Studies in Literacy

1. Course Description from 2015-2017 Undergraduate Catalog:
   Course examines the history and theories of literacy, including the critical ways literacy is connected to personal, political and social forces and ramifications. Prerequisites: Nine hours of English.

2. Professor Contact Info:
   Dr. Beatrice Mendez Newman
   Professor, Department of Writing and Language Studies
   Office: ELABS 208
   Email: beatrice.newman@utrgv.edu
   Office phone: 665-7384
   Office hours: M & W 8-9am

3. A Brief Overview of ENGLISH 3345
   Studies in Literacy will be an exciting class! We will explore the way traditional views of literacy have been expanded to integrate realities that impact the way we use language to achieve our goals and, in general, become self-actualized individuals. At the core of changing constructions of literacy is the profound impact that technology has had on the way we read and write and how we use our literacy to negotiate our way through social, political, rhetorical, and economic environments.

   Class Activities: We will have two major types of class activities: (1) lessons that introduce you to the content (the knowledge base) of our course (delivered during our traditional in-class sessions and online), and (2) a variety of activities that provide opportunities for you to apply that new knowledge through interaction with your professor and with your classmates.

   Our hybrid course environment: Our hybrid environment blends the best of traditional and online learning. We will meet at the beginning and end of each unit, each time for 1-2 week traditional class sessions. The rest of our hybrid course activities will be online. Throughout the entire semester, I will be available in my office during our scheduled meeting time should you want to come by for conferencing or clarification of course information and assignments. The Course Orientation Lesson in the Orientation Unit provides details and specifics about logistics, expectations, and work in our hybrid environment. After our traditional class sessions, you will need to log in to our course at least several times a week to make sure you stay on track and pay attention to course-related announcements and email messages. All our course material and assignments are on our Blackboard page organized into units.

   Class Work: We have two content units and two course framework units. Details about each unit are in the Course Orientation Lesson.
# 4. COURSE GOALS AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

**Departmental Goals: Student Learning Outcomes for English (SLOs)**

SLO 1—Students will be able to interpret and analyze a text using different approaches from literary, rhetorical and/or linguistic theories.

SLO 2—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.

SLO 3—Recent graduates who majored in English will demonstrate satisfaction with the programs in the English Department.

SLO 4—Students will be able to use discipline-appropriate technology applications (such as library databases, computer applications, Internet research, non-print media, multi-media applications, desktop publishing, etc.) in preparation and presentation of course projects.

### Student Learning Outcomes for English 3345

By the end of English 3345, students will be able to:

1. extend their understandings of literacy through guided practice, collaborative activities, and independent learning (SLO 2, 3)

2. articulate well-informed positions on new constructions of social, political, and economic aspects of literacy (SLO 1, 2, 4)

3. create writing products that analyze their own literacy experiences in the context of new constructions of literacy (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4)

4. interact regularly with classmates and professor through traditional and online discussions of literacy topics (SLO 4)

# 5. What we'll do in English 3345

This Course Map provides a visual representation of our course structure. The unit materials and activities on our Blackboard page include overviews, due dates, and time and effort expectations for each unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORIENTATION</th>
<th>Unit 1</th>
<th>Unit 2</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 28-Sept. 1</td>
<td>Aug. 28-Oct. 6</td>
<td>Oct. 16-Dec. 4</td>
<td>Dec. 6-Dec. 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Content &amp; Activities</td>
<td>Unit Content &amp; Activities</td>
<td>Unit Content &amp; Activities</td>
<td>Unit Content &amp; Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Course Orientation Lesson</td>
<td>• Course Orientation Lesson</td>
<td>• Course Orientation Lesson</td>
<td>• Course Orientation Lesson</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 1 discussion board: 100 points</td>
<td>• 4 in-class sessions: total 100 points</td>
<td>• 4 in-class sessions: 100 points</td>
<td>• 1 discussion board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Unit Points:</strong> 100</td>
<td><strong>Total Unit Points:</strong> 450 points</td>
<td><strong>Total Unit Points:</strong> 600</td>
<td><strong>Total Unit Points:</strong> 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assignments and point totals for each unit are projections; unit materials may be changed if it appears that we need to spend more time and effort on specific aspects of the unit.
Each unit has a designated tab in our Blackboard menu. Each unit includes a unit overview, a “What's Due When” schedule of unit activities, and a Content and Activities folder with all unit materials, assignments, and quizzes.

PREREQUISITES: Each assignment has a threshold score that will indicate you’ve met the expectations for the assignment at a minimal level. If you meet this score, then you can move on to the next assignment. If you have not met the threshold score in your initial submission, you will be provided feedback that addresses what you need to do to improve, revise, and resubmit your assignment. Prerequisites are explained more fully in SOPHIE.

FEEDBACK: When you submit an assignment, you'll get feedback which tells you how effectively you completed the task and which aligns your score with the rubric provided for the assignment. If you did not meet the minimum score (usually 70%) to move to the next assignment, you will be encouraged to resubmit the assignment for a higher score on the basis of the feedback as long as you meet the deadline. The rubric, feedback, and resubmission opportunities will enable you to end all assignments with the highest possible score and optimum learning levels.

RESPONSE TIME: For minor assignments, such as discussion boards, you'll get feedback usually within a few hours of your submission. Drafts of essays will generally be back to you with feedback in 24 hours. If I can’t stick to these feedback turn around times for a specific assignment, I’ll let you know via an Announcement once we launch the assignment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and EMAIL: I will rely on class announcements and emails to stay in touch with you. Since we are in an online, virtual classroom environment, this cyber communication will be vital to staying up with adjustments and updates. You need to check your email every day to ensure you have not missed reading such class updates.

LATE WORK: Submitting assignments late will hurt your grade, derail your progress in interacting with classmates on our discussion boards, and significantly cut back on your revision and resubmission time. For some assignments, you will have the option to request a reasonable extension (presented in the submission options of the assignment). For all other assignments, a late assignment will be eligible for maximum 70% credit.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS: Please check the technical requirements for full participation in online learning, presented in the syllabus tab and the technical requirements tab from our course menu on our Blackboard page. Some caveats: (1) do not send assignments from your phone; such submissions tend to be garbled and unformatted and will yield a low score; (2) not having updated hardware and software on your personal computer will not justify problematic submissions or non-submissions. We have numerous computer labs on campus which you can use to complete your course work.

BLACKBOARD SUPPORT: If you something should go wrong with your Blackboard access, here’s the basic contact info from the Blackboard support tab on your syllabus menu. You need to keep in mind, however, that a Blackboard issue exacerbated because you waited till the last minute to do an assignment is not an excuse for a late submission. Also, I cannot change or “fix” anything related to Blackboard technology.
6. Course grade calculation:

Your final grade will be based on the percentage of points you’ve accumulated. The course map shows **1250 total points** for the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Points required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100%–90%</td>
<td>1250–1125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>89%–80%</td>
<td>1124–1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>79%–70%</td>
<td>999–875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>69%–60%</td>
<td>875–750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59%–0%</td>
<td>749–0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bonus reminder:** For each unit, you’ll have multiple bonus point opportunities that will allow you to build up a repertoire of extra points that reflect going above and beyond basic expectations.

7. Materials Required:

- **NO BOOKS REQUIRED**—All required class materials and readings will be available on our Blackboard page.
- **Dedicated notebook or spiral**—I strongly encourage you to keep your class notes and reminders in a writing notebook dedicated to our course content.
8. Meet SOPHIE—our course navigation guide

A few semesters ago, I created a learning support strategy for my online classes which I named SOPHIE—Success Oriented Policies, Help, Incentives, & Examples (You may know that the name Sophia means wisdom; SOPHIE is designed to keep us feeling wise about how we move through the course.) There is a SOPHIE tab in our Blackboard menu. SOPHIE is our repertoire of important info that you need in order to effectively negotiate our day-to-day course dealings, such as deadlines, required formatting for assignments, consequences for failure to submit assignments, online protocols, email requirements, bonus opportunities, virtual course attendance, and several other topics. You need to refer to SOPHIE regularly to ensure you are meeting expectations for success. And, when you fail to follow a key guideline, I will refer you to SOPHIE and you will need to resubmit your assignment until it meets the guidelines and expectations presented in SOPHIE.

A lot of the information presented in this syllabus will be expanded in SOPHIE, so make sure you pay attention to every section of SOPHIE.

SOPHIE is under the COURSE TOOLS section of our Blackboard menu.
9. UTRGV Policy Statements

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Required on all syllabi. Do not modify.

Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive academic accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to initiate services. Accommodations can be arranged through SAS at any time, but are not retroactive. Students who suffer a broken bone, severe injury or undergo surgery during the semester are eligible for temporary services. 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 ability@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 ability@utrgv.edu.

MANDATORY COURSE EVALUATION PERIOD: Required on all syllabi. Do not modify.

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:

- Fall 2017 Module 1: Oct. 5 – Oct. 11
- Fall 2017 Module 2: Nov. 29 – Dec. 5
- Fall 2017 (full semester): Nov. 15 – Dec. 6

ATTENDANCE: Recommended on all syllabi; may be modified by the instructor as long as it is not inconsistent with UTRGV policy.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. 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.

Since our English 3345 is a hybrid course, our attendance will be actual (in-class, in-person class sessions) as well as virtual (online activities). You will need to attend our class sessions but also stay active as an online class participant via email, responses to assignments, and phone conferencing.

SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY: Recommended on all syllabi.

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 (including self-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.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, and VIOLENCE: Required on all syllabi. Do not modify.

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, 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 that is free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

COURSE DROPS: Recommended on all syllabi; may be modified by the instructor as long as it is not inconsistent with UTRGV policy.

According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. In Fall 2017, the official drop date is Nov. 15. 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.

Possible drop by instructor in English 3345: if you stop participating in our actual or online class activities (over 1 week without contact), you will be sent an email advising you that you might be dropped if you don’t contact your professor and arrange for completing missing assignments.