

ENGL 1143. X21: Introduction to Critical Reading and Academic Writing

Spring 2026

Online

Contact:

Mrs. Taylor Ullman, M.S.

Lecturer

Office: Virtual

Office Hours: by appointment only

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Required Text:

1. Lunsford, Andrea & Michael Brody. *Let's Talk with Readings*. Norton.2023.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.

| Assignment | % of Final Grade |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Response Papers | 20% |
| Rhetorical Analysis | 15% |
| Position Paper | 15% |
| Annotated Bibliography | 10% |
| Synthesis Paper | 20% |
| Discussion Boards | 10% |
| Remix Project | 10% |

Response Papers

These short essays (2 paragraphs) will be written in response to articles that we read and discuss together.

Rhetorical Analysis

You will have the opportunity to plan, draft, and revise this essay. It will analyse the rhetorical elements of a text.

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.

Annotated Bibliography

You will summarize and evaluate each source that you consult for the synthesis paper.

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.

Discussion Boards

Participation in regular discussion boards about varying topics including: readings, topic brainstorm, & peer reviews. For each discussion board, your initial post should be posted by Wednesday @11:59 pm and your response should be posted by Friday @11:59 pm.

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 |
| 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:

The best way to contact me is through email. I check my email regularly, so you should get a response within 24 hours (during the week). If you don't hear back after 48 hours, email again (your email may have been lost in the busy inbox). I don't respond to emails over the weekend unless it is an emergency. If it is later than 6pm, assume I will not see it until the next day.

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 | Assignments | Due Dates |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| 1 1/20-1/23 | Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Syllabus & Calendar• Ch 1 Listening• Ch 3 Engaging Respectfully with Others Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction Discussion Board (DB) | DB: Initial post due Wed 1/21 @ 11:59pm Response due Fri 1/23 @ 11:59pm |
| 2 1/26-1/30 | Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ch 2 Thinking Rhetorically• Ch 8 Writing Processes• Ch 6 Reading to Understand, Engage, & Respond• Ch 11 Summarizing & Responding Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter Readings DB Introduce: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Response Papers | DB: Initial post due Wed 1/28 @ 11:59pm Response due Fri 1/30 @ 11:59pm |
| 3 2/2-2/6 | Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ch 7 Recognizing Facts, Misinformation, & Lies• “How to Fix Social Media”• “Warped Front Pages” (D2L)• Ch 10 Analyzing Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Response Paper #1 Introduce: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rhetorical Analysis (RA) | RP #1 Due Fri 2/6 @ 11:59pm |
| 4 2/9-2/13 | Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “How and why do consumers access news on social media?” (D2L) Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Response Paper #2• Find & read text for RA• RA Rough Draft | RP #2 Due Fri 2/13 @ 11:59pm |

| Week | Assignments | Due Dates |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| 5 2/16-2/20 | Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch 25 Writing Great Sentences Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RA Peer Review DB | DB: Initial post due Wed 2/18 @ 11:59pm Response due Fri 2/20 @ 11:59pm |
| 6 2/23-2/27 | Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch 26 Using Languages & Dialects Rhetorically From Ch 32 “Contesting Standardized English” From Ch 33 “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” “‘Qué lo qué, papi’: Giants bridge cultural gaps with Spanish classes” (D2L) Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rhetorical Analysis due Response Paper #3 | RA due Wed 2/25 @ 11:59pm RP #3 due Fri 2/27 @ 11:59pm |
| 7 3/2-3/6 | Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch 8 Arguing From Ch 36 “What Can Sports Teach Us?” From Ch 36 “Step Aside, LaBron...” “Goin’ Bananas...” (D2L) “...the Double Standards of Race in Sports” (D2L) Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response Paper #4 Introduce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position Paper (PP) | RP #4 due Fri 3/6 @ 11:59pm |
| | Spring Break: March 9th-13th | |
| 8 3/16-3/20 | Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch 16 Starting with Questions, Finding Sources Ch 17 Evaluating Sources, Checking Facts Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position Paper Peer Review DB | DB: Initial post due Wed 3/18 @ 11:59pm Response due Fri 3/20 @ 11:59pm |

| Week | Assignments | Due Dates |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| 9 3/23-3/27 | Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch 18 Building an Annotated Bibliography • Ch 19 Synthesizing Ideas • “Influencer Parents and the Kids Who Had Their Childhoods Made into Content” (D2L) Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position Paper due • RP #5 Introduce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annotated Bibliography (Ann Bib) • Synthesis Paper (SP) | PP due Wed 3/25 @ 11:59pm RP #5 Due Fri 3/27 @ 11:59pm |
| 10 3/30-4/3 | Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Question • Working Thesis • Possible Sources Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming BD • Ann Bib <p style="text-align: center;">Holiday Break: April 2nd-4th</p> | DB: Initial post due Wed 4/1 @ 11:59pm Response due Mon 4/6 @ 11:59pm |
| 11 4/6-4/10 | Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch 20 Quoting, Paraphrasing, Summarizing • Ch 21 Giving Credit, Using Sources Ethically • Ch 22 MLA Style Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesis Paper Draft • Ann Bib due | Ann Bib Due Fri 4/10 @ 11:59pm |
| 12 4/13-4/17 | Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesis Paper Draft • SP Peer Review DB | DB: Initial post due Wed 4/15 @ 11:59pm Response due Fri 4/17 @ 11:59pm |

| Week | Assignments | Due Dates |
|------------------------|--|---|
| 13 4/20-4/24 | Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch 27 Designing What You Write Ch 28 Using Visuals Ch 15 Writing in Multiple Modes Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SP Final Draft Introduce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remix Project | SP due Fri 4/24 @ 11:59pm |
| 14 4/27-5/1 | Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remix Project | |
| 15 5/4-5/8 | Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remix Project DB Remix Project Due | DB: Initial post due Wed 5/6 @ 11:59pm Response due Fri 5/8 @ 11:59pm Remix Project due Fri 5/8 @ 11:59pm |
| 16 | No Final Exam! | |