**English 1020: Research and Argumentative Writing (Section 11714)**

Peck Hall 327 | MWF | 10:20 – 11:15

Instructor: Dr. Eric Detweiler

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Office Hours:

Mondays & Wednesdays 2:15-3:15, Fridays 11:30-2:30, and by appointment

**Course Description**

ENGL 1020 is the second of MTSU’s two General Education English courses. It emphasizes analytic and argumentative writing as well as locating, organizing, and using library resource materials in that writing. A minimum grade of C- is required for credit. Prerequisite: ENGL 1010.

In this particular section of ENGL 1020, we’ll be researching, reading, arguing, and writing about the future. Unlike a traditional vocational or technical education, a university education isn’t only about preparing you for the job you’ll find right after you graduate, but for the world we might all face ten, twenty, fifty, a hundred years down the line. It’s a world where jobs we take for granted won’t exist anymore and jobs we can’t imagine might have taken their place. But people, political systems, businesses, and even universities themselves aren’t always good at planning for the more distant future. We pay a lot of attention to short-term problems and solutions, but these can distract from and even intensify the problems that might arise in 2050 or 2100.

To approach these long-term problems, we’ll be using the principles of deliberative rhetoric. Deliberative rhetoric, which has been around since ancient Greece, is a framework for inventing and arguing about future possibilities. We’ll use it to think and write about the future of work, food, the environment, urban planning, technology, and more.

**Course Texts**

Selected readings available online and/or as PDFs on D2L. The day we discuss a reading in class, you’re responsible for bringing a copy with you. Digital versions on tablets or laptops are fine, as are printed hard copies. Smartphones are out because they aren’t a good platform for detailed engagement with readings.

**Learning Objectives**

In this course, you can expect to:

* gain a greater appreciation of the relationship between reading and writing;
* improve your ability to read rhetorically;
* use writing and discussion to work through and interpret complex ideas from readings and other texts;
* consider and express the relationship between your ideas and the ideas of others;
* critically analyze your own and others’ choices regarding language and form;
* engage in multiple modes of inquiry using text (field research, library-based inquiry, web searching);
* understand research as a way to increase your understanding of important and complex issues;
* acquire information literacy—the ability to locate and evaluate source material;
* understand your responsibilities as writers—to do your topic justice by conducting thorough research and considering multiple points of view, to acknowledge and engage meaningfully with the work of other writers, and to provide your audience with reliable information as well as thoughtful analysis and commentary;
* see yourself as a novice scholar, contributing to ongoing conversations about matters of consequence by making purposeful choices about rhetorical strategy, style, and document design
* improve your ability to engage in criticalreflection, identifying your strengths and opportunities for improvement as a collaborator, reader, researcher, writer, speaker, and learner.

**Grading**

We’ll be using a portfolio-based grading system called the Learning Record. I’ll provide written or spoken feedback on individual assignments, but not numerical or letter grades. Then, at midterm and during finals, you’ll turn in written arguments for the grade you deserve based on the body of work you’ve done in the course, the grading criteria below, and dimensions of learning and course strands that we’ll discuss during the second day of class. Here are the grading criteria:

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| 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 all 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. |

It is difficult to overstate the importance of you familiarizing yourself with these criteria. Note that the “significantly” in the “A” category doesn’t just mean doing everything required for the course really, really well. It means doing *more*. Taking thorough reading notes on every reading we cover this semester, for instance, does not necessarily constitute going “significantly beyond the required course work.” You will have to demonstrate that you’ve done something or some things that have required time and energy beyond what the course requires and that what you’ve done has resulted in demonstrable learning.

**Coursework**

The work in this course will be made up of two major threads: First, assignments connected to the Learning Record. Second, assignments connected to the argumentative and research goals of the course. Here are the major assignments:

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| The Learning Record | Argumentative and Research Assignments |
| Reflection  Midterm Self-Evaluation  Final Self-Evaluation | Annotated Bibliography (2 drafts)  Rhetorical Analysis (2 drafts)  Researched Argument (2 drafts) |

While I’ve listed these two parts of the course separately, they will overlap a lot. You’ll receive more detailed descriptions of all assignments and how I’ll respond to them as the semester unfolds. The deadlines for these assignments are included in this syllabus’s course calendar.

In addition to these major assignments, coursework will include short writing assignments, twelve reading reflections, in-class activities, and other homework. Remember the grading criteria: to get an A or B, you’ll need to complete all assigned work, including both major assignments and the everyday stuff.

**Grading**

The grading scale for this course is as follows. You need at least a C- to pass.

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| A: 90-100  B+: 87-89  B: 83-86  B-: 80-82 | C+: 77-79  C: 73-76  C-: 70-72  D+: 67-69 | D: 63-66  D-: 60-62  F: 59 and under  N\* |
| \*A grade of “N” is for students who are taking English 1020 for the first time and complete the course without meeting the minimum standards for at least a C-level grade. An “N” requires that you retake the course, but does not affect your GPA. | | |

**Late Work**

Because homework contributes to what we do in class the day it’s due, I will not accept it late. As for the major assignments: Deadlines are an important part of the drafting process, so all first drafts 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 major Learning Record assignments *or* the second draft of one of the argumentative/research assignments. Everything else must be turned in the day it is due. If you anticipate a 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 know you are planning ahead.

**Attendance**

If you miss class more than six times, you will not pass this course. Any time you are absent, you are responsible for getting in touch with me to find out what you missed. If you arrive after I take roll or leave class early, you’ll be marked tardy. Tardiness counts as half an absence. As for the six absences you are allowed, you do not need to provide me with an excuse or explanation. Just be sure you get in touch to find out what you missed. As with late work, if you think you’ll have any problem sticking to this attendance policy, let me know in advance. Again, no guarantees, but I am more likely to be flexible if I know you’re planning ahead.

**Students with Disabilities**

Middle Tennessee State University is committed to campus access in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Any student interested in reasonable accommodations can consult the [Disability & Access Center (DAC) website](http://www.mtsu.edu/dac/index.php) and/or contact the DAC for assistance at (615) 898-2783 or [dacemail@mtsu.edu](mailto:dacemail@mtsu.edu).

If I can provide or assist with any accommodations related specifically to this course, let me know. I would be glad to help.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is complicated. Here is the academic integrity statement from MTSU’s Lower Division office:

“Learning to use source material responsibly will be a focus of this class. In your compositions and presentations, you must give credit for text, ideas, and images that did not originate with you. Your handbook distinguishes between unintentional and intentional plagiarism. Unintentionally failing to attribute researched material, or misuse of sources, is a ‘teaching moment’; intentional plagiarism—such as downloading a paper, having someone else write your essay, or cutting-and-pasting with no acknowledgement of the source—is a form of academic misconduct.

“I am required to report all instances of academic misconduct to the Provost’s Office. See the MTSU student handbook for an explanation as well as the possible consequences of engaging in academic misconduct. In this class, sanctions range from a mandatory rewrite for partial credit to an F in the course. The Provost’s Office may impose additional sanctions such as probation or suspension. To avoid such penalties, always do your own work, and ask for help when you are using source material. You can get help in class, during my office hours, at the University Writing Center, from a librarian, or online at Purdue’s Online Writing Lab (OWL).”

Now here’s a strange thing: I copied and pasted that statement from somewhere else. It’s not plagiarism because I told you where it’s from (even though the statement uses the word “I,” which would suggest that I wrote it myself if it weren’t for the fact that I told you I didn’t). Here’s a stranger thing: part of the “Students with Disabilities” section on the previous page is copied and pasted from somewhere else, which I didn’t tell you till now. In fact, some words are meant to be copied without citation.

So anyway, plagiarism is complicated, and we’ll have a few conversations about it over the course of the semester. Here are a couple tips: (1) If you think that you might be using another person’s words or ideas without giving enough credit to that person, talk to me about it before the assignment is due. There is no penalty for asking in advance whether or not you’re plagiarizing. (2) If it’s the night before a deadline and you have no idea what to write, don’t panic and just copy and paste someone else’s words. It’s better to turn in nothing than to turn in something plagiarized, though neither is a good option. Better to talk with me a week before the deadline so that the moment of panic never arrives.

I won’t accept plagiarized papers. I reserve the right to offer the chance to redo an assignment if I determine the plagiarism wasn’t done on purpose. I’ll try to do my part by creating course-specific assignments that are hard to plagiarize. Also, I’ll only assign papers that I believe will contribute to your development as a thinker and writer, which is to say I genuinely think you’ll be missing out on important skills and experiences if you do decide to plagiarize instead of writing any of them yourself.

**University Writing Center**

The University Writing Center is in room 362 of the James E. Walker Library and on the web at [www.mtsu.edu/uwc](http://www.mtsu.edu/uwc). The UWC offers students valuable one-on-one assistance with their writing. You can make an appointment for a conference by calling (615) 904-8237. Online writing assistance is also available. Visit the UWC website for hours and more information.

Seriously: the UWC is great.

**Inclement Weather**

MTSU does not usually close because of inclement weather, but students are allowed to use their own discretion when snow and icy conditions exist and will be given the opportunity to make up missed classes should they decide not to attend. To determine if classes are cancelled, listen to area radio and television stations or visit <http://www.mtsunews.com/weather/>.

**Email**

MTMail will be the official way that I pass on information about this course. Because of educational privacy laws, I will not use your personal email accounts. I won’t send you email every day, but check your MTMail daily to make sure you don’t miss important updates from the university, me, or your other teachers. I do not check D2L email regularly, so don’t plan on contacting me that way. You can find more information on MTMail here: <http://mtsu.edu/email/index.php>.

**Technology**

We are fortunate to be in a room equipped with computers. We will use those computers often, and in many cases it will be fine if you use a personal laptop or tablet instead. However, if you wish to use a laptop or tablet on a daily basis (for taking notes, etc.), you must submit a 500-word explanation of how that device will benefit and contribute to your learning in the course. That explanation is due by the end of the second week of classes. You can email it to me or turn in a hard copy at the beginning of class that Friday.

As for smartphones and other cell phones, there may be some times when it will make sense for us to use them. In general, though, they aren’t a good fit for the sort of work we do in this class. For instance, their screens are too small to engage with readings in the detail-oriented way we will during this course. For that reason, don’t plan on using them in class unless we decide otherwise during a particular activity.

**Lottery Statement**

Do you have a lottery scholarship? To retain the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship eligibility, you must earn a cumulative TELS GPA of 2.75 after 24 and 48 attempted hours and a cumulative TELS GPA of 3.0 thereafter. A grade of C, D, F, FA, or I in this class may negatively impact TELS eligibility. If you drop this class, withdraw, or if you stop attending this class, you may lose eligibility for your lottery scholarship, and you will not be able to regain eligibility at a later time.

**Course Schedule**

Reading assignments are in italics. Writing assignments are in bold. All assignments are due on the day they’re listed on the calendar. Unless you submitted an argument for using a laptop or tablet in class, bring a printed copy of readings with you on the day they’re assigned. If you miss a day of class, contact me to see what you missed. On days when there’s a reading reflection, “(RR)” appears at the end of the readings listed for that day. You must complete at least 12 of 15 possible reading reflections.

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| Week 1 | Jan. 18 | Introduction to the Course |
| Jan. 20 | Introduction to the Learning Record |
| Week 2 | Jan. 23 | *“Why Futurism Has a Cultural Blind Spot”:* [*http://nautil.us/issue/28/2050/why-futurism-has-a-cultural-blindspot*](http://nautil.us/issue/28/2050/why-futurism-has-a-cultural-blindspot) |
| Jan. 25 | *ARCS Chapter 1 (PDF on D2L)* (RR) |
| Jan. 27 | **Reflection** |
| Week 3 | Jan. 30 | Overview of Library Resources for ENGL 1020  ***Meet in LIB 272***  *“Why Scientific American’s Predictions from 10 Years Ago Were So Wrong”:* [*http://gizmodo.com/why-scientific-americans-predictions-from-10-years-ago-1701106456*](http://gizmodo.com/why-scientific-americans-predictions-from-10-years-ago-1701106456)  *“How to Be Less Terrible at Predicting the Future”:* [*http://freakonomics.com/podcast/how-to-be-less-terrible-at-predicting-the-future-a-new-freakonomics-radio-podcast/*](http://freakonomics.com/podcast/how-to-be-less-terrible-at-predicting-the-future-a-new-freakonomics-radio-podcast/) |
| Feb. 1 | *“The Long and Brutal History of Fake News”:* [*http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/12/fake-news-history-long-violent-214535*](http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/12/fake-news-history-long-violent-214535)  *“Extra! Extra!”:* [*http://www.flashforwardpod.com/2016/12/06/extra-extra/*](http://www.flashforwardpod.com/2016/12/06/extra-extra/)(RR) |
| Feb. 3 | *“The Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism”:* [*http://www.italianfuturism.org/manifestos/foundingmanifesto/*](http://www.italianfuturism.org/manifestos/foundingmanifesto/)  *“What the Luddites Really Fought Against”:* [*www.smithsonianmag.com/history/what-the-luddites-really-fought-against-264412/*](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/what-the-luddites-really-fought-against-264412/)(RR) |
| Week 4 | Feb. 6 | *“Murfreesboro Works to Repair the 1950s Road Project that Divided Its Landscape”:* [*http://nashvillepublicradio.org/post/murfreesboro-works-repair-1950s-road-project-divided-its-landscape#stream/0*](http://nashvillepublicradio.org/post/murfreesboro-works-repair-1950s-road-project-divided-its-landscape#stream/0)  *“A City’s Immovable Roadblock”:* [*https://www.bostonglobe.com/news/nation/2015/10/10/nashville-mayor-wanted-bring-two-parts-his-city-together-then-was-crushed-state-legislators/QT91unb8xk4xPBqkTumgMP/story.html*](https://www.bostonglobe.com/news/nation/2015/10/10/nashville-mayor-wanted-bring-two-parts-his-city-together-then-was-crushed-state-legislators/QT91unb8xk4xPBqkTumgMP/story.html)  *“Murfreesboro Monorail? Ketron’s P3 Bill Passes Senate”:* [*http://www.murfreesboropost.com/murfreesboro-monorail-ketron-s-p3-bill-passes-senate-cms-44119*](http://www.murfreesboropost.com/murfreesboro-monorail-ketron-s-p3-bill-passes-senate-cms-44119)(RR) |
| Feb. 8 | Tour MTSU’s Makerspace  ***Meet in Digital Media Studio on the library’s 2nd floor*** |
| Feb. 10 | *ARCS Chapter 3: “Achieving Stasis by Asking the Right Questions” (D2L)* (RR) |
| Week 5 | Feb. 13 | **Annotated Bibliography (First Draft)** |
| Feb. 15 | *“Never Fall in Love with Your Own Airship” (D2L)* (RR) |
| Feb. 17 | *“Climate Change isn’t Coming to Nashville—It’s Already Here”:* [*http://www.nashvillescene.com/news/article/13035246/climate-change-isnt-coming-to-nashville-its-already-here-and-the-future-might-be-hotter-than-we-can-handle*](http://www.nashvillescene.com/news/article/13035246/climate-change-isnt-coming-to-nashville-its-already-here-and-the-future-might-be-hotter-than-we-can-handle)(RR)  “The Navy Adapts to Rising Sea Levels” (in-class listening) |
| Week 6 | Feb. 20 | **Annotated Bibliography (Second Draft)** |
| Feb. 22 | *ARCS Chapter 4: The Common Topics and the Commonplaces* (RR) |
| Feb. 24 | *“The Future of Privacy”:* [*https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/06/opinion/the-future-of-privacy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/06/opinion/the-future-of-privacy.html?smid=fb-share&_r=0)(RR) |
| Week 7 | Feb. 27 | *ARCS Chapter 8: Extrinsic Proofs* (RR) |
| Mar. 1 | Prep for Midterm Self-Evaluations |
| Mar. 3 | **Midterm Self-Evaluation** |

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| Week 8 | Mar. 6 | Spring Break |
| Mar. 8 |
| Mar. 10 |
| Week 9 | Mar. 13 | *“Why the Future Doesn’t Need Us”:* [*https://www.wired.com/2000/04/joy-2*](https://www.wired.com/2000/04/joy-2)  *“The Future of Work: The World Needs a New Business Model”:* [*https://psmag.com/the-future-of-work-the-world-needs-a-new-business-model-aecfd6f3bc5a*](https://psmag.com/the-future-of-work-the-world-needs-a-new-business-model-aecfd6f3bc5a)(RR) |
| Mar. 15 | *The Last Angel of History* (in-class viewing) (RR) |
| Mar. 17 | *ARCS Chapter 5: Logical Proofs (D2L)* (RR) |
| Week 10 | Mar. 20 | *“A Blueprint for the Future of Food”:* [*https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/07/opinion/a-blueprint-for-the-future-of-food.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/07/opinion/a-blueprint-for-the-future-of-food.html)  *“Robocrop”:* [*http://www.flashforwardpod.com/2017/01/03/old-macdonald-had-a-bot/*](http://www.flashforwardpod.com/2017/01/03/old-macdonald-had-a-bot/)(RR) |
| Mar. 22` | *“Vertical by Stephen Graham Review – Class War from Above”:* [*https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/nov/23/vertical-by-stephen-graham-review*](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/nov/23/vertical-by-stephen-graham-review)  *“Doomsday Prep for the Super-Rich”:* [*http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/01/30/doomsday-prep-for-the-super-rich*](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/01/30/doomsday-prep-for-the-super-rich)(RR) |
| Mar. 24 | **Rhetorical Analysis (First Draft)** |
| Week 11 | Mar. 27 | *World of Tomorrow* (in-class viewing) |
| Mar. 29 | In-class work on Rhetorical Analysis |
| Mar. 31 | **Rhetorical Analysis (Second Draft)** |
| Week 12 | Apr. 3 | *“We Need an Audacious Plan to Innovate America’s Prison System”:* [*https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/innovations/wp/2014/05/22/we-need-an-audacious-plan-to-innovate-americas-prison-system/*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/innovations/wp/2014/05/22/we-need-an-audacious-plan-to-innovate-americas-prison-system/)(RR) |
| Apr. 5 | TBD |
| Apr. 7 | TBD |
| Week 13 | Apr. 10 | In-class work on Researched Argument |
| Apr. 12 | **Researched Argument (First Draft)** |
| Apr. 14 | Celebration of Student Writing |
| Week 14 | Apr. 17 | Present Researched Arguments |
| Apr. 19 | Present Researched Arguments |
| Apr. 21 | Present Researched Arguments |
| Week 15 | Apr. 24 | **Researched Argument (Second Draft)** |
| Apr. 26 | Course Wrap-Up |
| Finals | Apr. 28– May 4 | **Final Self-Evaluation** |