

Instructor: Professor Marc Diefenderfer
Email: marc.diefenderfer@brazosport.edu
Office Hours: TBA

Course Description

Welcome to English 1301: Composition & Rhetoric I. This class is designed to provide you with opportunities not only to discover more about the social and cultural contexts that surround you, but also to view writing as a means to discover more about yourself as an individual. You should leave this class with the confidence to create, interpret, and evaluate a variety of texts across a range of forms and genres.

English 1301 stresses the rhetorical nature of all situations, your ability to identify and work in a variety of rhetorical situations, the ways in which the writer's work shapes its audience, and the ways in which rhetoric involves thought, the spoken word, the written word, and performance.

About English 1301

English 1301 provides students with the opportunity to interpret and compose in both digital and print media across a variety of textual genres. Students engage in active learning, which includes class discussion, problem solving, peer review, and digital interaction. English 1301 is grounded in the idea that writing provides an outlet for sharing and developing ideas; facilitates understanding across different conventions, genres, groups, societies, and cultures; and allows for expression in multiple academic, civic, and non-academic situations. In short, writing is a way of learning that spans all fields and disciplines.

By the end of the course, students will:

- Demonstrate rhetorical awareness of diverse audiences, situations, and contexts.
- Compose a variety of texts in a range of genres.
- Critically think about writing and rhetoric through reading, analysis, and reflection.
- Provide constructive feedback to others and incorporate feedback into their own writing.
- Perform research and evaluate sources to support claims.
- Engage multiple digital technologies to compose for different purposes.

Course Website and Email Policy

Our course website can be found on **D2L** (<https://online.brazosport.edu/d2l/home>). Because this is an online class, all of our course materials will be housed on this website. You will be expected to access and submit all assignments digitally, so it is essential that you have a strong working knowledge of the D2L virtual campus, word processing software, and basic online tasks like downloading files, emailing, and using Dropbox. Course announcements and information will appear on D2L and may also be sent to you via your Brazosport College email account. You are expected to check your email and D2L on a regular basis.

Course Assignments

Final grades in English 1301 are assessed according to the following categories:

Personal Literacy Narrative	5%
Unit 1 (Rhetorical Analysis)	15%
Unit 2 (Academic Exposition)	20%
Unit 3 (Academic Argument)	20%
Short Writes (SWs)	15%
Discussion Posts	18%
Citation Scavenger Hunt	2%
Peer Review	5%

In Unit 1, students will compose an essay in which they identify, analyze, and respond to an argument made in a short essay or editorial; several options will be provided.

In Unit 2, students will compose an informative (and surprising) academic essay based on independent research about an aspect of global popular culture of their choosing. The essay should explain something to readers (the members of the class, including the teacher, and other students of global popular culture) that will strike the audience as interesting, in part because it is new and thus in some way surprising.

In Unit 3, students will compose an annotated bibliography that outlines a well-researched position aimed at either (a) gaining the reader's agreement on a certain environmental concern, or (b) delineating a course of action and establishing its preeminent importance among competing environmental goals. This essay will build upon the skills of research, exposition, summary, analysis, and synthesis learned in previous units, but adds the task of developing a classical argument based on research.

At the end of the semester, students may revise either their Unit 1 paper or their Unit 2 paper, reflecting on the choices made for revision and on the student's experiences in the course. The grade for the revision replaces the grade for the original assignment. The replacement grade takes into account any grade penalties for late or missing work applied to the original assignment.

Shorter writing assignments (Short Writes, or SWs) are also incorporated throughout the course, and are designed as building blocks toward completion of the major unit assignments. More specific information on each assignment will be made available in the Course Calendar. A student cannot pass the class unless all unit papers have been submitted.

Weekly Topics

Week 1: Literacy and rhetoric
 Week 2: Rhetorical thinking strategies
 Week 3: Summary writing
 Week 4: Rhetorical reading
 Week 5: Peer review
 Week 6: Globalization and de-globalization
 Week 7: Writing an informative essay
 Week 8: Paragraph development

Week 9: Establishing a research question
 Week 10: Thesis formation and support
 Week 11: Advancing an arguable position
 Week 12: Argument justification
 Week 13: Explaining and refuting claims
 Week 14: Finding reliable sources
 Week 15: Writing an academic argument
 Week 16: Academic revision

Grading Standards

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

- A** You completed the assignment at a high level of quality, *and your work shows originality and creativity*. Work in this range shows all the qualities listed below for a B, but it also demonstrates that you took extra steps to be original or creative in developing content, solving a problem, or developing a style.
- B** You completed the assignment at a high level of quality. Work in this range needs little revision, is complete in content, is organized well, and shows special attention to style.
- C** You did what the assignment asked of you. Work in this range tends to need some revision, but it is complete in content and the organization is logical. The style is straightforward but unremarkable.
- D** You did what the assignment asked at a low level of quality, OR you did not do what the assignment asked. Work in this range tends to need significant revision. The content is often incomplete and the organization is hard to discern. Style is often chaotic.
- F** This grade is reserved for those who do not complete the assignment. If you follow the assignment's instructions and give it an honest try, you are unlikely to receive an F.

Online Course Environment

This class does not meet at a specific time; it is available to you 24/7. That said, there are concrete deadlines for all assignments. As a result, and because feedback from and interaction with me and with your classmates are necessary to your learning in this class, you will not be able to simply rush through the class in a few days at the beginning or end of the semester. This course will require strong time-management skills and a commitment to independently working on the assigned materials every week. Most experts recommend that college students spend two hours studying (i.e. reading, writing, and reviewing materials) for every hour they spend in class; in a self-guided online course without class meeting times, the student's time commitment necessarily increases. Please reach out with questions or concerns as soon as they come up; this will prevent you from falling behind and ensure that you get the most out of the course.

Class Participation and Attendance

You must engage with and complete each activity (for example, posting and replying in discussion forums, watching video lectures, reading texts, etc.) by the deadline on the course calendar in order to be marked "present." Each activity you fail to engage with will count as one absence and any activity you make substantial progress through without completing will count as half an absence. After three absences, each subsequent absence will bring your overall grade down by one step (in other words, 10 percentage points). Each activity has a specific deadline, so you will not be able to take "time off" or make up work at the end of the semester. Keep in mind that I can see who has engaged with a reading, video lecture, or other activity *and* for how long

you've engaged with that activity; so, be advised not to try to cheat the system by simply clicking on links without engaging with the content.

Discussion Posts

Because dialogue and argument are essential to facilitate critical thinking, reading, and writing, each unit will contain several discussion post activities. Unlike the unit papers for this course, discussion posts do not need to contain an introduction or a conclusion. They should be **150 to 200 words** in length, and should be written in the in-browser text field on D2L rather than attached as a separate file. (I recommend initially typing your posts in a word browser and saving them, though, before ultimately copying and pasting them to D2L. That way you'll never risk losing your work, and you'll have a record of your work if you are ever unable to access D2L.) You can think of a discussion post as being similar to a thoughtful, well-developed comment of about two or three minutes in a face-to-face class. Typically you will compose your discussion post in response to a specific prompt that I provide. In general, though, be sure to cite evidence from our course materials that helps to illustrate whatever point you are making. Your posts should indicate not only that you have read the assigned materials with care, but that you have thought critically about them as well.

In addition to crafting your own posts, you are required to reply to the discussion post of at least one classmate during the course of each discussion activity. Your reply to a classmate should be approximately **100 words** in length, and should reflect thoughtfully, substantively, and respectfully on the ideas expressed by your peers. By "substantively," I mean that your response must engage meaningfully with the content of your classmate's post; you should not merely agree, disagree, or write "good job," for example. Non-substantive discussion responses will receive zero credit.

If you have difficulty meeting the word count when replying to a classmate's post, here are a few examples of questions you might ask yourself: Can you identify additional textual evidence that supports a claim made by your classmate? Does your classmate cite textual evidence in a way that calls for clarification and/or context, or that you would interpret differently? Might your classmate's ideas be worth their exploring in a longer paper, and if so, what additional considerations should they make in order to develop a convincing argument? Does your classmate's interpretation of a particular reading open new pathways in your own understanding of that reading, or for a previously assigned reading?

Individual discussion post threads are open until the deadline indicated both on D2L and in the course calendar. After the deadline passes, the thread will be closed for submissions and you will be unable to complete or receive credit for that assignment if you have not already done so. There will be 12 discussion post assignments this semester, each worth 1.5% of the final grade: 1% for the initial post, and 0.5% for your response to a classmate.

Peer Review

Peer review enhances your critical thinking, reading, and editing abilities and provides you with feedback on your essay before it is graded. For each peer review session, you should prepare a full draft of your unit paper; more detailed instructions will be provided. Final decisions about what to revise (and what not to revise) in your draft are yours alone. **NOTE:** If you do not

submit a draft of your unit paper by the Peer Review deadline for that unit (or if you submit an incomplete draft), you will earn a zero for that Peer Review assignment and you will not be able to participate in the peer review process.

Grammar and Spelling

Proper mechanics—that is, grammar and spelling—are an important part of composition and revision, and thus an important component of your paper grades. At this point in your academic career, you are expected to have a fairly strong grasp on the mechanics of writing. This being said, proper mechanics alone are not enough to guarantee a high paper grade. If you experience difficulties in these areas, I encourage you to schedule an appointment with a writing tutor in the Student Success Center. The tutors are highly skilled and can help you whether you are a novice or more advanced writer. For more information, please visit the following Web address: <https://brazosport.edu/students/for-students/student-success-center/writing-center/schedule-an-appointment/index>

Late Work

All writings are due when specified by the instructor or by the assignment description on D2L. Anything turned in later is considered late. Late SWs (Short Writes) will have their grades lowered by half; SWs more than two weeks late will not be accepted. Late unit papers will have their grades lowered by 10% for each day they are late. Papers submitted more than two weeks late, in the absence of prior arrangement with the instructor, will not be accepted. (Please keep in mind that, as stated above, all three unit papers must be submitted in order to pass the class.) No late work will be accepted after the Sunday at the beginning of finals week.

Thus, if you have an emergency, please contact me in advance to make arrangements for another due date. If you contact me after the due date has passed, such arrangements will not be possible. If you need to miss class for an extended period, contact the Office of the Dean of Students; they will send letters to all your instructors so that you may make up work.

Computer problems will not be accepted as excuses for late work; please be responsible and complete your work far enough in advance to turn it in on time. Discussion post assignments that have been closed on D2L cannot be made up.

Content Note

This is a college-level class, and we will be dealing with texts that may make you uncomfortable, upset, or offended because of the language, content, or views expressed. You are, however, expected to engage with the texts in a professional manner and to be respectful in discussions with your classmates and instructor.

Inclusive Language

All work in this course should employ inclusive language, which shows that the writer honors the diversity of the human race by not using language that would universalize one element of humanity to the exclusion of others. Examples of areas in which non-inclusivity commonly occurs include racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, or otherwise discriminatory language. Disrespectful or threatening speech or behavior will not be tolerated. Students who ignore this policy will receive zero credit for that class activity.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Brazosport College takes academic dishonesty very seriously. It is assumed that students eligible to perform on the college level are familiar with the ordinary rules governing proper conduct, including academic honesty. The principle of academic honesty is that all work presented by you is yours alone. Using someone else's work as your own without careful citation is always unethical and, at times, illegal. Conversely, letting someone else use your work is also unethical. Academic dishonesty (including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, and collusion) is a serious offense and shall be treated accordingly. Please refer to the Brazosport College Student Guide for more information. This is available online at <https://brazosport.edu/Guide/>.

Academic dishonesty violates both the policies of this course and the Student Code of Conduct. In this class, any occurrence of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Dean of Student Services for prompt adjudication and may, at a minimum, result in a grade of zero for the assignment and/or your failing the course. Sanctions may be imposed beyond your grade in this course by the Dean of Student Services. Please note that I am required to report any instance of academic dishonesty that affects a student's grade.

As a writer and student at Brazosport, you are cautioned against:

- submitting someone else's (or AI-generated) work as your own, even if you have paid for it or obtained the author's permission
- using, without proper citation and/or acknowledgment, word-for-word phrases, sentences, or paragraphs from the printed or electronic manuscript material of others
- using materials not written by you (including AI-generated writing) after making only slight changes (a form of plagiarism known as "patch-writing")
- using a rewritten form of someone else's materials
- submitting work that you have composed for another class

These guidelines apply to the work of fellow students as well as the published work of professional writers, information found on the Internet, and electronic compositions such as websites and slideshows. If you have questions about this policy, or if you are not sure whether an assignment that you plan to submit is in violation of it, contact me immediately. Work that has not yet been turned in can always be revised without penalty; submitted work cannot.

AI Statement

AI (Artificial Intelligence) is a tool, and like any tool, it can be used beneficially or it can be misused. In this class, which tasks you with thinking critically, evaluating sources, and developing your own rhetorical awareness, the use of AI actively works against fulfillment of the learning objectives. This is because the course values the *process* of thinking and writing over the *product* of thinking and writing.

For the purposes of this class, it is not appropriate to use AI to generate thesis statements, sources, supporting evidence, or specific language to be submitted for assignments. To copy text from an AI program into your paper would be cheating and a violation of the Academic Honesty policy outlined above. As such, it will be treated in line with any other violation of the policy and of the Student Code of Conduct.

If you believe that a specific application of AI would somehow uniquely benefit your work, you must discuss that potential application in detail with me and secure my written approval before moving forward with its use. Further, if AI plays any role in the composition of your assignment(s), it must be cited; you can find examples of how to cite AI programs online. However, keep in mind that many assignments in this course discourage the use of outside sources.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that requires academic accommodation, please let me know as soon as possible. Brazosport College is committed to providing equal education opportunities to every student. BC offers services for individuals with special needs and capabilities including counseling, tutoring, equipment, and software to assist students with special needs. For a student to receive any accommodation, documentation must be completed in the Office of Disability Services. Please contact Phil Robertson, Special Populations Counselor, at 979-230-3236 for further information.

Title IX Statement

Brazosport College faculty and staff are committed to supporting students and upholding the College District's non-discrimination policy. Under Title IX and Brazosport College's policy FFDA (Local), discrimination based on sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression is prohibited. If students experience an incident of discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct, they are encouraged to report it.

If a faculty or staff member "is informed of a student's pregnancy or related condition" by the student or "a person who has a legal right to act on behalf of the student," the employee must "promptly" tell the student or representative how to notify the Title IX Coordinator of the student's pregnancy or related conditions and must provide the Title IX Coordinator's contact information to the student or representative, unless the employee "reasonably believes" the Title IX Coordinator already knows.

While students may talk to a faculty or staff member at BC, please understand that they are "Responsible Employees" and must report what is told to them to college officials. Students can also contact the Title IX Coordinators directly by using the contact information below. Additional information is found on the Sexual Misconduct webpage at www.brazosport.edu/sexualmisconduct.

Alex Crouse, Director of Student Life and Deputy Title IX Coordinator
979-230-3355; alex.crouse@brazosport.edu

Mareille Rolon, HR Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinator
979-230-3303; mareille.rolon@brazosport.edu

Campus Emergencies

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or

other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. To get information about changes in this course, check our D2L website or contact me at marc.diefenderfer@brazosport.edu.

Campus Closure Statement

Brazosport College is committed to the health and safety of all students, staff, and faculty and adheres to all federal and state guidelines. The College intends to stay open for the duration of the semester, and to provide access to classes and support services on campus in the safest way possible. The College will also comply with lawful orders given by applicable authorities, including the Governor of Texas, up to and including campus closure. It is possible that on-campus activities may be moved online and/or postponed if such orders are given.

Student Support

To help you on your educational pathway, Brazosport College provides all students with access to TimelyCare. If you're stressed, challenged, or need help, download the TimelyCare app today! It's your free virtual health and well-being service platform, available 24/7, 365 days of the year. Search "TimelyCare" in your app store. Then, register with your student email to access your health care services.