



Course Syllabus:
Introduction to English Studies
College of Humanities & Social Science
ENGL 2013 Section 101
Fall 2026

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Melissa Nivens
Office: Hardin 112A
Office hours: By appointment
Office phone: (940) 397-6305
E-mail: melissa.nivens@msutexas.edu

Course Description

Introduction to the discipline of English studies. Required of all English majors, but open to all students who might be interested in being an English major or minor. This course will help students think about what it means to be an English major.

Course Goals

- Understand the disciplines in the English major: literature, creative writing, language, rhetoric and composition, professional and technical writing, and secondary English language arts.
- Discover how courses and disciplines are connected to each other and reflect on their purposefulness.
- Construct a proposal for a long-term project in English studies that will advance their personal goals for a future career.
- Understand the rhetorical nature of writing by studying the expectations, values, and norms associated with writing in specific contexts.
- Understand writing processes as iterative and complex.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Krouse, Tonya and Tamara F. O'Callaghan. *Introducing English Studies*. Bloomsbury. 2020. Print.

Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

Tutoring and Academic Support Programs (TASP) provides free drop-in tutoring and homework help 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. Remember that you don't need an appointment to utilize these services. Check the [TASP webpage](#) for times.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work, not the individual to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the [Office of Student Conduct](#).

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the goals and objectives for English courses, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in these areas will prepare students for a competitive workplace. Therefore, AI-generated submissions are prohibited and will be treated as plagiarism.

All formal papers will run through Turnitin for an Originality Report and an AI Report. If the report or instructor suspects plagiarism, a conference with the student will be recommended before taking punitive action. Offenders may be reported to the Chair of the Department of English, Humanities, and Philosophy and/or the Director of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

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.

Grading

For final grades, this class will not use the plus/minus grading system. The following numerical equivalents for final grades are used: A = 100-90%; B = 89-80%; C = 79-70%; D = 69-60%; F = 59-0. For individual assignment grades, an A+ = 98, A = 95, A- = 92; B+ = 88, B = 85, and so on.

Table 1: Percentages allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Description	Percentage
Reflection Journal	Write a series of reflective entries about the guest speakers.	10%
Position Essay	Write an essay that argues a position related to a topic from our reading(s).	15%
Analysis Essay	Write an essay that examines a passage using literary or rhetorical analysis strategies.	15%
Career Exploration Proposal & Annotated Bibliography	Write a short research proposal. Summarize and evaluate each source.	15%
Career Exploration Paper	Write a researched argument that explores how a degree in English could be valuable for a particular occupation or career field.	25%
Presentation	Remix the CEP for a more public audience. Include slides or other visual component.	10%
Final Reflection	Write an essay on what you have learned and what you would still like to explore related to English Studies.	10%
Total Points	*****	100%

Midterm Grades

In order to help students keep track of their progress toward course objectives, I will provide a Midterm Progress Report through Navigate. I will submit a grade for all students, not just those in danger of failing the course. Midterm grades will not be reported on your transcript; nor will they be calculated in the cumulative GPA. They simply give students an idea of where they stand at the midpoint of the semester. Students earning below a C at the midway point should make an appointment with me and consider visiting the Learning Center for tutoring services.

Late Work

Late assignments (defined as work not submitted by the date and time posted in D2L) will be accepted, but at least 10 points will be deducted from the final grade. Additionally, no late work will be accepted more than 48 hours after the original deadline without prior arrangements with the instructor. If students are unable to come to class on the day an assignment is due, they should still upload their work into the D2L Dropbox folder on time to avoid late paper deductions.

Assignment Submission Format

All formal assignments are to be typed, formatted, and outside sources documented according to MLA style. All formal papers will be uploaded into the appropriate D2L Dropbox folder.

By enrolling in this class, students expressly grant MSU a “limited right” in all intellectual property created by students 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 papers through Turnitin.com. Turnitin provides both an Originality Report and an AI Report.

Final Exam

The Final Reflection counts as the course final exam. It is due in D2L at the time of the scheduled exam Tuesday, 12/8, 3:00pm.

Important Dates

- Last day for term schedule changes: **August 26, 2026**
- Deadline to file for graduation: **September 21, 2026**
- Last Day to drop with a grade of “W:” **November 21, 2026 4:00pm.**
- Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Attendance

Students should attend class and arrive on time. I will take daily attendance via an “attendance question” at the start of class. If a student accumulates more than three weeks’ worth (TR 6 classes) of absences (excused or not) the missed instruction will make it difficult 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. Students who need to miss several classes because of personal reasons or illness should alert the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and provide them with the necessary documentation so that they can verify the situation and notify instructors.

The instructor’s records will stand as evidence of absences. Please understand that a student with excessive absences may be dropped from a course by the instructor after a verbal or written warning.

Recording Classes

****Recording classes is generally prohibited without the professor's explicit permission.*** Such recordings, when permitted, are for personal use only and may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published without the professor's prior consent. When it is feasible and appropriate, students may record classes to accommodate disabilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act, with prior approval of Disability Support Services. Such recordings may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

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).

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 Student Wellness Center, (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](#).

Emergency Aid Resources for Basic Needs

Unexpected life circumstances can affect anyone. If you are experiencing challenges meeting basic needs—such as housing, utilities, food, transportation, healthcare, technology, textbooks or other life necessities, resources may be available to help. Visit the [Student Emergency Support and Resources webpage](#) to learn more, and explore emergency support opportunities through MSU and how to access them. For additional information, please contact the Office of Student Affairs: Clark Student Center #108, (940) 397-7500, student.affairs@mstuexas.edu.

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.

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 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."](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

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

Course Schedule:

Week	Do this before class...	Do this during class...
Week 1 T 8/25	*****	Introduction to Course Syllabus Review
R 8/27	Read: IES: Choosing English: An Introduction pg. 1-7 D2L: "Where Do English Departments Come From?"	Discuss: Book Intro Why are you majoring/minoring in English? History of English as an academic discipline
Week 2 T 9/1 <i>History of English Language & Linguistics</i>	Read: IES Ch 1 History of English Language (HEL)	Guest Speaker: Dr. Peter Fields Introduce: Reflection Journal
R 9/3	Read: IES Ch 2 Linguistics	Discuss: Ch 1&2 and creating new words
Week 3 T 9/8	Read: D2L Fish, "What Should Colleges Teach?" Parts 1-3 D2L Young, "Should Writers Use They Own English?"	Discuss: Fish and Young Introduce: Position Essay
R 9/10	Write: Position Essay Rough Draft Bring 2 copies to class	Complete: Peer Review Workshop
Week 4 T 9/15 <i>Rhetoric & Composition</i>	Read: IES Ch 5 Rhetoric & Composition Write & Revise: Position Essay Final Draft	Discuss: Ch 5 Rhetorical Situation POSITION ESSAY DUE
R 9/17	Review: Ch 5	Guest Speaker: Dr. Hillary Coenen

Week	Do this before class...	Do this during class...
Week 5 T 9/22	TBD	Practice: Rhetorical Analysis
R 9/24 <i>Literature & Critical Theory</i>	Read: IES Ch 3 Literature	Discuss: Literary Genres Introduce: Analysis Essay
Week 6 T 9/29	Read: Ch 8 Critical Theory	Guest Speaker: Dr. Todd Giles
R 10/1	Read: "The Yellow Wallpaper"	Guest Speaker: Dr. Todd Giles
Week 7 T 10/6	Review: Ch 3 and 8	Guest Speaker: Dr. Kirsten Lodge
R 10/8	Write: Analysis Essay Rough Draft Bring 2 copies to class	Complete: Peer Review Workshop Reflection Journal Check #1
Week 8 T 10/13	Write & Revise: Analysis Essay Revisions	Guest Speaker: Greg Giddings
R 10/15	Write & Revise: Analysis Essay Final Draft	NO CLASS – OUT OF TOWN ANALYSIS ESSAY DUE
Week 9 T 10/20 <i>Teaching English</i>	Read: IES Ch 9 English Education	Guest Speaker: Dr. Heidi Hakimi-Hood
R 10/22	*****	Introduce: Career Exploration Project (CEP) Annotated Bibliography Instructions
Week 10 T 10/27 <i>Professional & Technical Writing; Digital Tools</i>	Read: IES Ch 7 Professional & Technical Writing	Guest Speaker: Dr. Meng Yu
R 10/29	Read: IES Ch 10 Digital Age	Guest Speaker: Dr. Erin Jensen

Week	Do this before class...	Do this during class...
Week 11 T 11/3	Read: Sources for CEP Write: Annotated Bibliography	Complete: CEA Planning/Ann Bib Workshop
R 11/5	Read: IES Ch 6 Creative Writing Write: Annotated Bibliography	Guest Speaker: Dr. John Schulze PROPOSAL & ANN BIB DUE
Week 12 T 11/10	Write: CEP Rough Draft	Attend: Individual Conferences w/ Instructor Reflection Journal Check #2
R 11/12	Write: CEP Rough Draft	Attend: Individual Conferences w/ Instructor
Week 13 T 11/17	Write: CEP Rough Draft	Complete: Peer Review Workshop
R 11/19	*****	NO CLASS – ATTEND UGRCA FORUM
Week 14 T 11/24	Write: CEP Final Draft	Complete: Presentation Planning Workshop CEP DUE
R 11/26	*****	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
Week 15 T 12/1	Work on Presentation	PRESENTATIONS
R 12/3	Work on Presentation	PRESENTATIONS
Week 16 T 12/8	Write: Reflection Essay	REFLECTION ESSAY DUE