



Course Syllabus: Introduction to Critical Reading & Academic Writing

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

ENGL 1143-1R8 (2:00 BW117) and 1R7 (11:00 PY202)

TR

Fall 2025, August 26-December 4, 2025

Contact Information

Instructor: Becky Green

Office: BW 233

Office hours: Monday and Friday (MW) 10:00-11:00; Tuesday and Thursday (TR) 9:30-11:00

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When writing a message, follow conventions of standard written English. Do not text when “u” write a professor or instructor. Begin with a greeting (Ms. Green) and end with a signature (your name) followed by your class and course number (1143-XR1) even when using a cell phone.

What you cannot expect of me is to be available 24/7. I don’t answer late night emails, and I’m offline on Saturday.

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 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.

THECB Core Course Objectives and Assessments

- Critical Thinking Skills: To assess the student's critical thinking skills, the Synthesis Research Paper rubric will be applied to the Synthesis Research Paper.
- Communication Skills: To assess the student's written communication skills, the Synthesis Research Paper rubric will be applied to the Synthesis Research Paper.
- Personal Responsibility: To assess ethical use of sources as a measure of personal responsibility, the Synthesis Research Paper rubric will be applied to the Synthesis Research Paper.
- 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.

Instructional Materials

3-ring binder, 2 dividers, notebook paper, pencils

Writing Assistance

Follow guidelines from [TASP Learning Center](#) to find the in-person and online help you need.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty is cheating, collusion, and plagiarism. 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 in the text and a listing in "Works Cited")—whether you use that material in a quote, paraphrase, or summary. At the least, plagiarism will result in an F on an assignment. At the worst it will result in an F in the course. Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the [Office of Student Conduct](#).

Grading

Assignments	Percentage
Journal	10
Position Paper	15
Proposal Paper	15
Annotated Bibliography	10
Synthesis Research Paper	25
Posted Peer Review	10
Infographic	15
Total	100

This class will not use the plus/minus grading system. In this class, the following numerical equivalents for final grades are used: A = 100-90%; B = 89-80%; C = 79-70%; D = 69-60%; F = 59-0. Letter grades have the following significance: A indicates excellent work, B indicates good work, C indicates satisfactory work, D indicates passing work, F indicates failing work. Consequently, an essay that meets the basic requirements earns a C, not an A or B. If you wish to earn As and Bs, you must work hard to produce better than satisfactory, or average, writing. A paper that receives a D or F may be rewritten once for a possible C/70. The rewrite

must be submitted as a hard copy by the date noted on the rubric. A journal entry may not be rewritten.

Final Exam

This course has no final exam.

Extra Credit

The instructor does not accept extra credit assignments.

Late Work

You may submit a late paper or assignment at a penalty of 10 points 48 hours after the deadline.

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, the drop boxes for submitting papers, 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.

Due dates are your responsibility. If you have computer difficulty, send an email to your instructor immediately. Then follow the instructions on the D2L homepage for obtaining technical assistance. If the problem is with your personal laptop, MSU cannot work on it. However, the university has provided computer labs for your convenience:

Location	Hours
Clark Student Center	24 hours (Mon-Sun)
Dillard 146	6:00 am – 7:00 pm (Mon-Thu)
Moffett Library	8:00 AM-10:00 PM (Mon-Thu); 8:00 AM-5:00 PM (Fri); closed (Sat); 1:00-10:00 PM (Sun) *These hours are subject to change.
Legacy Hall	24 hours (Mon-Sun)

Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled. Although in general students are graded on intellectual effort and performance rather than attendance, absences may lower the student's grade where class attendance and class participation are deemed essential by the faculty member. Attendance and participation are required in this course. You are allowed 4 absences in this Tuesday-Thursday (TR) course. A 5th absence results in being dropped from the course with an F.

You'll also be absent if you

- touch a cell phone or similar electronic device while in the classroom, (*Research proves that a cell phone within reach mentally removes its owner from the classroom.)

- sleep during class
- refuse to work with your team
- miss more than 15 minutes of class time twice.

You can earn attendance by

- attending a PYCHSS sponsored event (announced during class),
- meeting with the instructor for an extracurricular draft conference, and
- presenting proof to your instructor that you worked on a paper/essay with a writing tutor at TASP.

Midterm Grades

In order to help students keep track of their progress toward course objectives, the instructor provides a Midterm Progress Report through Navigate. Midterm grades are not reported on the students' transcript, nor are they calculated in the cumulative GPA. They simply give students an idea of where they stand at the midpoint of the semester. Students who are not doing satisfactory work at the midway point should make an appointment with their instructor and consider visiting TASP.

Submission Format and Policy

The assigned papers must follow MLA format style. A sample paper for each of these is included in the content of the course. The style preference includes the following:

- Header: writer's last name and page number
- Identification: writer's full name, instructor's name, course title-number-section, date
- Title: centered
- Spacing: Double-spaced throughout (extra space eliminated)
- Margins: One-inch margins on top, bottom, and sides of text
- Font: Times New Roman, Calibri, or Arial; size 12

A student should submit each paper in its corresponding D2L drop box by 11:59 PM on its due date. Submission is not through email.

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. 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.

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.

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, Northwestern 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 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 Northwestern 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.

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 has 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 NSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [NSUReady – 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:

Grade Appeal Process

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

