Welcome to your class!

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English 1312/RWS 1302
CRN: 26296

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**Face to Face meeting:** Thursday 7:30am - 8:50am  
**Office Hours:** Friday: 9:00 – 10:30 am  
**Office:** Worrel Hall 309

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OR  
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I can also be reached at my Google+ Profile (click below):  
[**Elena Christine**](https://plus.google.com/u/0/107882784337898071710)
## Contents

Clickable Document

Course Description and Learning Objectives

- Course Description
- Course Objectives
- Required Texts
- Required Technology

Class Policies

- Communication
- Attendance and Participation
- Technology
- Late Work and Revisions
- Code of Conduct

Grade Mechanics

University Policies

- Course Drop Information
- Academic Integrity
- ADA Information
Course Description and Learning Objectives

Course Description
The primary goal of English 1312 is to develop students’ critical thinking skills in order to facilitate effective communication in all educational, professional, and social contexts. This effective communication is based on an awareness of and appreciation for discourse communities as well as knowledge specific to subject matter, genre, rhetorical strategy, and writing process.

The class presents an approach to communication that helps students determine the most effective strategies, arrangements, and media to use in different rhetorical contexts. It teaches students a systematic approach for analyzing rhetorical situations and then producing a variety of documents and presentations while gaining more confidence and fluency in visual, oral, and written communication. In addition, because communication is central to being an active and engaged member of society, the course also provides a space for informed advocacy.

This course is taught as a hybrid class— with one face-to-face meeting for lecture and discussion, and the rest of the course utilizing a management system such as Blackboard, a Wiki, or a class website depending on the instructor. Instructors will provide students with permanent access to the syllabus, supplemental reading materials, e-mail, and discussion groups. It is vital that students check and participate in the online environment consistently as it is an integral part of the course. On occasion, students will be asked to meet on the hybrid day to participate in library research, technology workshops, presentations, or other activities their instructor might need them to be physically present for. Please keep this time available for this class. Otherwise, students may miss out on important information.

Course Objectives
At the end of this course, students will be able to:
» Understand a theory of discourse communities;
» Engage as a community of writers who dialogue across texts,
» Argue, and build on each other’s work;
» Draw on existing knowledge bases to create “new” or “transformed” knowledge;
» Develop a knowledge of genres as they are defined and within discourse communities;
» Address the specific, immediate rhetorical situations of individual communicative acts;
» Develop procedural knowledge of the writing task in its various phases.

Students will also have the opportunity to strengthen skills sets in the following areas:
» Think, read, and write critically;
» Formulate research questions and perform primary and secondary research to answer those questions;
Become familiar with the contents of the UTEP Library, in a variety of forms and areas of professional study (e.g. the arts, humanities, sciences, nursing, social sciences, business, engineering, and education);

» Analyze and synthesize material from outside sources;

» Develop a sensitivity to the significance of data and how it can be rhetorically applied to various genres; and,

» As part of a research process, apply research to various genres;

» Receive instruction in the logic and form of documentation within a discipline (APA); learn writing strategies for integrating source material into your own prose (quoted, paraphrased, and summarized material); write analytical and argumentative papers appropriate to genres and larger discourse communities.

Requirements for the Class

Required Texts:

Rhetoric and Writing Studies in English: Research and Critical Writing Course. 2014.
Pearson Custom Library, English Mercury Reader.
[Find this book in the UTEP Bookstore]
ISBN: 10:1-269-25983-0


BryteWave Quick Start Guide:
The Guide to First-Year Composition is a digital book. Students need to purchase an access code either from the UTEP Bookstore or online at reader.brytewave.com.
(I would STRONGLY suggest that you just buy the book online. It is available, but there have been many issues with the code in the past. Just purchase it online)

Below are a few simple steps to get you started. More information about reading and using your book will be provided.
To Use Your Book:
- Click the link for BryteWave: HERE
- Create an account with a username and password that are easy to remember: your UTEP info, for instance.
- Enter your code into the box that looks like the image to the right:
- If you do not have a code, you can search for the book using the link at the bottom of this box.

Required Technology
This is a hybrid class, which means that at least half of the work will be completed online. As a result, you will be required to learn how to manipulate many different types of software. Most of this software has an easy learning curve, and I will be able to assist you with figuring out the fine details as we go along. Just be prepared to eventually become comfortable with all of the technology listed below.

Google Account:
This class will utilize many different software and technologies that google has to offer, therefore you will need to have a Google account. You can either use an existing one, or create a new one to be associated with this class.

Cloud Storage
Computers break down, USB drives get lost, but the cloud ever remains. Again, this is not a suggestion, you must have some sort of cloud storage in this class. “I left my drive at home” or “I couldn’t access my document because my computer crashed” are not acceptable excuses in this class.

Some cloud storage programs you can choose from:
- Dropbox
- OneDrive
- Google Drive (This one is connected to your Google Account)
- Bitcasa

Website Design
You will complete and/or present a lot of work in an online environment, therefore you will need to become comfortable with the software. The website we will use to host our work is going to be on Weebly.com (click the link to navigate to it).
**Blackboard**
You need to be comfortable with blackboard in general, and with our blackboard shell in particular. The best way to do so is to practice navigating our links to see where information is posted that you may need in the future.

**Microsoft Office or Open Office**
I work off of a PC, and will absolutely not accept .pages or other iOS formats that are not compatible with the software that I use. You can use Microsoft Office (and purchase it for cheap at the bookstore) or you can use Open Office, which is free:

» Apache Open Office
  → For Windows: [https://www.openoffice.org/download/](https://www.openoffice.org/download/)
  → For Mac: [http://www.openoffice.org/porting/mac/](http://www.openoffice.org/porting/mac/)

**Files must be saved in the following manner:**
» First Name Last Name – Title of Assignment.doc/.docx/.rtf/.txt
» I do not know who you are by a file name like: englishhomework
» It is the same thing as not writing your name on your papers.

**PDF Reader**
You will need to have access to Adobe Reader or another form of PDF reader that allows you to annotate and highlight. I would also suggest using Foxit Reader as it is more customizable and has many more tools for annotation.

**Note-taking software**
This is software that is useful in everyday life as well as throughout all of your classes. Three programs that I support are: Evernote, OneNote (connected to your Microsoft Word Software), and Google Keep (must have a google account to use). Each of these programs keep your notes in cloud storage.

**Movie Editing Software**
This software is fun to use, especially if you like to take a lot of pictures or video, and it is something that is necessary in our class. iMovie is readily available to us in the classroom, but it is not the required software. For PC users, Windows Movie Maker is free and you also have access to the more complicated programs through the technology lab upstairs in the library (Rm 300).
The policies below act as your contract for this class, so I would suggest that you read them carefully. Consider them our “Terms of Use/Service.”

**Communication**
As this is a hybrid class, much of the feedback and explanation that you get from me will be outside of the classroom. It is your responsibility to stay in communication with me throughout the semester. I see you once a week in a face to face setting, but am available throughout the week on Google+ and through email.

If you are struggling with the class, whether for personal reasons or because you do not fully understand the material, it is your responsibility to communicate with me immediately. I cannot help you if I do not know what is happening.

**Attendance and Participation**
This class, like many, requires your actual attendance to pass it. We will participate in discussions, workshops, and other activities aimed at making you a more successful writer. As we only meet once a week, missing 1 class can put you incredibly far behind.

Attendance in this class extends to our Blackboard work as well. You will have assignments that must be completed each week as well as readings from outside of the books in some cases. It is vital that you are “present” on Blackboard as well. Keep in mind that I can literally see the last time that you logged in to our blackboard shell.

Participation in this class does not just mean showing up and being counted in your seat. Come to class or blackboard prepared to be involved.

**Technology**
We use a lot of technology in this class, and technology has a tendency to fail right when we need it most. I understand this and have designed an alternative to most (though not all) technology issues. I do not give extension on assignments because of technology issues.

**Back Up Everything**
Whenever you see a PDF posted to BB, download/upload it to your cloud storage. This ensures that you have a copy of the materials anywhere that you have internet access. Most smart phones and tablets have the ability to read PDFs.

**If Blackboard is Down:**
It is a good idea to make sure that you have everything you need (see above) to finish the homework in the event that blackboard is down. **I will not accept:** “I couldn’t turn in my work because...”
blackboard is down” as an excuse. If blackboard is down, email me your work: ecbitner@miners.utep.edu or elena.christine.x@gmail.com.

Internet Access Issues
Access to the internet is absolutely necessary for a hybrid class. In the event that you unexpectedly lose access, remember that there are other locations on campus as well as public establishments that have internet access. However, if this is not an option for you, bring the work with you to the VERY NEXT class period in hard copy (paper/usb/etc.) and explain.

Exploding Computers
Literally and figuratively, sometimes computers just decide to blow up. I understand this, but again, it is not an excuse. Download all instructions and make sure to save your work to cloud storage.

Late Work and Revisions
I do not accept late work. I do not give extensions. However, I do allow Revisions for major assignments. Revisions must be completed on your time, however, and you will still need to keep up with the rest of the class.

For your work to be considered for a revised grade:
» First revise your paper based on any comments I make. If I make a suggestion and you ignore it, I will notice.
» Take the revised version of your paper to The University Writing Center and have a tutor go over your paper with you. Whatever markings or advice they give you, document it and have the tutor fill out a form (you can ask for it at the front desk) documenting your presence there.

   The more information you provide, the better.
» Revise the paper according to the tutor’s advice and direction – I will want a copy of the revised version as well as the earlier draft so that I can see what revisions you have made.
» Turn in all of your documents to me personally.

Based on the level of revision you turn in the second time, I will re-evaluate your grade. If you barely did any revision, you can expect my re-evaluation to reflect that. If you show that you worked hard to improve your work, you stand a much better chance at a grade increase.

Code of Conduct
In an environment where words are the main means for communication, it is important to remember to choose your words carefully. Just as you would not call someone names, shout, or stamp your feet in class, similar behavior is expected of you in our online classroom setting. The same level of respect for your fellow classmates is expected for the physical classroom as well.
Grade Distribution: Students can potentially earn 1000 over the course of this semester:

1000 – 900 = A      899 – 799 = B      798 – 698 = C      697 – 597 = D      596 and Below = F

There will be 5 major assignments for the entire semesters (points possible):

» **Genre Analysis**: To deepen our understanding of the discourse community concepts you will be introduced to in class, this assignment will ask you to analyze both traditional and multimedia documents as genres. **(100 points)**

» **Opinion Piece**: Students will write an online opinion piece on some aspect of the topic of their Literature Review/Primary Research Report in order to advocate for a policy change. **(100 Points)**

» **Literature Review**: Students will conduct primary and secondary research on a social, political, or ethical issue to become well-informed experts on the issue. Students will then write a literature review of these sources to summarize and synthesize the arguments and ideas of the research sources. **(200 points)**

» **Documentary**: Students will plan, write, film and edit a documentary film advocating a position on a current issue. Students will be provided with opportunities to become more familiar with this software throughout the semester. This will be uploaded on Vimeo or YouTube, and the link copied and pasted on a Word Document. **(200 points)**

» **Personal Website/E-Portfolio**: Students will create, design, and maintain a website that presents their work from the semester. Students will design, add additional links, and provide the needed content to this website in any way they want—with the stipulation that it is focused on this course and the topic chosen and draws from their semester’s work and research. **(150 Points)**

**Participation and Attendance (200 points):**
As this is a hybrid class both attendance and participation points will be divided up over work completed in the classroom and work completed online. Since we only attend face to face class 1 time every week, it is very important that you are on Blackboard as much as possible to keep up with the work assigned for the rest of the week.

**Keep in Mind**: Minor assignments in this class are important by themselves, worth points that count toward your attendance and participation, but they are also assignments designed to help you complete the major assignments. If you make a habit of missing these minor assignments, you will not only risk failing the attendance and participation portion of this class – you will also fall behind on the major assignments.

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1 Subject to change.
University Policies

Course Drop Information
Each semester has a drop date beyond which an instructor can no longer drop a student with a “W.” Students who fail to attend or fulfill assignments after the drop date must necessarily receive an “F.” However, in the event of exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the instructor of the course and the academic dean, a grade of “W” may be obtained. The student is responsible for supplying written documentation to support the request for a “W.” Acceptable reasons for a "W" include: personal or family medical emergencies, death of family member, military leave, or an exceptional work schedule that prevents you from completing the course. For information on semester deadlines, see the UTEP Academic Calendar.

Please also be aware of the six-course drop limit. According to the Texas Education Code, "all first-year students enrolled for the first time at any Texas public college or university are limited to six drops during their academic career. This includes student and faculty initiated drops and courses dropped at other Texas public institutions. This policy does not apply to courses dropped prior to census day or to complete withdrawals." So, be sure to start your college experience on the right track by attending class regularly.

Academic Integrity

The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence. In all matters of intellectual pursuit, UTEP faculty and students must strive to achieve excellence based on the quality of work produced by the individual. In the classroom and in all other academic activities, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty is an affront to the pursuit of knowledge and jeopardizes the quality of the degree awarded to all graduates of UTEP. It is imperative, therefore, that the members of this academic community understand the regulations pertaining to academic integrity and that all faculty insist on adherence to these standards.

Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP), and available in the Office of the Dean of Students and on the Academic Dishonesty Page, may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to a failing grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others.

Copyright and Fair Use: The University requires all members of its community to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for
Student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. (UTEP Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution)

ADA Information
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you suspect that you have a disability and need an accommodation, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu. The CASS is located in Room 106, Union East Bldg. Students are responsible for presenting the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions.