



ENGL 1143 | Fall 2026 | Dr. Heidi Hakimi-Hood

Introduction to Critical Reading & Academic Writing
ENGL 1143-104 | MWF 12-12:50 AM | PY 201

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Heidi Hakimi-Hood | Phone: (940) 397-4123 | Email: heidi.hakimihood@msutexas.edu

Office: BW 228 | Office hours in person, by phone, or on Zoom at the following times:

MWF: 10:00-11:00 AM | Tues. and Thurs.: 2:00-3:00 PM | OR BY APPOINTMENT

Course Description

This course provides training in critical reading and academic writing. It focuses on the writing process and rhetorical concepts while requiring students to read and write a variety of texts. Students will be required to prepare a synthesis paper of moderate length demonstrating critical reading and academic writing skills, including selection, evaluation, analysis, integration, and documentation of sources.

Course Theme: Belonging, The Mustangs' Way

Midwestern State University is a unique, opportunity-rich community, a place in which each of us belongs. Our MSU Texas Website states that we Mustangs "are scientists and artists. Athletes and bookworms. Texas natives and students from places all over the map."

This composition course uses selections from the *Bedford Bookshelf* to explore how students pursue, define, and achieve belonging in their respective fields. By analyzing the intersections of the sciences, art, business, engineering, mathematics, athletics, literature, music, writing and geography, we will investigate what it means to contribute and belong to our MSU space, place, and community while developing the core rhetorical tools of academic writing and critical reading.

Required Materials

Electronic (Ebook) materials are provided via Follett Access in D2L. You won't buy them separately!

- Bedford Bookshelf Resources. See Live Class Schedule for specific readings.
- MSU Email Address
- A notebook and Pen/Pencil for in-class assignments and notes.

Course Objectives

Upon completing this course, students will be able to

- Apply key rhetorical concepts through analyzing and composing a variety of texts
- Engage in a writing process that includes invention, drafting, collaboration, and revision
- Read & compose for inquiry, learning, thinking, & communicating in varied 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 & in contextually appropriate ways & follow a designated style guide
- Demonstrate proficient use of linguistic structures, including grammar and mechanics, through practice in composing and revising

THECB Core Learning Objectives - Communication

This course fulfills a Communication Core requirement and will assess the following:

- To assess the following skills, the Synthesis rubric will be applied to the Synthesis Essay.
 - o *Critical Thinking Skills*, to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
 - o *Communication Skills*, to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
 - o *Personal Responsibility Skills*, to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.
- The Peer Review Teamwork rubric will be applied to each student's preparation for and participation in a peer review workshop to assess Teamwork Skills.
 - o *Teamwork Skills*, to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.

Assignment Path

To begin, we will compose a personal story (narrative) that ties ourselves to our learning background and a place. How does where we learn from impact us as MSU Mustangs? This essay will be anchored by three photographs of your choosing.

Secondly, music and inspiration accompany a big part of engaging with our work-study lives. Therefore, our next project will be to compose a Mustangs Study Playlist and complete a Rhetorical Analysis of the MSU Texas website for your major's particular college. If you haven't chosen a major, don't panic. We will work together to find a space on the MSU website that speaks to your academic experience. We will rhetorically analyze the website and then write a response paper for one of the songs/inspirations from the playlist.

Thirdly, we will individually conduct an interview with an MSU faculty member to investigate a problem faced by your major or career field. This assignment will inform your synthesis paper.

Next, we will compose an annotated bibliography that will involve selecting six informational sources (at least one scholarly). This assignment will inform our synthesis paper.

The synthesis paper will illustrate the significance of a problem faced by your academic major or career field and synthesize research that investigates the problem. Working from the sources you find for your Synthesis Matrix, you will address a stakeholder who can do something to address the problem. You should use at least six (6) credible sources, including one scholarly source, to show the significance of the problem and provide insight regarding possible solutions. We will conduct a peer review for this paper. The findings from your synthesis paper will also be presented in an Infographic final project, which asks you to present your research findings about the problem to a public audience to gain support for addressing the problem.

This project will require research on an approved topic, incorporation of research that is substantive for your field, and proper MLA citations of source material.

Finally, class discussions, the exchange of ideas and interpretations of the texts we read, will impact a significant portion of your class participation grade. It is vital you read the assigned course readings and be prepared to share your understandings during our in-class discussions, participation responses, and quizzes.

Grading System & Policies

How your final grade will be determined:

Letter-grade system:

- A = 90-100
- B = 80-89
- C = 70-79
- D = 60-69
- F = 0-59

Course Work:

- Personal Learning Story 15%
- Playlist/Rhetorical Analysis 15%
- Faculty Interview 15%
- Annotated Bibliography 10%
- Synthesis Paper 20%
- Infographic Presentation 10%
- Quizzes/Day-Writings/Peer Reviews 15%
- Total –100%

Acceptable Submission Format and Process

Formal assignments are to be typed and formatted with all sources documented according to MLA style guidelines. Assignments will be uploaded to the D2L Assignment folder. By enrolling in this class, students expressly grant MSU a “limited right” in all intellectual property created for the purpose of this course. The “limited right” includes but is not limited to the right to reproduce the student’s work in order to verify originality and authenticity, and for educational purposes.

Note: You may not submit a paper for a grade in this class that has been (or will be) submitted for a grade in another course, unless you obtain both instructors’ explicit written permission in advance.

Revision

You may revise and resubmit any writing assignments (excluding quizzes and day-writings) within 2 weeks of receiving feedback and prior to finals week for additional feedback and a new assessment. Grade revisions are negotiated on a case-by-case basis, and all should be preceded by an appointment with the instructor and a documented revision plan with the help of the instructor.

Mid-Term Progress Report

At mid-term, I’ll share a progress report with advisors, support staff, and you. These do not appear on transcripts or affect GPAs. Students earning Cs or below should visit with me and TASP.

Late Assignment Policy

Late assignments, defined as work not submitted to the designated site within 2 hours after the deadline, may still be accepted for credit if you consult with me within two business days of the deadline, at the discretion of the instructor. If you anticipate you may have difficulty meeting a deadline, request an extension at least 24 hours in advance of the due date. If you have difficulty submitting or are unsure if your submission was successful, email me with your work attached and explain the issue. Daily quizzes and day-writings cannot be “made up.” Check the course schedule and plan accordingly.

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Plagiarism is the use of another’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. 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 the Dean of Students. Students have the right to appeal an alleged incident of Academic Dishonesty. Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in [the Student Handbook](#), under Academic Dishonesty Procedure or through [the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Class Preparation and Participation

Class participation, day-writings, quizzes, and class activities are directly tied to keeping up with the readings, which means we will have daily in- and out-of-class writings, including brief in-class writing prompts, reading quizzes, in-class small group work, and various short homework assignments. These day writings will be graded on a plus/x/check/minus scale: (+) for doing a thorough job (100%); (x) for a good job (85%); (✓) for completing the work in an acceptable fashion (70%); (–) for not completing the work or for obvious lack of course-level effort (0%). On occasion, some assignments might, depending on length, count for more than one daily grade. As your grade is determined by your presence and attention to the daily readings, you cannot make up in-class day-writings or quizzes. To succeed at your daily writing, you must show that you’ve closely read, have at least a cursory understanding of the material, and address, to the best of your ability, the writing prompts. I do not expect you to remember exact quotations, but specific examples from your reading always help get the point across. It is also good to try to tie in any relevant terminology or critical concepts from class discussions. As you read, take notes and underline/highlight what you believe are key passages in the text (a memorable scene, crucial lines for understanding the work, a summary of the argument, etc.), or things you have trouble understanding. *Please come to each class with comments and questions.

Tardiness Policy

Your behavior in the college classroom should be no different than what will be expected of you as a working professional. Regularly arriving late to class is disruptive to your instructor and your classmates; as such, it will not be tolerated. Students who arrive after the day-writing and/or quiz assignments have begun will automatically receive a minus.

Electronics Policy

Cell phones, laptops, earphones, earbuds, headphones, smart glasses, smart watches, and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. If a student is caught using an electronic device

during a quiz or day-writing, they will automatically receive a zero. As a matter of respect to yourself, classmates, and instructor, please do not wear earphones, earbuds, or headphones during class time. We simply cannot tempt ourselves with distractions. College is too expensive to miss out on a learning experience or engage with a classmate's perspective because of an electronic device. Engaging with electronics beyond what is expected for our academic instruction means you will lose credit for any in-class writings, quizzes, and/or homework assignments due that day. I will tell students they are losing credit for the day for the first few weeks of class, after which time it is not my responsibility to alert them. Other disruptive behavior, including coming in late on a regular basis, chatting with classmates during class discussion or in-class writing, sleeping, or any other behavior not conducive to a mature learning environment, will first receive a warning; if the behavior continues, an instructor drop will be initiated.

AI Policy Details

AI is new and emerging. How you might use it as a tool in your career field will be determined by your discipline's professional organizations, major professors, credentialing entities, and company policies/regulations. Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared, generated, and written by the student. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. We certainly have much to anticipate with regard to how AI impacts our chosen occupations, and professions, and our respective disciplines (business, education, engineering, healthcare, R&D, as examples) are doing dynamic work to determine how AI will be normed for the important work within specific career fields. Prior to using AI-tools for writing, students need to establish fundamentals, a word hoard, scholarly building blocks, and an educated understanding of academic writing to which students might apply AI tools in the future, outside of the purview and intent of our class. Since English 1143 is a foundational, interdisciplinary academic reading and writing course, we must focus on learning and developing our skills as critical readers and writers. This course aims to teach ethical research and writing practices, with a focus on the writing process. In this class, AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism. Quite simply, the use of AI is inappropriate for this course.

All work submitted for this course is subject to be scanned by plagiarism and AI checkers. This policy is designed to create learning potential, a space for honoring you and your authentic creativity, critical thinking, and written expression. Note that there is no uniform policy on AI use at MSU. Make efforts to understand the policy for each course you take.

*In this class we are learning to write and express our own academic stories. We simply cannot use AI to replace ourselves as the storytellers of our own emerging academic lives.

Academic Integrity Advice

To avoid penalties, discussions, or accusations of academic dishonesty, I suggest the following:

Ask for help: As the instructor of this course, I am responsible for teaching you about correct and ethical citation and attribution, and I'm available to assist you. Contact me several days before the assignment is due with a link to the source so that I have time to review the article and meet to discuss your concerns.

Don't use AI: You are not allowed to use artificial intelligence (AI) engines, software, or artwork generating programs to produce content submitted for grading in this class.

Provide instructor access to all sources used in assignments: All sources cited in an assignment should be available to your instructor. Save sources in a readily accessible folder, and share that folder

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by pasting the URL into the comment box of your D2L submission. A link to an abstract or online database with a paywall won't work: I need to be able to read the entire article, as do you.

Accurately cite sources: When using the ideas of other published and/or unpublished sources, students must use accepted documentation conventions (MLA). All quoted content must be placed in "quotation marks," and for quoted, paraphrased, or summarized content, the correct source must be cited in the body and in a list of references.

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Punctual, engaged attendance is crucial to your success in this class and in college. More than two weeks' worth of **unresolved** absences (MWF: 6 classes) is grounds for the instructor to drop you from the course. Any absences are likely to affect your performance in the course, and it's your responsibility to be present and prepared for class to maximize your learning. If you must miss class for any reason, you may resolve absences by communicating with your instructor. If you must miss multiple sessions for any reason, alert the Dean of Students office so they can verify for instructors.

***Unresolved Absence:** Absences about which you did not communicate to the instructor prior to or within two days of its occurrence.

***Resolved Absence:** Absences about which you email your instructor prior to or within two business days. Emails must explain what actions you will take to stay on track in the course.

Class Communication - Email & D2L

Before asking questions via email, check D2L and our course syllabus and schedule. If the answers you seek are not provided, please email me for questions and conversation about class activities, deadlines, and any other course concerns.

Email is the best way to contact me about your own performance or attendance. Allow 2 business days for email responses. All emails you send for academic purposes should be revised and edited, including a greeting, body paragraph(s), and closing, to meet professional expectations for emails. For all correspondence with your instructors, indicate your full name, course and section number.

eBook Access

Your textbooks for this class are provided through English 1143 and are part of MSU Texas' Courseware Access and Affordability Program. Students are charged for course materials on their Business Office account. If you wish to opt-out of the Program and purchase the required course materials on your own, you must do so using the opt-out instructions, which will be sent to your my.msutexas.edu email on the second day of class. Contact jenny.denning@msutexas.edu (MSU Bookstore) if you have questions about opting out.

University Closure Practices

In the event of university closure for inclement weather conditions or emergency situations, students will be notified through official campus channels (MSU Alert, MSU Safety app, Postmaster emails, and website headers). When any schedule changes occur, I will provide schedule updates and assignment expectations using D2L News announcements and university emails, and I will also update the Live Class Schedule to reflect changes. For this course, unless a change is posted to the course D2L News, assignments due to be uploaded or posted to D2L during the closure will remain due as scheduled. Students who are unable to complete assignments due during a closure (for example, due to a power outage) will not be penalized, but will be expected to notify the professor of their situation.

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Learning with Generosity

As a community, we have bountiful experiences and needs. Our differences are strengths, and we should strive to learn from them. To learn in a meaningful environment, we must ardently reject language and behaviors that denigrate others. In this learning space, unprofessional communication, talking over others, verbal altercations, and violence are not tolerated. There is a lot we don't know about each other, and our word choices matter as we collaborate and learn.

Formatting

All written work turned in to me for a grade must follow a specific format. I will only accept double-spaced typed work that uses a 12 pt. Arial or Times New Roman font, and the margins must be standard width and height (1-inch all around). Every assignment must have a title centered above the text, your name, class and section, date, and my name (in that order) in the upper left-hand corner of the first page. Assignments that are longer than one page are expected to have page numbers in the lower right-hand corner, beginning on the second page. Assignments that do not follow these guidelines will lose 5 pts.

Note: You may not submit a paper for a grade in this class that has already 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.

Campus Resources & Policies

Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

TASP's Learning Center is located on the first floor of the Moffett Library, and tutors are available for one-on-one sessions Monday-Thursday from 11 AM-7 PM. You don't need an appointment to use these services. Writing tutors will not edit your papers for you, but they will provide support and feedback at every stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to drafting, revising to proofreading. [See TASP's Webpage for more information.](#)

Access to Microsoft 365

All students can download Microsoft Office 365 free of charge using their MSU Texas student email address. To acquire Office 365, [visit MSU's Student Resources.](#)

Important Dates

Deadline to file for graduation: Sept. 21, 2026

First Day to drop a TSI-required course: Oct. 19, 2026

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" Nov. 23, 2026

University Computer Labs

The University provides four open computer labs with Microsoft Office & internet access.

- Clark Student Center: 24 hours (Mon-Sun)
- Dillard 146: Mon-Thurs 6 AM – 7 PM
- Moffett Library: Mon-Thurs 8AM – 10PM; Fri. 8AM-5PM; Sat 10AM-6PM; Sun 2PM-10PM
- Legacy Hall: 24 hours (Mon-Sun)

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. Explore resources on [Moffett Library's webpage](#) to learn how to best utilize the library.

Grade Appeal Process

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

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from 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. For information about refunds, refer to [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#).

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 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](#).

Campus Carry

For information on the University's Campus Carry policies, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Student Emergency Support & Resources

Your well-being and success at MSU are of the utmost importance. The [Student Emergency Support & Resources page](#) features campus and community resources available for students experiencing emergency or extenuating circumstances. Contact student.affairs@msutexas.edu (940-397-7500) for more information.

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@mstueexas.edu.

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

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otherwise shared, transmitted, or published without the professor's prior consent. Some faculty may not permit recordings of their classes. 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

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 [Spreddy – 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."](#)

Tobacco Policy

Midwestern State University seeks to provide a safe, healthy, pleasant environment for its faculty, staff, and students. To this end, the use of tobacco products, including smoke and smokeless tobacco, and the advertising, sale, free distribution, and discarding of tobacco products shall be prohibited in all indoor and outdoor facilities and in all university vehicles. The policy extends to faculty, staff, students, vendors, guests, and visitors.

Overview Schedule

***Note:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor. Check D2L for updates.

Weeks	Topics/Activities/Assignments	Deadlines: Submit on D2L by 11:59 PM
Week 1: 8/24-8/28	Course Intro, Knowing Yourself and Your Campus Read Hello, Writer: Chapter 1 pages 1-17	n/a
2: 8/31-9/4	Becoming a College Reader Read Chapter 2 pages 18-29 Chapter 18 MLA Introductions	n/a
3: 9/8-9/11	Labor Day Holiday 9/7 Annotating to Read for Your Active Reader Read Chapter 2 pages 30-49	n/a
4: 9/14-9/18	Investigating a Topic and College Success Introduction to Evaluating Sources Rhetorical Analysis Introduction Read Chapter 3 50-62	9/14: Personal Learning Story Due
5: 9/21-9/25	Source Evaluation Rhetorical Analysis Practice Read Chapter 3 63-73	n/a
6: 9/28-10/2	Prewriting Read Chapter 4 74-84	9/30: Playlist and Rhetorical Analysis
7: 10/5-10/9	Prewriting, Revising, and Editing Read Chapter 4 85-95	10/7: Peer Review
8: 10/12-10/16	Generating a Thesis and Organizing Your Essay Read Chapter 4 96-116	10/16: Faculty Interview
9: 10/19-10/23	Establishing Research and Writing Goals Finding and Evaluating Sources Potential Library Visit CRAAP Test Read Chapter 15 360-382 Incorporate Research: Synthesis Matrix & Practice	n/a
10: 10/26-10/30	Troubleshooting and Completing Synthesis Matrix for next week's peer review	n/a
11: 11/2-11/6	Revising & Reflecting on Synthesis Matrix Introduce Annotated Bibliography	11/2: Peer Review 2 11/6: Synthesis Matrix

Weeks	Topics/Activities/Assignments	Deadlines: Submit on D2L by 11:59 PM
12: 11/9-11/13	Planning & Developing Synthesis Essay Complete Annotated Bibliography	11/13: Annotated Bibliography
13: 11/16-11/20	Drafting & Troubleshooting Synthesis Essay	11/20: Peer Review 3
14: 11/23-11/24	Revising Synthesis Infographic Introduction Last day for "W" Drop (11/23) Thanksgiving Holiday 11/25-11/29	n/a
15: 11/30-12/4	Reflect and Demonstrate Learning: Grammar Workshops, Reflection Day Writing	11/30: Synthesis Essay
Final: 12/8	*Schedule Alert. Class meets from 10:30 am -12:30 pm Location: To Be Determined (TBD) Celebration and Infographic Presentations	12/8: Infographic