

ENGL 1143.115: Introduction to Critical Reading and Academic Writing

Fall 2025

TR 11 AM -12:20 PM

Rm: PY 205

Contact:

Mrs. Taylor Ullman, M.S.

Adjunct

Office: Bea Wood 204

Office Hours: TR 9:30-11am or by appointment

Email: taylor.ullman@msutexas.edu

Required Text:

1. Lunsford, Andrea & Michael Brody. *Let's Talk with Readings*. Norton.2023.ebook.
2. *The Little Seagull Handbook, 5th ed.* Norton. 2024.ebook.
ISBN: 978-1-324-10153-6

Texas Core Curriculum:

This course fulfills a core requirement for Communication. As such, the course will assess the following THECB Core Course Objectives:

- Critical Thinking Skills: To assess the student's critical thinking skills, the Synthesis rubric will be applied to the Synthesis Paper.
- Communication Skills: To assess the student's written communication skills, the Synthesis rubric will be applied to the Synthesis Paper.
- Personal Responsibility: To assess ethical use of sources as a measure of personal responsibility, the Synthesis rubric will be applied to the Synthesis Paper.
- 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 peer review workshops.

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 communication 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.

Response Papers

These short essays (2 paragraphs) will be written in response to articles that we read and discuss together. These are worth ***20%** of your grade.

Rhetorical Analysis

You will have the opportunity to plan, draft, and revise this essay. It will analyse the rhetorical elements of a text. It is worth ***15%** of your grade.

Position Paper

You will have the opportunity to plan, draft, and revise this essay. It will make a claim that is supported with evidence and fully developed reasoning. This is worth ***15%** of your grade.

Annotated Bibliography

You will summarize and evaluate each source that you consult for the synthesis paper. This is worth ***10%** of your final grade.

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. This is worth ***20%** of your grade.

Peer Review & Instructor Conferences

You will participate in conferences with your peers and instructor at various stages of the writing process. These are worth ***10%** of your grade.

Remix Project

You will present your synthesis paper to the class using multimodal text. This is worth ***10%** of your final grade.

Grading Policy:

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 0-59%

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 student's 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 & Policy:

All written assignments are to be typed and formatted according to MLA style. All 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 [Microsoft Office for MSU](#) and create an account.

University Computer Labs:

MSU Provides 4 open computer labs throughout the week. These labs feature access to Microsoft Office Suite for writing and internet access for research.

These labs are:

Location	Hours
Clark Student Center	Mon- Fri TBD Sat-Sun 10am-8pm

Location	Hours
Dillard 146	Mon-Thurs 6am-7pm
Moffett Library	Mon-Thurs 8am-10pm Fri 8am-5pm Sat 10am-6pm Sun 2-10 pm
Legacy hall	Open 24hrs Mon- Sun

Late Assignment Policy:

All assignments are due by 11:59 pm on the date listed. Extensions can be requested by email within 36 hours of a due date. I understand that sometimes life happens. If an extension is not requested and granted, it is an automatic-10 points per day late. I will not grade assignments turned in more than a week late.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty- committing or contributing to dishonest acts by those engaged in teaching, learning, research

Plagiarism- the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own

Since writing and analytical skills are part of the learning outcomes from this course, all assignments should be prepared by the students. Developing a foundation in these skills will be pivotal for success in other courses and future endeavors. ***AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism.**

Those who are found to have committed academic dishonesty or plagiarism will receive a zero on the assignment. Offenses may also result in the student being reported to the Chair of the Department of English, Humanities, and Philosophy and/or the Director of Student Conduct.

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 an 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.

Contacting Your Instructor:

Outside of office hours, email is the best way to contact me. I will reply at the earliest convenience. I check emails approximately twice a day except on weekends.

You may also use the discussion boards on D2L to ask questions and share resources among classmates.

Attendance Policy:

It is important that you attend class and arrive on time. If you have more than 4 absences, the missed instruction will make it difficult for you to excel in the course. Students who missed class will not be directly penalized; however, they will miss out on participation opportunities and assignment explanations important to the final grade. If you need to miss several classes due to personal reasons (illness, death in the family, etc.) you should alert the Dean of Students office and provide them with the necessary documentation in order to verify the situation and notify all 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 Learning Center provides tutoring support in several core courses and subject areas. Follow guidelines from [TASP Learning Center](#) to find the in-person and online help you need.

Moffett Library:

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student's studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

College 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 prohibit 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.

[Campus Carry](#)

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License-to-carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

[Active Shooter](#)

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by the MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: [“Run. Hide. Fight.”](#)

Schedule:

*Notice: Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Week	Do this BEFORE Class	Do this IN Class
1 T 08/26		Review: Syllabus & Calendar Introduce: Community and Belonging Theme Where do we find community?
	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 1 Listening Ch 3 Engaging Respectfully with Others	Discuss: Listening & Engaging Respectfully
2 T 09/02	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 2 Thinking Rhetorically Ch 8 Writing Processes	Discuss: Thinking Rhetorically & Writing Processes
	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 6 Reading to Understand, Engage, & Respond Ch 11 Summarizing & Responding	Discuss: Close reading and responding Read: “How to Fix Social Media” Introduce: Response Papers
3 T 09/09	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 7 Recognizing Facts, Misinformation, & Lies “Warped Front Pages” (link in D2L) Submit: Response Paper #1 to D2L Dropbox	Discuss: Credibility & Bias Group Activity
	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 10 Analyzing	Discuss: Analyzing Texts Writing Thesis Statements Introduce: Rhetorical Analysis Assignment (RA)
R 09/11		

Week	Do this BEFORE Class	Do this IN Class
4 T 09/16	Read: “How and why do consumers access news on social media?” (link in D2L) Submit: RP #2 to D2L Dropbox	Discuss: Readings Practice: Rhetorical Analysis
R 09/18	Find/Read: Text for analysis	Plan: Rhetorical Analysis Planning Workshop
5 T 09/23	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 25 Writing Great Sentences Complete: Rhetorical Analysis Rough Draft	Practice: Sentence patterns Clear and Concise sentences PEER REVIEW WORKSHOP: Bring 2 printed copies of your draft to class
R 09/25	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 26 Using Languages & Dialects Rhetorically From Ch 33 “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” ““Qué lo qué, papi’: Giants bridge cultural gaps with Spanish classes” (link in D2L) Submit: RP #3 to D2L Dropbox	Discuss: Readings
6 T 09/30	Submit: Rhetorical Analysis to D2L Dropbox	Demonstration: Library Instruction Session Finding and Evaluating Sources
R 10/02	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 8 Arguing From Ch 32 “Contesting Standardized English”	Discuss: Writing Arguments

Week	Do this BEFORE Class	Do this IN Class
7 T 10/7	Read: <i>LT</i> From Ch 36 “What Can Sports Teach Us?”	Discuss: Supporting your argument and reading Introduce: Position Paper
R 10/09	Read: <i>LT</i> From Ch 36 “Step Aside, LaBron...” “Goin’ Bananas...” (link in D2L) “...the Double Standards of Race in Sports” (link in D2L) Submit: RP #4 to D2L Dropbox	Discuss: Readings Plan: PP Planning Workshop
8 T 10/14	Complete: PP Rough Draft	PEER REVIEW WORKSHOP: Bring 2 printed copies of your draft to class
R 10/16	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 16 Starting with Questions, Finding Sources Ch 17 Evaluating Sources, Checking Facts	Discuss: Research and Evaluating Sources Introduce: Annotated Bibliography (Ann Bib) Synthesis Paper (SP)
9 T 10/21	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 18 Building an Annotated Bibliography Ch 19 Synthesizing Ideas Submit: Position Paper to D2L Dropbox	Discuss: Annotated Bibliography Synthesizing Sources Plan: Research Question Working Thesis Possible Sources

Week	Do this BEFORE Class	Do this IN Class
R 10/23	Read: “Influencer Parents and the Kids Who Had Their Childhoods Made into Content” (link in D2L) Submit: RP #5 to D2L Dropbox	Discuss: Reading Practice: Ann Bib
10 T 10/28	Find: TWO popular sources and ONE scholarly source and bring to class	Plan: Ann Bib Workshop
R 10/30	Write: Ann Bib SP Outline/First Draft Submit: Ann Bib to Dropbox in D2L	NO CLASS SIGN UP FOR INSTRUCTOR CONFERENCE
11 T 11/04	Read: Ch 20 Quoting, Paraphrasing, Summarizing Ch 21 Giving Credit, Using Sources Ethically Ch 22 MLA Style	Discuss: Integrating Sources Avoiding Plagiarism MLA
R 11/06	Write: Synthesis Paper Draft	Plan: Synthesis Paper Workshop
12 T 11/11	Write: Synthesis Paper Revisions	SP PEER REVIEW WORKSHOP: Bring 2 printed copies of your draft to class AND submit rough draft to D2L Dropbox
R 11/13	Write: Synthesis Paper Revisions	Complete: Mini Conferences/Revision Workshop
13 T 11/18	Read: Ch 27 Designing What You Write Ch 28 Using Visuals Write: Revisions	Discuss: Writing Design Introduce: Remix Project Presentations

Week	Do this BEFORE Class	Do this IN Class
R 11/20	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 15 Writing in Multiple Modes Submit: SP Final Draft Dropbox in D2L	Discuss: Multi-modal Writing
14 T 11/25	Write: Remix Project	Complete: Remix Workshop
R 11/27	Thanksgiving Break!	
15 T 12/02	Complete: Presentation	PRESENTATIONS 1-10
R 12/04	Complete: Presentation	PRESENTATIONS 11-20
16	No Final Exam!	