

English 4370: Theory and Practice: Reading/Composition Policy Statement and Syllabus

Course Information: Section 001; TuTh 12:30-1:50; Preston Hall 210

Instructor:

Office/Hours:

Email:

Phone:

Course Description: ENGL 4370 is a required course for English majors seeking Secondary Teacher Certification, so those students are the primary audience. However, this course has proven highly useful for students seeking other forms of teacher certification and for students who are simply interested in the theoretical foundations of reading and writing instruction.

We'll frame the course with some of the historical and epistemological issues involved in the study of rhetoric, paying particular attention to the quarrel between rhetoric and philosophy that spans virtually the entire history of Western thought. In many ways, this dispute remains with us today and determines the type of language instruction predominant in public education.

As we delve into rhetorical theory as manifested in the classroom, we'll consider questions like: What is "rhetoric," "composition," and "rhetoric and composition?" Why do we teach reading and writing differently from the way it was taught 50 or 100 years ago? Why is reading and writing taught so differently in college and in high school, and what, if anything, should we do to improve alignment between the two?

This is a content course, not a pedagogy course, but we *will* examine writing instruction as itself a research field. You'll learn what pedagogical practices are supported by recent scholarship in rhetoric and writing, and as you do so, you'll occupy the dual role of student and teacher-in-training. For example, you'll learn how to teach analytic reading skills as you practice these skills. You'll learn how to teach argument as inquiry as you produce written arguments that engage timely issues. I'll include you in the process of composing writing assignments that you then complete. We'll talk about how to comment on and grade student writing as I give you feedback on your writing. We'll consider the best ways to teach grammar and mechanics as you sharpen your command of Standard Written English.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of ENGL 4370, students should be able to:

- Apply knowledge of the history and theory of rhetoric in the English Language Arts (ELA) classroom.
- Apply knowledge of composition studies in the ELA classroom.
- Apply knowledge of research and best practices in composing writing assignments for the ELA classroom.
- Use knowledge of the rhetorical situation—writer, purpose, subject, genre, audience—to analyze and construct texts, and impart this knowledge in the ELA classroom.
- Practice writing as a recursive process that can lead to substantive changes in ideas, structure, and supporting evidence through multiple revisions.

- Apply knowledge of research and best practices in teaching a process approach to composition in the ELA classroom.
- Apply knowledge of research and best practices in responding to student writing.
- Apply knowledge of research and best practices in assessing student writing.
- Control such surface features of writing as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling, and impart this knowledge in the ELA classroom.

Required Materials:

- Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. New York: Norton, 2006.
- Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*. 6th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007. **OR ANY HANDBOOK**
- An email address that **YOU CHECK DAILY**.
- A binder/folder that allows you to take notes and store readings and handouts. Copies of readings and handouts can be downloaded from the MavSpace ticket listed below, so you are responsible any materials you lose or miss due to absence.

https://mavspace.uta.edu/xythoswfs/webview/_xy-906703_1

Assignments:

Paper 1 – Rhetorical Analysis (3-4 pp.)	15%
Paper 2 – Synthesis Essay (4-5 pp. minimum)	20%
Paper 3 – Researched Argument (4-6 pp. minimum)	25%
Final Exam	20%
Class Participation	20%

Grades: All major essay projects must be completed to pass the course. If you fail to complete an essay project, you will fail the course, regardless of your average.

Good writing always involves drafting and redrafting, and this is particularly true when writing for a public audience because you must respond to your readers. Your papers will not reach their full potential unless you begin them well in advance of the due date, allow your ideas to incubate, and respond actively to my and your peers' comments. You will be required to make a first submission of each of the assigned papers. **A first submission is not in any way a rough draft;** it is more like a piece you first submit for publication, prior to receiving a reviewer's comments. You should believe that your first submission is ready to go to press—only then can feedback be advanced enough to get your final submission in top form (and get you the kind of grade you want). If your first submission is not solid, meaning you haven't put forth a good faith effort to cover all aspects of the assignment, it will be returned to you and counted late. **Late papers (be they first or final submissions) will result in a full letter grade penalty on that assignment for each day they are late.**

The final exam is comprehensive and is intended to ensure that you have retained the key principles from the 20 or so lectures I'll be giving over the course of the semester. Despite how it may sound on its face, the final should not be difficult so long as you attend every class and follow our discussions closely. I will distribute notes for each of the lectures, and exam questions will be taken directly from those notes.

Participation comprises fully 1/5 of your final grade, the reason being that the success of the course depends on your active engagement. Although this is a content-based course, it's not one in which you sit back and ingest knowledge, facts, and information passively. Rather, you'll share your own thoughts on the material we cover, and I'll rely on you to share your experiences in high school and college English classes in order to provide examples of the teaching methods we discuss. Our classroom atmosphere will be informal and lively; we'll know each others' names; everyone will speak; and vigorous, respectful discussion will take place on a daily basis. For this class, you must overcome any shyness you feel about speaking in front of others, and the sooner you start talking, the more quickly you'll begin to feel comfortable. Also, an important component of participation is active listening, which means no texting, sleeping, or working on assignments for different classes.

Although the atmosphere in class will be laid back, in order for it to work, you and I must be partners, meaning that we both come to class each day having read closely and prepared to talk. To that end, I expect you to be punctual and attend class daily. Absences result in a "0" participation grade for that day; **four unexcused absences** will lower your overall semester grade by a full letter; **five absences** will mean you must drop the course or receive a grade of F. Excused absences include official university activities and illness with a physician's note.

Drop Policy: If you choose to withdraw from this course, it is your responsibility to do so within the university's deadlines. For information on dropping, consult your major academic department (or the University Advising Center if undeclared).

Syllabus and Schedule Changes: I've tried to make this document as complete as possible; however, during the course of the semester I may be required to alter, add, or abandon certain policies/assignments. I reserve the right to make such changes as they become necessary. You will be informed of any changes in writing.

The Writing Center: The Writing Center, Room 411 in the Central Library, will assist you with any writing assignment while you are a student at UT-Arlington. During Fall 2008, the Writing Center's hours 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday; and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. You may schedule appointments online by following directions available at www.uta.edu/owl/appointments, by calling 817.272.2601, or by visiting the Writing Center. If you come to the Writing Center without an appointment, you will be helped on a first-come, first-served basis as tutors become available. Writing Center tutors are carefully chosen and trained, and they can assist you with any aspect of your writing, from understanding an assignment to revising an early draft to polishing a final draft. However, the Writing Center is not an editing service; tutors will not correct your grammar or rewrite your assignment for you, but they will help you learn to solve your grammatical and organizational problems. I encourage each of you to use the Writing Center.

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism: It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University. "Scholastic 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, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts” (Regents’ Rules and Regulations, Series 50101, Section 2.2). You can get in trouble for plagiarism—even if you do not intend to cheat—by failing to correctly indicate places where you are making use of the work of another. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the conventions of citation by which you indicate which ideas are not your own and how your reader can find those sources. Read your handbook for more information on quoting and citing properly to avoid plagiarism. If you still do not understand, ask me.

Student Success Programs: The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. They include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admissions and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817.272.6107 for more information and appropriate referrals.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 – The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of federal legislation entitled *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens. As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty of their need for accommodation and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability. Also, you may visit the Office for Students with Disabilities in room 102 of University Hall or call them at 817.272.3364.

E-Culture Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University email address as an official means of communication with students. Through the use of email, UT-Arlington is able to provide students with relevant and timely information, designed to facilitate student success. In particular, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation may be sent to students through email. All students are assigned an email account and information about activating and using it is available at www.uta.edu/email. New students (first semester at UTA) are able to activate their email account 24 hours after registering for courses. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active as long as a student is enrolled at UT-Arlington.

January 19	Review course policy statement and syllabus; introductions.
January 21	“Rhetoric vs. Philosophy.” For next class: read Preface, Introduction, Ch. 9 in <i>They Say/I Say</i>.
January 26	“Introducing a Rhetorical Theory of Texts”; discuss assigned reading.
January 28	“Introducing Argument.” For next class: read Horowitz’s “In Defense of Intellectual Diversity”
February 2	In-class rhetorical analysis of Horowitz.
February 4	Continue in-class rhetorical analysis.
February 9	Assign Rhetorical Analysis.
February 11	No class. For next class: read Ch. 1, Ch. 7 in <i>They Say/I Say</i>.
February 16	Discuss assigned reading; “Introducing Composition Studies.” For next class: first submission of Rhetorical Analysis due.
February 18	First submission of Rhetorical Analysis due. “Composing Writing Assignments”; “Responding to Student Writing”; “Revision.” For next class: read Ch. 10 in <i>They Say/I Say</i>.
February 23	Feedback on first submission returned; discuss assigned reading; “Grading Student Writing.”
February 25	“Problems and Possibilities of Standard English.” For next class: bring <i>A Writer’s Reference</i> (or other handbook).
March 2	“Problems and Possibilities of Standard English,” continued. For next class: final submission of Rhetorical Analysis due.
March 4	Final submission of Rhetorical Analysis due. “Stasis Theory.”
March 9	Assign Synthesis Essay. For next class: topic proposal for Synthesis Essay due. read Ch. 4, Ch. 6 in <i>They Say/I Say</i>.
March 11	Topic proposal for Synthesis Essay due. Pass back graded papers; review model paper. For next class: read Ch. 2, Ch. 3, Ch. 4, Ch. 5, Ch. 6 in <i>They Say/I Say</i>.

March 16, 18	Spring break.
March 23	Discuss assigned reading; “Incorporating Sources Effectively.” For next class: first submission of Synthesis Essay due.
March 25	First submission of Synthesis Essay due. “Rhetorical Chairs.”
March 30	Feedback on first submission returned; “The Enthymeme.”
April 1	“Discussion Pedagogy”; “Expert Reading.”
April 6	Make-up day. For next class: final submission of Synthesis Essay due.
April 8	Final submission of Synthesis Essay due. Library Day (room B20 in Central Library).
April 13	Assign Researched Argument. Pass back graded papers; review model paper; “What Counts as Evidence?” For next class: topic proposal for Researched Argument due.
April 15	Topic proposal for Researched Argument due Make-up day.
April 20	Make-up day. For next class: first submission of Researched Argument due.
April 22	First submission of Researched Argument due. “Peer Review.” For next class: peer review of Researched Argument due.
April 27	Peer review of Researched Argument due. Feedback on first submission returned.
April 29	Make-up day.
May 4	“Rhetoric vs. Philosophy Revisited.”
May 6	Final submission of Researched Argument due. “Rhetoric vs. Philosophy Revisited, continued”; course evaluations.
May 13	Final Exam, 11:00-1:30