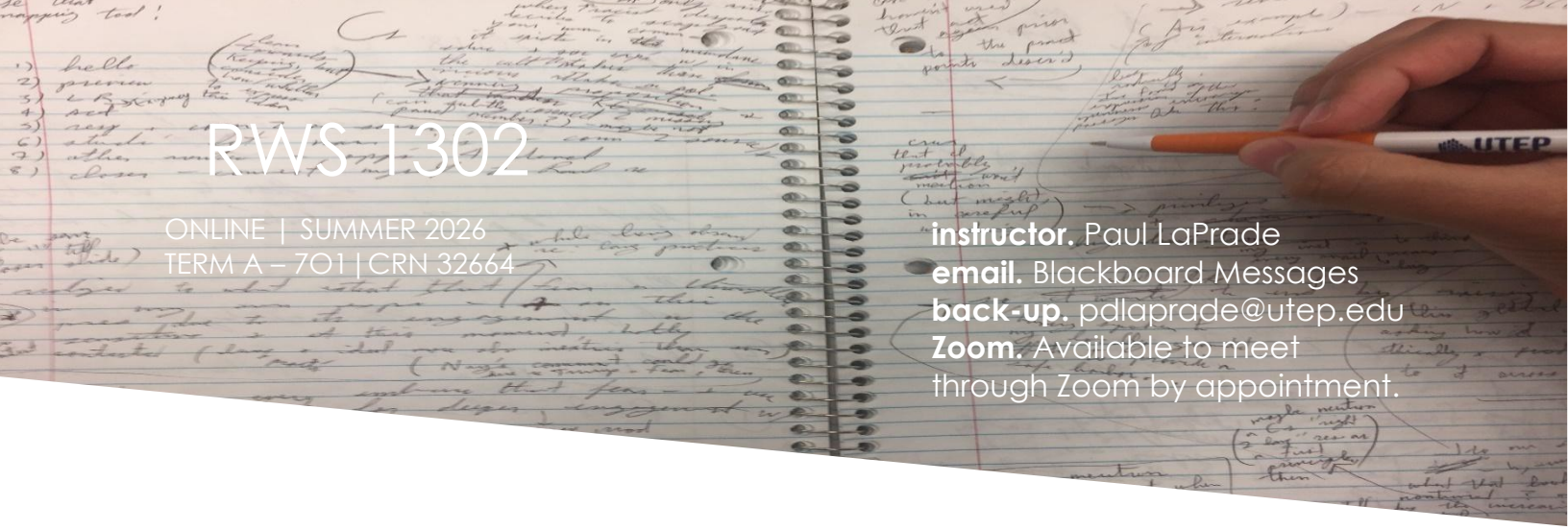


RWS 1302

ONLINE | SUMMER 2026
TERM A – 701 | CRN 32664

instructor. Paul LaPrade
email. Blackboard Messages
back-up. pdlaprade@utep.edu
Zoom. Available to meet through Zoom by appointment.

Program Overview

At UTEP, the **First-Year Composition (FYC) program** in the English department offers two first-year courses that are typically taken as a sequence, RWS 1301—Rhetoric and Composition I and RWS 1302—Rhetoric and Composition II. These courses are intended to help students develop and reflect upon their rhetorical and writing knowledge including awareness of social and racial justice, and the implications of their language choices when they write, based on the understanding that language is never neutral. Therefore, we teach writing as a complex activity through which students are given guidance and often collaborate. Drawing on the rich scholarship of Rhetoric and Writing Studies, we have designed our courses to help students address the challenges of 21st century composing. In these courses, students are empowered to determine the most effective strategies, arrangements, and media to use in different rhetorical contexts.

The FYC program reminds students that the primary purpose of these classes are the learning and practice of writing. The Conference on College Composition and Communication together with the Council of Writing Program Administrators state:

> Writing classes teach writing: Principally, writing classes foreground writing itself as a complex, distributed activity premised upon sociality and community formation, processes and materials, flexibility, and ethical communication. Writing classes may involve participants in purposeful interpersonal interactions (discussions and conversations), writing-related activities (peer review, studying features in model texts), and interpreting texts (making meaning individually or together with others); however, the activity of writing itself continues to be central to what a writing class sponsors.

And we are..

The First-Year Composition Program is geographically and discursively situated in the US-Mexico borderland and offers a binational and transnational experience through culture, language, and knowledge. We are committed both to learning from students and to building our program in a way that honors what they bring with them into the classroom and encourages them to make their voices heard in the university and beyond. Our vision is to collectively journey toward the practice of self-reflexivity, listening carefully and empathically to the ideas and experiences that challenge our thinking, and to engage various rhetorical practices and genres of traditional and non-traditional writing. The program's curriculum design encourages students to imagine the possibilities of speaking, listening, and being heard through different literacies and compositions. We invite students to explore topics from local, global, and disciplinary contexts that matter to them while learning effective writing skills and being mindful of their own situations and audiences.

RWS 1301 & 1302 Learning Outcomes

1) Students will reflect on and critically analyze their own language experiences.
2) Students will synthesize information about racial and ethnic biases and other social justice issues and confront these issues in their writing.
3) Students will demonstrate engagement with multiple media sources through their projects, including, but not limited to, digital resources.
4) Students will identify relevant research sources and opportunities from their lived experiences, their campus interactions, and their engagement within their communities.
5) Students will apply knowledge from local communities to research broader social issues demonstrating their critical awareness.

Rhetoric & Composition 2 (RWS 1302) Course Description

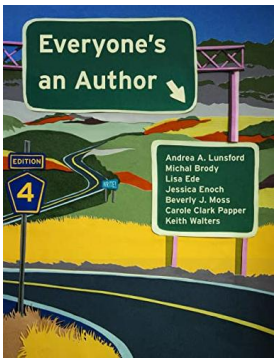
Rhetoric & Composition 2 (RWS 1302) aims to develop further students' rhetorical and critical thinking skills in order to facilitate effective written communication in educational, professional, and social contexts. Effective

communication is based on awareness of and appreciation for diverse language practices as well as knowledge specific to subject matter, genre, rhetorical strategy, racial and social justice, and writing processes.

The curriculum consists of these 5 modules:

1. **Community Engagement Proposal**: Students will explore issues and concerns in their communities (home, place of worship, civic, work, school) and will identify a problem connected with the community that they wish to study. Students will explain how their own interests, goals, and values align with the organization or agency's mission. This paper will take the form of a proposal or memo.
2. **Community Genre Analysis**: Students will identify two distinct texts in different genres (written, visual, and/or oral) created by their organization or related to their selected issue. Students will write an explanatory genre analysis of the two texts and how they operate rhetorically. Students will engage in peer review activities during the writing process.
3. **Local Fieldwork:** Students will identify a social, political, or ethical issue related to their local community or partnering agency. As part of this assignment students will generate research questions pertaining to the topic and their inquiry. Local research may include field observations, consulting local and primary sources, collecting surveys, and conducting interviews.
4. **Broader Community Study:** The broader community study will build upon students' local research, extending it into a broader inquiry. Students have the option to change their focus. This project will incorporate secondary research in order to examine the societal impact of their chosen issue. This includes developing a larger list of sources and creating an evaluative annotated bibliography.
5. **Multimodal Community Product/Tool:** Students will create a multimodal product or tool based on the needs of their community partner, organization, or a topic they are exploring. This can be an individual or group assignment to be completed with classmates focused on a similar topic. The goal of this project is to synthesize the research and writing students have done and present it to their classmates and/or chosen community.

Required Texts & Materials



Lunsford, A., Brody, M., Ede, L., Enoch, J., Moss, B.J., Papper, C.C., Walters, K. (2023).

Everyone's an Author, 4th. Norton Publishing.

ISBN: 978-1-324-04510-6

Available at the UTEP Bookstore. *Instructions for buying this textbook as an e-book are one the next page.*

UTEP First-Year Composition Handbook, 2025-2027 edition. ISBN 978-1-5339-7355-9. *Instructions for buying this text (only available as an e-book) are on the next page.*

Step-by-step instructions for buying

- **the *FYC Handbook* (only available as an e-book through the Kortext platform)**
- **or for buying *Everyone's An Author* (4th ed.) as an e-book through the Kortext platform:**

1. Visit the UTEP Bookstore website and click "Sign In" (top-right corner) to create a new account (this is necessary even though you already have a UTEP account) using your UTEP email address.
    a. **Link:** https://www.bkstr.com/texaselpasostore/home
2. Buy the *First-Year Composition Handbook* (only available as an e-book) by searching for "First-Year Composition Handbook" in the search bar at the top of the UTEP Bookstore website.
    a. If you would like to buy *Everyone's An Author* (4th ed.) as an e-book, search for "Everyone's An Author" in the search bar at the top of the UTEP Bookstore website.
3. Check the checkbox next to "Digital" (center of page) and click on "Add to Bag" (center of page).
    a. **Link:** https://www.bkstr.com/texaselpasostore/product/first-year-composition-handbook---university-of-texas-at-el-paso-263144-1
    b. **Link:** https://www.bkstr.com/texaselpasostore/search/keyword/everyones%2520an%2520author
4. From the pop-up screen, click on "View Bag & Checkout."
5. From the "My Bag" screen, click on "Checkout" (lower-right corner), and enter your payment information.

Course Assignments and Grading

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 or below = F

Module 1 Community Engagement Proposal

Major Assignment: 50 pts.

Module 2 Community Genre Analysis

Major Assignment: 150 pts.

Module 3 Local Fieldwork

Major Assignment: 200 pts.

Module 4 Broader Community Study

Major Assignment: 150 pts.

Module 5 Multimodal Community Product/Tool

Major Assignment: 150 pts.

Total Points for Major Assignments: 700 pts.

Total Points for Discussion Activities and Reading Quizzes: 300 pts.

Grading: Your instructor will assign due dates for all assignments and will provide you with detailed assignment sheets that describe expectations, constraints, and deadlines for each project. You are required to adhere to the terms of your instructor's grading policy that is attached to this syllabus.

Course Delivery

Course Delivery: This online course will be delivered asynchronously through Blackboard (Bb). It is designed to engage students through discussions with your classmates and instructor using Blackboard. In order to succeed in the course, you will need to have regular use of the internet and a stable connection regardless of whether your class meets face-to-face, hybrid, or fully online. Although you can use the Blackboard App on your phone, it is highly recommended that you compose your work for class, and perform class activities, via a computer. If you don't have a computer or reliable internet at home, the university can help you with resources: Technology Support - UTEP. Please speak with your instructor immediately if you will need assistance. We want you to have the opportunity to succeed in class without concern about access. There are also computers available for you to use in the library on campus.

Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the *Help Desk* as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students.

Students can prepare by taking the Blackboard Student Orientation:
https://www.utep.edu/extendeduniversity/cid/student-resources/blackboard-orientation.html

Submitting Work: All work will be submitted through the Bb course shell for this class. Since the Bb comment and grade function works best with Microsoft Word, please submit all assignments in Microsoft Word following APA or MLA format unless directed otherwise. Be sure to name each submitted assignment with your name and the title of the assignment.

Late Work: For major assignments, I accept late work for 12 hours after the assigned due date. Please contact me as soon as possible regarding any circumstances that affect your ability to complete coursework on time.

Participation: Active participation is vital to your success in this online course. This includes engaging with classmates through discussion activities based on assigned readings.

Classroom Etiquette: 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 interactions online, and to surface through discussion board postings. You are expected to demonstrate respect and courtesy for your peers and instructor when they express differing arguments, viewpoints, and/or experiences. Sexist, racist, homophobic, or other hateful speech will not be permitted. Angry displays, whether in writing, online postings, or in class discussions will be handled as disruptions to the wellbeing of the class.

Texas SB17 Exception for Course Instruction: The Texas Conference of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has issued the following statement that protects academic course content. The FYC program includes writing along with speech as an academic freedom of expression ("students should not feel the need to censor their speech" or writing):

Texas Senate Bill 17, the recent law that outlaws diversity, equity, and inclusion programs at public colleges and universities in Texas, does not in any way affect content, instruction or discussion in a course at public colleges and universities in Texas. Expectations regarding academic freedom for teaching and class discussion have not been altered post-SB 17, and students should not feel the need to censor their speech pertaining to race and racism, structural inequality, LGBTQ+ issues, or diversity, equity, and inclusion.

University and Program Policies

FYC Class Attendance Policy: According to UTEP's *Curriculum and Classroom Policies*:
The student is expected to attend all classes and laboratory sessions. 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 or with a grade of F after the course-drop deadline.

Please consult UTEP's *Curriculum and Classroom Policies* for more information regarding Excused Absences for University-Recognized Activities, Absence for Religious Holy Days, and Military Leave

Attendance is mandatory for all freshman-level courses. Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to participate in discussions and workshops. The class discussions will help students learn to improve their writing, often through the discussion of a sample student project (sometimes the student's, sometimes one written by a classmate).

In addition, the First-Year Composition Program has developed the following policies that should be adhered to strictly by all instructors:

For Face-to-Face Classes:
Students are entitled to a single week of unexplained absences without penalty (for example, 3 classes missed in a three-times-a-week class, 2 classes missed in twice-a-week class, 1 class missed in a once-a-week class).

After 2 total weeks of absence (not necessarily consecutive classes) the student's grade is lowered by a full letter (A becomes B, etc.).

After 3 total weeks of absence (not necessarily consecutive), the student is automatically dropped from class. Missing a scheduled conference with the instructor constitutes an absence.

For Hybrid courses

The attendance policy for hybrid courses aligns with the structure for face-to-face courses with each missed weekly class meeting constituting absence from a week of class.

The program recommends that the student contact the instructor to discuss the attendance policy and how it applies in cases in which it is not possible to attend a weekly class meeting, while continuing to maintain robust participation in class activities. [see also online courses]

For Online courses

In an online class, attendance is measured by participation in class activities. The attendance policy for online courses aligns with the structure for face-to-face courses, with each missed week of class activities constituting absence from a week of class.

The instructor can measure participation through various pathways, such as completion of scaffolded activities and discussion posts, and responding to other students' posts and feedback. We also recommend measuring course activity by using the Course Reports feature on Blackboard, particularly the Course Activity Overview.

When it becomes evident that it is not possible to participate in class, the program recommends that the student contact the instructor to discuss the attendance policy and how it applies, before resuming robust participation in class activities.

Drop Policy

If you cannot complete this course for whatever reason, please contact your instructor. Your instructor can help you with the drop process and you can contact the Registrar's Office. If you do not drop, you are at risk of being dropped by the instructor and possibly receiving an "F" for the course.

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 Community Standards page for more information on Academic integrity.

The First-Year Composition Program fundamentally trusts its students and strives to create dynamic classroom experiences and writing opportunities rooted in the values of inquiry and critical thinking. We agree deeply with Anna R. Mills' (2023) claim, in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, that "writing practice continues to be intensely rewarding for students and central to intellectual growth in college."

Because of the rapid pace of change represented by ChatGPT and other Artificial Intelligence (AI) programs, it is necessary to set clear program standards regarding their use in our classes. Specifically, the FYC Program recognizes that Large Language Models (LLMs) are part of our contemporary culture and hold educational value that can be explored in the classroom, such as narrowing down a topic idea or critically analyzing the quality of an AI-generated text. However, our program maintains an expectation that **all assignment submissions must constitute original pieces of writing composed by the student-author only.**

By this standard, an example of an appropriate use of ChatGPT (or any AI program) could be

- writing an introduction paragraph that openly describes how this AI tool offered possible approaches to researching a particular topic,
- providing any direct quotes placed in quotation marks and cited in-text and in a final references page.

By contrast, an example of an inappropriate use of ChatGPT (or any AI program) could be

- copying any amount of text from an AI tool and claiming it as your original composition without acknowledging its source. This includes failure to cite and place quotation marks around any directly quoted language.

FYC instructors are required to submit any assignment submissions that appear to include inappropriate uses of AI programs (or that are marked for further review) to the Office of Community Standards (OCS).

Accommodations: UTEP is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the *UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services* (CASS). Students are encouraged to visit CASS in room 106, Union East Building or contact them at 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu.

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. Go to University Writing Center - UTEP to make an appointment with a writing center consultant.

Extra Credit @ The University Writing Center: You can earn extra credit by visiting the Writing Center in person or online at *https://www.utep.edu/uwc/*. Each UWC session counts for 4 points, for up to 40 total points. To receive extra credit, email me your UWC visit forms.

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.

Student Pregnancy and Parenting Nondiscrimination Policy: The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Students who become pregnant or have parenting responsibilities may also request reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. The UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) will process requests for accommodations based on a disability, pregnancy, or parenting. Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, email them at *cass@utep.edu*, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

Course Support Resources

Title IX	915-747-8358	*Institutional Compliance*
Dean of Students	915-747-5648	*Dean of Students*
UTEP Health & Wellness Center	915-747-5624	https://www.utep.edu/chs/shc/ studenthealth@utep.edu
UTEP Police Department	915-747-5611	https://www.utep.edu/police/ police@utep.edu
Counseling and Psychological Services	915-747-5302	https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/ caps@utep.edu

Important Dates for Term 7O1

Event	Date	Notes
Start date	5/18/2026	Class is open to students in Blackboard
End date	7/3/2026	
Census date	5/22/2026	Students may drop a class before Census date without any penalty reflected in their transcript.
Memorial Day	5/25/2026	University holiday; offices closed. Students may still complete assignments and coursework.
Auto W	6/26/2026	Last day to withdraw with a W.
Emancipation Day	6/19/2026	University holiday; offices closed. Students may still complete assignments and coursework.
Final exam	7/3/2026	Final exam must be completed or closed by this date. (**Note:** We won't have a final exam for this class. Our final project, Assignment #5, will be due on Thursday, July 2nd.)

Course Calendar

Major-Assignment Calendar:

1. **Week 1, Community Engagement Proposal**: Due Sunday, May 24th
2. **Week 3, Community Genre Analysis**: Due Wednesday, June 3rd
3. **Week 5, Local Fieldwork Report:** Due Wednesday, June 17th
4. **Week 6, Broader Community Study:** Due Sunday, June 28th
5. **Week 7, Multimodal Community Product/Tool:** Due Thursday, July 2nd

Reading Calendar:

Key: EAA=*Everyone's An Author*; FYC=*First-Year Composition Handbook*

Week 1 Readings:

- **FYC:** Brief excerpts from the *FYC Handbook*: "Indigenous Land Acknowledgment Statement," "And We Are," "First-Year Composition at UTEP," "RWS 1301 & RWS 1302 Learning Objectives," "On Writing Block"; "Introduction: Welcome to RWS 1302" (FYC, pp. v-xv; 281-282)
- **FYC:** "Module 1: Community Engagement Proposal" (Includes Assignment Guidelines) (FYC, pp. 283-285; 290-293)
- **EAA:** *Everyone's an Author*: Part 1 Introduction, "The Need for Rhetoric and Writing"; Chapter 1: "Thinking Rhetorically" (EAA, pp. 1-17); Chapter 2, "Engaging Productively with Others" (EAA, pp. 18-29)

Week 2 Readings:

- **FYC:** "Module 2: Community Genre Analysis" (Includes Assignment Guidelines) (FYC, pp. 297-302); Sample Student Texts by Devoe Smith and Anavictoria Dominguez (FYC, pp. 303-309)
- **EAA:** Chapter 3, "Rhetorical Situations" (EAA, pp. 30-37)
- **EAA:** Chapter 5, "Understanding College Expectations" (EAA, pp. 49-60)
    - **Suggested reading:** Chapter 4, "Language, Power, and Rhetoric" (EAA, pp. 38-48)

Week 3 Readings:

- **FYC: "**Module 3: Local Fieldwork" (FYC, pp. 310-313); "Assignment Guidelines: Local Fieldwork—Exploring Your Community Through Primary Research" (FYC, pp. 330-334)
    - **Sample Local Fieldwork Reports:** Sample Texts by Kyle Conner (pp. 335-346); Aleyana Flores (pp. 347-355); and Daire Pardo (pp. 356-363)
- **EAA:** Chapter 15, "Writing Analytically / 'Let's Take a Closer Look'" (Part 1) (EAA, pp. 234-259)
- **EAA:** Chapter 15, "Writing Analytically / 'Let's Take a Closer Look'" (Part 2) (EAA, pp. 260-286, beginning at "Visual Analysis")

- **Note:** Due to the length of chapter 15, consider breaking it up into two reading sessions as listed above.
- **Suggested reading:** Chapter 32, "What's Your Style?" (EAA, p. 677-692)

Week 4 Readings:

- **FYC: Sample Local Fieldwork Reports:** Sample Texts by Trinity Pitcher (pp. 364-371); Haydee Skye Gonzalez (pp. 372-376); Raymond Arias III (pp. 377-380); and Daniela Castro Enriquez (pp. 381-388)
- **EAA:** Chapter 9, "Managing the Writing Process" (EAA, pp. 109-122)
- **EAA:** Chapter 21, "Starting Your Research: Joining the Conversation" (EAA, pp. 479-487)
  - **Suggested reading:** Chapter 34, "How to Craft Powerful Sentences" (EAA, pp. 704-722)

Week 5 Readings:

- **FYC:** "Module 4: Broader Community Study" (FYC, pp. 389-391); "Assignment Guidelines: Broader Community Study—Creating an Evaluative Annotated Bibliography" (FYC, pp. 386-399); Sample Broader Community Study by Andrea F. Salas (FYC, pp. 400-406)
- **EAA:** Chapter 23, "Conducting Research in the Field" (EAA, pp. 505-514)
- **EAA:** Chapter 24, "Keeping Track" (EAA, pp. 515-519)
- **EAA:** Chapter 25, "Evaluating Sources" (EAA, pp. 520-527)
  - **Suggested readings:** Chapter 8, "Distinguishing Facts from Misinformation" (pp. 92-102); Chapter 6, "Reading Rhetorically" (EAA, pp. 63-72)

Week 6 Readings:

- **FYC:** ***Review:*** "Module 4: Broader Community Study" (FYC, pp. 389-391); "Assignment Guidelines: Broader Community Study—Creating an Evaluative Annotated Bibliography" (FYC, pp. 386-399); Sample Broader Community Study by Andrea F. Salas (FYC, pp. 400-406)
- **EAA:** Chapter 26, "Annotating a Bibliography" (pp. 528-532)
- **EAA:** Chapter 27, "Synthesizing Ideas" (pp. 533-547)
- **EAA:** Chapter 29, "Giving Credit, Avoiding Plagiarism" (EAA, pp. 562-569)

- **Lastly, choose a chapter based on citation style:** Chapter 30, "MLA Style" (pp. 570-624); OR Chapter 31, "APA Style" (pp. 625-672)
- **Suggested reading:** Chapter 28, "Quoting, Paraphrasing, Summarizing" (EAA, pp. 548-561)

Week 7 Readings:

- **FYC:** "Module 5: Multimodal Community Product/Tool" (FYC, pp. 407-408); "Assignment Guidelines: Multimodal Community Product/Tool—Engaging with Visual Rhetoric" (FYC, pp. 421-426); Sample Multimodal Projects by J. Porras (FYC, p. 427); Ulices Villalobos (p. 428); Karina Flores (p. 429); Alexandra Trejo (p. 431-441); and Christian Rodriguez (FYC, pp. 442-443)
- **EAA:** Chapter 37, "Composing and Remixing across Media," (EAA, pp. 788-809)
- **EAA:** Chapter 36, "Designing What You Write" (EAA, pp. 769-787)
    - **Suggested reading:** Chapter 39: "Writing for a Public Audience" (EAA, pp. 825-834)