

Instructor: Dr. Melissa Nivens

Class Time: TR 9:30-10:50am

Location: DB 121

Office: BW220

Email: melissa.nivens@msutexas.edu

Office hours: MW 10:00-11:00am

TR 11:00-12:30pm

Afternoons by appointment

ENGL 1143.111: Introduction to Critical Reading and Academic Writing

Syllabus

Texts:

- Lunsford, Andrea and Michael Brody. *Let's Talk with Readings*. Norton. 2023. eBook.
- *The Little Seagull Handbook, 5th ed.* Norton. 2024. eBook.

Required Materials:

- Note-taking materials

Texas Core Curriculum

- 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.

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.

- 20% Response Papers (RP)
 - These short essays (2 paragraphs) will be written in response to articles that we read and discuss together.
- 15% Rhetorical Analysis (RA)
 - You will have the opportunity to plan, draft, and revise this essay. It will analyze the rhetorical elements of a text.
- 15% Position Paper (PP)
 - 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 reasons.
- 10% Annotated Bibliography
 - 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.
- 10% Remix Project
 - You will present your Synthesis Paper to the class using a multimodal text.

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 written assignments are to be typed and formatted – and outside sources documented - 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 <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/products/office?ms.officeurl=getoffice365?ms.officeurl=getoffice365> and create an account.

University Computer Labs: MSU 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	Mon – Fri TBD Sat – Sun 10am – 8:00pm
Dillard 146	Mon-Thurs 6:00 am – 7:00 pm

Moffett Library	Mon-Thurs 8:00 am – 10:00 pm; Fri. 8-5; Sat: 10am -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 future courses and 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

Attendance Policy: It is important that you attend class and arrive on time. If you have a total of more than two weeks’ worth (4 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.

Alcohol & 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.

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

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 [Campus Carry page](#).

Active Shooter Procedure: 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.](#)"

1143 Daily Schedule of Readings and Assignments: See Table 1.

Table 1. Course Calendar

Week	Dates	Do This BEFORE Class	Do This IN Class
BALANCING BELONGING WITH INDIVIDUALITY: How Can I Fit In & Stand Out?	T 8/27		Review: Syllabus and Calendar Introduce: Community and Belonging Theme Where do we find community?
	R 8/29	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 1 Listening Ch 3 Engaging Respectfully with Others	Discuss: Listening & Engaging Respectfully Line Game Activity
Week 2	T 9/3	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 2 Thinking Rhetorically Ch 7 Writing Processes	Discuss: Thinking Rhetorically & Writing Processes
	R 9/5	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 5 Reading to Understand, Engage, & Respond Ch 12 Summarizing & Responding	Discuss: Close reading and responding Read: "How to Fix Social Media" Introduce: Response Papers
FIGURING OUT WHAT I BELIEVE: How Do I Know Who to Trust?	T 9/10	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 6 Recognizing Facts, Misinformation, & Lies From Ch 33 Navigating the Dangers of the Web" "Warped Front Pages" (link in D2L) Submit: Response Paper #1 to D2L Dropbox	Discuss: Credibility & Bias Group Activity

	R 9/12	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 9 Analyzing	Discuss: Analyzing Texts Writing Thesis Statements Introduce: Rhetorical Analysis Assignment (RA)
Week 4	T 9/17	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 9/19	Find/Read: Text for analysis	Plan: Rhetorical Analysis Planning Workshop
Week 5 UNDERSTANDING WHERE I COME FROM AND WHERE I’M GOING: How Does Language Impact My Identity?	T 9/24	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 23 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 9/26	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 24 Mixing Languages & Dialects From Ch 32 “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

Week 6	T 10/1	Submit: Rhetorical Analysis to D2L Dropbox	Demonstration: Library Instruction Session Finding and Evaluating Sources
	R 10/3	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 8 Arguing From Ch 32 "Contesting Standardized English"	Discuss: Writing Arguments
Week 7 MAKING THE TEAM: How Do Sports Build Community?	T 10/8	Read: <i>LT</i> From Ch 35 "What Can Sports Teach Us?"	Discuss: Supporting your argument and reading Introduce: Position Paper
	R 10/10	Read: <i>LT</i> From Ch 35 "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
Week 8 ASKING QUESTIONS: How Do I Learn More about Topics that Matter?	T 10/15	Complete: PP Rough Draft	PEER REVIEW WORKSHOP (Bring 2 printed copies of your draft to class)
	R 10/17	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 14 Starting with Questions, Finding Sources Ch 15 Evaluating Sources	Discuss: Research and Evaluating Sources Introduce: Annotated Bibliography (Ann Bib) Synthesis Paper (SP)

Week 9	T 10/22	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 16 Building an Annotated Bibliography Ch 17 Synthesizing Sources Submit: PP to D2L Dropbox	Discuss: Annotated Bibliography Synthesizing Sources Plan: Research Question Working Thesis Possible Sources
	R 10/24	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
Week 10	T 10/29	Find: TWO popular sources and ONE scholarly source and bring to class	Plan: Ann Bib Workshop
	R 10/31	Write: Ann Bib SP Outline/First Draft Submit: Ann Bib to Dropbox in D2L	NO CLASS SIGN UP FOR INSTRUCTOR CONFERENCE
Week 11	T 11/5	Read: Ch 18 Quoting, Paraphrasing, Summarizing Ch 19 Giving Credit Ch 20 MLA	Discuss: Integrating Sources Avoiding Plagiarism MLA
	R 11/7	Write: Synthesis Paper Draft	Plan: Synthesis Paper Workshop

Week 12	T 11/12	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 11/14	Write: Synthesis Paper Revisions	Complete: Mini Conferences/Revision Workshop
Week 13	T 11/19	Read: Ch 25 Designing What You Write Ch 26 Using Visuals Write: Revisions	Discuss: Writing Design Introduce: Remix Project Presentations
	R 11/21	Read: <i>LT</i> Ch 27-30 Media Submit: SP Final Draft Dropbox in D2L	Discuss: Multi-modal Writing
Week 14	T 11/26	Write: Remix Project	Complete: Remix Workshop
	R 11/28	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY NO CLASS	
Week 15	T 12/3	Complete: Presentation	PRESENTATIONS 1-10
	R 12/5	Complete: Presentation	PRESENTATIONS 11-20
Week 16	NO FINAL EXAM		