

Spring 2012
RHE 306: Rhetoric and Writing
Syllabus & Class Policy Statement

Instructor: Eric Detweiler
Course Number: 44020
Class Time and Place: Parlin 104, 10:00 – 11:00am MWF
E-mail: eric.detweiler@utexas.edu
Course Website: <http://edetweiler.pbworks.com>
Office: FAC 16

Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30-2:00 & Fridays 11:00-12:30 (also by appointment)

Textbooks

- ✓ *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*. Ravitch. Basic, 2010.
- ✓ *Critical Situations: A Rhetoric for Writing in Communities (UT Custom Edition)*. Crowley and Stancliff. Penguin, 2011.
- ✓ *Easy Writer: A Pocket Reference*. 4th Edition. Lunsford. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009.

RHE 306 – Rhetoric & Writing is a course in argumentation that situates rhetoric as an art of civic discourse. It is designed to enhance your ability to analyze the various positions held in any public debate and to advocate your own position effectively. Your work in this course will help you advance the critical writing and reading skills you will need to succeed in courses for your major and university degree.

You will learn how to

1. identify, evaluate, construct, and organize effective arguments;
2. read critically;
3. advocate a specific position responsibly;
4. conduct library and web-based research and document sources;
5. produce a clean, efficient style and adapt it to various rhetorical situations; and
6. edit and proofread your own and others' prose.

Coursework and Grading

For this course, we will be using a method of assessment called the Learning Record (LR). With the LR, your grade will depend heavily on your ability to reflect on and provide evidence of what you *learn* and how you *develop* as a writer and student of rhetoric during this course—not just the quality of the isolated pieces of writing you turn in. The primary factors in your grade will two evaluative projects (LR Evaluations B & C below) in which you create evidence-based arguments for your course grade. The submission of each evaluation will be followed by an individual teacher-student conference in which I will sign off on or challenge your proposed grade. We will discuss the LR, including the dimensions of learning and the course wiki where much LR work will take place, in greater detail as the semester progresses. For now, the major assignments you'll be responsible for this semester are as follows:

- General Assignments*
- ✓ Papers 1.1 & 1.2 5-7 pages

- ✓ Papers 2.1 & 2.2 4-6 pages
- ✓ Papers 3.1 & 3.2 3-4 pages
- ✓ Research summaries 6 individual summaries, 1 page apiece
- ✓ Misc. homework Assigned as needed
- ✓ Peer reviews Mandatory
- ✓ Participation Invaluable

Learning Record Assignments

- ✓ Observations Brief observations—at least one per week—related to the course, designed to develop mindfulness of course topics and issues in daily practice
- ✓ LR Reflection A Initial reflection on your standing and goals as this course begins
- ✓ LR Evaluation B Midterm evaluation of your learning based on LR Reflection A, evidence from all previous coursework, and the five dimensions of learning
- ✓ LR Evaluation C End-of-semester evaluation of your learning based on LR Reflection A & Evaluation B, evidence from all previous coursework, and the five dimensions of learning

Your overall grade for the course will be assessed on the following plus/minus scale:

- 93 and above: A
- 90-91: A-
- 88-89: B+
- 82-87: B
- 80-81: B-
- 78-79: C+
- 72-77: C
- 70-71: C-
- 68-69: D+
- 62-67: D
- 60-61: D-
- 59 and below: F

The grading criteria on which you will base evaluations B & C—and which I’ll keep in mind as we discuss your evaluations—are as follows:

A	Represents outstanding participation in all course activities, perfect or near perfect attendance, and all assigned work completed on time. Also represents very high quality in all work produced for the course. LR provides evidence of significant development across the five dimensions of learning. The LR at this level demonstrates activity that goes significantly beyond the required course work in one or more course strands.
B	Represents excellent participation in all course activities, near perfect attendance, and all assigned work completed on time. Also represents consistently high quality in coursework. Evidence of marked development across the five dimensions of learning.
C	Represents good participation in all course activities, minimal absences, and all assigned work completed. Also represents generally good quality overall in coursework. Evidence of some development across the five dimensions of learning.
D	Represents uneven participation in course activities, uneven attendance, and some gaps in assigned work completed. Represents inconsistent quality in course work. Evidence of development across the five dimensions of learning is partial or unclear.
F	Represents minimal participation in course activities, poor attendance, serious gaps in assigned work completed, or very low quality in course work. Evidence of development is not available.

Major Assignments

You will write three essays ranging from 3-7 pages each (above designated as 1.1, 2.1, and 3.1), and will revise each of these three based on feedback from the instructor and your peers (above designated as 1.2, 2.2, and 3.2). In addition, you will compose six short writing assignments (research summaries) and the three LR assignments.

Helpful Resources

The following websites will be helpful this semester:

DRW - <http://www.drw.utexas.edu/>

UWC - <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Blackboard - <https://courses.utexas.edu/>

UT Libraries - <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

Late Work

Because they generally contribute to what we will be doing in class the day they are due, I will not accept any late homework, research summaries, or LR assignments. As for the major papers: Deadlines are an important part of the drafting process, so “.1” papers (1.1, 2.1, and 3.1) must be turned in by the beginning of class the day they are due. I will give you a single two-day extension—no questions asked—on one of the “.2” papers. The other two must be turned in the day they are due; excessive lateness will reflect very negatively on your progress during your LR evaluations. If you anticipate any problem meeting a deadline, let me know at least 48 hours in advance. No guarantees, but I am much more likely to be flexible if I can see you are planning ahead.

Tardiness

On any day you arrive after I have finished calling roll at the beginning of class, you will be considered tardy. Two tardies equal an absence. If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you are absent—not tardy. You are responsible for making sure I mark you on the roll when you are late. Leaving early will also count as half an absence.

Technology

In terms of technology, we are in one of the most well-equipped rooms on campus. You will thus not need your cell phone. If I see you on your cell phone, I will mark you absent. If your cell phone use disrupts your fellow students, you will receive one warning before being dismissed from class. Do not take notes on your cell phone, as it is very difficult to tell note-taking from texting. If you have a special reason for needing access to your cell phone, notify me at the beginning of that class day.

We will make regular use of the computers in this classroom this semester. They are good machines, but if you wish to use a personal laptop during times designated for computer usage, you may do so. If you wish to use your laptop at other times for other purposes, such as taking notes, you will need to write me an argumentative essay roughly the length of a research summary justifying that use.

Department of Rhetoric & Writing RHE Course Policy Statement, 2009-10

Attendance

Rhetoric & Writing has established this attendance policy for all RHE courses. Any questions or appeals concerning this policy must be made directly to the department Associate Chair. You are expected to attend class, to arrive on time, to have prepared assigned reading and writing, and to participate in all in-class editing, revising, and discussion sessions. **Should you miss the equivalent of seven MWF sessions this semester, excused or not, you will fail the course.** If you find that an unavoidable problem prevents you from attending class, you should contact your instructor as soon as possible, preferably ahead of time, to let him or her know.

You will not be penalized for missing class on religious holy days. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor, in writing, well in advance of the absence, so that alternative arrangements can be made to complete work. If you know you will have to miss class(es) for this reason, provide your instructor with the date(s) as early as possible. Please note that the university specifies very few other excused absences (e.g. jury duty).

When you must miss a class, you are responsible for getting notes and assignments from a classmate.

Scholastic Honesty

Turning in work that is not your own, or any other form of scholastic dishonesty, will result in a major course penalty, possibly failure of the course. This standard applies to *all* drafts and

assignments, and a report of the incident will be submitted to the Office of the Dean of Students and filed in your permanent UT record. Under certain circumstances, the Dean of Students will initiate proceedings to expel you from the University. So, take care to read and understand the *Statement on Scholastic Responsibility*, which can be found online at <http://www.drw.utexas.edu/first-year/writing/plagiarism>. If you have any doubts about your use of sources, ask your instructor for help *before* handing in the assignment.

Undergraduate Writing Center

You are strongly encouraged to use the Undergraduate Writing Center in FAC 211 (471-6222; <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>), which offers *free* one-on-one writing consultations with trained specialists. UWC consultants are trained to help you develop and improve your writing in ways that preserve the integrity of your work.

Students With Disabilities

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), at (512) 471-6259 [voice] or (866) 329-3986 [video phone].

Email Accounts

Email is an official means of communication at UT-Austin, and your instructor will use this medium to communicate class information. You are therefore required to obtain a UT email account and to check it daily. All students may claim an email address at no cost by going to <http://www.utexas.edu/computer/email/>.

Questions about these policies should be addressed to:

Department of Rhetoric & Writing
The University of Texas at Austin
Parlin Hall, Room 3
rhetoric@uts.cc.utexas.edu
(512) 471-6109

Plagiarism & Collusion

Statement on Scholastic Responsibility

The writing you do in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing (DRW) courses must be your own. Passing off the work of others as your own can be either plagiarism or collusion. Both are scholastic offenses that the Department of Rhetoric and Writing will not tolerate. Be certain you understand what these terms mean.

This statement describes the acceptable and unacceptable forms of quoting and paraphrasing information in your written work and defines specific types of academic violations. You will sign and turn in to your instructor an agreement confirming that you have read and understood this policy, including the penalties for committing plagiarism or collusion. The DRW will keep your signed form on file.

Please read this statement carefully. Its detailed information can help you understand the need for documentation whenever you incorporate research into your papers. If parts of the statement are unclear, ask your instructor to explain them.

Plagiarism

The General Information Catalog of the University of Texas at Austin defines *plagiarism* as follows: "the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit."

- **You commit plagiarism if** you fail to acknowledge the sources of any information in your paper that is not either common knowledge or personal knowledge. Common knowledge includes facts, dates, events, information, and concepts that belong generally to the educated public. Even if you used a reference book to discover the dates of George Washington's presidency, for example, you would not have to acknowledge the source because those dates fall into the range of historical common knowledge. If you borrowed material that interpreted or commented on Washington's presidency, however, you would be expected to cite your source. You can acknowledge a source through in-text citations, attribution lines (for example, "George Will observes in *Men at Work* . . ."), footnotes, or other forms of documentation approved by your instructor.
- **You commit plagiarism if** you fail to acknowledge direct quotation either by using quotation marks when quoting short passages or indentation when quoting longer passages. Without the quotation marks or indentation, a passage copied directly from a source might be considered plagiarized even if it were followed by an in-text citation or a footnote: the citation or footnote acknowledges that you have a source but it does not indicate that you have borrowed someone else's exact words. If you use the language of a source, word-for-word, you must use quotation marks or block indentation.
- **You commit plagiarism if** you too closely paraphrase the original words of your source. Some students think that they can avoid a charge of plagiarism by changing a few words in each sentence they copy, or by rearranging the shape of phrases or the order of sentences in a paragraph. This is not true. When you take notes, you must be careful to put ideas in your own words, or to use direct quotation when you are relying on phrases

borrowed directly from a source.

- **You commit plagiarism** if you borrow the ideas, examples, or structure of your source without acknowledging it. You can be guilty of plagiarism if you systematically borrow the ideas and organization of a source—even if the language of your piece is substantially original. A student who, for example, reports on a major news event by using exactly the same ideas in the same order as they appear in an article in *Time* or *Newsweek* might be accused of plagiarism.
- **You commit plagiarism** if you take, buy, or receive a paper written by someone else and present it as your own.
- **You commit plagiarism** if you use one paper for two different courses, or re-use a paper previously submitted for credit, without the prior approval of both instructors.

If you want to use words, ideas, or the structure of a selection such as the passage below from *Harper's*, you may do so correctly in two ways.

Medical costs will bankrupt this country if they continue on their current trajectory. And there are no data to demonstrate that improved management techniques will solve the problem. "Managed care" and "managed competition" might save money in the short run (though the examples of some other managed industries—such as the utilities and airlines do not inspire confidence). But the bulk of the savings achieved by Health Maintenance Organizations has been achieved by cutting back on expensive, unprofitable facilities such as burn centers, neonatal-intensive-care units, emergency rooms, and the like. In other words, HMOs conduct what amounts to a hidden form of health-care rationing—confident that municipal and university hospitals are still around to pick up the slack. (Gaylin 62)

From: Gaylin, Willard M.D. "Faulty Diagnosis: Why Clinton's Health-Care Plan Won't Cure What Ails Us." *Harper's* (Oct. 1993): 57-64.

You may quote from the passage directly, using appropriate citations and quotation marks, or (when the quotation is lengthy) indentation. For example:

Willard Gaylin, a professor of psychiatry at Columbia Medical School, maintains that "medical costs will bankrupt this country if they continue on their current trajectory. And there are no data to demonstrate that improved management techniques will solve the problem" (62).

You may report the information in your own words, acknowledging Gaylin as your source and using an in-text citation to indicate the location of the passage:

Doctor Gaylin, for instance, does not believe that the improved management techniques proposed by the Clinton administration will solve the problem of rising medical costs, because the cost-cutting measures followed by HMOs under the current system will not be feasible when all Americans belong to such health collectives (62).

You may not simply change a few words or phrases and call the material your own, even if you acknowledge a source. The following passage based on Gaylin's original would be considered plagiarism, with or without an in-text citation or footnote:

Medical expenses will ruin America if we stay on our current path. There is no evidence that better management techniques will fix the trouble. "Managed care" may save some money today, but the way things are we will still pay for expensive, unprofitable care tomorrow.

You may not call the work your own if you change the language in the original passage but closely follow its organization, ideas, and examples. Most instructors would consider the following passage too much like Gaylin's original to be considered acceptable as a student's work:

Our country will go broke if it follows on its current path. And there is no information that says we can get out of this mess through better management. HMOs are successful today because they leave the county and teaching hospitals to fund costly, unprofitable specialized care (Gaylin 62).

Collusion. The current General Information Catalog of the University of Texas at Austin defines *collusion* as follows: "the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty."

- **You commit collusion if you allow someone else to write your papers.**
- **You also commit collusion if you allow someone else to edit your papers.** It is scholastically dishonest for students to employ tutors to correct, edit, or modify essays in any substantive way. The same reservations and restrictions apply, within reason, to any outside assistance you may receive from a parent, friend, roommate, or academic tutor. Any changes, deletions, rearrangements, additions, or corrections made in your essays should represent your own work. If you want assistance in a course beyond that which your instructor can offer in class or in office hours, you may use the DRW's Undergraduate Writing Center (UWC) in the FAC or remote locations or the Learning Skills Center (LSC) in Jester A332. Tutors at these facilities are trained to comment on essays and to offer advice without editing or rewriting papers.

Penalties

If you have any questions or doubts about the way you are employing sources or getting assistance in writing a given paper, consult your instructor before handing it in. The penalties for plagiarism or collusion can be severe. In all demonstrable cases of either offense, the DRW recommends that its instructors fail the student for the entire course, not just for the paper. However, the penalty in a given case is at the discretion of the individual instructor.

Your instructor must discuss any charge of scholastic dishonesty directly with you and may also refer you to the Chair or Associate Chair of the Department of Rhetoric and Writing. In

most instances, a plagiarism or collusion case is resolved either in the meeting between student and instructor, or between instructor, student, and Chair or Associate Chair. If it is not, a student has a right to a hearing before a designated University official and a right to make an appeal to the Office of the Dean of Students.

With the exception of the first few weeks, the syllabus calendar below has been left fairly open to leave us with some flexibility based on the particular needs and interests of class members. A more detailed version will be posted to the course wiki after the first few weeks of class. We will be doing something important every day this semester—do not assume any blank day is nonessential. Homework and major writing assignments are due the day they are listed on the schedule. I reserve the right to adjust this syllabus calendar as necessary, though I will not do so without advance notice and discussion.

RHE 306 Syllabus Schedule

Date	Day Plans
W 1/18	Course Introduction
F 1/20	Due: <i>Critical Situations (CS)</i> 3-16 Wiki Overview Discuss LR Reflection A
M 1/23	Due: Ravitch 1-14 Education Overview
W 1/25	Due: LR Reflection A Mapping Controversies
F 1/27	Due: Ravitch Reading Song Summary Activity
M 1/30	Due: Group Research Summary (RS) Discuss Papers 1.1 & 1.2
W 2/1	Due: Ravitch 223-242 & Selected Controversy Introduction to Research
F 2/3	Due: <i>CS</i> 39-54 NovaMind Activity
M 2/6	Due: RS 1
W 2/8	Due: <i>CS</i> 55-67
F 2/10	Due: RS 2
M 2/13	
W 2/15	Due: RS 3
F 2/17	
M 2/20	Due: Paper 1.1 Peer Review 1
W 2/22	Individual Conferences
F 2/24	
M 2/27	
W 2/29	Due: Paper 1.2 Due
F 3/2	
M 3/5	Due: RS 4
W 3/7	Due: LR Evaluation B
F 3/9	Individual Conferences
M 3/12	<i>Spring Break</i>

W	3/14	<i>Spring Break</i>
F	3/16	<i>Spring Break</i>
M	3/19	
W	3/21	
F	3/23	
M	3/26	
W	3/28	Due: Paper 2.1 Peer Review 2
F	3/30	
M	4/2	
W	4/4	Due: Paper 2.2
F	4/6	
M	4/9	
W	4/11	
F	4/13	
M	4/16	
W	4/18	Due: Paper 3.1 Peer Review 3
F	4/20	
M	4/23	
W	4/25	Due: Paper 3.2
F	4/27	
M	4/30	
W	5/2	Due: Evaluation C
F	5/4	Individual Conferences