

ENG 301 Advanced Composition  
Syllabus – Term

Professor: Dr. Kristin LaFollette  
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Office: Orr Center 3007  
Office hours: (or by appointment)

Credits: 3 credit hours  
Meeting time/location:  
Pre-requisite: ENG 201

**Course Description**

ENG 301 is an advanced composition course with a flexible format; the course emphasizes the analysis of various rhetorical situations and the cultivation of prose styles appropriate to these situations.

This course introduces students to key terms, concepts, theories, and approaches to rhetoric and writing and asks students to draw on that knowledge to analyze and produce a variety of genres, both alphabetic and multimodal, for a variety of audiences and purposes. This course provides a broad theoretical framework intended to help students critically analyze authentic texts characteristic of their discipline/major as well as texts that circulate beyond and across traditional academic boundaries. Students will develop a nuanced understanding of concepts and practices widely used by contemporary rhetoricians to better understand and manipulate the discourses that suffuse their literate worlds.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

## Rhetorical Knowledge

- Analyze and adapt key rhetorical strategies within disciplines/fields by reading, analyzing, and composing in a variety of texts

## Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing

- Distinguish ideas in primary and secondary sources
- Analyze and contribute to critical conversations

## Processes

- Assess and address appropriate audiences and contexts
- Construct effective delivery within different genres
- Employ research methods within disciplines/fields
- Compose recursively through invention, drafting, collaboration, and revision

## Conventions

- Identify the appropriate genre conventions for particular writing situations
- Select language appropriate for the rhetorical context
- Implement the citation conventions within the discipline/field

**Program Learning Outcomes**

Mission: "Through the study of literature and writing, the Department of English prepares students to communicate effectively, think imaginatively, and live wisely in a diverse world."

**Textbook/Course Materials**

- There is not a required text for this course; instead, I will post readings throughout the course of the semester on Blackboard.

- Access to Blackboard

### **Assessment**

#### *Grading Events*

Project #1	50 points
Project #2	50 points
Project #3	100 points
Presentation	50 points
Attendance/participation	50 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>300 points</b>

#### *Grading Scale*

A	270-300
B+	255-269
B	240-254
C+	225-239
C	210-224
D+	195-209
D	180-194
F	0-179

All assignments will be turned in to the appropriate submission area on Blackboard. Feedback and grades will also be provided via Blackboard.

### **Grading/Assignment Policies**

#### *Late Work*

In general, I do not accept late work. If you submit an assignment late, you will not receive credit. If you are not able to complete an assignment on time, you must contact me before the assignment is due to receive an extension. Failure of computer technology is not an acceptable reason for late written work. You should start your written work early and “back up” your drafts and revisions. **YOU MUST SUBMIT EVERY MAJOR PROJECT IN THIS CLASS TO PASS. IF YOU FAIL TO SUBMIT ANY OF THE PROJECTS, YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY FAIL THE COURSE.**

#### *In-Class Activities*

There will often be activities completed during each class session. If you are absent, these activities cannot be made up.

#### *Participation*

Students are expected to attend all classes, and it is crucial that all students have done the reading(s) for each class period. Class participation through discussion is required and necessary. We will also be doing peer reviewing, which requires that students be in attendance and participate in class. Your participation/attendance score is worth 50 points at the end of the semester. You will lose 3 points for every class session missed (please see the full attendance policy below). Your participation score will be given holistically at the end of the course and will be based on your interactions in class (contributing to class discussion, asking questions, participating in group work, etc.).

**Course Policies***Academic Honesty*

All members of the university are accountable for their actions in maintaining high standards of academic integrity. Students are responsible for completing academic requirements without action and/or material that violate academic integrity. More information on academic integrity and the student code of conduct can be found at <https://www.usi.edu/deanofstudents/code>. The first incident of academic dishonesty will result in a 0 for the assignment. Further infractions will result in failure of the course. All academic dishonesty will be reported to the university.

*Professionalism*

Students should listen, engage, and appreciate an atmosphere of diversity and open discussion. Class discussion must be respectful; whenever students speak, they should be considerate of other students' feelings, use appropriate language, and make their points without being combative or confrontational. Students should not use discriminatory language regarding their fellow students' gender, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or anything else. Students should listen to one another, ask questions, and explain their disagreements without attacking others.

*Attendance*

I will take attendance each class session. Students may miss up to 4 class sessions; if a student misses more than 4 class sessions, they will be ineligible to pass the course. According to the University Handbook, "Students who expect to be absent from classes should confer with their instructors prior to the absence. Students who miss classes are not excused from their obligations to instructors" (84). University-sanctioned absences will count toward the total number of excused absences. Students who believe they cannot complete the semester without missing 4 class sessions should either seek another section that poses fewer conflicts with their extracurricular schedules or drop the course and enroll in it during another semester. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor in the case of an absence before class. Since we are all connected to our electronic devices, it is almost always possible to send an email or text message indicating that you will be absent from class.

*Late Arrivals/Early Departures*

Late arrivals/early departures are defined as follows: If you arrive after the first 10 minutes of class or leave with 10 or more minutes left in the class session. Every 3 times you are late or leave early, you will receive 1 absence.

*Technology*

I appreciate technology and think cell phones, tablets, computers, etc. can be great tools for learning and composing. That being said, please be respectful of the instructor and the rest of the class. Cell phones, tablets, and computers are permitted, but please don't allow them to distract you or your classmates from what's going on in class. Laptops are welcomed and encouraged.

*Communication*

Contact me and/or make an appointment to come see me in my office if you have questions or need help with your writing. You should always use your USI email address (be sure to check your USI email frequently) and contact me using my USI email address (which is available at the top of the syllabus). You should also be checking Blackboard regularly to stay on track.

*Names/Pronouns*

I want to refer to you by your preferred name/pronouns. Please let me know if what is listed on my roster is not what you prefer.

*Campus Resources*

- Academic Skills (ED 1111) – tutors, supplemental instruction, writing help ([usi.edu/university-division/academicskills](http://usi.edu/university-division/academicskills))
- The Writer's Room (ED 1102) – one-on-one sessions with a writing consultant (812-461-5359)
- Rice Library – help with research, finding resources, etc. ([usi.edu/library](http://usi.edu/library))
- Information Technology (IT) – help with computers, email, etc. ([usi.edu/it](http://usi.edu/it))

**University Policies***Accessibility*

If you have a disability for which you may require academic accommodations for this class, please register with Disability Resources (DR) as soon as possible. Students who have an accommodation letter from DR are encouraged to meet privately with course faculty to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as early in the semester as possible. To qualify for accommodation assistance, students must first register to use the disability resources in DR, Science Center 2206, 812-464-1961, [www.usi.edu/disabilities](http://www.usi.edu/disabilities). To help ensure that accommodations will be available when needed, students are encouraged to meet with course faculty at least 7 days prior to the actual need for the accommodation. Please contact Disability Resources as soon as possible to discuss accommodations needed for access while in this setting.

*Title IX – Sexual Misconduct*

USI does not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment and all forms of sexual violence. If you have experienced sexual misconduct, or know someone who has, the University can help. It is important to know that federal regulations and University policy require faculty to promptly report incidences of potential sexual misconduct known to them to the Title IX Coordinator to ensure that appropriate measures are taken and resources are made available. The University will work with you to protect your privacy by sharing information with only those who need to know to ensure we can respond and assist. If you are seeking help and would like to speak to someone confidentially, you can make an appointment with a counselor in the University Counseling Center. Find more information about sexual violence, including campus and community resources, at [www.usi.edu/stopsexualassault](http://www.usi.edu/stopsexualassault).

*Student Basic Needs*

Students who have difficulty affording food on a regular basis or lack a safe place to live and believe this may affect their class performance are encouraged to contact the Office of the Dean of Students. A list of resources can also be found at [www.usi.edu/media/5612733/financial-wellness-resources.pdf](http://www.usi.edu/media/5612733/financial-wellness-resources.pdf).

*Syllabus Change Policy*

This syllabus is a guide to the course and may be subject to change with reasonable advanced notice.

A note about style: Since this course is focused on getting you to think about writing in your field of study, you are free to choose which style guide to follow in your writing assignments (the most common style guides are MLA or APA, although Chicago style could be an option depending on your discipline). You should do a bit of research on which style guide your field uses, but MLA is typically used in the humanities and APA is typically used in the sciences and social sciences and in business and education. You will be expected to use your chosen style properly and consistently throughout the course of the semester; please use the Purdue OWL site as a resource.

## **Projects**

### *Project #1 – Faculty Interview and Article Analysis*

This project will give you the opportunity to further explore writing in your discipline. You will perform an interview with a faculty member in your field at the University of Southern Indiana. You must set up an appointment to meet with the faculty member in their office for the interview (and you should set this appointment up early in case they are busy or can't participate and you need to interview someone else). Here are some questions to consider as you prepare for your interview (but you can certainly ask other questions in addition to these):

- Why did your interviewee choose their particular field of study/research?
- Who are they as a researcher and a scholar?
- How does the faculty member “do” writing? For example, if they write emails, how are they written and who are they written to?

You should also ask your interviewee to recommend a pertinent academic article in your field for you to read and analyze. You will use this article to explore the rhetorical practices characteristic of the discipline and analyze the genre(s) produced by people in your discipline. While reading/analyzing the recommended article, consider the following:

- What is the article about? How does it connect to your field of study?
- Who is the author of the article? What is their background?
- What is unique about this article and, more specifically, how is it unique to your discipline?
- What types of writing are happening in your discipline that other disciplines aren't doing?
- Does the writing in your coursework and in your discipline/field match?

You will complete a write-up of your interview (where you discuss your questions and the interviewee's responses) and your article analysis, and this write-up will take the form of a 4-5-page essay.

### *Project #2 – Annotated Bibliography*

Now that you've had a chance to talk with a faculty member in your discipline and learn a bit more about research in your field, it's your turn to choose a topic to research in your discipline (you must choose a topic to research in *your* area of study). If you're unsure of a topic, talk to someone in your department, do some research, or browse threads/discussions in public forums (like Reddit or Twitter). (As an undergraduate, I was an English major; for my topic, I may have chosen to talk about different approaches to teaching composition, digital media and composition, the structure of creative writing workshops, or arts-based approaches to writing). Once you've chosen a topic, you will search for sources (primary and secondary, popular and scholarly) and use these sources to compile an annotated bibliography. You should have at least 8 sources for your annotated bibliography, although you can certainly have more. Your annotated bibliography should be formatted according to the style guide you used for Project #1 (according to what is used in your field), and each annotation should contain a proper citation and a paragraph (approximately 150-200 words) that summarizes the source and provides a

critical evaluation of the source. Consider some or all of the following as you critically evaluate each of your sources:

- Who is the author? Are they an expert on the subject they are researching/writing about? Are they from/do they represent a reputable institution?
- Is the author presenting facts? Are they unbiased? Are the sources the author is citing credible?
- Is the publisher and/or journal reputable?
- Is the source current? Is the information still relevant, or has more recent research been published on the topic?
- Is this source helpful for your assignment?

### *Project #3 Research Presentation*

Everyone will be required to give a presentation while working on the preliminary stages of Project #3, and you will be given a sign-up sheet so you can choose a date/time slot. Your presentation should be approximately 5 minutes in length (you should fully explain your topic and preliminary research but should not go so far over the requirement that we run out of time for everyone to present – your grade WILL be penalized if you are significantly over or under the required time). In addition to meeting the length requirement, you will also need to have a visual to accompany your presentation (like PowerPoint slides, a Prezi, a Piktochart, a handout, etc.). Your visual should outline and emphasize the main points of your presentation and preliminary research. Consider the following while putting together your presentation:

- What research topic did you choose? Why?
- Provide a brief overview of your preliminary research. What sources are you working with? What are your findings? What evidence supports your claim(s)?
- What multimodal form will your project take? Why?

### *Project #3 – Multimodal Research Project*

Project #3 will build upon Project #2 and you will create a research project that contains both a written and multimodal component. The written component of this project (4 pages) should provide a well-developed argument about your research topic and should articulate support for that argument (using the sources you discussed in your annotated bibliography). The other aspect of this project requires that you create a multimodal component. As we've discussed in class, multimodal means "many modes" and gives you the opportunity to compose beyond the written text. Composing multimodally gives you the chance to play into your individual skills and talents and communicate your goals (to your audience) in new and exciting ways. You should consider the following when deciding on what form your multimodal component will take:

- Audience awareness – Who is your audience? What form will best communicate your project/goals to that audience? How will you use rhetorical appeals to communicate effectively?
- Purpose – What are your goals/aims with this project? How do you want your audience to react to and interact with your project?
- Design – How will you design a quality project? How will you create balance, contrast, and unity in your project? How will you use color, space, shape, texture and other elements to create an interesting, well-crafted project?

While multimodal projects can take many forms, here are a few examples:

- A PowerPoint presentation
- A movie
- A website (using a tool like Weebly)
- A podcast

- A poster
- A photo essay
- An advertisement
- An infographic (using a tool like Piktochart)
- A collage

The multimodal component of your project should not merely illustrate your written component but should be an integral part of the project (don't look at the written and multimodal components as separate or as one "illustrating" another, but as tightly interwoven parts of the same project). For example (to return to my earlier example about a topic I may have chosen as an English major), if my topic was the structure of creative writing workshops, I might argue in my essay that the current way these workshops are run are counterproductive and don't help students become better writers. For my multimodal component, I might choose to create a "blueprint" as a poster where I propose a new structure for facilitating creative writing workshops (using a variety of materials to do so). Be as creative as you like; this is an opportunity for you to "think outside the box"!

**Course Schedule**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Class/Due Dates</b>	<b>Readings/Homework</b>
<b>Week #1</b>		
Tuesday, 1/14	Introduction to course, review syllabus and course schedule, Blackboard overview	Introductory questionnaire (Blackboard, extra credit)
Thursday, 1/16	Introduce Project #1 assignment, formatting/using Microsoft Word, email etiquette, introduce MLA and APA styles	Read "What is Rhetoric?" by Covino and Jolliffe (Blackboard)
<b>Week #2</b>		
Tuesday, 1/21	Discuss reading, continue discussing MLA and APA styles, develop interview questions	Read excerpts from <i>Naming What We Know</i> by Adler-Kassner and Wardle (Blackboard), schedule your interview, work on Project #1 interview questions
Thursday, 1/23	Discuss reading, audience/rhetorical awareness, writing as a social/rhetorical activity	Finish Project #1 interview questions
<b>Week #3</b>		
Tuesday, 1/28	<b>Complete interview,</b> discuss/practice analyzing a scholarly article	Read "The Concept of Discourse Community" by John Swales (Blackboard)
Thursday, 1/30	Discuss reading, discourse communities	
<b>Week #4</b>		
Tuesday, 2/4	<b>Complete article analysis,</b> small groups discuss article analyses, Project #1 work day	Read "Identity, Authority, and Learning to Write in New Workplaces" by Wardle (Blackboard)
Thursday, 2/6	Discuss reading, peer review practices/expectations	Review "Responding—Really Responding—to Other Students' Writing" by Straub (Blackboard) in preparation for peer review, work on Project #1 rough draft
<b>Week #5</b>		

Tuesday, 2/11	<b>Project #1 rough draft due,</b> peer review	Revise rough draft based on peer review feedback
Thursday, 2/13	<b>Project #1 final draft due,</b> introduce Project #2 assignment, review sample annotated bibliographies	
<b>Week #6</b>		
Tuesday, 2/18	Library research presentation (a representative from the library will come talk about research, finding resources, etc.)	Read excerpt (pp. 260-263) from "Ethos, Pathos, Logos, Kairos" by Rife and "Argument as Conversation" by Greene (Blackboard)
Thursday, 2/29	Discuss readings, developing a topic for Project #2/Project #3	Choose a topic for Project #2/Project #3
<b>Week #7</b>		
Tuesday, 2/25	<b>Project topic due,</b> sign up for conferences, small groups discuss topic ideas, work on finding sources	Review "Finding and Evaluating Sources" by Kirsznner and Mandell (Blackboard)
Thursday, 2/27	Project #2 work day, find and evaluate sources	Work on Project #2
<b>Week #8</b>		
Tuesday, 3/3	Conferences, sign up for a time slot to meet in my office	
Thursday, 3/5	Conferences, sign up for a time slot to meet in my office	Enjoy Spring Break!
<b>Week #9</b>		
Tuesday, 3/10	No class, Spring Break	
Thursday, 3/12	No class, Spring Break	Work on Project #2 rough draft
<b>Week #10</b>		
Tuesday, 3/17	<b>Project #2 rough draft due,</b> peer review	Revise rough draft based on peer review feedback
Thursday, 3/19	<b>Project #2 final draft due,</b> introduce Project #3 assignment, discuss multimodal composing	Read "Draw Me a Word, Write Me a Picture" by Newkirk (Blackboard)
<b>Week #11</b>		

Tuesday, 3/24	Discuss reading, introduce Project #3 presentations	
Thursday, 3/26	Professor will be out of town at a conference, no class (online activity)	Work on presentations
<b>Week #12</b>		
Tuesday, 3/31	<b>Project #3 presentations</b>	Work on presentations
Thursday, 4/2	<b>Project #3 presentations</b>	Work on presentations
<b>Week #13</b>		
Tuesday, 4/7	<b>Project #3 presentations</b> (if needed)	Read "Introduction: Multimodality and Communicative Practice" from <i>Toward a Composition Made Whole</i> by Shipka
Thursday, 4/9	Discuss reading	
<b>Week #14</b>		
Tuesday, 4/14	Discuss Project #3 multimodal components	
Thursday, 4/16	Project #3 work day	Work on Project #3 rough draft
<b>Week #15</b>		
Tuesday, 4/21	<b>Project #3 rough draft due</b> , peer review	Revise Project #3 based on peer review feedback
Thursday, 4/23	<b>Project #3 final draft due</b>	
<b>Exam week begins</b>		
Tuesday, 4/28		
Thursday, 4/30	No final exam, class will meet during assigned final exam time to discuss Project #3 results and final grades	
<b>Exam week ends</b>		
Wednesday, 5/6	Final exams, last day of Spring 2020 semester	