

# **Rhetoric and Writing Studies I**

## **RWS 1301**

CRN: 24555

Online Meeting Time 10:30-11:50 AM T-Th

### **Instructor Information**

Name: Sebastian Martinez

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Online Office Hours: Office hours will be held online via Zoom on Mondays from 1:30 to 3:00 PM. I will post a recurring link on our Blackboard page that you can use for my office hours. I am also available at other days and times by appointment. Don't hesitate to reach out to me through email!

### **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 their rhetorical and writing knowledge and skills within these five knowledge domains: writing process knowledge, subject matter knowledge, rhetorical knowledge, genre knowledge, and discourse community knowledge. 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.

In spring 2021, all sections of RWS 1301 and 1302 will be taught online. Regardless of the delivery system, 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.*  
CCCC and CWPA Joint Statement in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

## **RWS 1301 & 1302 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of these FYC courses, students will be able to:

### Critical thinking and reading

- Think, read, and write analytically and reflectively
- Address specific, immediate rhetorical situations and their effects on individuals and communities
- Read a diverse range of texts and apply these texts to different audiences, contexts, and situations.

### Composing practices

- Read and compose in several genres to understand how genre conversations shape and are shaped by readers' and writers' practices and purposes
- Develop composing processes appropriate to writing style, audience, and assignment
- Use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas, generate writing, and make meaning
- Engage with a community of writers who dialogue across texts, argue, and build on each other's work
- Develop writing projects through multiple drafts by learning flexible strategies for reading, drafting, reviewing, collaborating, revising, rewriting, rereading, and editing
- Give, receive, and act on productive feedback from peers and instructors to work in progress

### Research

- Learn to formulate research questions, methods for research, and analyze and synthesize material
- Develop 21st century technological literacies and modalities needed for researching and composing
- Locate and evaluate primary and secondary materials, such as: journal articles and essays, books, scholarly and professionally established and maintained databases and archives, and informal electronic networks and internet sources.
- Learn writing strategies for integrating source material into your own prose (quoted, paraphrased, and summarized material)
- Apply research to various genres and cite sources in American Psychological Association Style (APA) or Modern Language Association Style (MLA)

### Assessment

- Use reflective learning strategies to self-assess and understand one's processes and products
- Collaborate
- Integrate and act on critical feedback from peers and instructors

- Understand and examine critically the reasons behind writing conventions in fields and disciplines

### **Rhetoric & Composition 1 (RWS 1301) Course Description**

Rhetoric & Composition 1 (RWS 1301) is designed to help you reach your academic and professional goals. Course assignments invite you to explore civic, cultural, political, or social concerns through topics that appeal to your sense of civic responsibility as a member of various communities. By engaging with your course topic through various genres, RWS 1301 encourages you to cultivate rhetorical skills while gaining domain knowledge in an area of special interest to you. The goals of RWS 1301 at UTEP are largely based on the Writing Program Administrators' Outcomes.

You will use writing to inquire into different rhetorical situations, and you will create different types and genres of composition (not limited to academic essays).

The curriculum consists of these 5 modules:

#### **MODULE 1 – Taking Inventory**

- Exploring texts
- Experimenting with multimedia
- Collaborative project on studying texts, authorship, and the idea of composition

#### **MODULE 2 – Autoethnographic Study of Self and Language Experiences**

- Language and literacy – relationship to home and language
- Looking back on your linguistic identities
- How do linguistic and cultural experiences affect your ideas about what it means to write in college?

#### **MODULE 3 – Remixing the Self Study**

- Adapting to another audience—audience analysis
- Examining an alternative genre –genre analysis
- Composing in a new medium
- Rhetorical analysis

#### **MODULE 4 – Social Issue Investigation**

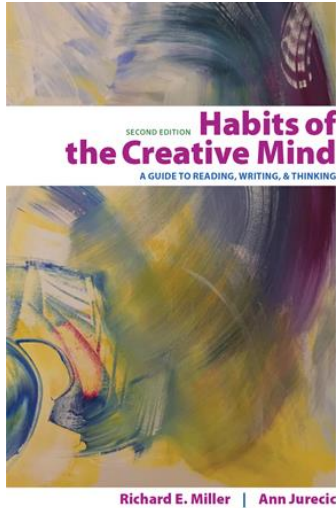
- Identifying an issue of personal and social concern
- Interrogating assumptions, biases, and representations through topic research
- Report with annotated bibliography for future study

## MODULE 5 – Visual Argument

- Creating infographic, PSA, or alternative visual project
- Presentation of infographics and PSAs

### Required Texts & Materials

- Miller, R. E., & Jurecic, A. (2020). *Habits of the Creative Mind: A Guide to Reading, Writing, & Thinking* (2nd ed.)



Available at the UTEP Bookstore.

- Additional required readings may also be posted on Blackboard, which will be listed in the course schedule.
- Internet access through Wifi/Hotspot.
- Account with Zoom

### 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 and below = F

200 Points: MODULE 1– Taking Inventory

200 Points: MODULE 2 – Autoethnographic Study of Self and Language Experience

200 Points: MODULE 3 – Remixing the Self Study

200 Points: MODULE 4 – Social Issue Investigation

200 Points: MODULE 5 – Visual Argument

## **Grading Policy**

During the course you will complete five major assignments/projects, each of which will be worth the same number of points in relation to your overall grade. I've chosen this method of grading to enforce the importance of each assignment you will complete throughout the course, making sure that one project isn't worth more than another.

As shown above, one can earn up to 200 points in each learning module, which will be split between writing journals, mini assignments, drafts, and the one major assignment in each module. Before the due date of most of the major assignments, we will spend some time revising a draft of that major assignment, which is meant to encourage the recursive nature of the writing process.

As far as what I'm going to be evaluating in each your submissions, I'm going to primarily be looking at the content of your writing. I want your submissions to be substantial, well thought-out, and engaging with the prompt or purpose of the assignment. I'm going to forgo "word-count" requirements because I would prefer that you write in a way that seems fulfilling to yourself (and the assignment), rather than to meet an arbitrary number of words. That being said, the writing being done in this course should convey effort and be reflective of the time you spent on completing it.

To that effect, I also won't be evaluating for grammar or "academic language." I'm mainly concerned with how well you can express your ideas and thoughts through your writing in whichever way you're most comfortable doing. From time to time I may offer grammatical tips and suggestions if necessary, but these will be purely constructive and are not meant to count against your grade.

Upon grading many of your assignments, I will try to provide an end-comment that consists of feedback in response to your written work. If any of you would like to discuss your grades, you are welcome to visit during my office hours to do just that.

## **Course Delivery**

In spring 2021, RWS 1301 will be held fully online. The course is designed to engage students through discussions with your classmates and instructor through Blackboard (Bb), UTEP's Learning Management System (LMS). The course will rely extensively on Blackboard, though your individual instructor may supplement it by incorporating other platforms and various media. In order to succeed in the course, you will need to have regular use of the internet and a stable connection. 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: <https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/learningremotely.html>

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. Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome are the most supported browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications with the LMS. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another 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 for the course by familiarizing themselves with the “Ready for Online Learning” guides to acclimate to online learning:

- Dispelling the Myths of Taking an Online Class
- Check Your Technology
- Communicating Effectively Online
- Managing Your Time Before It Manages You
- Online Teamwork
- Netiquette Guide for Online Courses

These guides are available on the navigation bar on the Blackboard shell for RWS 1301.

Students can also 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 Blackboard course shell for this class. Since the Blackboard 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. (For example: “Rhetorical Analysis DRAFT- Sebastian Martinez”, “Rhetorical Analysis FINAL-Sebastian Martinez”).

**Late Work:** It is important to submit work before deadlines for full credit and feedback. That being said, considering these are difficult times, if anything were to come up that prevents you from submitting an assignment on time, do not hesitate to reach out to me through email to let me know what’s going on so that we can work something out.

**Participation:** All students will be provided with an equal chance of participating in the class, given that they will be called upon at random and expected to contribute to the course discussion. Students may also participate by “raising their hand” through Zoom to ask/answer a question they may have. To “raise your hand” simply click on (ALT+Y) or (Option +Y) on your keyboard or within Zoom, click on “Participants” at the bottom center and then click “Raise hand.” It is expected that all students have their cameras and microphones working to receive full participation credit.

### **Classroom Etiquette and Netiquette**

- 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

interaction (whether face-to-face or online). 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 and responded to as negative participation.

- As a general rule: always consider audience, in class and online. As Virginia Shea writes in *Netiquette*, the first, or “golden,” rule of online practice is to “Remember the human.” Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading your postings. When reacting to someone else’s message (verbal or written), address the ideas, not the person and 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 your RWS classmates and instructor 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).
- For more on Netiquette, visit the “Ready for Online Learning” guides located in our Blackboard course shell in the Navigation bar.

## **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 Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution](#) page for more information on Academic integrity.

### **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](mailto: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.

Please note that in spring 2021 the UWC will be operating fully online. Go to [University Writing Center - UTEP](#) to make an appointment with a writing center consultant.

There are now two options students can take advantage of:

1. Synchronous online assistance – students can go to our website ([utep.edu/uwc](http://utep.edu/uwc)) and use the link to log into Blackboard Collaborate. No Appointment Needed! We will review your paper with you live online! Visit our website for current hours and availability of Synchronous Sessions.
2. Email us your paper – go to our website ([utep.edu/uwc](http://utep.edu/uwc)) and choose the Email option. You can email your paper to us any time. We will review it during our next open hours of operation and return it to you with suggested revisions. There may be up to a 72-hour turnaround for emailed papers, so plan ahead!

### **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 Spring 2021 Semester

<b>Jan 19th</b>	<b>Spring classes begin</b>
<b>Jan 19th–22nd</b>	Late Registration (Fees are incurred)
<b>Feb 3rd</b>	Spring Census Day <i>Note: This is the last day to register for classes. If payment is not received by this day, students will be dropped.</i>
<b>Feb 15th</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> Class Day <i>Note: Students who were given a payment deadline extension will be dropped at 5:00 pm if payment arrangements have not been made.</i>
<b>Feb 19th</b>	Graduation application deadline for degree conferral
<b>Mar 21st</b>	Midterm Spring 2021 Grades Due
<b>Mar 15-19th</b>	Spring Break
<b>Mar 26th</b>	Cesar Chavez Holiday – no classes
<b>Apr 1st</b>	Spring Drop/Withdrawal Deadline <i>Note: Student-initiated drops are permitted after this date, but the student is not guaranteed a grade of W. The faculty member of record will issue a grade of either W or F.</i>
<b>Apr 2nd</b>	Spring Study Day
<b>Apr 16th</b>	Deadline to submit candidates' names for degree conferral
<b>May 6th</b>	Spring – Last day of classes
<b>May 7th</b>	Dead day
<b>May 10-14th</b>	Spring Final Exams