ENGL 4343.02
COMPOSITION THEORY & PEDAGOGY
FALL 2018, MON & WED. 12:15-1:30, EDINBURG. ELABS 259

Dra. Alyssa G. Cavazos | e-mail: alyssa.cavazos@utrgv.edu | Office: ELABS 270-A |
Office Number: 956-665-8779 | Office Hours: TR 9:00-10:30 and 1:00-3:00 or by appointment
Building Translanguaging Writing Ecologies

Welcome to English 43243! The official course description states: “A study of advanced composition techniques, including theories and methods of teaching composition skills.” The course focuses on challenging diverse theories and methods on the teaching of writing. I structured the class around five questions aligned to Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

- How do we learn to write? Why do we write?
- What is writing? What purpose(s) does it serve?
- What is the role of multilingualism and translanguaging in writing instruction?
- How do we teach and respond to writing and translanguaging?
- How do we design writing assignments responsive to students’ linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds?

These questions will guide our discussions throughout the semester. My goal is to collaborate with you as you become critical writing teachers and writing scholars and as you identify your own theories and pedagogies in teaching writing through a linguistically inclusive perspective. My role in class is that of a collaborator and facilitator; I want to think of our relationship as one focused on discovering new knowledge, ideas, and possibilities about writing, writing research, and teaching writing together. In order to engage in collaborative learning, I expect you to remain committed to course readings, discussions, and projects throughout the semester. Collaborative thinking entails critical listening; therefore, I also expect that each one of you will attentively and respectfully listen to other’s perspectives. The course readings will, at times, be challenging and complex. I have high expectations of your abilities and performance. Feel free to ask questions or express concerns openly as I am more than happy and willing to work with you, especially when I see an equal commitment to learning and thinking on your part. I look forward to a learning-enriching semester! The following consists of specific activities, learning expectations, and policies that will guide our learning, writing, reading, and thinking.

The guiding questions and student learning outcomes will assist you in:

1. Applying a number of theories and practical strategies for teaching writing that will engage students in rhetorically compelling and linguistically inclusive writing;
2. Productively giving and receiving feedback from peers and veteran teachers on teaching activities, materials, and theories; and
3. Producing and maintaining a professional teaching portfolio that will stand out among peers applying for teaching and writing-related professions.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

1. Students will analyze and interpret a variety of texts and patterns of language, using a range of theoretical approaches and disciplinary modes of inquiry.
2. Students will demonstrate a broad and foundational knowledge of the traditions of American, British, Ethnic and/or World literatures by critically situating specific works of literature within these traditions.
3. Students will write coherently and demonstrate a consistent use of the conventions of a variety of genres, including, but not limited to, the academic essay.
4. Students will apply appropriate research methodologies, including appropriate use of electronic media, to understand and/or illuminate specific research questions about language and literature.
5. Students in certification tracks will demonstrate knowledge and skills in the areas of writing, literature, reading, oral communication, media literacy, and English language arts pedagogy.
Learning Expectations
This semester, the course is focused on building translanguaging writing pedagogies in order to deliver quality education and ensure all students have the opportunity to achieve success, thereby reducing inequalities and increasing socially just pedagogies and assessments. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals to Transform Our World, I invite you to engage in collaborative partnerships with peers, faculty, and community members as we think critically and deeply about what just, equal, and quality educational experiences look like through a translingual theoretical and pedagogical lens.

Our ability to speak, read, and write in more than one language and/or dialect is a strength both in our personal and professional lives. As we are a part of a University that aims to become bilingual, bicultural, and biletrate, I encourage you to engage in conversation, conduct research, and write in any language and/or dialect that fit your goals and expectations. As rhetorical users of language, we also want to ensure we are mindful and aware of who is our intended audience and what is our intended purpose as we make language and rhetorical choices. Drawing on multiple languages and/o dialects as we conduct research, engage in conversation, and write not only increases our access to existing knowledge but also increases our ability to make new knowledge. I look forward to learning from you and your use of diverse languages/dialects.

I designed the course in a way that will help us collaboratively explore what building socially just, equal, and quality translanguaging writing pedagogies means as we engage with guiding questions, readings, and your own experiences with writing. Because my goal is for us to become collaborators, critical readers, scholars, and teachers of writing, the following consists of what you will achieve by the end of the semester aligned to SLOs:

◊ Interpret, analyze, and evaluate a variety of writing theories and pedagogies
◊ Collaborate with peers to develop inclusive and just writing feedback and assessment practices.
◊ Engage with scholarly texts and conduct original research.
◊ Design linguistically inclusive writing ecologies.
◊ Create a professional writing pedagogy portfolio

In order to achieve the above-mentioned expectations, you will engage with diverse in and out of class activities, responses, and projects. Many of you in this class plan to become writing teachers; however, I also know that some of you may have taken this class for other reasons, in this case, we can adjust the two major course projects to fit your educational and professional goals as they relate to writing. If this applies to you, please set up an appointment with me immediately so we may begin brainstorming potential project ideas.
Course Projects

**Rhetorical Responses 20%**
This section encompasses in and out of class activities, rhetorical responses, collaborative assignments, and reflections. Throughout the semester, we will read a variety of academic articles and educational policies and statements on writing and the teaching of writing (see Readings). You will be expected to write approximately **five rhetorical** responses based on assigned texts. Each rhetorical response is worth 4% of your grade. In each rhetorical response, you will summarize the main research questions, arguments, and supporting data and analyze the implications of the main arguments presented, application in the classroom, or challenge arguments based on personal experiences (see formal assignment on Blackboard). You will also write reflections and collaborative assignments. Finally, peer response is an essential component of this class not only in this portion of your grade but also in the other two components. Academic scholars read and provide feedback to each other to strengthen arguments and knowledge in the field. You will be expected to provide detailed, critical, and constructive feedback to your classmates. At times, the feedback you provide will be under “blind review” (i.e., you or your peers will not know who wrote the piece or who provided feedback). Peer response is an opportunity to learn from each other and strengthen theories, practices, and research about writing and teaching writing.

**Translingual Dispositions Reflection 15%**
In this project, you will take a pre- and a post- semester translingual dispositions questionnaire to self-assess your openness to language difference and enactment of language difference (as writers and future teachers/professionals). After you take the pre- semester questionnaire, you will reflect on your responses and analyze why you responded the way you did by referencing specific examples related to your previous experiences with literacy and language. You will share your responses and reflections with classmates to identify larger narratives about the implications, meaning, and significance about your responses related to how we see writing and the teaching of writing. After you take the same questionnaire near post- semester, you will reflect on your responses by drawing connections to your initial responses/reflections and by drawing connections to the work you designed in this semester in the course. Similarly, you will engage in collaborative reflections where you articulate the meaning and significance of your post- semester response/reflections to create larger narratives related to what it means to write and teach writing in a multilingual world.

**Inquiry-Based Research Project 30%**
The inquiry-Based research project consists of devising a research question you have about writing or teaching writing. This question might arise from our course readings, perhaps your question is connected to something the scholars failed to take into account or your question builds on these scholars’ work. The main purpose of the research project is to provide you with an opportunity to conduct research on a question you have about writing or the teaching of writing that is important to you. The project will consist of both **primary and secondary research**. Primary research will consist of your choice of personal interviews, surveys, observations, analysis of primary texts. Secondary research consists of journal articles, books, book chapters, websites, among many others. In the end, you will **analyze** your primary and secondary research and make a specific argument or proposal based on your findings. Specific details about the diverse components of this project are located in the formal assignment sheet on Blackboard.

**Teaching/Professional Portfolio 35%**
The professional portfolio is designed to provide you with the opportunity to represent your knowledge and experience of writing and teaching writing through purposeful writing situations. If you will pursue a teaching career, you will be required to present a **teaching portfolio** where you outline your beliefs about teaching writing and provide sample projects. The teaching portfolio will consist of the following: a **teaching philosophy**, a set of writing projects and activities, a feedback/assessment approach, and a reflective rationale explaining your choices by drawing on course readings and your own research findings. A detailed assignment sheet will be posted on Blackboard. If you will not pursue a teaching profession, you will have the opportunity to create a **professional portfolio** equally as valuable as a teaching portfolio. However, as mentioned above, you need to speak with me soon so we
may discuss what your Professional Portfolio will entail. We need to discuss what type of projects and “real” writing situations you will engage with in a rhetorically meaningful manner. The main objective of the Professional Portfolio assignment is representing your knowledge, experiences, and theoretical understanding of writing in a meaningful way that will be beneficial to you and others in the near future.

Course Readings: We will not utilize a textbook for this course. Rather, we will read both established and recent articles in composition studies from diverse flagship journals in the field. We will also read educational reports, policy statements, guidelines, frameworks, and other learning standards. The main goal of readings is to understand established conversations in the field of writing studies so that you can make contributions and develop your own writing pedagogy approach. The readings in this course are challenging. However, I know you will engage with these readings by questioning, challenging, and joining the conversation about writing. When I read challenging texts, I usually have a pen or pencil, highlighters, and a dictionary immediately available. The following are a few tips to help you engage with course readings in a meaningful way:

◊ As you read, **write on the margins** of the text whether you are reading a hardcopy or an electronic version. Often, in iAnnotate (an app) or other PDF files, you can make notes on the margin.

◊ **Make connections** to your own personal experiences as a writer or other readings.

◊ **Ask questions** to the authors as if you could engage in conversation with them. Often, these questions are ideal for class discussion.

◊ **Write notes** when we “frame the reading” in class. In preparation for course readings, I will provide you with a brief overview of the readings and will pose questions to help guide your reading experience.

◊ **Read the discussion questions and activities** on Blackboard for each course reading; these can help you read the text with a specific focus in mind.

◊ **Discuss your thoughts on the readings** with your peers, family, friends and, of course, me. Verbalizing your thoughts, questions, or concerns often leads to a better understanding of arguments within a text.

All readings are free and located on Blackboard. Please print these readings in advance or have them as electronic versions with your annotations the day we are scheduled to discuss them in class (see course tentative calendar for readings due dates).

**Writing: Learning, Revision, Process**
Brandt, Deborah. “Remembering Reading, Remembering Writing.”
Shaughnessy, Mina P. “Diving In: An Introduction to Basic Writing”
Sommers, Nancy. “Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers.”

**Multilingualism/Translingual Writing in Writing Studies**
*History/Field (Writing Studies & Education)*
Students Rights to Their Own Language. CCCC 1974
Matsuda, Paul Kei. “Let’s Face It: Language Issues and the Writing Program Administrator”
Horner, Bruce, Min-Zhan Lu, Jacqueline Jones Royster, and John Trimbur “Language Difference in Writing toward a Translingual Approach”
“Translanguaging in Schools: Subiendo y Bajando, Bajando y Subiendo as Afterword” by Ofelia Garcia
Teacher/Student Perspective
Canagarajah, Suresh. “Codemshing in Academic Writing: Identifying Teachable Strategies of Translanguaging”
Allard, Elaine C. “Re-examining teacher translanguaging: An ecological perspective
Guerra, Juan. “Cultivating a Rhetorical Sensibility in the Translingual Classroom”
Shapiro, Shawna, Michlle Cox, Gail Shuck, and Emily Simnitt. “Teaching for Agency: From Appreciating Linguistic Diversity to Empowering Student Writers”

Responding to and Assessing Student Writing
Connors, Robert and Andrea Lunsford. “Teacher’s Rhetorical Comments on Student Papers”
Ferris, Dana R. “Inclusivity Through Community: Designing Response Systems for ‘Mixed’ Academic Writing Courses”
Inoue, Asao. “Writing Assessment as the Conditions for Translingual Approaches: An Argument for Fairer Assessments.”
Fiscus, Jacki. “Transmodal/Translingual Projects: A Case Study”

Position Statements and Student Learning Outcomes
“Framework for Success in Post-Secondary Writing” CWPA
“Supporting Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Learners in English Education”

*ALL READINGS ARE LOCATED ON BLACKBOARD. ADDITIONAL READINGS AND/OR LINKS WILL BE PROVIDED (E.G., TEACHING PHILOSOPHY, WRITING ASSIGNMENT DESIGN, ETC.).
**Self-Assessment: Criteria on Assessment**

**Excel Sheet & Grade Performance:** On Blackboard, you will find an Excel Sheet with the above-mentioned percentages, so you can keep track of your grades; I do not use the Blackboard Grade section. In addition to this “formal” Sheet, below you will find specific criteria for specific grades. In addition to formal assessment of projects, you will also submit a Self-Reflective Memo at the end of the semester where you will self-assess your performance and knowledge-making throughout the semester based on major course projects. Thoughtful and critical reflections are a part of your grade.

**A note on grades:** Simply fulfilling the course requirements warrants an average grade, as in “C,” not an “A.” Coming to class every day and doing assignments is not something that earns “extra credit” or an automatic A, as it is expected by you enrolling in the course. A higher grade will be based on the distinctive quality, development, and reflective nature of your work as well as your ability to guide a piece of writing through the various stages of revision and your willingness to peer review and explore new readings, genres, and techniques.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Expectations and Performance</th>
<th>(Adapted from Doug Hesse’s <em>Language and Composition I Course Guide</em> and revised by Dra. Alyssa G. Cavazos)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Outstanding Performance</strong></td>
<td>The work student produces is <strong>outstanding</strong> as it demonstrates rhetorical and critical awareness that extends beyond intellectual expectations by offering insightful contributions, self-reflections, and thoughtful revisions throughout their reading, writing, thinking, and learning processes. The student is always prepared for class (i.e., completes and annotates readings and brings assignments). The student participates frequently and thoughtfully in discussions (orally/electronically), makes comments and asks questions that lead to deeper understanding and multiple perspectives. The student makes detailed, insightful, clear, and accurate contributions to peer response activities (written &amp; oral) and is also open and receptive to new ideas and perspectives informed by teacher and peer feedback. The student uses class time wisely and productively—working with partners, writing or revising, consulting with the professor.</td>
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<td><strong>B Advanced Performance</strong></td>
<td>The work student produces is <strong>advanced</strong> as it demonstrates rhetorical and critical awareness of intellectual expectations; at times, further elaboration/clarification and/or revision is needed. Self-reflections are often thoughtful and engages, and at times, specific examples could strengthen their claims. Student is always prepared for class (i.e., completes and annotates course readings and brings assignments). The student participates frequently in class, orally/electronically, makes comments, and asks questions leading to deeper understanding. While the student may participate infrequently, he/she makes valuable contributions. The student makes generous, detailed, and clear contributions to peer response activities, but may lack specific details or examples in their response. While the student considers feedback received from peers and professor, revisions may not always represent or align with feedback received. The student uses unstructured time productively in most cases.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>C Expected Performance</strong></td>
<td>The work student produces is <strong>expected</strong> as it demonstrates a general rhetorical and critical awareness of intellectual expectations; often times, further elaboration, clarification, explanation, and revision is necessary. Self-reflection is general rather than specific and often requires further details and examples on their learning, thinking, writing, and reading processes. The student is prepared for class (i.e., completes and annotates readings and brings materials) but work may be lackluster and/or incomplete. The student seldom takes part in discussion, though attentively follow discussions and reacts to what others said. The student performs peer response work willingly; often, he/she offers commentary that is generous, detailed, and insightful while consistency may strengthen this area. While the student reads peer and professor feedback, they rarely apply the feedback in subsequent revisions. The student uses unstructured time adequately, although they do not fully demonstrate initiative and fail to ask questions for further guidance.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>D Weak Performance</strong></td>
<td>The work student produces is weak in quality as it fails to demonstrate rhetorical and critical awareness of the intellectual expectations. Regularly, the student fails to explain, elaborate, clarify, revise, and/or complete all activities, assignments, and requirements. Self-reflections are vague, lack specificity and depth, or are missing. The student is sometimes unprepared for class (i.e., does not complete and annotate the readings and does not bring materials). The student is inattentive (not following the discussion or taking part in it), disinterested, and/or disrespectful (reading the paper, texting, chronically absent, offering little if any commentary on peers’ work). The student does not revise work based on peer or teacher feedback. The student rarely uses unstructured time in a productive fashion.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>F Unacceptable Performance</strong></td>
<td>The work student produces is unacceptable as it may severely contain “D-Weak Performance” qualities OR is not submitted on time or at all. Lack of preparation, lack of engagement, or disruption in class is severe.</td>
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Course Policies

Classroom Atmosphere: I envision our classroom as a place where all of us can share our ideas, thoughts, and questions without fear of being made fun of or embarrassed. We all have different beliefs and perspectives and we do not need to agree with each other on everything we discuss in class; we do, however, have to respect each other at all times, provide constructive feedback, and believe we can all learn from one another. I envision peaceful and learning enriching discussions for all. Our classroom interaction will be based on respect for all of the writers and readers we encounter this semester. Because our writing classroom will be a community of writers and readers, you are expected to help your peers succeed in all course writing projects and in the process you will also succeed. Below you can find additional policies that will help us construct a positive learning environment.

Attendance & Drop by Instructor Policy: Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Failure to attend classes may result in failing the course. UTRGV’s attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations. I do understand that unexpected issues may develop during the semester. If you are absent more than two times, you should make an appointment with me as soon as possible so we may discuss whether dropping the course is a better option for you or continuing with the course is a possibility in order to enable you to earn the best possible grade. Please do not hesitate to contact me. Keep in mind that chronic absences adversely affect your grade.

I will not drop you from the course if you simply stop coming to class. It is your responsibility to make an appointment with me to discuss your absences, dropping the course, or discuss any personal issues that may prevent your full engagement. I am open to discuss specific issues with you, and I am willing to work with you as much as possible to help you gain as much as possible from the course. Please be aware of the following: According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.

Punctuality: As per UTRGV policy, you are expected to be on time to each class meeting. Walking in late to class is a distraction to me and your peers and it impedes the learning atmosphere. Most importantly, if you come in late to class, you will miss important course information that I usually cover within the first few minutes of class, and I will not repeat myself to each student who walks in late. I consider lack of punctuality an absence. Also, in your future professional career you will be expected to be on time; please practice this skill in all your college classes. Finally, please discuss with me any issues I might need to be aware of regarding your punctuality to class.

Late Work: Work is due at the beginning or before class, it will be considered late thereafter, and will NOT be accepted late. If you know you will miss a class, you need to submit the assignment ahead of time. Rhetorical Responses are due before class time if they are submitted on Blackboard. I do not accept them late. Also, all major research projects will require you to complete activities and assignments throughout the duration of the semester (including process work); therefore, it is imperative for you to submit each component of each major course project by the due date in order to receive feedback from your peers and teacher. If you do not submit these components on time, your grade on the major projects will be severely affected. Most importantly, I will NOT read or comment on drafts or other components for major projects if they are submitted late unless a) the student has an official university absence and contacted me well in advance and b) the instructor has agreed to late submission in advance of the due date. If you know you will miss class, you need to submit the
assignment ahead of time or come meet with me well in advance of the due date for us to discuss the issue. **Note**: This course relies heavily on technology, so you will need to have reliable access to the internet, which is always available in several places (including the library) on campus. Problems with technology (i.e., computer crash, printer malfunction, internet connectivity issues, etc.) are not acceptable excuses for late work. Plan ahead to avoid last minute crises related to submittal of your assignments. Also, often, assignments will be due on Blackboard, and you are expected to post the assignment by the time and due date specified. If you are absent and you DID NOT inform me of your absence or made contact with me in the case of an emergency, you will not be allowed to make up in-class activities and assignments. Missing in class activities and assignments can severely affect your performance on other projects, such as the major research project and professional portfolio.

**Phones, Computers, and Electronic Devices**: Because this is an institution of learning, ipods and cell phone use is not permitted in the classroom unless for specific educational purposes related to our course. If you need to take a call, please excuse yourself from class. Text messaging during class is not permitted. When you walk into class, your cell phone should be completely OFF (not on silent or vibrate). Please respect your professor and peers. Additionally, you are encouraged to bring your laptop to class, especially during peer workshop and research days. Your use of laptops is a privilege in class, and they can prove to be a learning-enriching instrument; however, you want to limit use of your computer to our classroom activities and assignments only. If you use your computer to complete homework for other courses, check your e-mail, facebook, or text message (not related to course learning), you will kindly be asked to leave class and will receive an absence for the day; we might also need to discuss if you are fully committed to this course. As soon as you arrive to class, you should login to our Blackboard website.

**Materials in Class**: You are expected to bring course readings and assignments to class. You may choose to print course readings or you may choose to have them as electronic versions on an electronic device (such as, an iPad or Computer; this excludes cell phones). Most importantly, your course readings MUST be annotated on the margins whether you choose to print them or annotate digitally. Additionally, please print course assignments in advance and bring them to class regularly in order to address questions or concerns.

**Academic Integrity Statement**: As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students. If you have any questions about how to properly cite sources or any concerns about giving credit to other’s ideas, please do not hesitate to ask me. I assume that you are familiar with a variety of citation styles, such as MLA (Modern Language Association) and APA (American Psychological Association), and I assume you know how to provide parenthetical citation for all quoted or paraphrased work and how to create a Works Cited page; however, if you are NOT familiar with documenting sources accurately, please ask me and I am happy to help you.

**Sexual harassment, Discrimination, and Violence**: In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at [www.utrgv.edu/equity](http://www.utrgv.edu/equity), including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.
Course Resources

Blackboard: We use Blackboard as our course website for various activities throughout the course: discussion threads, sharing resources and links, accessing handouts or assignments for the course, assigned readings, discussion questions, activities, and submitting course assignments. You can access Blackboard via www.my.utrgv.edu.

Please make sure you have regular access to Blackboard or if you do not have access to the Internet at home, please plan ahead in order to complete readings and submit assignments on time. If you experience any technical difficulties with Blackboard, you should contact the COLT² Helpdesk:

   Education Complex-(EDCC) 2.202 (2nd Floor)
   1201 W University Dr.
   Edinburg TX, 78401
   email: colthelp@utrgv.edu
   P: 956.665.2979 F: 956.665.5276

A technical difficulty with Blackboard, unless officially approved by COLT² staff as a campus wide issue, is not considered an excuse for not completing readings or assignments on time.

Peer Assistance: Please find fellow classmates who can provide you with assistance throughout the duration of the semester. These peers can remind you of something I said in class; they can also help you find information in Blackboard. As the instructor, I am here to help you think through readings, respond to your writing, and assistant in the content of the course. I cannot recount what you missed if you fail to come to class or explain what homework is due as this information is located on the course calendar on Blackboard. However, your peers can provide you with help in this area should you be absent or unable to locate a file on Blackboard. You may also use the Blackboard Discussion Board for questions about finding assignments or due dates; this is a place where you and your peers can help each other with technical and other issues. A word of caution: Your peer will NEVER supplement your presence and participation in class. Your peer is not expected to answer their phones or email and should NEVER be used as an excuse for your failure to complete assignments. I also do not expect your peers to share class notes and/or report in for you.

E-mail: University policy states that all communication should occur via UTRGV e-mail addresses. I will not respond to e-mails sent from e-mail addresses other than the e-mail address provided to you by the university. My e-mail address is alyssa.cavazos@utrgv.edu. I usually check my e-mail early mornings and late afternoons during weekdays. You can expect a response from me within 24 hours from the time you send an e-mail, except on weekends and holidays. If you have a question or concern about a homework assignment or reading, DO NOT wait until the night before to ask me a question. You need to e-mail me well in advance if you have any questions or concerns regarding course objectives, readings, or assignments.

Office Hours: During the office hours posted on the first page of the syllabus, I will be in my office and available to talk with you about any questions, comments, or concerns you have about the course. Please stop by and see me during these hours—that time is YOURS. If the stated office hours do not work with your schedule, e-mail me or ask me in person to make an appointment. Keep in mind that the stated office hours are dedicated to you; I may be in my office during other times, but I might not be able to help you outside of my office hours given my other responsibilities as a university faculty member, such as research, meetings, and committees. Please plan in advance.

Course Calendar: The course calendar is a tentative schedule or a plan for course readings, discussions, assignments, and deadlines. This means that the tentative course schedule may change at any time; it is imperative that you remain current with the most updated course calendar on Blackboard as this is where I will update the schedule of assignments, readings, and deadlines.
**Online Readings & Assignment Submission:** I understand that you may or may not have reliable access to the Internet at home. For this reason, I expect you to plan in advance in order for you to print the required course readings by the time we meet for class. Additionally, please plan ahead when an assignment must be submitted online by a certain time or when you are expected to participate in an online discussion. Lack of access to the Internet is NOT an excuse in your failure to complete and annotate course readings or your failure to submit assignments on Blackboard.

**The Writing Center:** The Writing Center is dedicated to assisting UTRGV students in all stages of the writing process with the ultimate goal of helping students to be more efficient communicators, critical thinkers, and independent learners. Trained, interdisciplinary peer tutors actively engage students to: generate ideas at all stages of the writing process, gain a better understanding of content and structure, effectively research topics by using reliable resources and correctly formatting citations, provide convenient access to writing tutoring (face-to-face, Skype, or online), implement revision strategies for independent learning, and raise confidence in student writing. The Writing Center can be found on both UTRGV campuses: BLIBR 3.206 (Brownsville) and ESTAC 3.119 (Edinburg). More info can be found at: https://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/student-academic-success/writing-center/index.htm

**Accommodating Students with Disabilities:** If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and contact Student Accessibility Services to schedule an appointment to initiate services. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with Student Accessibility Services before classes start. However, accommodations can be provided at any time. **Brownsville Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu. **Edinburg Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu.

**Fall 2018 Calendar of Activities:** The UTRGV academic calendar can be found at https://my.utrgv.edu/home at the bottom of the screen, *prior to login*. Some important dates for fall 2018 include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 27</td>
<td>First day of classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 30</td>
<td>Last day to add a course or register for fall 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 3</td>
<td>Labor Day – NO classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 14</td>
<td>Last day to drop a course; will count toward the 6-drop rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 22-24</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holiday – NO classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 6</td>
<td>Study Day – NO classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 7-13</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 14-15</td>
<td>Commencement Exercises</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Course Resources:** Additional course resources can be found on Blackboard. Check regularly.

**Course Evaluations:** Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (http://my.utrgv.edu); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available on or about:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td>October 4 – 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td>November 29 – December 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Fall Semester</td>
<td>November 15 – December 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>