

**Instructor:** Dr. Melissa Nivens

**Class Time:** MWF 9:00am-9:50am

**Location:** BW117

**Office:** BW220

**Email:** [melissa.nivens@msutexas.edu](mailto:melissa.nivens@msutexas.edu)

**Office hours:** MW 10:00-12:00am

TR 11:00-12:30pm

# ENGL 1143.113: Introduction to Critical Reading and Academic Writing

## Syllabus

### Texts:

- Lunsford, Andrea et al. *Everyone's an Author with Readings*. Norton. 2023. eBook.
- *The Little Seagull Handbook, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.* 2020. eBook.

### Required Materials:

- Note-taking materials

### Course Goals:

- Apply key rhetorical concepts through analyzing and composing a variety of texts
- Engage in a writing process that includes invention, drafting, collaboration, and revision
- Use reading and composing for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating in various rhetorical contexts
- Use strategies – such as interpretation, synthesis, response, critique, and design to compose texts that integrate the writer's ideas with those from appropriate sources
- Use sources ethically and in contextually appropriate ways and follow a designated style guide
- Demonstrate proficient use of linguistic structures, including grammar and mechanics, through practice in composing and revising

## **Course Assignments:**

**You will receive detailed assignment sheets that explain the specifics for each of these assignments.**

- 10% Community Literacy Narrative (Timed Writing)
  - This essay will be written during class in response to an article that we read and discuss together.
- 15% Visual Analysis
  - You will have the opportunity to plan, draft, and revise this essay. It will analyze the rhetorical elements of a visual text.
- 10% Position Paper (Timed Writing)
  - This essay will be written during class. You will take a position on a topic and support your argument with evidence.
- 10% Synthesis Matrix
  - You will summarize and evaluate each source that you consult for the Synthesis Paper.
- 20% Synthesis Paper
  - This is the longest paper you will compose in this class. It will explore various perspectives on a topic of your choosing. You will cite sources and show connections between them.
- 10% Peer Review and Instructor Conferences
  - You will participate in conferences with your peers and instructor at various stages of the writing process
- 5% Grammar Exercises
  - Your digital text includes opportunities for grammar and mechanics practice. You will complete these exercises in InQuizitive.
- 10% Remix Project
  - You will present your Synthesis Paper to the class using a different genre or media.
- 10% Final Exam
  - Much like the first two timed writings, you will compose a multiple-paragraph essay during the designated final exam time.

## **Final Exam:**

**Tuesday, December 12, 2022. 10:30am – 12:30pm. Location TBD.**

**Grading Policy:** This class will not use the plus/minus grading system for *final grades*. The following numerical equivalents for final grades are used:

A = 100-90%;

B = 89-80%;

C = 79-70%;

D = 69-60%;

F = 59-0

**Midterm Grades:** In order to help students keep track of their progress toward course objectives, a Midterm Progress Report through each student's Navigate account will be provided by the instructor. Midterm grades will not be reported on the students' transcripts; nor will they be calculated in the cumulative GPA. Students earning below a C at the midway point should make an appointment with the instructor and consider visiting the Tutoring & Academic Support Programs Center (TASP).

**Submission Format and Policy:** All formal assignments are to be typed and formatted – and outside sources documented - according to MLA style. All formal papers will be uploaded into the D2L Dropbox folder.

By enrolling in this class, the student expressly grants MSU a “limited right” in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The “limited right” shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student's work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and for educational purposes. Please note that the D2L Dropbox folder will automatically run the paper through Turnitin.com. Turnitin provides both an Originality Report and an AI Report.

Note: You may not submit a paper for a grade in this class that already has been (or will be) submitted for a grade in another course, unless you obtain the explicit written permission of me and the other instructor involved in advance.

**Access to Microsoft 365:** All students are able to download Microsoft Office 365 free of charge using their MSU Texas student email address. To acquire Office 365, please visit <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/products/office?ms.officeurl=getoffice365?ms.officeurl=getoffice365> and create an account.

**University Computer Labs:** The University provides four open computer labs throughout the week. These four labs feature access to Microsoft Office Suite for writing and internet access for research. You can find these labs in:

Location	Hours
Clark Student Center	24 hours (Mon-Sun)

Dillard 146	Mon-Thurs 6:00 am – 7:00 pm
Moffett Library	Mon-Thurs 8:00 am – 10:00 pm; Fri. 8-5; Sat: 10pm-6 pm; Sun: 2:00 pm-10 pm
Legacy Hall	24 hours (Mon-Sun)

**Late Assignment Policy:** Late assignments, defined as work not submitted by the designated date and time posted in the D2L Dropbox/Submission folder, will be accepted, but they will lose 10% of the final grade. Additionally, no late work will be accepted more than 48 hours after the original deadline. If you are unable to come to class on the day an assignment is due, you should still upload it into the D2L Dropbox folder on time to avoid late paper deductions.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s thoughts, words, ideas, or lines of argument in your own work without appropriate documentation (a parenthetical citation at the end and a listing on the Works Cited page) whether you use that material in a quote, paraphrase, or summary.

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism.

As stated above, formal papers will run through the Turnitin for an Originality Report and an AI Report. At the very least, plagiarism will result in an F on the assignment; at worst, the consequence will be an F in the course. Offenders will be reported to the Chair of the Department of English, Humanities, and Philosophy and/or the Director of Student Conduct.

**Students with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Support Services in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, 940-397-4140

**Contacting Your Instructor:** Email is the best way to contact me:  
[melissa.nivens@msutexas.edu](mailto:melissa.nivens@msutexas.edu)

**Attendance Policy:** It is important that you attend class and arrive on time. If you have a total of more than two weeks’ worth (6 classes) of absences (excused or not) the missed instruction will make it difficult for you to excel in the class. Students who miss class will not be directly penalized, but they will miss out on opportunities for participation and explanations of assignments that could impact the final grade. If you need to miss several classes because of personal reasons (illness, death in the family, etc), you should alert the Dean of Students office

and provide them with the necessary documentation so that they can verify the situation for all of your instructors.

**Tutoring:** Tutoring and Academic Support Programs (TASP) provides free drop-in tutoring for MSU students. Located on the first floor of Moffett Library, TASP's Learning Center provides tutoring support in a number of core courses and subject areas. Writing tutors are available. Remember that students don't need an appointment to utilize these services.

**Safe Zone Statement:** The professor considers this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being – regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is the professor's expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.

**Writing Proficiency Requirement:** All students seeking a Bachelor's degree from Midwestern State University must satisfy a writing proficiency requirement once they have 1) completed 6 hours of Communication Core and 2) earned 60 hours. Students may meet this requirement by passing the Writing Proficiency Exam, passing two Writing Intensive Courses, or passing English 2113. If you have any questions about the exam, visit the Writing Proficiency Office website at <https://msutexas.edu/academics/wpr/> or call 397-4131.

**Campus Carry Statement:** Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at MSU Texas's [Campus Carry page](#).