



English 301 Writing Theory & Practice

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Welcome to ENGL 301-701. The material in this syllabus is important, so read it thoroughly and even print it for your records. It is subject to change upon notification. If/when something does change, I will send an email or announcement via eCampus. It is your responsibility to stay current with all course emails, announcements, and discussion posts. ***This is especially important since this is a fully online and asynchronous course.***

Communicating with Your Instructor

WVU Email

Please contact me via email (jhiggin7@mix.wvu.edu OR Jill.Woods@mail.wvu.edu), and I will respond within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours on the weekend. The “email” link on the left-hand side of our eCampus course site will take you to my or your course colleagues’ Mix addresses should you need them (e.g., for group work). Practice good, clear writing by being sure to include an informative subject line, beginning with the course number (e.g., ENGL 301: *Question about deadline for DB#2*).

Office Hours

I will hold in-person (1-2pm in Colson 209) and online (2-2:30pm) office hours on **Tuesdays and Thursdays**. If you’d like to meet outside these times, just email me to set something up. The link for regular, virtual office hours is on eCampus.

Required Texts and Equipment

You must have the required textbooks for this course. You will have assigned readings almost every week from:

- **Textbook to purchase/rent:** Longaker, Mark Garrett and Jeffrey Walker. *Rhetorical Analysis: A Brief Guide for Writers*. Pearson. 2011. ISBN: 978-0-205-56570-2.
- **Readings I provide:** Supplementary reading material will be made available through corresponding *coursework modules* in the “Coursework” section of our WVU eCampus course site.
- **Readings you locate:** For some assignments, you are required to locate additional reading material on your own using the Internet or WVU Libraries search tools. See specific assignment instructions for details.

In addition to texts, you’ll need:

- **A reliable computer/internet connection for regular Mix email and eCampus access:** Because this is an online course, nearly all of our interaction will be via email (Mix) and WVU eCampus. This means you need a **reliable** computer and Internet connection. Prepare a back-up plan for yourself in the case that some technology mishaps occur!
- **Optional Webcam and microphone** (built-in or ear buds with mic should work fine for our needs) to participate in Zoom office hours or multimodal discussions.

Course Goals

While much of your professional writing and editing curriculum emphasizes the practice and products of organizational communication, this course invites you to the theoretical discussion addressing why we practice and produce what we do and how we can improve upon these practices and products in a deliberate, systematic way. To these ends, you will engage in rhetorical analysis of professional documents; review quantitative and qualitative

research methods commonly used by writing professionals; and “invent” a reflection-in-action research agenda that allows you to unify both theory and application.

By the end of this semester, you will be able to:

- Define rhetoric, including concepts such as kairos, techne, and praxis.
- Identify key rhetorical concepts in your own and others’ writing.
- Recognize and evaluate how rhetorical concepts inform professional writing practices.
- Identify various research methods relevant to professional communication.
- Research and analyze a current issue in professional communication to identify a relevant research topic.
- Prepare a professional literature review and research agenda to improve upon the communication practices of a particular business.

These goals align with the outcomes of SpeakWrite certified courses. That means this class is committed to helping you communicate your knowledge effectively as you keep four key components in mind: purpose, audience, conventions, and trouble spots (or PACT for short).



- Purpose:** What exactly do I want to happen?
- Audience:** Who is reading, listening, or viewing?
- Conventions:** What is expected in this context?
- Trouble:** What could get in the way of my goals?

Course Policies

You can access and read institution-level policies here: <https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements>. These include policies on academic integrity, inclusivity, and COVID-19 procedures. No incompletes will be provided for this course. Here are additional details for policies particularly relevant to this course:

Netiquette

In a fully online course, clarity and professionalism in our written communication is imperative to course success. Here are a few tips on how to achieve clarity and professionalism in our eCampus course emails and Discussion Board Forums in particular:

- Never type a message in ALL CAPS. Users may interpret that as shouting.
- In a Discussion Board Forum thread, clarify for whom a response is intended. You can do this by beginning a response post with a name (e.g., Jill – You make a good point about...) or with the “at” symbol (e.g., @ Jill: You make an interesting point about X. @ Tom: Do you think Jill’s comment contradicts what you said about Y?). If you’re adding an audio or video comment to a Voicethread, you can still begin your message with a name: “Latesha: I think you’re right. What you said about X is the same thing the EBC authors said in chapter 3...”
- Make your subject lines – be they for Discussion Board Forum posts or email messages – specific so they are easy to sift through even weeks after a forum takes place. (They may be useful in studying for quizzes or completing writing projects!) For instance, rather than the generic subject line “DB Forum #1,” you could be more specific by putting your name in your post, e.g. “Jill’s Introduction.” Think about using concepts or textbook chapters as specific information for use in subject lines, too, e.g.: “Resumes: objectives vs. summary of qualifications.”
- Proofread your posts and emails.

In general, remember to be respectful. We want to create a community that is rich and conducive to learning. Sometimes that means disagreeing with each other, but you can always do this in a respectful manner.

Deadlines/Late Work

This course has biweekly deadlines: **every Thursday and Sunday at midnight (i.e. 11:59 p.m.)**. Failure to meet a deadline will result in a zero for work due. It is especially important in an online class that you look ahead and keep yourself current with upcoming projects and weekly assignments. If you have a technical or mechanical issue that will prevent you from completing your work, contact me immediately. Otherwise, if I don’t hear from you by the time your work is due, I will not accept it. An outline of deadlines is included in the schedule in this syllabus. More specific assignment details will become available in the **coursework modules** at least a week prior to a deadline.

Writing Studio

If you'd like additional writing help, contact the **WVU Writing Studio** (<https://speakwrite.wvu.edu/students>) to schedule an appointment with a writing consultant.

Mental Health Services

Finally, mental health concerns or stressful events can adversely affect your academic performance and social relationships. WVU offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns that you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at the Carruth Center for Psychological and Psychiatric Services (CCPPS) website: <https://carruth.wvu.edu/>

If you are in need of crisis services, call the CCPPS main number 24/7: (304) 293-4431.

Required Work

To achieve the course goals outlined above, you will be writing reflective and analytical texts, participating in class discussions on the eCampus Discussion Board (DB), and otherwise demonstrating your knowledge of rhetorical concepts and how they are, could, or should be used in professional communication practice. You will be evaluated on the following course assignments:

- Quizzes & Exam – 30%, 150 pts. Total
- Discussion Board (DB) Forums – 35%, 175 pts. Total
- Research Presentation (LR & Proposal) – 35%, 175 pts. Total

Quizzes: & Exam

The seven quizzes and midterm exam ensure that you are reading the required material, help you remember what you read, and help you prepare for analytical writing assignments. If you read carefully, you should pass these tests. Quiz and exam due dates are indicated in the course schedule and cannot be made up; while the quiz will be available to you for several days, once you start the quiz, you must complete it. (Eight quizzes are scheduled, so one quiz grade [lowest score] will be dropped.)

Discussion Board (DB) Forums

These writing exercises include reflective writing, assignments from your textbooks, or analyses explained in the biweekly Coursework Modules. You will submit all of these assignments to the appropriate eCampus Discussion Board (DB) Forum unless otherwise directed by your instructor. All writing assignments are due by midnight (i.e. 11:59 pm) on the due date specified in the Coursework Modules and schedule below.

Please note that you are expected to read your peers' questions and comments posted on the eCampus DB on a regular basis. Your participation in the course should involve commenting on others' posts, answering questions (when you can), and carrying on a professional, friendly, productive dialogue with your instructor and peers. Your DB activity is graded; assessment criteria are included in the grading rubric available on eCampus and listed in the "Grading" section below. While there is no required word count (length) for your posts, most of your initial DB posts should be at least 150 words to have a chance at meeting the criteria for "superior" work. While you should be responding to questions and comments on your own thread when appropriate, *the required DB response posts should be to two of your peers' initial posts—responses on your own thread then become grade boosters (for individual DBs and participation).*

You'll see that there is one week where you have been assigned the task of locating discourse for our class discussion. More details will follow on eCampus, but note that in that week, you'll have three deadlines (instead of two). You'll need to post your discourse by Sunday of the week prior; then, as usual, you will post your initial analysis of that discourse by Thursday and response posts by Sunday. This schedule (with your

COURSE GRADE

Course grades will be calculated by points earned through completed work:

A-/A/A+ = 90–100% (450-500 points)

B-/B/B+ = 80–89% (400-449 points)

C-/C/C+ = 70–79% (350-399 points)

D-/D/D+ = 60–69% (300-349 points)

F = 0-59.4% (0-299 points)

(Percentages rounded up at 0.5; -/+ added for bottom/top ranges [e.g., 89.5–90.4% = A-; 99.5–100% = A+])

names highlighted in blue and white) was created before class started, so note that assignments might be updated based on class adds/drops. Be sure to stay up to date on eCampus.

Research Presentation (Literature Review & Proposal)

The research presentation—which combines a literature review and primary research proposal—allows you to investigate an area of interest in your field for future research. You may have noticed the hefty weight assigned to this project—that’s because it will enable you to combine the skills practiced in the first half of the term (rhetorical judgement) with a practical application of those skills (objectively identifying trends and research needs in your field). Instructions for these assignments will be available in corresponding coursework modules on eCampus.

Participation

Participation includes your interaction with other students and your instructor on the course Discussion Board, as well as doing each of the assigned reading and writing activities. Your participation grade is combined with DB posts (since you are required to respond to your peers’ initial posts in each of those DB Forum assignments, including peer review of a classmate’s annotated bibliography/matrix).

Submitting Required Work

Each unit of this course has a **coursework module** identifying unit objectives and containing weekly folders of instructions, supplementary files, and assignment/quiz submission links for related unit work. Most submitted work is due on Thursday (by midnight) or Sunday (by midnight). Do not submit work via links (e.g., to Google Docs), and do not attach .pages files, as those might not be accessible. Work submitted incorrectly or late will not be graded and will be recorded as a zero for failure to submit work according to the guidelines.

Assignment Preparation

I recommend writing Discussion Board (DB) Forum posts in Microsoft Word (or equivalent), saving them to your own files, and then copying and pasting the text from your Word document into the DB text editor. That way, if eCampus automatically logs you off of the course page, all of your work won’t be lost.

All assignments submitted as attachments should be submitted as document files (.doc, .docx, .pdf, .xls, .xlsx, or .rtf) or image files (.jpg, .png). The literature review assignments will require you adhere to a specific style (either APA or Chicago). Style information is available in the “Course Information” page of our WVU eCampus course site.

Schedule of Work Due

In the schedule below, **RA = Rhetorical Analysis: A Brief Guide for Writers is abbreviated**. Supplementary readings are available on eCampus. If readings change, this will be noted on eCampus.

Due dates	Reading	Discussion Board (DB) Forums	Writing	Quiz
Coursework Module: Intro to Class and Rhetoric				
Due Thurs. 8/18	– Course Syllabus, Announcements and Messages	DB Forum #1	– Start-of-Term Survey	
Due Sun. 8/21	– RA Ch. 1 – Foss, Foss & Trapp, <i>Perspectives on the Study of Rhetoric</i> (available on eCampus)	DB Forum #1 (responses)		

Due dates	Reading	Discussion Board (DB) Forums	Writing	Quiz
Coursework Module: Rhetorical Concepts (Kairos, Argument, Structure, Style)				
Due Thurs. 8/25	– RA Ch. 2 – Appendices A, B, C – Check next week’s DB instructions early to see if you’re assigned to share discourse on Sunday!	DB Forum #2		– Quiz #1 (on RA Ch. 2)
Due Sun. 8/28		DB Forum #2 (responses)		
Due Mon. 8/29	Assigned students (Larry A, Kennadie B, Melinda C, Haley D), post discourse options for DB#3			
Due Thurs. 9/1	– RA Ch. 3	DB Forum #3		– Quiz #2 (on RA Ch. 3)
Due Sun. 9/4		DB Forum #3 (responses)		
Due Mon. 9/5	Assigned students (Kyra F, Jordan H, Erin L, Alex M), post discourse options for DB#4			
Due Thurs. 9/8	– Supplementary material on eCampus	DB Forum #4		
Due Sun. 9/11		DB Forum #4 (responses)		
Due Mon. 9/12	Assigned students (Shawnte M, Mackenzie R, Heather R, Stephanie S), post discourse options for DB#5			
Due Thurs. 9/15	– RA Ch. 4	DB Forum #5		– Quiz #3 (on RA Ch. 4)
Due Sun. 9/18		DB Forum #5 (responses)		
Due Mon. 9/19	Assigned students (Emma S, Lee S, Julia S, Jenna S), post discourse options for DB#6			
Due Thurs. 9/22	– RA Ch. 5	DB Forum #6		– Quiz #4 (on RA Ch. 5)
Due Sun. 9/25		DB Forum #6 (responses)		
Due Thurs. 9/29	– Review RA Chs. 1-5, DB Forums	DB Forum #7		Midterm Exam
Due Sun. 10/2		DB Forum #7 (responses)		
Due dates	Reading	Discussion Board (DB) Forums	Writing	Quiz
Coursework Module: Rhetoric & Professional Writing/Research				
Due Thurs. 10/6	– Supplementary Material on eCampus ([1] Rosenberg, Reading Games ; [2] group article [see eCampus for your assigned group/reading])	DB Forum #8 (Intragroup post)		
Due Sun. 10/9	– Intragroup DB Forum #8 discussions <i>Note that Friday this week is considered Fall Break.</i>	DB Forum #8 (Intragroup responses)		
Due Thurs. 10/13	– Intergroup DB Forum #8 posts (comments to other groups’ forums)	DB Forum #8 (Intergroup responses)		
Due Sun. 10/16	– ARP Ch. 1, 2 – Driscoll, Introduction to Primary Research: Observations, Surveys, and Interviews			– Quiz #5 (on ARP 1, 2)
Due Thurs. 10/20	– Supplementary material on quantitative research – Quantitative research article (see eCampus)	DB Forum #9		
Due Sun. 10/23		DB Forum #9 (responses)		– Quiz #6 (on quant. research)
Due Thurs. 10/27	– Supplementary material on qualitative research – Qualitative research article (see eCampus)	DB Forum #10		

Due Sun. 10/30		DB Forum #10 (responses)		– Quiz #7 (on qual. research)
Due dates	Reading	Discussion Board (DB) Forums	Writing	Quiz
Coursework Module: Research Presentation (Literature Review [LR] & Research Proposal [RP])				
Due Thurs. 11/3	– ARP Ch. 3 – Supplementary material on literature reviews (eCampus)			– Quiz #8 (on UNC handout & ARP 3)
Due Sun. 11/6	– Developing a Research Question	DB Forum #11		
Due Thurs. 11/10	– Supplementary material on conducting library research (eCampus)	DB Forum #11 (responses)		
Due Sun. 11/13	– Your research			
Due Thurs. 11/17		DB Forum #12	– Research Matrix OR AB & RQs	
Due Sun. 11/20		DB Forum #12 (responses)		
Week of 11/21–27	Fall Recess <i>Eat turkey and cranberries, take a nap, and then work on your Research Presentation</i>			
Due Thurs. 12/1	– Your research/writing	DB Qs Forum (optional)		
Due Sun. 12/4	– Your research/writing			
Due Thurs. 12/8		DB Forum #13 (Final Reflection)	– Final Research Presentation – eSEI	

Grading

Rubric for major assignments will be available on eCampus, but generally, when evaluating each of your writing assignments, I will ask one overriding question: *Does this document do its job successfully?* The “job,” or purpose, of your matrix and literature review will be explained on eCampus.

Even the reflective and less formal writing exercises (DB Forum posts) have a “job” to do; while mechanics becomes less important in accomplishing writing goals in eCampus Discussion Board (DB) posts, standards of content, detail, development, and clarity still weigh heavily. Keeping this in mind, your DB posts and participation will be assessed using the following criteria:

	A – Superior	B – Good	C – Competent	D – Marginally acceptable	F – Unacceptable
Critical Thinking	Rich in content, insight, and analysis	Contains substantial information, thought, insight, and analysis has clearly taken place	Generally competent, yet information is thin and commonplace	Rudimentary and superficial, displaying no analysis or insight	Displays no analysis or insight
Connections	Clear connection to previous or current content, course readings, and to real-life situations	Contains new connections that lack depth or detail	Limited, if any connections or vague generalities	No connections are made or are off topic	Makes no connections

Uniqueness	New ideas and new connections made with depth and detail	Contains new ideas that lack depth or detail	Few, if any, new ideas; rehashes or summarizes other postings	No new ideas or “I agree/disagree with...” statement without explanation	Contributes no new ideas
Timeliness	All required postings appear early and throughout the discussion	All required postings with some not in time for others to respond	All required postings with most at the last minute without allowing time for others to respond	Some or all required postings missing	Most or all required postings missing
Stylistics	Few grammatical or stylistic errors	Several grammatical or stylistic errors	Obvious grammatical or stylistic errors that interfere with the readability of content	Obvious grammatical or stylistic errors that make understanding nearly impossible	Grammatical or stylistic errors make understanding nearly impossible or impossible