

Rhetoric and Writing Studies RWS 1301
CRN: 30862

Instructor Information

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Office Hours: Online through Zoom on class Homepage, Wednesday 10:00-11:00 am

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.

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: surveys, interviews, observations, case studies, 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 intended to help students develop and reflect on their rhetorical and writing knowledge including awareness of social and racial justice, and the implications of their language choices, based on the understanding that language is never neutral. RWS 1301 helps students reach their academic and professional goals as writers. Course assignments invite students to explore cultural, political, linguistic, racial, and social issues through topics that appeal to their interests and sense of civic responsibility as members of various communities.

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

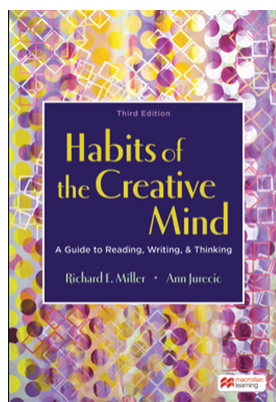
MODULE 5 – Visual argument

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

Required Texts & Materials



UTEP First-Year Composition Handbook, 2024-2025 edition.



Miller, R. E., & Jurecic, A. (2023). *Habits of the Creative Mind: A Guide to Reading, Writing, & Thinking* (3rd ed.) Available at the UTEP Bookstore and Redshelf.com.

Additional required readings may also be posted on Blackboard.

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Course Assignments and Grading

Assignment #1: Literacy Narrative (100 points)

Assignment #2: Choosing a Topic for the Semester (50 points)

Assignment #2: Rhetorical and Visual Analysis paper (150 points)

Assignment #3: Annotated Bibliography (100 points)

Assignment #4: Global Issues Report (200 pts)

Minor Assignments and Discussion Board Posts (300 points)

Reading Journal (100 points)

Typically twice a week you will write a journal entry of 150-300 words in response to writing prompts related to readings. These responses will not be graded based on content, but on apparent effort; you will receive credit if you make your post before midnight Sunday the week for which it is assigned. This assignment is an attempt to get you writing and thinking about the process of writing without worrying about evaluation.

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

Course Delivery

Course Delivery:

In Summer of 2022, RWS 1301 will be held primarily face-to-face on campus. There are a few sections that are designated as online. Those classes may meet synchronously while others may meet asynchronously through Blackboard. Whether face-to-face or online, the course is designed to engage students through discussions with your classmates and instructor using Blackboard (Bb). 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 or 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 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

- ☐ Assignments will be due at midnight on the date they are assigned. All due dates can be found on the class calendar in Blackboard
- ☐ Students who fail to submit assignments on time will not receive feedback on performance.
- ☐ Be sure to submit all major assignments in order to pass this class.

Late work will be accepted based on the following chart:

Late Work Timeline	Deductions	Type of Assignment	Late Work Rule
1 Day	10%	Major Papers, Readings, Drafts, Homework	Accepted
2-7 Days	20%	Major Papers, Readings, Drafts, Homework	Accepted
1-2 Weeks	30%	Major Papers	Accepted
2 Weeks or more	50%	Major Papers	Accepted

Participation:

Participation is a major component of this class, but how you participate is (in part) up to you. In-class discussions, contributions to canvas discussion boards, and correspondence with me will all be factored into participation. Respect for the classroom space -- helping to create an environment where other students can learn -- will be considered, as well.

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

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.

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.

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.

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

Course Schedule

Weekly Schedule (Provisional--Subject to change) |

HCM: Habits of the Creative Mind; FYC: The First-Year Composition Handbook

Week	Topic	Readings	Writing
Week 1 Jun 10	Introductions Syllabus Review Semester Topic Literacy Narrative	Literacy Narrative Assignment Guidelines HCM Chapter 1 and 2 and FYC pages 1-9 and 38-41. David Sedaris, "Me Talk Pretty..." Amy Tan, "Mother Tongue" Gloria Anzaldua, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue"	Literacy narrative responses Reading Journal Habits of a Creative Mind Chapter 1 and 2. Literacy Narrative Rough Draft Literacy Narrative Peer Review Literacy Narrative Final Draft
Week 2 Jun 17	Rhetorical Visual Analysis Paper	Rhetorical Visual Analysis Assignment Guidelines.	Semester Topic Proposal Visual Analysis Exercise

Week	Topic	Readings	Writing
	Peer Review	<p>Habits of a Creative Mind Chapter 3 and 4.</p> <p>FYC 159-166, 42-61 and 122-124.</p> <p>Visual Analysis Student Example</p> <p>APA formatting.</p>	<p>Visual Analysis Rough Draft, Peer-Review, and Visual Analysis Final Draft due</p> <p>Reading Journal Habits of a Creative Mind Chapter 3 and 4.</p>
<p>Week 3</p> <p>Jun 24</p>	<p>Annotated Bibliography</p> <p>Research</p> <p>Evaluating Sources</p>	<p>FYC 141-144</p> <p>Reading Journal Habits of a Creative Mind Chapter 5 and 6.</p> <p>Kantz's Article "Helping Students Use Textual Sources Persuasively"</p>	<p>Global Issues Student Example</p> <p>Annotated Bib Final Draft due</p> <p>Discussing Kantz's Article "Helping Students Use Textual Sources Persuasively"</p> <p>Reading Journal Habits of a Creative Mind Chapter 5 and 6.</p>
<p>Week 4</p> <p>Jul 1</p>	<p>Global Issues Report</p> <p>Peer Review</p>	<p>Habits of a Creative Mind Chapter 7 and 8.</p> <p>Devoss and Rossati, "It wasn't me, was it?" Plagiarism and the Web."</p>	<p>Discussion Board: Devoss and Rossati, "It wasn't me, was it?" Plagiarism and the Web."</p> <p>Reading Journal Habits of a Creative Mind Chapter 7 and 8.</p> <p>Global Issues Rough Draft, Peer-Review and Final Draft Due</p>

