**English 4370: Rhetoric and Composition for Secondary School Teachers**

**Spring 2018 Policy Statement and Syllabus**

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**Course Information:** Section 001; Tu,Th 9:30-10:50; Preston Hall 206

**Course Description:** This course is required for students pursuing an English BA with Secondary Teacher Certification, so these students constitute the primary audience. However, the course is designed to appeal to any student interested in the history, theory, and practice 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 influences the type of language instruction predominant in public education.

As we delve into rhetorical theory as manifested in the English/Language Arts classroom, we’ll consider questions like the following: 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 to study composition is to study writing instruction *as* a research field. Consequently, the content knowledge you acquire will inform your own teaching practices. As you learn what pedagogical practices are supported by the latest scholarship in rhetoric and composition, 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 take you “behind the scenes” of 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.
* 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 composing writing assignments for 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*. 3rd ed. New York: Norton, 2014.
* An UTA email address that **YOU CHECK DAILY**.

**Assignments:**

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

Final Exam **20%**

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

Paper assignments align with the writing sections of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) end-of-course assessments for English I, II, and III, as well as the free-response section of the Advanced Placement (AP) English Language and Composition Exam. Thus, these assignments are entirely appropriate for high school students. At the same time, these assignments require higher-order thinking and thus can accommodate varying levels of sophistication. Your versions of these papers undoubtedly will be more advanced than your high school students’, but the experience of writing them will prepare you to teach them (or modified versions of them).

Effective writing requires drafting and revising, particularly when it is intended for outside readers, who often provide feedback to which you must respond. Your papers in this course will not reach their full potential unless you begin them well in advance of due dates, allow your ideas to incubate, and respond actively to my and your peers’ comments. For your 2nd and 3rd papers, you will be required to submit a topic proposal prior to drafting. For all your papers, you will be required to make a first submission that will receive extended feedback. **A first submission is not a rough draft**; rather, it is more like a piece you 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 submission of a topic proposal, first submission, or final submission will result in a full letter grade penalty on that assignment for each day it is late.**

Class participation counts for the same percentage of your grade as a major paper assignment. There are two main reasons for this. First, a main objective of this course is to develop your skills in critical thinking and public discourse, and our classroom is the primary playing field where you’ll practice these skills. Second, your own experiences in classes that taught reading and writing will form part of our course content, the specific cases to which we will apply theoretical knowledge. Everyone in the class is depending on you to share your experiences and to help us compile a representative sample of current teaching practices. You cannot simply sit back and listen and expect to succeed in this course. You must overcome any discomfort you feel when speaking in class, and I’ll try to make this easier by building a classroom atmosphere that is informal and lively, a place where vigorous, respectful discussion occurs daily.

The final exam is comprehensive and is intended to ensure that you have retained the key principles from the dozen or so dialogic 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.

**Attendance and Tardiness:** 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 attend **every single class** and to be on time. Specific policies are as follows:

* Arriving to class late is disruptive and disrespectful to me and your classmates; therefore, tardies result in a letter-grade deduction for that day’s participation grade.
* The latest research indicates that despite college students’ belief that they are good at multitasking, their learning suffers significantly when it is interrupted by digital media. Consequently, the use of cell phones, tablets, or laptops during class is strictly prohibited. The use of any electronic device during class will result in a zero participation grade for that day.
* Absences result in a zero participation grade for that day.
* **Four unexcused absences** will lower your overall semester grade by a full letter.
* **Five unexcused 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:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Disability Accommodations:** UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA),* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of **a letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD).Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

**The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364.Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability).

Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS) [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit*[*uta.edu/eos*](http://www.uta.edu/hr/eos/index.php)*.*

**Title IX Policy:** The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit*[www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or <jmhood@uta.edu>.

**Academic Integrity:** Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>.

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**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 as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory will be asked to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS) about the course and how it was taught. Instructions on how to access the SFS system will be sent directly to students through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback data is required by state law; student participation in the SFS program is voluntary.

**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 English Writing Center (411 LIBR)**: The Writing Center Offers free tutoring in 20-, 40-, or 60-minute face-to-face and online sessions to all UTA students on any phase of their UTA coursework. Our hours are 9 am to 8 pm Mon.-Thurs., 9 am-3 pm Fri. and Noon-6 pm Sat. and Sun. Register and make appointments online at http://uta.mywconline.com. Classroom Visits, workshops, and specialized services for graduate students are also available. Please see [www.uta.edu/owl](http://www.uta.edu/owl) for detailed information on all our programs and services.

**January 16** Review course policy statement and syllabus.

**January 18** Introductions; “Rhetoric vs. Philosophy.”

**January 23**  Continue “Rhetoric vs. Philosophy.”

**January 25** “Introducing Argument”; “Identifying Central Claims”; “Rhetorical Analysis Questions.”

**For next class: read Shumer, “Finland Not an Apt Educational Model for U.S. Schools.”**

**January 30** In-class rhetorical analysis of Shumer.

**For next class: read Ch. 1, Ch. 7 in *They Say/I Say*.**

**February 1 Assign Rhetorical Analysis.**

**February 6** “Introducing a Rhetorical Theory of Texts.”

**For next class: read Preface, Introduction, Ch. 9 in *They Say/I Say.***

**February 8** Continue “Introducing a Rhetorical Theory of Texts”; discuss reading.

**For next class: first submission of Rhetorical Analysis due.**

**February 13** “A Brief History of Composition”

**For next class: first submission of Rhetorical Analysis due.**

**February 15 First submission of Rhetorical Analysis due.**

Continue “A Brief History of Composition.”

**February 20** Feedback on first submission returned; discuss first submissions, grading criteria and grading rubric; “Revision”; continue “A Brief History of Composition.”

**February 22** Continue “A Brief History of Composition.”

**February 27** Continue “A Brief History of Composition”; “Rhetorical Chairs.”

**For next class: final submission of Rhetorical Analysis due.**

**March 1 Final submission of Rhetorical Analysis due.**

Continue “Rhetorical Chairs.”

**For next class: read Ch. 4, Ch. 6 in *They Say/I Say*.**

**March 6 Assign Synthesis Argument.**

**March 8** Pass back graded papers and review model paper.

**By Saturday, March 10 at 11:59 p.m.: topic proposal for Synthesis Argument due.**

**For next class: read Ch. 2, Ch. 3, Ch. 5 in *They Say/I Say.***

**March 13, 15** Spring break.

**March 20** Discuss assigned reading; “Incorporating Sources Effectively.”

**For next class: first submission of Synthesis Argument due.**

**March 22** **First submission of Synthesis Argument due.**

“Best Practices for Constructing Writing Assignments.”

**March 27** Feedback on first submission returned; discuss first submissions, grading criteria, and grading rubric; “Best Practices for Instructor Review.”

**March 29** “Best Practices for Grading Student Writing”; “Problems and Possibilities of Standard English.”

**April 3** Continue “Problems and Possibilities of Standard English.”

**For next class: final submission of Synthesis Argument due.**

**April 5 Final submission of Synthesis Argument due.**

Continue “Problems and Possibilities of Standard English.”

**April 10 Assign Researched Argument.**

**April 12** Pass back graded papers and review model paper.

**By Saturday, April 14 at 11:59 p.m.: topic proposal for Researched Argument due.**

**For next class: read Warren, “Taming the Warrant.”**

**April 17** Discuss assigned reading, practice identifying warrants.

**For next class: first submission of Researched Argument due.**

**April 19 First submission of Researched Argument due.**

“Peer Review.”

**For next class: peer review of Researched Argument due**

**April 24 Peer review of Researched Argument due.**

Feedback on first submission returned; discuss first submissions, grading criteria, and grading rubric.

**April 26** Catch-up day.

**May 1** “Rhetoric vs. Philosophy Revisited.”

**For next class: final submission of Researched Argument due.**

**May 3 Final submission of Researched Argument due.**

Continue “Rhetoric vs. Philosophy Revisited”; review for final exam; Student Feedback Surveys.

**May 10 Final exam, 8:00-10:30.**