RWS 1302: Research and Critical Writing

CRN:
Time/Days:
Place: UGLC, 232

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Office Location: Vowell, 103
Office Hours:

Online Office Hours via Google+:

Required Texts and Materials

The following items are required:

Students need access to a cloud drive or USB to save assignments.

Neuleib, J., Cain, S. K., & Ruffus, S. (Eds.). (2014). *Rhetoric and Writing Studies in English: Research and Critical Writing Course.* Boston: Pearson.

Salome, M. (2011). *The Student Guide to Undergraduate and Writing Studies* (17th ed.).

The *Student Guide* is a digital book.

Students need to purchase an access code either from the UTEP Bookstore or online at www.Brytewave.com.

Q: *Can I use the 16th edition?*

A: No, you need the 17th or 18th edition because the 16th edition received a substantial amount of revisions. The readings for the course do not align with the page numbers for the 16th edition.

Information on how to purchase and activate the digital book is available on Blackboard.

Course Description

The primary goal of Rhetoric and Writing Studies 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.

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 a management system such as Blackboard, a Wiki, or a class website depending on the instructor. Instructors will provide students with permanent access to the syllabus, supplemental reading materials, e-mail, and discussion groups. It is vital that students check and participate in the online environment consistently as it is an integral part of the course. On occasion, students will be asked to meet on the hybrid day to participate in library research, technology workshops, presentations, or other activities their instructor might need them to be physically present for. Please keep this time available for this class. Otherwise, students may miss out on important information.

Learning Outcomes

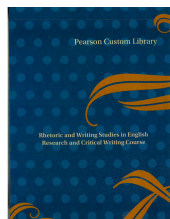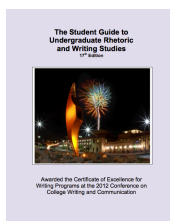At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- 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.

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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, as part of a research process, apply research to various genres; Receive instruction in the logic and form of 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.

Course Assignments and Grade Distribution

This syllabus provides an overview of assignments for the course.

Assignment guidelines for major writing assignments are available in the *Student Guide to Undergraduate and Writing Studies*, and guidelines for smaller assignments will be provided via Blackboard. All assignments will be submitted to and graded/provided feedback by the instructor via Blackboard.

The Rhetoric and Writing Studies Undergraduate Program at UTEP uses a rubric for each assignment. Additional information is available in the *Student Guide to Undergraduate and Writing Studies* and will also be provided by the instructor.

Grade Distribution (Students can earn a total of 1000 points for the course):

A = 1000-900   B = 899-800   C = 799 -700   D = 699- 600   F = 599 and below

Assignment & Description	Points
Genre Analysis: Students will identify two texts on the same subject, but in different genres, to write a comparative analysis.	100
Annotated Bibliography and Research Questions: Students will submit 3-4 research questions for approval and complete an annotated bibliography as an activity assignment to begin work on the Literature Review/Primary Research Report.	20
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.	200
Documentary Film Project (group project): Students will plan, write, film and edit a documentary film advocating a position on a current issue. Students will be provided with opportunities to become more familiar with this software throughout the semester. This will be uploaded on Vimeo or YouTube, and the link copied and pasted on a Word Document.	200
Film Doc Presentation: Students will present their documentaries to the class. The instructor will grade this presentation.	50
Online Opinion Piece: Students will write an online opinion piece on some aspect of the topic of their Literature Review/Primary Research Report in order to advocate for a policy change.	100
Advocacy Website: Students will create, design, and maintain a website that advocates for the topic of their literature review/primary research report. Students will design, add additional links, and provide the needed content to this website in any way they want--with the stipulation that it is focused on advocacy and draws from their semester's work and research. Students should copy and paste the link on a Word Document.	150

Drafts and Conferences: In order for students to receive additional feedback to assignments,	90
Participation: Because this is a hybrid class, participation in-class **and** online is mandatory. Students will complete weekly Blackboard modules as part of their participation grade. The activities included in this category ensure that students learn the material and help them to compose effective projects. This score will include peer review assignments, drafts, conferences, in-class writing assignments, quizzes, and other work the instructor assigns.	90

Assignment Policies

Late Assignments

Instructor will not accept e-mailed assignments. Students have a 24-hour grace period to submit late assignments. Late assignments will receive minimal feedback from the instructor, will not receive a grade higher than a 50, and will receive a 0 if it is e-mailed and/or turned in after the 24-hour grace period. There is no quota for submitting late work, but online attendance assignments submitted late will count as half an absence. Peer review assignments, In-class writing assignments, quizzes, and advocacy website will receive an automatic 0 if turned in late.

Revision Opportunities

Students are granted **TWO** revision opportunities of any assignment worth 15 points or more. Assignments not turned in or not given credit cannot be revised. Student must schedule an appointment with instructor to discuss assignment; revise assignment based on additional feedback received during meeting; and will submit assignment no later than December 6th by 11:59PM via e-mail. Instructor will not accept revision requests or meet with students after December 4th.

Extra Credit

Extra credit, additional revision attempts, and/or late submission opportunities without a grade deduction will not be granted to individual students, but may be granted to the entire class at the instructor's discretion.

Student will receive an automatic 0 on an assignment if:
- The instructor is unable to open the assignment from Blackboard due to it not being saved as a .doc or .docx file;
- E-mailed and/or submitted after the 24-hour grace period.

Blackboard Modules

A great deal of work will be done online; not having access to a computer or Internet will not be an excuse/will not be accepted for incomplete, missing, or late assignments. The course is divided into weekly Blackboard modules, which consists of content used to ensure students comprehend the material and provides a space to compose effective projects. Students are required to complete the readings and content in the weekly module prior to attending lecture, and adhere to online netiquette course policies. Quizzes based on the readings and content in each module will be administered either online or during class.

Students 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. Be mindful of the deadlines (refer to calendar), plan ahead, and complete the module in a timely manner. Expect that at some time, the network will be down, computers will go on the fritz, or some other small catastrophe will occur. If students are prepared ahead of time, they can go to plan B.

Any questions or problems concerning Blackboard can be directed to the Helpdesk at 747-5257.

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Accessing Blackboard:

Students must have a UTEP e mail ID and password before they can access Blackboard. UTEP automatically generates an e-mail ID for students when they are entered into the system.

Students can access Blackboard by the steps outlined below:
1) Go to http://www.my.utep.edu
2) Login is e-mail ID. Password is e-mail password.
3) Click on the link to Blackboard
4) Once logged into Blackboard, all the courses a student is registered for are listed under the appropriate semester.

Tumblr Assignments

Students are required to maintain a Tumblr blog by submitting weekly blog posts in order to meet the online attendance requirement for the course. In addition, students must adhere to online netiquette course policies. A tutorial will be provided during the first week of class, and students are encouraged to meet and/or speak with the instructor in a timely manner if an issue arises. The instructor will provide the prompts via Blackboard.

Rough Drafts

Part of the participation grade will include the submission of rough drafts. In order to get the most useful feedback, rough drafts should be completed projects and follow the draft guidelines provided by the instructor.

Rough Draft Feedback

On the rough drafts, students will receive marginal comments as well as comments at the end of the project via Blackboard.

The purpose of this feedback is to:
1. To be sure that the project is on the right track, and that it meets the requirements of the assignment.
2. To 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-- visit the Writing Center.

Assignment Format:

All assignments will be submitted via Blackboard; e-mailed assignments will not be accepted and reviewed. Students are responsible for saving their in-class assignments and keeping a copy of their submitted work on a USB or a cloud drive.

Project Format:

All projects must be word-processed and saved as a .doc or .docx file. They should be in 12 pt. font, Times New Roman, have one-inch margins throughout, follow APA format and headings (including the appropriate cover page and headings), and be double-spaced. Failure to meet the page length or word count for an assignment or online posting will lead to the deduction of points and/or an automatic **F** for the Writing Fluency portion in each rubric.

Microsoft Word is available to students at all campus computers and can be purchased at the UTEP Bookstore using a current UTEP ID card at discount. Students may also go to openoffice.org and download a free and compatible version of Word/Office.

Be sure to name each submitted assignment with your first initial, last name, and an abbreviation of the assignment.

Example:
JVilla genre analysis draft
JVilla genre analysis final

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Course/Instructor Policies: Technology and Attendance

Technology and RWS 1302

This course makes heavy use of technology and multimedia. Unless it is a Blackboard outage affecting the entire UTEP campus, instructor will not review e-mailed assignments and/or grant extensions stemming from technology problems. It is strongly recommended that students have access to the Internet from home and are comfortable using a computer and Blackboard. If a student does not have access to a computer or Internet, he/she can get free access through the university at several computer labs on campus. For a list of labs, visit: http://admin.utep.edu/default.aspx?tabid=58049.

Online Netiquette

General	Blackboard	Tumblr
Always consider audience. **Respect** and **courtesy** must be provided to classmates and to instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated. When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation. Please do not copy documents from Blackboard 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).	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 the professor only. Instructor reserves the right to delete content on that is verbally abusive toward another student or instructor.	Tumblr is a public Internet venue; all posting should be considered public and must adhere to UTEP's student code of conduct. Instructor reserves the right to not provide credit to content on that is verbally abusive toward another student or instructor.

Attendance Policy (Face-to-Face and Online):

Students are expected to come prepared, attend all class meetings, and to participate in discussions, peer reviews, workshops, and conferences. Because this is a hybrid course, attendance is determined by class participation both in class and online. Students must be prepared to complete online attendance assignments and attend the face-to-face class consistently to understand and incorporate the rhetorical strategies and processes used to complete the projects. Students are allowed to miss **4 face-to-face (F2F) meetings** and **4 online attendance assignments.** Additional absences will receive a **10-point deduction** from the final grade. Student will be notified via e-mail when he/she has exceeded 4 face-to-face (F2F) meetings and/or 4 online attendance assignments (OAA).

General	Face-to-Face (F2F)	Online
Late arrival, early departure (10+ minutes), or submitting late online attendance assignments count as half an absence. Instructor does not distinguish between an excused and unexcused absence, arrival, departure, etc.	F2F attendance is taken via a sign-in-sheet; failure to sign-in will lead to being counted absent. Signing-in for another student will negatively affect both students' academic standing in the course.	Online attendance is taken via writing activities labeled as "Online Attendance Assignment "or "OAA" in Blackboard, and must be completed every Sunday by 11:59 PM.

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Each semester has a drop date beyond which an instructor can no longer drop a student with a "W." Students who fail to attend or fulfill assignments after the drop date must necessarily receive an "F." Instructor will not drop students from the course; it is the responsibility of the student to drop before census day or the drop deadline. However, in the event of exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the instructor of the course and the academic dean, a grade of "W" may be obtained. The student is responsible for supplying written documentation to support the request for a "W." Acceptable reasons for a "W" include: personal or family medical emergencies, death of family member, military leave, or an exceptional work schedule that prevents you from completing the course.

Six-Course Drop Limit

Please also be aware of the six-course drop limit. According to the Texas Education Code, "all first-year students enrolled for the first time at any Texas public college or university are limited to six drops during their academic career. This includes student and faculty initiated drops and courses dropped at other Texas public institutions. This policy does not apply to courses dropped prior to census day or to complete withdrawals." So, be sure to start your college experience on the right track by attending class regularly.

For information on semester deadlines, see the UTEP Academic Calendar: http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=11145

Extracurricular Involvement and Classroom Etiquette

Students whose academic involvement (financial aid, scholarship, athletic eligibility, etc.) requires good academic standing are responsible for being aware of their academic requirements and responsibilities needed to remain in good standing.

Class Exemption Policy
Student must provide proof of exemption and will submit in-class assignments, online postings, and major assignments within a week of the original deadline.

Classroom Etiquette:
- No checking email, typing assignments, or surfing the web during class;
- Absolutely no using the printer after class has started. It can be difficult to hear in this room; the printer only makes it that much worse;
- Absolutely no food or drinks in this classroom;
- Turn off cell phone ringers, and please do not text message, use tablets, or listen to iPods/MP3 players during class;
- Student will be kicked out of the classroom and counted absent if he/she is caught browsing the internet/using the computer for non-academic work, using their phone/tablet/laptop for non-lecture related work.

Academic Integrity and Campus Resources

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. (http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=54418)

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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.

ADA

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 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, UWC tutors will not hold a tutoring session fewer than 12 hours before the assignment is due.

To learn more the UWC, visit http://uwc.utep.edu

Contact & Textbook Information:

(change QR code)