

ENGL 301: Writing Theory & Practice

ENGL 301 CRN 11911

Spring 2020: T/R 2:30 -3:45pm

G18 Colson Hall

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Office Hours: T/R 1–2:30 pm & by appointment most days, M-F

REQUIRED TEXTS AND SUPPLIES

You must have the required textbooks for this course. You will have assigned readings almost every class period. Please note that the WVU Bookstore will price match.

- Longaker, Mark Garrett and Jeffrey Walker. *Rhetorical Analysis: A Brief Guide for Writers*. Pearson. 2011. ISBN: 978-0-205-56570-2
- Leavy, Patricia. *Research Design: Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods, Arts-Based, and Community-Based Participatory Research Approaches*. Guilford. 2017. ISBN 978-1-4625-1438-0
- Access to and familiarity with resources on *Writing Commons*: <https://writingcommons.org/>
- A working MIX address and access to WVU eCampus and Google Classroom
- Additional material placed on eCampus or Google Classroom
- Additional material located by you via the Internet and WVU Libraries research tools

OVERVIEW & COURSE GOALS

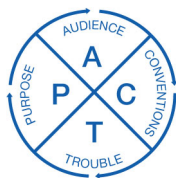
Why do we write what we write? Why does it sometimes work? Why does it sometimes fail?

This course invites you to engage in rhetorical analysis of professional documents and to review quantitative and qualitative research methods commonly used by writing professionals. By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Define rhetoric, including concepts such as *kairos*, *techné*, and *praxis*
- Identify key rhetorical concepts in your own and others' writing
- Evaluate how rhetorical concepts (*including* PACT) inform professional writing practices
- Identify various research methods relevant to organizational communication and define concepts such as *validity* and *reliability*
- Analyze & research a current issue in organizational or professional communication
- Prepare research to improve professional or organizational communication practices

Final Grades

- A = 90-100%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- D = 60-69%
- F = <59%



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). You can find resources at [SpeakWrite.wvu.edu](https://speakwrite.wvu.edu).

You can also get assistance through the **WVU Writing Studio** (<https://speakwrite.wvu.edu/students>). To schedule an appointment, call 304-293-5788, stop by G02 Colson Hall, or schedule online (<https://wvu.campus.eab.com>).

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

You will be evaluated on the following course assignments:

Assignments and Due Dates	Points	Percent of Grade
10 Weekly Responses @ 10 pts each (due most Thursdays)	100 total	20%
Rhetorical Analysis (due 2/18)	50	10%
Quantitative Research Article Analysis (due 3/10)	50	10%
Qualitative Research Article Analysis (due 3/24)	50	10%
Annotated Bibliography (draft 4/2; final 4/14)	100	20%
Mixed Methods Res. Proposal (draft 4/21; final 4/30)	100	20%
Participation (see assessment criteria)	50	10%
Total Points	500	100%

- **Weekly Responses (20%, 100 pts. total).** Most weeks, I will ask you to complete brief writing exercises (worth 10 pts each) that ask you to analyze, reflect, or respond to our readings. Since many of your posts will be the base for in-class discussions and activities, please be sure to complete your writing **before the start of class** on the due date specified in the course schedule. When I read these weekly responses, I mainly want you to show that you are **actively** reading and engaging with the materials.
- **Rhetorical Analysis (10%, 50 points).** Drawing on key concepts from *Rhetorical Analysis* by Longaker and Walker, you will identify two credible, non-fiction texts that discuss a topic of interest for you. (Both texts should address the same topic.) Each of your selections should be *at least* 500 words long and should represent two different types of writing (e.g. a newspaper article and a public letter; a blog post and a transcript of a speech or video; a popular magazine article and a scholarly article; etc.) Your task is to write a paper that compares and contrasts the purposes, the audiences, conventions, as well as more specific rhetorical choices in each type of writing. Why does each author write? Where, how, and why does each piece of writing succeed or fail?
- **Quantitative Research Article Analysis (10%, 50 points).** Based on Chapters 3 and 4 in *Research Design* by Leavy (2017) and using the topic you have selected for your research design activities, locate a peer-reviewed journal article that employs a quantitative research design. *Articles using a mixed methods research design are not appropriate for this assignment.* Summarize and critique four elements in the article: (1) the research design; (2) the findings; (3) the limitations; and (4) the validity and reliability.
- **Qualitative Research Article Analysis (10%, 50 points).** Based on Chapters 3 and 5 in *Research Design* by Leavy (2017) and using the topic you have selected for your research design activities, locate a peer-reviewed journal article that employs a qualitative research design. *Articles using a mixed methods research design are not appropriate for this assignment.* Summarize and critique four elements in the article: (1) the research design; (2) the findings; (3) the limitations; and (4) the validity and reliability.
- **Annotated Bibliography (20%, 100 pts.).** Using the topic you have selected for your research design activities, you will find, evaluate, select, cite, and summarize at least nine scholarly, peer-reviewed research articles. Three sources should be quantitative studies, three should be qualitative, and three should be mixed method. You can count the research articles that you used in for your qualitative and quantitative analyses. Note: Your full collection of nine sources will prepare you for the final project: a mixed method research design proposal.
- **Mixed Method Research Design Proposal (20%, 100 pts.).** Using the topic you have selected for your research design activities, design a proposal for a potential new study with a mixed method approach. Use chapter 3 as well as chapter 6 of Leavy (2017) to guide your proposal.
- **Participation (10%, 50 pts. total):** Your active participation is what makes class interesting! I count on you to take time before class to read carefully, take notes, and complete any assigned writing. In class, I value your responses to short, in-class writing prompts and I look forward to hearing you contribute your knowledge, questions, and insights! (Please take a look at the participation criteria below for more detail.)

FEEDBACK. On weekly responses, I will often provide feedback to the class as a whole to note strengths to maintain and trouble spots to avoid as you continue to improve your abilities to explain and apply key course concepts. For the other assignments, we will spend some class time working through challenges together. For the annotated bibliography and research proposal, you will get comments on drafts before the final version is due. At any point during the semester, you are welcome to meet during office hours (or by appointment) for additional feedback.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Writing. Effective communication relies on clear prose that attends to purpose and audience as well as conventions and context. Clear communication also anticipates questions and avoids trouble spots. (PACT is a useful acronym to remember these four points.) When I evaluate your writing, I will always look first at the quality of your ideas, but exceptional writing must also demonstrate quality of expression and initiative. My criteria include the following:

- **A – Superior:** The work is of near professional quality. The document meets *or exceeds* the goals and purpose of the assignment. The content is mature, thorough, and well suited for the audience. The style is clear and accurate. The information is well organized and designed and uses appropriate conventions (including correct grammar, mechanics, and documentation). No trouble spots get in the way of achieving goals.
- **B – Good:** The document generally meets its purpose, but would benefit from greater clarity (perhaps by developing one or two points). The writer may need to anticipate audience needs and questions more fully at one or two points. In terms of conventions, the writer may have missed easily correctable errors in grammar, format, or style.
- **C – Competent:** The document needs significant improvement in concept, details, development, organization, grammar, or format. It may be formally correct but superficial in content. It stands a chance of meeting its goals in terms of audience, purpose, and conventions, but a few trouble spots remain.
- **D – Marginally Acceptable:** The document meets some of the objectives but ignores others. Trouble spots are serious--such as under-developed content or so many errors that they start to disrupt meaning. The work requires extensive revisions.
- **F – Unacceptable:** The document fails to meet basic goals. It does not have enough information, does something other than the assignment required, or it contains excessive errors. A document will also fail if it is not the writer's original work.

Participation: This course relies on a strong community where everyone participates, so your participation will be evaluated using the following rubric:

- **A:** You are prepared for every class period and contribute to class discussion every day; this includes bringing the course materials on a daily basis. You have insightful and relevant contributions and you go above and beyond an average engagement with the day's readings/activity. You respond to your peers' comments and questions, ask questions of your own, and help facilitate dialogue.
- **B:** You are prepared for every class period and contribute to most class discussions; you usually have the course materials. Comments are relevant and insightful and demonstrate a careful reading of the texts assigned. You respond to other's comments on a regular basis and you take an active role in class activities.
- **C:** You are typically prepared for class and contribute to class discussion approximately half of the time; you bring the course materials about half of the time. Sometimes your contributions are off-topic or prevent dialogue from moving forward. During group work, you take on a quiet role.
- **D:** You rarely comment or add insight to class discussion; you rarely bring the course materials. You do not display your preparedness for class, which is reflected by class discussion and/or low response scores. You may show little interest in the material and are off task during class (reading

non-relevant material, sending text messages, sleeping, etc.). You may have missed as many as four classes.

- **F:** You arrive late to class, are unprepared for class discussion/activities, distract others, intentionally offend others, fail to follow the classroom policies and procedures and/or have missed 5 or more classes.

COURSE POLICIES

You can access and read institution-level policies here: <https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements>, including policies for adverse weather, sexual misconduct, academic integrity, inclusivity, and campus safety.

Here are additional details for policies particularly relevant to this course:

- **Attendance:** absolutely necessary and expected. Two absences are allowed; each additional absence may lower your final grade up to 50 pts. If something serious prevents you from coming to class, contact me as soon as possible.
- **Late work:** unprofessional. All writers improve by writing, by receiving timely feedback, and by writing some more. Late work interrupts that process by delaying feedback from others (including me) and by compressing your time between writings. When I receive work late--even just a day or two after the deadline, it has to go to the end of that week's "to-do" list because, like you, I juggle multiple deadlines and obligations. When I do respond, it's likely that I will be very brief. If you believe you have compelling and exceptional circumstances that I need to understand, please write me a detailed explanation and set up a meeting with me. Finally, please remember that the end of the semester imposes a final deadline on all of us. I generally do not give incompletes.
- **Professional Etiquette.** Etiquette is really all about making people feel respected and appreciated. Whether in class or in a meeting, please focus on faces, not phones/e-mail.

RESOURCES

- **Eberly Writing Studio.** For more information about writing and presentation support offered through the SpeakWrite Studio, visit <https://speakwrite.wvu.edu/students> or stop by G02 Colson.
- **WellWVU: The Students' Center of Health.** Well WVU: The Students' Center for Health provides resources to help manage stress, improve relationships, make healthy lifestyle choices, and face new challenges and transitions. Visit: <https://well.wvu.edu/>

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SCHEDULE OF WORK

The schedule of work below is subject to minor changes based on our progress. Changes will always be posted online.

Please Note: If WVU ever needs to cancel classes, we will typically maintain our schedule by continuing our work online.

Weeks	Topics and Activities	Assignments & Readings DUE
Week 1: January 14-16 *Jan 17: last day to add/drop classes without a "W"	Tuesday: Intros and Syllabus Review	
	Thursday: Identifying a research design topic related to Professional Writing	Read: <i>Rhetorical Analysis</i> —Ch. 1, pp.1-6 <i>Research Design</i> —Ch 1, pp. 3-8
Week 2: January 21-23 *Jan 20 is MLK Day	Tuesday: Perspectives on the Study of Rhetoric	Read: Foss, Foss, & Trapp, "Perspectives on the Study of Rhetoric" (PDF on eCampus)
	Thursday: Rhetoric of Resumes and Cover Letters	Read: Write: Weekly Response #1
Week 3: January 28-30	Tuesday: Kairos and the Rhetorical Situation	Read: <i>Rhetorical Analysis</i> —Ch. 2
	Thursday: Kairos and the Rhetorical Situation	Write: Weekly Response #2
Week 4: February 4-6	Tuesday: Argument: Pisteis, Topics, Stases	Read: <i>Rhetorical Analysis</i> —Ch. 3
	Thursday: Argument: Pisteis, Topics, Stases	Write: Weekly Response #3
Week 5: February 11-13	Tuesday: Structure and Form	Read: <i>Rhetorical Analysis</i> —Ch. 4
	Thursday: Structure and Form	Write: Weekly Response #4
Week 6: February 18-20	Tuesday: Style	Read: <i>Rhetorical Analysis</i> —Ch. 5 Due: Rhet Analysis
	Thursday: Style	Write: Weekly Response #5
Week 7: February 25-27 *Mid-semester	Tuesday: Review & Renew ABC Review of <i>Rhetorical Analysis</i> Intro to <i>Research Design</i> , Ethics in Research	Read: <i>Research Design</i> —Ch 2 pp. 23-53
	Thursday: Getting Started on Research Design	Read: <i>Research Design</i> —Ch 3, pp. 54-83 Write: Weekly Response #6
Week 8: March 3-5	Tuesday: Quantitative Research Design	Read: <i>Research Design</i> —Ch 4, pp. 87-123
	Thursday: Quantitative Research Design	Write: Weekly Response #7
Week 9: March 10-12	Tuesday: Qualitative Research Design	Read: <i>Research Design</i> —Ch 5, pp. 124-63 Due: Quantitative Article Analysis
	Thursday: Qualitative Research Design	Write: Weekly Response #8
Week 10: March 16-20. Spring Break: No Classes		
Week 11: March 24-26	Tuesday: Mixed Methods Research Design	Read: <i>Research Design</i> —Ch 6, pp. 164-90 Due: Qualitative Article Analysis
	Thurs: Mixed Methods Research Design	Write: Weekly Response #9

Week 12: Mar 31-April 2	Tuesday: In-class Library Workshop	
	Thursday: In-class Peer Review Workshop	Due: Annotated Bib—full draft
Week 13: April 7-9 *Fri, Apr 10: No Classes	Tuesday: No class: Individual Conferences	
	Thursday: No class: Individual Conferences	
Week 14: April 14-16	Tuesday: Community-Based Participatory Research ABC Review of <i>Research Design</i>	Due: Annotated Bib FINAL version (intro and all sources) SKIM: <i>Research Design</i> —Ch 8, pp. 224-54
	Thursday: <i>Research Design Proposal Template</i> on pages 186-87 and Point 2 under “Further Engagement” on pp. 188-89.	Re-Read: <i>Research Design</i> —Ch 6, pp. 164-90
Week 15: April 21-23	Tuesday: Rhetorical Presentations Infographics, research posters, elevator speeches, abstracts, and screencasts	Due: Mixed Methods Research Design Proposal--DRAFT
	Thursday: Rhetorical Presentations Infographics, research posters, elevator speeches, abstracts, and screencasts	Write: Weekly Response #10
Week 16: April 28-30 * last week of classes	Tuesday: Rhetorical Presentations Infographics, research posters, elevator speeches, abstracts, and screencasts	
	Thursday: Last class. Reflecting back and thinking ahead.	Due: Mixed Methods Research Design Proposal--FINAL