



**MIDWESTERN
STATE UNIVERSITY**

A Member of the Texas Tech University System

Course Syllabus: Introduction to Critical Reading and Academic Writing

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

ENGL 1143 Section 102

Fall 2024 August 26, 2024 to December 14, 2024

Contact Information

Instructor: Ms. Melissa Laussmann

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Course Description

In this course, students will learn to examine various texts to develop their own insights and arguments. By sharpening critical thinking skills, students will gain an understanding of rhetorical devices used in various media and utilize this skill to foster counter-arguments and research questions. A minimum grade of C is required for successful completion of this course.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

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

This course's required eBook is part of MSU Texas' Courseware Access and Affordability Program. Students are charged for the 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 the MSU Bookstore at jenny.denning@msutexas.edu if you have questions about opting out.

Learning Objectives

- This course fulfills a core requirement for Communication. As such, the course will assess the following learning objectives:
 - Critical Thinking, Communication, and 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.

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Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work, not the individual to whom credit is given).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.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

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

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

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
Reader's Responses	30
Group Discussions	20
In-Class Essays	50
Rhetorical Analysis	150
Literary Analysis	150
Annotated Bibliography	50
Peer Review Workshop & Instructor Conference	50
Synthesis Project	200
Class Presentation	150
Final Exam	150
Total Points	1000

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	900
B	800 to 899
C	700 to 799

Grade	Points
D	600 to 699
F	Less than 600

Quizzes

You will not have traditional-style quizzes in this class, but you will be assigned responses to various texts in class to demonstrate your understanding of the lessons.

Mid-Term Exam

In order to help students keep track of their progress toward course objectives, a Midterm Progress Report 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 consider visiting the Tutoring & Academic Support Programs Center (TASP).

Final Exam

Final exam details will be provided when date, time, and location are determined.

Late Work

All assignments are due by the deadline provided. I will accept late work within 48 hours from the deadline with the understanding that one letter grade will be deducted from the final graded product. Communicate with me if you know there will be an issue with turning in an assignment on time.

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: August 29, 2024

Deadline to file for graduation: September 23, 2024

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 25, 2024

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

Attendance is taken at the beginning of class: students who arrive late need to notify the instructor at the end of that class session of their attendance.

Negative points: Points are deducted against the final grade for unexcused absences:

- -0 points for 2 absences
- -2 points for 3 absences
- -4 points for 4 absences

- Two tardies (i.e., arriving 5-14 minutes late) are counted as one absence.
- Arriving 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes before class ends counts as an absence.

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.

Cell Phone, Earbud, Headphone Use

Cell phones, earbuds, and/or headphones need to be put away during the class session (e.g., in a pocket, purse, or backpack). Use of earbuds or headphones are not allowed during class unless you have obtained permitted use through [MSU Disability Support Services](#) and provided the instructor the necessary documentation. If you are using an e-text, please access the e-text on the class computer—not on a cellphone. If you receive a call or text to which you need to read or respond, please leave the room to do so.

Instructor Class Policies

No eating or drink in the computer lab.

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) exist 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 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](#).

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 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.”](#)

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 1

- **Monday 8/26:**
 - Introduction; Syllabus & Agenda; Pre-Assessment Essay
 - Homework: Read *Let's Talk*: Ch. 1 Listening and Ch. 4 Developing Academic Habits of Mind
- **Wednesday 8/28:**
 - Discuss: The Importance of Writing Well; Listening; Academic Habits
 - Homework: Read *Let's Talk* Ch. 3 Engaging Respectfully with Others and Ch. 5 Reading to Understand, Engage, & Respond
- **Friday 8/30:**
 - Discuss: Engaging with Others and Close Reading
 - Handout: Small group discussion of "Big Yellow Taxi and "Mercy Mercy Me" by J. Mitchell and M. Gaye
 - Homework: Read handout: "The Beginning" by Denis Hayes and write a one-page response (**Reader's Response 1**) and read *Let's Talk* Ch. 7 Writing Processes

Week 2

- **Monday 9/2**
 - **Labor Day- No Class**
- **Wednesday 9/4**
 - Discuss: "The Beginning" and Writing Process
 - Introduce: Sense of Place
 - Homework: Read *Little Seagull* Section W-4 Writing Processes
- **Friday 9/6:**
 - Discuss: Writing Processes; Thesis Statements
 - Handout: Small group exercise on thesis statements

Week 3

- **Monday 9/9:**
 - Let's meet in Moffett Library
 - Sign up for Interlibrary Loan (ILL)
 - Research Databases
 - Homework: Read *Let's Talk* Ch. 2 Thinking Rhetorically and *Little Seagull* W-1 and W-12; Read handout of "Sense of Place" Stegner
- **Wednesday 9/11:**
 - Discuss: Writing Process/ Thesis/ Sense of place
 - Homework: Read *Little Seagull* W-9 and *Let's Talk* Ch. 8 Arguing
- **Friday 9/13:**
 - Discuss: Arguments/ Rhetorical Appeals
 - Handout: Rhetorical Analysis Paper Guidelines due on 9/27

- Quiz: will take place of small group discussion
- Homework: *Little Seagull* W-8

Week 4

- **Monday 9/16:**
 - Read: *Let's Talk* Ch. 34 Greta Thunberg
 - **In-Class Essay 1:** Two Arguments (Thunberg)
 - Homework: Read *Let's Talk* Ch. 34 "The Nature You See..." by E. Marris. Write a one-page response. (**Reader's Response 2**)
- **Wednesday 9/18:**
 - Small group discussion of "The Nature You See..."; answer prompt (provided in class)
 - Citations
 - Read handout: Sense of Place for In-class essay and *Little Seagull* W-15
- **Friday 9/20:**
 - **In-Class Essay 2:** Reflection Paper
 - Homework: Prepare two drafts of your Rhetorical Analysis paper for peer-review workshop

Week 5

- **Monday 9/23:**
 - Peer-Review Workshop
 - Homework: Read handout "from *My First Summer in the Sierra*" by J. Muir
- **Wednesday 9/25:**
 - Small group discussion of Muir's essay; prompt provided in class
 - Class discussion of Muir
 - Homework: prepare submission of Rhetorical Analysis paper
 - On an index card (provided), reflect on the challenges and lessons learned from this project
- **Friday 9/27:**
 - **Submit Rhetorical Analysis paper in class**
 - Introduce: Literary Analysis
 - Homework: Read *Let's Talk* Ch. 32 "What's Language Got to Do with It?" and Ch. 24 "Mixing Languages and Dialects" and *Little Seagull* W-13

Week 6

- **Monday 9/30:**
 - Discuss Literary Analysis Essay due 10/18
 - In-class assignment: Read *Let's Talk* "On Animacy: Learning the Grammar of Things" by R. Kimmerer and Ch. 34 "Who Owns Nature?" Respond to prompt (provided in class)
 - Homework: Read *Let's Talk* Ch. 9 Analyzing and Ch. 32 "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" by G. Anzaldua
- **Wednesday 10/2:**
 - Discuss: Analyzing "How to Tame a Wild Tongue"
 - Small group discussion: Literary Analysis: Topics & Ideas
 - Homework: Read *Let's Talk* Ch. 23 Writing Great Sentences and *Little Seagull* W-5
- **Friday 10/4:**
 - Discuss: Sentences & Common Errors
 - Grammar Exercise
 - Homework: Read *Let's Talk* Ch. 32 "America Ruined My Name for Me" by B. Nguyen. Write a one-page response (**Reader's Response 3**)

Week 7

- **Monday 10/7:**
 - Discuss “America Ruined My Name for Me”
 - Small group discussion: Read handout and annotate
 - Sign up for conferences
 - Work on Literary Analysis
- **Wednesday 10/9:**
 - **Instructor Conferences: No Class**
- **Friday 10/11:**
 - **Instructor Conferences: No Class**
 - Prepare two drafts of your Literary Analysis paper for peer-review workshop

Week 8

- **Monday 10/14:**
 - Peer-Review Workshop
 - Homework: Read *Little Seagull* L-6 and L-4
- **Wednesday 10/16:**
 - Grammar Exercise
 - Homework: Prepare submission of Literary Analysis paper. On an index card (provided), reflect on personal improvements (or not) in regards to the writing process.
- **Friday 10/18:**
 - **Submit Literary Analysis paper in class**
 - Introduce: Synthesis Project (Due 11/25)
 - Homework: Read *Let’s Talk* Part 4 Research, Ch. 14-16
 - Think of topics for synthesis paper & visit the research database

Week 9

- **Monday 10/21:**
 - Small group discussion: Discuss research paper topic ideas; brainstorm
 - On an index card (provided), write your research idea or question for submission
 - Homework: Read *Let’s Talk* Part 4 Research, Ch. 16-17 and *Little Seagull* W-16 and R-2
- **Wednesday 10/23:**
 - Discuss: Annotated Bibliography (Due 11/8)
 - Log on to research databases for resources
 - Homework: Read *Let’s Talk* Part 4 Research, Ch. 18-19 and *Little Seagull* W-17 and R-4
- **Friday 10/25:**
 - Prepare one entry for your annotated bibliography for submission
 - Homework: Read *Let’s Talk* “A Roadmap for Research”

Week 10

- **Monday 10/28:**
 - **In-class essay regarding the research process**
 - Homework: Work on Annotated Bibliography/ Research
- **Wednesday 10/30:**
 - Introduce: Examples of Academic Research Papers
 - Discuss: Research Projects Status
 - Homework: Work on Annotated Bibliography/ Research
 - Prepare two drafts of annotated bibliography for peer-review workshop
- **Friday 11/1:**
 - Peer-Review Workshop: Annotated Bibliography

- Homework: Continue Annotated Bibliography/ Research

Week 11

- **Monday 11/4:**
 - Small group discussion: Research Progress
 - Homework: Continue Annotated Bibliography/ Research
- **Wednesday 11/6:**
 - **In-class essay: Response to handout of Mary Oliver**
 - Homework: Prepare submission of Annotated Bibliography. Read *Let's Talk* Ch. 31 "Dismantling the Barriers Between Rap and Poetry" by A. Bradley
- **Friday 11/8:**
 - **Submit Annotated Bibliography**
 - Discuss: "Dismantling the Barriers Between Rap and Poetry"
 - Small group discussion: respond to prompt for Bradley's essay
 - Homework: Work on research paper

Week 12

- **Monday 11/11:**
 - **In-class essay: Response to handout provided in class**
- **Wednesday 11/13:**
 - Introduce: Research Project Presentation
 - Sign up for instructor conference
 - Homework: Prepare two drafts of research paper for peer-review workshop
- **Friday 11/15:**
 - Peer-Review Workshop
 - Homework: Work on research paper. Read *Little Seagull* W-7

Week 13

- **Monday 11/18:**
 - Instructor Conference- No Class
 - Homework: Work on research paper
- **Wednesday 11/20:**
 - Instructor Conference- No Class
 - Homework: Work on research paper
- **Friday 11/22:**
 - Instructor Conference- No Class
 - Homework: Prepare submission of Synthesis Paper. Prepare Project Presentation.

Week 14

- **Monday 11/25:**
 - **Submit Synthesis Project in Folder**
 - Discuss: Project Presentations
 - Sign up dates
 - Homework: Prepare Project Presentation
- **Wednesday 11/27:**
 - **Happy Thanksgiving! No Class**
- **Friday 11/29:**
 - Thanksgiving Break- No Class

Week 15

- **Monday 12/2:**
 - Class Presentations
- **Wednesday 12/4:**
 - Class Presentations
- **Friday 12/6: Final Class Presentations**