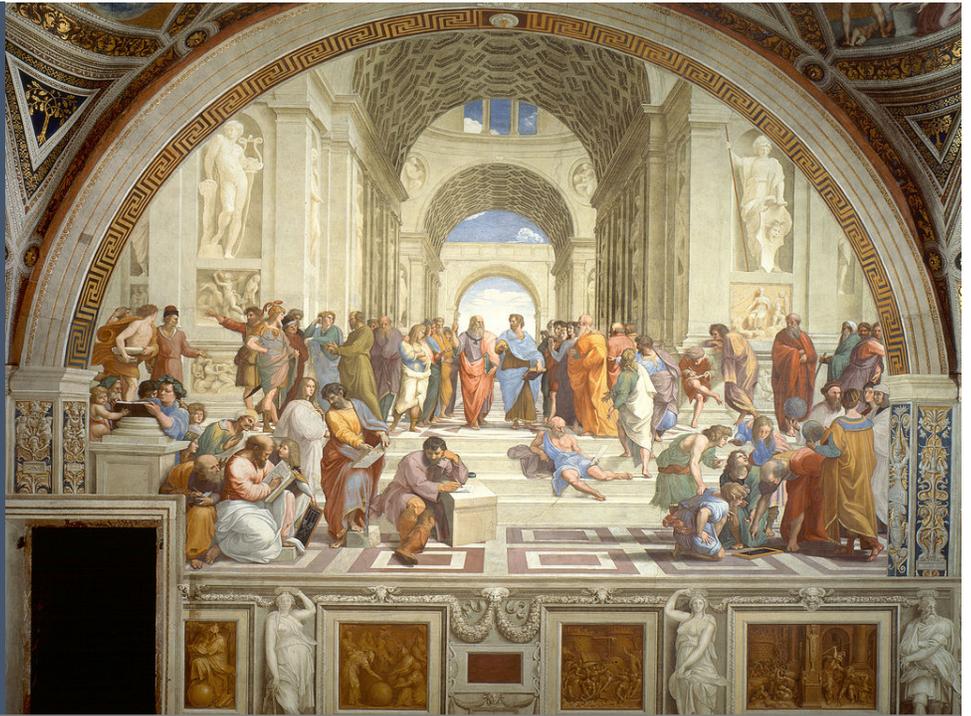Syllabus

RWS 1302

P.J. Vierra, Ph.D.

The University of Texas
at El Paso

Summer 2018

CRN 36129

Monday to Friday
11:40 a.m. – 1:50 p.m.
UGLC 236

syl•la•bus

ˈsɪləbəs

Etymology: <modern Latin *syllabus*, usually referred to an alleged Greek *σύλλαβος*.

1a. A concise statement or table of the heads of a discourse, the contents of a treatise, the subjects of a series of lectures, etc.; a compendium, abstract, summary, epitome.

1b. *spec.* a statement of the subjects covered by a course of instruction or by an examination, in a school, college, etc.; a program of study.

About this Course

Course Description	RWS 1302 develops your critical thinking skills. This provides you with the necessary tools to facilitate effective communication in educational, professional, and social contexts. Effective communication provides you an awareness of and appreciation for discourse communities, as well as knowledge specific to subject matter, genre, rhetorical strategy, and writing process.
	The class helps you determine the most effective strategies, arrangements, and media to use in different rhetorical contexts found in communication. It teaches you 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. 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, you 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 You will also receive the opportunity to strengthen your skills sets in the following areas: • Think, read, and write critically • Formulate research questions and perform primary and secondary research to answer those questions • Demonstrate familiarity 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

	• Apply research to various genres • Master documentation within a discipline (APA) • Practice 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
UTEPEDGE	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, visit the UTEP Edge.

Course Schedule and Topics Covered

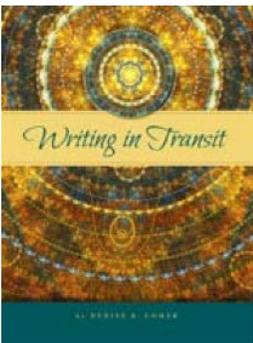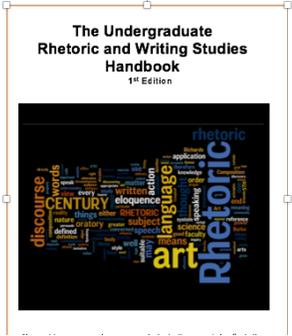See Blackboard for schedule.

Descriptions and Guidelines for Assessments

#	Project	Points
#1	**E-Portfolio Website** Create, design, and maintain an academic profile in the form of an e-portfolio website that includes the major assignments you worked on this semester.	**100 pts.**
#2	**Topic Proposal for Semester** Write a proposal to identify the subject/issue/topic they will be working with for the semester.	**20 pts.**
#3	**Genre Analysis Outline** Complete the genre analysis matrix as an activity assignment to begin work on the Genre Analysis.	**40 pts.**
#4	**Genre Analysis** Identify two texts on the same subject, but in different genres, to write a comparative analysis.	**100 pts.**
#5	**Research Proposal/Annotated Bibliography** Submit 3-4 research questions for approval along with an annotated bibliography to begin work on the Literature Review/Research Report.	**60 pts.**
#6	**Literature Review/Research Report** Conduct primary and secondary research on a social, political, or ethical issue to become well-informed experts on the issue. Write a literature review of these sources to summarize and synthesize the arguments and ideas of the research sources.	**200 pts.**
#7	**Argumentative/Advocacy Outline for Documentary Film Project** Submit a draft script and storyboard that presents a persuasive argument on your group's topic.	**50 pts.**
#8	**Documentary Film Project** Working with a group, plan, write, film and edit a documentary film advocating a position on a current issue. You will be provided with opportunities to become more familiar with this software throughout the semester. This will be uploaded to YouTube, and the link copied and pasted on a Word document.	**200 pts.**
#9	**Class Presentation** With your group, present your documentary film, script, and storyboard to the class.	**30 pts.**
#10	**Participation in Class** Because this is a hybrid class, participation both 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 blog entries, attendance, homework, drafts, discussion postings, peer reviews, and other work I assign. It also includes submittals to SafeAssign.	**200 pts.**
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE:		**1,000 PTS.**

Grade Distribution. You can earn a total of 1000 points for the course.

1000-900	899-800	799 -700	699- 600	599 and below

| = A | = B | = C | = D | = F |

| = A | = B | = C | = D | = F |

Required Texts and Materials

Textbooks	Yes, you will need to purchase textbooks for this class. All your assignments and many of your activities are in your texts.
	Cash flow problems? No problem!
	Simply visit loan.utep.edu for an emergency book loan.
Required Text	**Writing in Transit**
	Author: Comer **ISBN:** 9780393264371 **Copyright Year:** 2016 **Publisher:** Fountainhead Press
Required Text	**The Rhetoric and Writing Studies Handbook**
	Author: Padon **ISBN:** 9780692759530 **Publisher:** Writing Across Borders Co.
	This is an e-book available through the bookstore or through the printer, Follet/VitalSource. Look for the link in Blackboard.
Materials	In addition to the above textbooks, you will need the following items: • Composition book (80 sheets, college ruled). Bring to every class. • RefWorks account (free; see Blackboard for details on how to set up your account through the University Library). • OneDrive account (free; visit onedrive.utep.edu). • Microsoft Word 2016 (free; visit onedrive.utep.edu. If you have difficulties installing, visit tech support on the third floor of the University Library).

	• Weebly account (free; sign up for an education account at [www.weebly.com)](http://www.weebly.com). Additional readings (no cost) will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Delivery

Online Modules	**Summer session** courses rely on a combination of face-to-face meetings and extensive online activities both in and out of class. It is vital for you to regularly check your UTEP email and Blackboard.
	You should allocate sufficient time for the class projects and work. The general rule for all classes is that students should 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. **For summer session classes**, expect to spend two hours every day outside of class in order to complete this normally 15-week course in four weeks.
	Instructions for accessing your course online
	You 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 747-4357.**
	If you are not familiar with Blackboard, UTEP has many resources to help you grasp the basics. Visit https://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=74327
Technology	This course makes heavy use of technology and multimedia. It is strongly recommended that you have access to the internet from home and are comfortable using a computer.
	If home access is not possible, you can use a computer on campus to complete your work. Student computer labs are often available until midnight, but schedules do vary. You can also check out a loaner laptop from Technology Support, located on the third floor of the library.
	For a list of computer labs, visit https://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=74319
	Technology problems are not an excuse for turning in work late or not at all. You 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, your computer will go on the fritz, or some other small catastrophe will occur. If you are prepared ahead of time, you can go to Plan B.

Submitting Assignments	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 unless directed otherwise. MS Word is available to students at all campus computers and through UTEP's OneDrive cloud.
	For your free copy of MS Word, visit onedrive.utep.edu, or visit tech support on the third floor of the library.

Course Policies

Assessment	Submit all major assignments through Blackboard for grading using the **Assignment Inbox**.
	
	Additional information for each project is available in the RWS Handbook or as provided by me. Each project will be assessed by a grading rubric. Look for these rubrics in the RWS Handbook.
	
	Activities are turned in within their respective modules. These are formative assessments that are the building blocks for each project. Activities include readings, discussion board postings, and quizzes.
	
	Activities do not receive a grade, per se; instead, they receive a pass/did not pass assessment.
	
	      2 – Met requirement of activity
	
	      1 – Needs revision; resubmit for full credit
	
	      0 – Incomplete or not submitted
	
	Activities count toward your participation grade, with is 20% of your final grade for the class.

Due Dates	**Activities** are due as posted. **Projects** are major assignments. They are due Friday, 11:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted on the course schedule.
Late Work	Extensions are granted by office visits or through the use of a one-time exception, known as a Get Out of Jail Free Card. You receive one card per semester. Any exceptions other than the above must be approved through the dean of students. No other late assignments will be accepted.
First Drafts	Revise, revise, revise! Because revision is a very important part of the writing process, your class participation grade will include the submission of first drafts. In order to get the most useful revision feedback, first drafts should be <u>completed projects</u>. They must be submitted <u>before every major writing assignment.</u> **First Draft Feedback**

Your first draft will receive formative comments. This feedback will

- ensure the project is on the right track and that it meets the requirements of the assignment, and

- 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 University Writing Center for this.

Scoring the First Draft

Your first draft does not receive a grade, per se; it will receive activity credit. You must receive an activity score of 2 in order to submit a final draft for a grade.

2 – First draft complete; okay to submit revised final draft for grade

1 – First draft incomplete; need to resubmit first draft before submitting final draft

0 – Did not turn in a first draft

If you do not clear the 0 or 1 before the revised final draft is due, your final draft will receive a late mark. See Late Work above.

Participation

Your attendance is determined by class participation **both in class and online**. You 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.

Set up a dedicated time outside of class of at least 3 hours each week to complete weekly activities. Not completing an online class module counts as an absence.

Certain activities will require you to compose responses to online discussion board postings made by fellow students. You will need to make a minimum of two postings to receive credit for the activity.

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.

Tardies. Early is on time; on time is late; late is inexcusable. Don't be late to class.
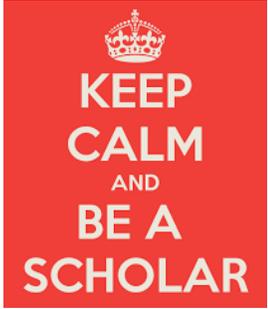
Teamwork	An important aspect of your university studies is the opportunity to work as part of a group. Teamwork in the classroom can be an effective and powerful way to learn, and is also highly relevant to the workplace.
	You will be randomly assigned to a research team for the semester. Each team will work on a common research topic leading up to the final class project.
	Membership on a team is based on unanimity. Any member who does not pull his or her weight can be voted off the team by a unanimous vote of the remaining members. Students voted off teams are responsible for completing all assigned projects themselves.

Classroom Etiquette

Civil Discourse	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 arise during small group or whole class discussions, 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, or experiences. Sexist, racist, homophobic, or other hateful speech will not be tolerated.
Netiquette	Civil discourse is an important component of every democracy. This includes our online community. • 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 to instructor at all times. Harassing or inappropriate postings will not 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 the ethical obligation to first request the permission of the writer(s).
Devices	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, or are a distraction, then I reserve the right to ask you to put them away or turn them off.

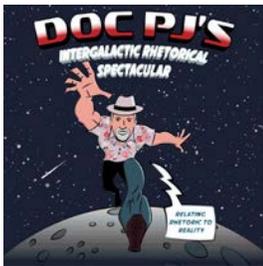| **Academic Integrity**	The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence. In all matters of intellectual pursuit, UTEP faculty and students must strive to achieve excellence based on the quality of work produced by the individual. In the classroom and in all other 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. If you are reading this sentence, send me a picture of a dragon by email to receive a valuable bonus.
	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.
	To view UTEP's academic regulations, visit http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/
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.

Accommodations

Success	Your success in this class is important to me. 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) There are also a range of resources on campus, including the Writing Center, Counseling Center, Military Student Success Center, and Academic Advising Center.
Accessibility	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.
University Writing Center	UTEP's University Writing Center (UWC) offers free writing 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 THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO **MILITARY STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER**	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.

Your Instructor

Keeping in Touch	I can be reached by email at pjvierra@utep.edu. When writing me, please use your UTEP email account. Include the class day/time that we meet. DO NOT include your student ID number.
	My F2F office hours take place in the University Writing Center, Library 227.
	For technical support, your first call should be to Technology Support Center at 915-747-4357. Or, you can visit TSC on the third floor of the University Library.
About the Instructor	P.J. Vierra, Ph.D.
	Office Hours:
	MTWRF 2:00 p.m. – 2:30 pm
	Office hours are held in the University Writing Center, Library 227
	pjvierra@utep.edu