



Fall 2024

Course Syllabus: ENGL 1143-Introduction to Critical Reading  
and Academic Writing

1143-109/152- TH 9:30am-10:50am, MY 136

1143-1R9- TH, 11:00am- 12:20, BW 210

1143-1R7- TH- 2:00pm-3:20pm, BW 117

**Contact Information**

Instructor: Amber Hunsaker, M.A.

Office: BW 228

Office phone: (940) 397-4123

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Office hours:

Day	Hours
Monday	11:00am-12:00pm
Tuesday	12:30pm-2:00pm
Wednesday	11:00am-12:00pm
Thursday	12:30pm-2:00pm
Zoom/Other Times	By Appointment

## Contacting Me

Email is the best way to contact me. In the body of your email, indicate the course and section number you're in. Please allow at least 24 hours for a response during the week and 48 hours over the weekend, though often, I will get back to you sooner. You may also stop by my office during office hours. If you cannot meet during my office hours, you may request a Zoom conference.

## Course Description

This course provides training in **critical reading** and **academic writing**. It focuses on the **writing process** and **rhetorical concepts** while requiring students to write a variety of text. Students will be required to prepare a synthesis paper of moderate length demonstrating critical reading and academic writing skills, including selection, evaluation, analysis, integration, and documentation of sources.

The purpose of this course is to develop your skills in critical reading and thinking and in evidence-based writing. These skills will be relevant in many aspects of your life and your work. Here you will get to choose what you will research and write about, and you'll be asked to be open to new perspectives.

## 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

This course fulfills a core requirement for Communication. As such, the course will assess the following learning objectives:

- Critical Thinking, Communication, & Personal Responsibility - To assess these skills, the Synthesis rubric will be applied to the Synthesis Essay.
- Teamwork - To assess the student's teamwork, the Peer Review Teamwork rubric will be used to assess each student's preparation for and participation in a peer review workshop.

### **Textbook & Instructional Materials**

Lunsford, Angela and Michael Brody. *Let's Talk . . . with Readings*. Norton, 2023. (Provided as an e-book; Access in D2L).

[Please see linked here a letter from the bookstore about opting out of the digital textbook.](#)

A Gmail account (like MSUTexas account) to collaborate & access digital materials

Regular computer and internet access, including access to D2L and a Webcam/microphone (for Zoom meetings when/if necessary).

This course's required eBook is part of MSU Texas' Courseware Access and Affordability Program. Students are charged for the course materials on their Business Office account. If you wish to opt-out of the Program and purchase the required course materials on your own, you must do so using the opt-out instructions, which will be sent to your my.msutexas.edu email on the second day of class. Contact the MSU Bookstore at jenny.denning@msutexas.edu if you have questions about opting out.

### **Submission Format and Policy**

All formal assignments are to be typed and formatted according to MLA style. Outside sources should be documented using MLA as well. We will spend time this semester learning how to do that. Some minor assignments may be submitted as a hard copy in class. All formal papers must be uploaded into the D2L Dropbox folder. 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 if necessary.

## Grading

### Final Grades

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Numerical</u>
<u>A</u>	<u>895-1000</u>
<u>B</u>	<u>795-894</u>
<u>C</u>	<u>695-794</u>
<u>D</u>	<u>595-694</u>
<u>F</u>	<u>0-594</u>

<b>Required Assignments</b>	<b>Points</b>
FE (Formal Essay) 1- Rhetorical Analysis	75
FE 2- Annotated Bibliography	75
FE 3- Synthesis Paper/Peer Review	250
FE 4- Position	75
10 Weekly Reports (Minimum Entries)	200
Research Presentation*	50
Final Exam- Reflection Letter*	75
<b>TOTAL Required Assignments</b>	<b>800</b>
-	
<b>Investment Tasks</b>	<b>Points</b>
5 Extra Weekly Reports	Up to 150
Textbook Quizzes**	Up to 100
Inquizitive Grammar	Up to 150
<b>TOTAL Possible Points</b>	<b>x/1000</b>

\*Note about Research Presentation and Final Exam– students may opt out of them if they are happy with their current grade during the last week of class.

\*\*Note about Reading Quizzes: Quizzes will close at 11:59pm on the day of which the reading is required. For example, if I ask that you read chapter 5 on a Thursday, the reading quiz for Chapter 5 will close at 11:59pm on that same Thursday.

All Formal Essays and at least 10 Weekly Reports MUST be completed in order to earn an A in the class.

## **Grade Policy**

This course operates on a labor-based grading contract theory heavily adapted from that of composition scholar Asao Inoue with Pass/Fail assignment grades, except for the Reading Quizzes and Weekly Reports (where you will earn a particular amount of points based off what you complete). You'll get feedback from me and your colleagues which you can use to improve your work and to take risks, but you won't get traditional grades on major assignments. If you do all that is asked of you in the manner and spirit it is asked, then you'll earn a B in the course.

Basically, if you complete the assignment following the instructions and meeting assignment expectations, then you earn a 100%. If you submit an assignment, but it does not meet the assignment expectation, you will earn 50% of the available points. If you do not submit any work, or if the work you submit is in any way plagiarized (including using AI generated text... or text you yourself did not create), you will receive a 0 for that assignment.

If you receive a 50%, you may revise the assignment using the feedback left for you to meet the assignment requirements. Revising may earn you a full 100%. If you revise and the assignment still doesn't meet the requirements, you will earn up to 25% of points back. For example, if you earned a 50% on the Rhetorical Analysis, and you successfully revised it, you will earn the full 75 points. If the revisions were not successful, you will earn at least 56 points.

If you receive a 0, you must meet with me and explain why you deserve a chance to earn points back. If you receive the opportunity to revise, you may earn up to 50% points on the assignment.

Along with any revised work, you must complete a reflection paragraph explaining what you revised and how it made your work better. I want you not only to rely on your colleagues and yourself for assessment and revision advice, but to build strategies of

self-assessment that function apart from a teacher's approval. For example, closely examining the assignment page and ensuring that your writing meets the assignment expectations.

This grading scheme is meant to foster a collaborative, supportive environment and to relieve some of the pressure of writing anxiety. You're not writing to impress me. You're writing to learn about different styles, genres, and rhetorical concepts. Demonstrating that you're learning these will warrant you a passing grade on assignments.

While the default grade for the course is a B, you can improve upon your overall grade by doing more than is required. The primary options for doing so are outlined above in the grade distribution chart on page 3. If you do not earn all of the points for a major assignment, this is also where you can make up for that in addition to revising. If you have missed or incomplete work or work that does not meet the expectations for revision, editing, or originality, and you choose not to make that up with timely revision or additional labor, you will forfeit the default B for a lower grade, depending on the amount and quality of missing or incomplete work.

Similarly, the Required Tasks are just that **REQUIRED**. Failure to complete the Formal Essays and 10 Weekly Reports forfeits an A. The highest grade you can earn is a B if you fail to submit any of the Required Assignments. You cannot skip the Annotated Bibliography, and make up those points in your Weekly Reports. However, students may opt out of the Research Presentation and Final Essay if they are happy with their current grades at the end of the semester.

Mid Term Grades: To help students track their progress, I will provide all students' Midterm Grades in D2L. Midterm grades will not appear on transcripts or be calculated in GPAs. They give you an idea of where you stand halfway through the semester. Students earning a C or below should visit with me about their future success in this course and visit the Writing Center for help on assignments.

After every major assignment, I will post announcements indicating how many points we should have earned by that point so that you can gauge whereabouts you stand in the grade scheme.

If you are ever confused by the grading practices, or would like clarification of what your grade is, I would be happy to help you. Please email me, stop by my office, or chat with me before or after class. I don't want you worrying about your grade. Instead, I want you to learn from me, your peers, and our shared experiences.

## **Assessment and Revision**

If you receive a failing grade on an assignment, you will have a chance after each major Writing Assignment to revise your work and re-submit it for revision points. I will tell the class when revisions for each assignment are due back. Typically it's within a week after I return your graded assignments.

### **Late Assignment**

Late assignments, defined as work not submitted by the designated date and time posted in the D2L Dropbox/Submission folder, will not be accepted. The D2L Dropboxes will indicate that assignments are due at 11:59pm, but the dropboxes will close at 8:00am the following morning. As long as you submit the assignments before the dropboxes close, they are not considered late. Late or missed work will receive a zero grade. 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.

If you need an extension, please email me no later than 12 hours before the deadline.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the use by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials. This includes work generated by AI. All formal papers will run through the Turnitin for an originality 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. Please understand that students have the right to appeal an alleged incident of Academic Dishonesty. More information about this policy and appeal procedure can be found on page 55 of the Student Handbook

[https://msutexas.edu/student-life/\\_assets/files/handbook.pdf](https://msutexas.edu/student-life/_assets/files/handbook.pdf)

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.

## **Course Community**

Because we and our community members have diverse bodies, experiences, and needs, and because language helps shape our world, as a community, we must reject language and behaviors that denigrate others based on any identity category. In this intentional and inclusive learning space, hate speech and any form of harassment, discrimination, or violence will have serious consequences and won't be tolerated.

**Learning with Generosity:** This course encourages the discussion and consideration of topics that may be uncomfortable. We can work through discomfort, and this class should be a safe space for learning and exploration. I will provide content warnings as needed, and if you have a need for warnings before particular kinds of content, please let me know.

We will demonstrate respect and consideration of perspectives that differ from our own. Realize that there is a lot we don't know about each other, and our choice of words in discussing social, political, and economic issues matters a great deal. As a group, we should acknowledge that, while ignorance is not an excuse for cruelty or dismissiveness, we all make mistakes as we learn, so we should be willing to forgive & learn from these situations.

**Courtesy and Hospitality:** The college classroom should be a vibrant environment that fosters creativity, discussion, and intellectual growth. You have the freedom to create the kind of intellectual community you desire. Included here are behaviors that I believe will help foster a generative community:

- Pay attention. This means when the instructor or classmates are addressing the class you are attentive to the speaker and NOT (1) talking, (2) using electronic devices for unrelated tasks, or (3) sleeping. If emergencies or mitigating circumstances mean that you may need to do one of these things, please be considerate by quietly excusing yourself.
- Be respectful. You are expected to be respectful to your instructor, your classmates, and yourself. If you witness behavior that is less than respectful, you are welcome to hold the community accountable by calling us in.
- Be prepared & responsible. Know what is happening in class by checking the schedule and your emails. Bring materials and assignments to class when needed. Submit work on time, and communicate with me in mitigating circumstances. Know that when you do miss a class, yes, you missed



something “important.” It is your job to keep up with the work/readings that you missed.

- Participate. Since you are working to become an expert in your field, the class and our scholarly community stand to benefit and learn from your contributions. Practice now by sharing what you know and are learning when it is relevant.
- Communicate. Come by or call me during office hours if you are struggling with an assignment, have issues with course material, or want additional guidance or feedback. You can also email me.

### **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.

### **Attendance**

It is important that you attend class and be on time. If you have a total of more than four (4) weeks’ worth (8 missed classes) of absences excused or not, the highest grade you can receive in the course is a 70%, no matter how many points you had or will have earned. So if you stop attending class half way through the semester, you may continue to submit work, but you will not receive higher than a “C” grade as your final, assuming you were submitting passing work. Often, students who do not attend class do not successfully complete the assignments.

If you need to miss multiple sessions for personal/health reasons, you should alert the Dean of Students office and provide them with the necessary information so that they can verify the situation for me and your other instructors.

I appreciate it if you notify me via email in advance if you will not be able to make class. Consider it your responsibility to be present and prepared for class in order to succeed and maximize your learning. This is a face-to-face course, dependent on in-class discussion and group work. So if you want to attend class virtually, I suggest you enroll in an online section.

## **This Class as a Contract**

Through contract, pass/fail grading in this course, the default grade is a B, assuming you pass every Required Tasks. If you do all that is asked of you in the manner and spirit it is asked, work through the processes we establish, do all the labor asked of you, then you'll earn a B in the course. It will not matter what I or your colleagues think of your writing, only that you are listening to our feedback openly. If you miss class (do not participate fully), turn in assignments late, forget to do assignments, or do not follow the labor instructions precisely, you will get a lower course grade. You can earn an A by completing additional "Investment Tasks" that contribute to the class community and to your learning.

You may think that you will learn "proper grammar" in this class, but linguists argue that every language and dialect has a distinctive grammar and that no one grammar is inherently better or more correct. American universities rely on "Standard (American) Academic English" (SAE) to determine "college readiness," but this ["standard" is a false one rooted in intentional gatekeeping and discrimination based on race, class, and citizenship status.](#) In this class, your professor will assume that SAE is a false and flawed standard. Your language practices are relevant. You will not be chastised for using grammars other than SAE. If you would like to learn to use SAE more persuasively, we can work on that, but you are also welcome to use your language experience in ways that you and your peers and community members would find persuasive and trustworthy; these goals are more practical and more inclusive than striving for an arbitrary and false notion of correctness. Grammar police be warned. (See also [CCCC's 2020 Demand for Black Linguistic Justice.](#))

By staying in this course and attending class, you accept this contract and agree to abide by it. I (Ms. Hunsaker) also agree to abide by the contract, and administer it fairly and equitably.

## **Student Resources**

### **Important Dates**

Last day for term schedule changes: **Aug. 29th**

Deadline to file for graduation: **Sept. 23rd**

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W": **Nov. 25th**

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

### **Desire-to-Learn (D2L)**

We will use D2L to access most course materials including the syllabus, the textbook & Achieve resources, schedule updates, assignment sheets, PowerPoints, your feedback and grades, and other materials. You will also submit formal assignments and find announcements on D2L, so please check it daily, especially before our class meets. Google Drive will also be used as a collaborative space and to store class resources. We may use Zoom as a need-to-use basis, such as individual conferences.

### **Technology**

For help with Technology (like D2L, Email, Banner) or to find a Computer Lab, please visit: [https://msutexas.edu/it/labs/#news\\_and\\_contact-hdg-0](https://msutexas.edu/it/labs/#news_and_contact-hdg-0)

### **Tutoring at MSU**

Tutoring and Academic Support Programs (TASP) provides free drop-in tutoring for MSU students. Located on the first floor of Moffett Library, Writing tutors are available Monday through Thursday from 11:00am to 6:00pm and Sunday 2:00pm to 9:00pm. You don't need an appointment to use these services. Writing tutors will not edit your papers for you, but they will provide support and feedback at every stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to drafting, revising to proofreading.

For Distance Education students, TASP has partnered with Thinkingstorm, an online tutoring company that provides you with high-quality, 24/7 tutoring support. Located at the top of your D2L course page, select the tutoring tab to book an appointment with a tutor.

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request

will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

Beyond complying with the ADA, I want to ensure that this course is accessible as possible to all students. If you have problems accessing campus sites or learning materials (physical or digital), don't hesitate to talk with me about how we might improve that. I will often refer to uses of technology that I have not covered during class, and I am happy to provide one-on-one or workshop-based support for students who are unfamiliar with platforms or programs I reference.

## **College Policies**

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

## **Refund and Repayment Policy**

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

## **Grade Appeal Process**

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [Undergraduate Catalog](#)

Notice: Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor, but she will do her best to forewarn you for major changes throughout the semester.

**ENGL 1143 Schedule\***  
**Fall 2024**

1143-109/152- TH 9:30am-10:50am, MY 136

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Do this BEFORE Class</b>	<b>Do this IN Class</b>	<b>What to Turn into D2L*</b>
1	T- 8/27	-	Introduction to Class	Welcome/Getting to Know you Survey
	H- 8/29	Read <i>Let's Talk (LT)</i> Ch. 5	Discuss/Practice Critical Reading/Annotating	Weekly Report (WR) 1
2	T- 9/3	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 7 Read " <a href="#">Should I Hang Out with Someone Whose Political Views I Hate?</a> "- Ch. 31, pg. 587-589	Discuss/Practice Rhetorical Situation Discuss Practice Reading and Rhetoric	-
	H- 9/5	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 2 and 3 Read "I'm a Conservative Who Believes Systemic Racism is Real"--Ch. 31, pg. 539-541	Discuss Practice Reading and Rhetoric	WR 2
3	T- 9/10	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 9 Read " <a href="#">How Colleges Tell Student-Parents They Don't Belong</a> "	Analyzing	-
	H- 9/12	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 4 and 6 <a href="#">Watch Smarter Every Day Video</a>	Academic Ethos Writing as a Process	WR 3
4	T- 9/17	Read <i>LT</i> Chs. 22 and 23	How to write about what you see	-

			Writing Process	
	H- 9/19	-	Practice	WR 4
5	T- 9/24	-	In-Class Workday	<b>Formal Essay 1- Rhetorical Analysis</b>
	H- 9/26	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 14	Introduction to Research/ Synthesis Practice/Topic Exploration	WR 5
6	T- 10/1	-	In-Class Conferences to confirm topics	-
	H- 10/3	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 15	Finding and Evaluating Sources	WR 6
7	T- 10/8	-	Library Instruction Day	-
	H- 10/10	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 16	Summarizing/Annotating Sources	WR 7
8	T- 10/15	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 18	Formatting Sources	-
	H- 10/17	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 20	MLA Formatting Practice/Checking	WR 8
9	T- 10/22	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 17	Informative thesis statements, putting it together	<b>Annotated Bib Due</b>
	H- 10/24	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 19	Integrating Sources in Writing	WR 9
10	T- 10/29	-	In-Class Conferences	-
	H- 10/31	-	In-Class Conferences	WR 10
11	T- 11/5	-	Learn How to Complete Peer Review/Practice	-

	H- 11/7	Bring a Completed Draft of Synthesis Paper	Peer Review Day	WR 11
12	T- 11/12	-	Finalize Peer Review	-
	H- 11/14	-	In-Class Work Day	<b>Synthesis Paper Due</b> WR 12
13	T- 11/19	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 8	Discuss/Practice Elements of Argument	-
	H- 11/21	-	Discuss/Practice Elements of Argument	WR 13
	M- 11/25	Last Day for W	-	-
14	T- 11/26	-	In-Class Work Day	<b>Position Due</b>
	H- 11/28	-	No Class- Thanksgiving	-
15	T- 12/3	Read <i>LT</i> Ch. 28 Prepare presentation	In-Class Presentations	-
	H- 12/5	Prepare presentation	In-Class Presentations	WR 14
16	T- 12/10	<b>Tuesday, December 10th, 10:30am-12:30pm Location: TBD</b>	Final Exam	<b>Final Self-Reflection Letter</b>

Remember that assignments are “due” at 11:59pm on the day indicated on the schedule. However, you have until 8:00am the following morning to submit assignments. Then the dropboxes will close. I do not accept late work.



Some in-class homework assignments are not indicated on this schedule, but will be announced in class. You should turn those in with your Weekly Reports.

\*This schedule is VERY subject to change depending on weather, illness, or class needs. Changes to the schedule will be announced in class.