

**Instructor:** Dr. Melissa Nivens

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

TR 11:00-12:30pm

Afternoons by appointment

# ENGL 1143.X10 and X66: 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, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.* Norton. 2024. eBook.

### 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.

- 15% Response Papers
  - These short essays (2 paragraphs) will be written in response to course readings.
- 5% Discussion Board Posts
  - You will respond to some readings with posts on our class Discussion Board.
- 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, Instructor Conferences, and Participation
  - 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.

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

**Attendance Policy:** Logging in to D2L regularly and submitting weekly assignments show student engagement and attendance.

**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**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Readings</b> Direct links to readings are available in D2L	<b>Submissions*</b> All submissions are due on <b>Thursdays at 11:59pm</b>
<p><b>Week 1</b> 8/26 – 9/1</p> <p><b>BALANCING BELONGING WITH INDIVIDUALITY: How Can I Fit In &amp; Stand Out?</b></p>	<p>Review Syllabus</p> <p><i>LT</i> Ch 1 Listening Ch 3 Engaging Respectfully with Others</p>	<p>Discussion Board Post #1: Intro</p>
<p><b>Week 2</b> 9/2 – 9/8</p>	<p><i>LT</i> Ch 2 Thinking Rhetorically Ch 7 Writing Processes Ch 5 Reading to Understand, Engage, &amp; Respond Ch 12 Summarizing &amp; Responding “How to Fix Social Media” (link in D2L)</p>	<p>Discussion Board Post #2: Social Media</p>
<p><b>Week 3</b> 9/9 – 9/15</p> <p><b>FIGURING OUT WHAT I BELIEVE: How Do I Know Who to Trust?</b></p>	<p><i>LT</i> Ch 6 Recognizing Facts, Misinformation, &amp; Lies From Ch 33 Navigating the Dangers of the Web” “Warped Front Pages” (link in D2L)</p>	<p>Response Paper #1</p>
<p><b>Week 4</b> 9/16 – 9/22</p>	<p><i>LT</i> Ch 9 Analyzing From Ch 33 “Inside the Lines” “How and why do consumers access news on social media?” (link in D2L)</p>	<p>Rhetorical Analysis Rough Draft &amp; Peer Review</p> <p>Response Paper #2</p>
<p><b>Week 5</b> 9/23 – 9/29</p> <p><b>UNDERSTANDING WHERE I COME FROM AND WHERE I’M GOING: How Does Language Impact My Identity?</b></p>	<p><i>LT</i> Ch 23 Writing Great Sentences Ch 24 Mixing Languages &amp; Dialects From Ch 32 “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” “‘Qué lo qué, papi’: Giants bridge cultural gaps with Spanish classes” (link in D2L)</p>	<p>Response Paper #3</p> <p>Rhetorical Analysis Final Draft</p>

<p><b>Week 6</b> 9/30 – 10/6</p>	<p><i>LT</i> Ch 8 Arguing From Ch 32 “Contesting Standardized English”</p>	<p>Position Paper Rough Draft &amp; Peer Review</p> <p>Discussion Board #3: Standard English</p>
<p><b>Week 7</b> 10/7 – 10/13</p> <p><b>MAKING THE TEAM: How Do Sports Build Community?</b></p>	<p><i>LT</i> From Ch 35 “What Can Sports Teach Us?” From Ch 35 “Step Aside, LaBron...” “Goin’ Bananas...” (link in D2L) “...the Double Standards of Race in Sports” (link in D2L)</p>	<p>Response Paper #4</p> <p>Position Paper Final Draft</p>
<p><b>Week 8</b> 10/14 – 10/20</p> <p><b>ASKING QUESTIONS: How Do I Learn More about Topics That Matter?</b></p>	<p><i>LT</i> Ch 14 Starting with Questions, Finding Sources Ch 15 Evaluating Sources</p>	<p>Discussion Board #4: Research Questions and Working Thesis</p>
<p><b>Week 9</b> 10/21 – 10/27</p>	<p><i>LT</i> Ch 16 Building an Annotated Bibliography</p> <p>“Influencer Parents...” (link in D2L)</p>	<p>Response Paper #5</p>
<p><b>Week 10</b> 10/28 – 11/3</p>	<p>Sources for your paper</p>	<p>Zoom Conference #1 – Sign up for a time on the Google Doc</p> <p>Annotated Bib</p>
<p><b>Week 11</b> 11/4 – 11/10</p>	<p>Ch 17 Synthesizing Sources Ch 18 Quoting, Paraphrasing, Summarizing Ch 19 Giving Credit Ch 20 MLA</p>	<p>Synthesis Paper Rough Draft</p>
<p><b>Week 12</b> 11/11 – 11/17</p>		<p>Zoom Conference #2– Sign up for a time on the Google Doc</p>
<p><b>Week 13</b> 11/18 – 11/24</p>	<p><i>LT</i> Ch 27-30 Media</p>	<p>Synthesis Paper Final Draft</p>
<p><b>Week 14</b> 11/25 – 12/1</p>	<p><b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b></p>	
<p><b>Week 15</b> 12/2 – 12/8</p>		<p>Presentations</p>

