In the first part of this syllabus, you’ll find a lot of information about what the class is and what different groups of people (at different levels of the university) want you to get out of it. You should read through that information, see what you think, and ask me any questions you have about it. My language and my approach to these goals starts immediately after that with the section What I Want To Do in English 1301.

Interrelated Goals for English 1301

Background
To ensure consistency in instructional approaches throughout Texas public institutions, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board devised in 1998 exemplary objectives for all courses required in universities’ core curricula. Institutions throughout the state, including UTPA, have used the THECB exemplary objectives to define objectives for required core curriculum courses. In addition, all UTPA major programs of study now have Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) which promote consistency and accountability in preparation of majors. Finally, within each program, individual courses have objectives that reflect accepted theories, content, and practice in that discipline. This section of your syllabus also demonstrates how these various sets of goals are implemented in your specific English 1301 course through your instructor’s course objectives.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Exemplary Objectives for Communication
1. To understand and demonstrate writing and speaking processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, and presentation.
2. To understand the importance of specifying audience and purpose and to select appropriate communication choices.
3. To understand and appropriately apply modes of expression, i.e., descriptive, expositive, narrative, scientific, and self-expressive in written, visual, and oral communication.
4. To participate effectively in groups with emphasis on listening, critical and reflective thinking, and responding.
5. To understand and apply basic principles of critical thinking, problem solving, and technical proficiency in the development of exposition and argument.
6. To develop the ability to research and write a documented paper and/or to give an oral presentation.

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 the Writing Program**

The following statements describe what we want our students to know, think/value, and do when they finish the First-Year Writing Program and successfully complete 1302 with a "C" or better.

1. The student improves his/her writing by engaging in processes of inventing, drafting, organizing, revising, editing, and presentation (corresponds with THECB Communication Objective #1).
2. The student writes with a purpose and composes texts in genres appropriate to his/her purpose and audience (corresponds with THECB Communication Objectives #2 & 3)
3. The student productively interacts with his/her peers, engaging in small group activities regularly and in which students give one another feedback on their writing (corresponds with THECB Communication Objective #4).
4. The student thinks critically about his/her position in the context of a larger ongoing conversation about the issue he/she is investigating (corresponds with THECB Communication Objective #5).
5. The student is aware of the choices that writers have to make and feels confident in his/her ability to use that awareness to engage in a variety of future writing tasks (corresponds with THECB Communication Objective #5).
6. The student finds, evaluates, and uses appropriate sources for research (corresponds with THECB Communication Objective #6).
7. The student meaningfully integrates and correctly documents information from sources (corresponds with THECB Communication Objective #6).
8. The student is aware of the ways technology affects writing (corresponds with THECB Communication Objectives #1, 3, 5, & 6).

**English 1301 Undergraduate Catalog Description**

English 1301 is designed to help students become more effective and confident writers as well as more active and engaged readers of complex texts. To do this, students will engage in a variety of writing projects which will help them become more reflective writers who are better able to revise their work to meet the needs of a given writing situation.

**Course Goals for English 1301 (not necessarily in order of importance)**

English 1301 is designed to help students:

1. See that writing is an opportunity for learning (THECB 1-6; WPSLO 1-8; English SLO 1-3);
2. Develop an understanding of writing as an interactive and recursive process (THECB 1, 4; WPSLO 1, 3; English SLO 1-2);
3. Become reflective writers, aware of the rhetorical choices writers make (THECB 1-3, 5, 6; WPSLO 2, 5-8; English SLO 3);
4. Identify their own purposes for writing (THECB 2; WPSLO 2; English SLO 3);
5. Develop their abilities to write in a variety of genres appropriate for their audience and purpose (THECB 2, 3; WPSLO 2; English SLO 1);
6. Become actively engaged readers, able to use multiple reading strategies for a variety of complex texts, including their own (THECB 5, 6; WPSLO 4, 6; English 1, 3);
7. Learn how to interact productively with their peers throughout the writing process (THECB 4;
8. Know how to use various types of feedback (teacher, peer, self-assessment) to revise their texts effectively (THECB 1, 4; WPSLO 1, 3; English SLO 1-2);
9. Gain more confidence in their abilities to engage in future writing tasks successfully (THECB 5; WPSLO 5; English SLO 3);
10. Use technology in their writing in rhetorically effective ways (THECB 1, 3, 5, 6; WPSLO 8; English SLO 4);
11. Learn about and effectively use the conventions of writing that govern a given writing situation (THECB 2, 3, 5; WPSLO 2, 5; English SLO 1-2); and
12. Understand the rhetorical implications of writing style and grammatical conventions for a given writing situation (THECB 1; WPSLO 1, 5; English SLO 1-2).

What I Want To do in English 1301

English 1301 is what we call a core curriculum requirement. That means everyone has to take it. It's also what I sometimes call a threshold course—a place somewhere between what came before college and what you'll eventually accomplish here. So there's a lot of stress and adjustment going on. Oh, and from the title you can tell it's about "composition," or writing, an often misunderstood and much-dreaded act. Only slightly less misunderstood than "rhetoric," which often gets used to cut people like politicians down. Whenever anyone asks me what I do, I barely get the word English out before I hear a version of, "Oh, that was my worst subject," or "Guess I better watch my grammar." Really? That's what English means? Not to me, but I've been teaching writing to new college students for over fifteen years. I have a different, insider's perspective, and I enjoy what I do—in part because I don't do what was done to me when I took my first college English class in 1989.

In a nutshell, this class is about writing as inquiry. We'll read a lot, talk a lot, write about our ideas and other people's ideas, share our writing and feedback in workshops, and revise (which is not editing) a lot. And I hope the direction of the class is driven as much by your interests and questions as it is by mine.

From this point forward, then, I'd like you to begin to think of yourselves as writers. Every one of us will have something important to contribute to our discussions, and I am looking forward to talking with you, helping you, and learning from you. It is important to me that you feel comfortable sharing your ideas, even when they're different from others in the class (yes, even mine). I intend to treat you with respect, and I expect that you will do the same for me and for each other.

Because of my experiences writing and teaching writing, I have learned that you can learn a great deal from reading and responding to others' writing, so the networks you form will be an integral component of the class. You will often work in groups, reading each other's writing and commenting on it, sharing ideas from homework, and things like that. This work is designed to give each of you an opportunity to get a fresh pair of eyes, to get feedback and response from others who may not see the same things you do or respond to the words in the ways that you had expected. I expect each of you to take this work seriously and to give your peers the respect they deserve. I don't know anyone who couldn't benefit from constructive feedback and from talking through his/her ideas, so this will hopefully be a part of the course that you will come to appreciate and even enjoy.

This course isn't designed to make you a perfect writer by the end of the semester. It is designed to help you become more reflective and thoughtful about your writing, about why you write and how. What we hope to do in the Writing Program at UTPA is to give you some strategies for dealing with writing tasks
and to give you some opportunities to experiment with those strategies and to take some risks in an environment that is encouraging, constructively critical, and ultimately helpful. Hopefully, you’ll end up finding that writing can be a way of understanding yourselves and others and of communicating ideas in meaningful ways that can have tangible effects on your lives both as an individual and as a part of a larger social group.

So, while we will spend a good deal of time on developing ideas and pushing our thinking as well as thinking about rhetorical effects of writing choices, this is not a course in “formal” grammar and punctuation. I come here with the understanding that, whether you believe it yourself, you are familiar with the “basics” from a lifetime of experience, for some of you in two languages. When things like punctuation and syntax start getting in the way of your message, we’ll take time to talk about writing in those ways. And until the end of the semester, your peer workshops won’t address things like spelling and punctuation either. We will spend most of our time working on your ideas and how you express them rather than on editing issues.

I look forward to working with you, learning from you, and creating a space in 1301 where good writing and intriguing learning can happen.

My English 1301 Goals
Through your work in this class, you should begin doing the following things:

1. Develop and build confidence in your abilities to create, interpret, and evaluate texts in all types of media (THECB 1, 2, 3; WPSLO 1-8; English SLO 1-4).
2. Develop knowledge and inspire new ideas through writing (THECB 3, 5; WPSLO 1-4, 6-8; English SLO 1-4).
3. Become a rhetorically effective writer who can respond credibly and accurately to a variety of writing situations (THECB 1, 2, 3, 5; WPSLO 1-8; English SLO 1-4).
4. Learn to write with a purpose (THECB 2; WPSLO 1-3, 5; English SLO 2-4).
5. Develop an awareness of how and why you revise your writing (THECB 1, 2; WPSLO 1-3, 5, 8; English SLO 1-4).
6. Develop an understanding of the importance of getting feedback from others when writing (THECB 1, 4; WPSLO 1, 3, 5; English SLO 2-4).
7. Develop habits for thoughtful and effective questioning (THECB 4, 5; WPSLO 1, 3-4; English SLO 1-4).
8. Develop reading strategies for analyzing texts (your peers’ papers as well as the readings you’ll be working with) (THECB 4, 5; WPSLO 1, 3-4, 6-7; English SLO 1-4).
9. Learn how to work constructively with each other through group work (THECB 4, 5; WPSLO 3; English SLO 1-4).
10. Learn how to creatively take risks (THECB 1, 2, 3, 4; WPSLO 1-3, 5, 8; English SLO 2-4).
11. Become familiar with appropriate style guidelines for class projects (THECB 1, 6; WPSLO 1, 7; SLO 2-4).

Requirements
- A reliable pen drive/jump drive/memory stick. Get one for 5-10 bucks almost anywhere, keep it safe, and make duplicate copies of all your work. This is not an option.
- All of your readings will be electronic, so find, print, read, and bring ‘em. You have free access to many of the readings through JSTOR via our UTPA Library, (http://lib.utpa.edu/research/databases/#j). For off campus access to JSTOR, you will need to follow the Library’s directions for establishing a proxy index.
You'll need Adobe Acrobat Reader to read the PDFs, but there's a free download at: http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html or computer labs on campus have it if you don't have a computer of your own.

And UTPA has a new policy about STUDENT-TEACHER EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE. This policy "requires all electronic communication between the University and students be conducted through the official University supplied systems; namely BroncMail for email or Blackboard for course specific correspondence. Therefore, please use your UTPA assigned BroncMail or Blackboard account for all future correspondence with UTPA faculty and staff."

Readings
[NOTE: Other than the “Available at...” line you’ll find after some of these readings, these source citations are in correct MLA format the way they would appear in a Works Cited page.]


Kantz, Margaret. “Helping Students Use Textual Sources Persuasively.” College English 52.1 (1990): 74-91. [Available through JSTOR with your UTPA access.]

Grades
Writing Portfolio (60%)
This semester, you will be working towards the creation of a writing portfolio, and you will do it through a set of distinct stages, revising (which means adapting, changing, and tweaking your ideas) along the
One of my main goals when I teach writing is to help you develop a sense that your writing is a work in progress. I will not assign grades to each stage. You will be re-thinking and re-writing parts or all of every piece of writing based on feedback you get from me and your peers. As you write and re-write your stages, you will need to keep track of the feedback you receive, the revision and editing changes you make, and each successive draft. I suggest you do this by (1) using Google Docs as your primary place for creating and revising documents (it automatically creates a revision history you can view under FILE > SEE REVISION HISTORY) or (2) using TRACK CHANGES in Microsoft Word. I will ask you/show you how to create and share with me a Google Docs PORTFOLIO FOLDER with separate sub-folders for each stage’s materials. At the end of the semester, I will grade your portfolio as a whole, not as an average of individual grades.

Because your course grade depends heavily on your portfolio, it is difficult to estimate your course grade throughout the semester. If you’d like to have an idea of where you stand after you’ve completed a substantial amount of writing and revision, please make an appointment to meet me outside of class, and I will review your work with you and give you a better sense of where you are grade-wise. At mid-term, I will send out D/F notices if you are in danger of not passing the course at that time, and I will let you know if you're in trouble with your absences. There is no need for you to be surprised by your final course grade even though I do not put grades on the stages of your writing. It is your responsibility to set up a meeting if you’re curious or concerned, and it's important that you not wait until the last week or so to start asking about grades. At that point, it’s too late for you to do what needs to be done to significantly raise your overall course grade. IMPORTANT NOTE: If you do not submit a complete portfolio at semester’s end, you may not receive a passing portfolio grade.

**Daily Work (40%)**
I will periodically evaluate everything else you do for class (reading responses, workshops, in-class writings, blog posts & comments, homework, etc.) with a check system: √+ (3 pts), √ (2 pts), √- (1 pt), or 0 pts for doing nothing or not turning something in. This will allow me a chance to let you know how you’re doing in different areas and how you can improve throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, there will be a total number of possible points. Your specific grade will be determined by what percentage of the total points you have accumulated:

- 90-100% of total possible points = A range
- 80-89% of total possible points = B range
- 70-79% of total possible points = C range
- 60-69% of total possible points = D range
- 0-59% of total possible points = F range

For example, if there were two grades (6 total possible points) and you got a √+ (3) and a √ (2), this part of your grade would be: (5/6)x100=83. There will be many more points than this, but I wanted you to see
a smaller scale example.

**Attendance and Drop by Instructor Policy**

"The student is expected to attend all classes and laboratory sessions. It is the responsibility of the student to inform each instructor of absences. When, however, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of ‘DP’ or ‘DF’" (HOP 5.2.4). For more information on university policies that affect you in terms of drops and such, see the chart at the end of this syllabus.

**Late Work**

Late work makes life hard for all of us, so don’t count on turning any in. If you know of an upcoming absence, complete and turn in your work early. The class is designed so that you can miss some work in an emergency without it destroying your standing in the class.

**Materials in Class and Punctuality**

Bring everything every day, and be on time. If we start an activity and you don’t have the necessary materials or walk in late, you won’t be able to constructively contribute to the work we do in class.

**Accommodating Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability that will make it difficult for you to carry out the work as we have outlined and/or you need special accommodations/assistance because of the disability, please contact immediately the Disability Services Office (DSO), University Center Rm. 322. Appropriate arrangements and accommodations can be made. Verification of disability and processing for special services, such as note takers, extended time, separate accommodations for testing, is required and will be determined by DSO. Consult DSO Coordinator at (956) 316-7005.

**Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Statement (department approved)**

Dishonest acts, such as plagiarism (using words or a specific author’s ideas from another source without acknowledging the source) or collusion (having other people write parts of your paper for you), may result in an “F” on the assignment and may lead to a disciplinary hearing conducted through the office of the Dean of Students, which could result in suspension or expulsion from UTPA (this policy is consistent with the Student Conduct Code printed in the UTPA Student Guide). If you have questions about whether your use of other sources (such as books, websites, friends, writing center tutors) is fair or not, please ask before turning in the work that you have a question about.

**UTPA Academic Policies for Faculty and Advisors-Fall 2008**

1. **Three-peat Rule** (Subchapter F 13.105-13.107; Effective Fall 2005): (1) Classes before Fall 2002 (UTPA term 031) do not count in three-peat calculation; (2) Classes taken during or later than Fall 2002 (UTPA term 031) can be taken twice within the same institution at the state resident tuition; (3) The third enrollment to a class taken at the same institution will be charged a “repeat class fee” in addition to the state tuition. UTPA repeat class fee: $100 per credit hour.

2. **Six Course Drop Rule** (Subchapter A 4.10; Effective Fall 200): (1) Applies to students who first enrolled in Texas public university or college credit courses during Fall 2007 (UTPA term 081); (2) An institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student to drop a total of more than six courses. Includes any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education; (3) Concurrent enrollment courses and developmental courses do not count towards the six course drop limit; (4) After the student has reached the six course drop
limit, he/she will not be allowed to drop the course and receive a grade for the course; (5) Exceptions to the six course drop rule exist. The Office of the Registrar (William Morris, Joni Thomas, or Cindy Blanco) can be contacted to answer questions concerning policy exceptions and procedures 381-2201.

3. Seven Year Catalog Limit (UTPA 2007-2009 Catalog p. 73): (1) The degree requirements that must be completed for graduation are those in effect at the time of the student’s entrance or those provided in a subsequent catalog. In any case, the catalog used to determine the degree requirements must not be more than seven years old; (2) The College Catalog for 1998-2000 expired for students who did not graduate by August 7, 2007. Therefore, students who were under the 1998-2000 Catalog have been automatically moved to the 2000-2002 catalog and must obtain 51 advanced hours for graduation.

4. Enrollment Cap-Excess Hour (Includes drops, repeats and withdrawals; Subchapter F 13.102-13.104; Effective Fall 1999–Summer 2006): (1) Students first enrolled in Texas public university or college credit courses will have calculated enrollment caps based on the following criteria: before Fall of 1999 (UTPA term 001): NO enrollment cap; Fall 1999 through Summer 2006: Degree Plan + 45 hours; During or later than Fall of 2006: Degree Plan + 30 hours; (2) The student will be charged additional fees for those accumulated attempted college credit hours above the enrollment cap (= required degree plan credits + either 30 or 45 credit hours); (3) The additional UTPA “Excess Hour fee” for each credit hour starting Fall 2008 is $125 per credit hour. (NOTE: No student will be charged for both “Repeat Class Fee” and Excess Hour fee for the same course.)

5. Transfer of Credit-Limit (Chapter 4, Subchapter B 4.25 (f); Effective 2005): No institution of higher education shall be required to accept in transfer, or apply toward a degree program, more than sixty-six (66) semester credit hours of lower-division academic credit. Institutions of higher education, however, may choose to accept additional credit hours.

6. Transfer of Credit-Core Completed (Chapter 4, Subchapter B 4.28 (c)): Transfer of Credit-Completed Core Curriculum. If a student successfully completes the 42 semester credit hour core curriculum at a Texas public institution of higher education, that block of courses may be transferred to any other Texas public institution of higher education and must be substituted for the receiving institution's core curriculum. A student shall receive academic credit for each of the courses transferred and may not be required to take additional core curriculum courses at the receiving institution unless the Board has approved a larger core curriculum at that institution.

7. Drop/Withdrawal Deadline (Approved by Provost Leadership Team on February 26, 2008 Fall 2008): That a drop and withdrawal date deadline at the completion of 75% of the semester be set. After that drop withdrawal deadline, students will not be allowed to drop or withdraw from classes and will receive one of the following grades: A, B, C, D, F, I, P, S, or U for a class. The drop dates will be published in the UTPA Catalog and Calendar. The drop/withdrawal date for Fall 2008 is November 12, 2008.

8. Grading Policy Changes (Approved by Provost Leadership Team on February 26, 2008 Fall 2008): (1) Grading policy (codes) for Developmental Educational courses (ENG 1310, ENG 1320, MATH 1300, MATH 1334) be changed from grades of A, B, C, etc. to grades of RA, RB, RC, etc. to indicate these courses are "Remedial"; (2) Grading policy for drops: DP and DF will no longer be given, only a single, non-punitive drop symbol, DR will be used.