English 6324: Pedagogy in Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Studies

Dra. Alyssa G. Cavazos

Office: ELABS 270-A

Office Hours: MW 9:00a.m.-12:00noon or by appointment

e-mail: alyssa.cavazos@utrgv.edu
Course Overview

Welcome to English 6324: Pedagogy in Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Studies. The official course description reads: “Explore issues related to teaching of rhetoric, composition, and other literacies, with emphasis on a theoretically informed practice.”

While the official course description accentuates the teaching of writing from a theoretical perspective, I’d like for us to explore the teaching of writing from researched, theoretical, rhetorical, and personal viewpoints. The way I teach writing is not only informed by theory and research, but also by my own personal experiences with writing and language as well as the rhetorical contexts where I teach. When my seventh grade English teacher told my parents I would “never earn an ‘A’ in an English class because I learned English as a second language,” I was, naturally, devastated and hurt, but this experience helped me identify a critical research question I investigated throughout my graduate and academic career: how can I develop fair and equitable assessment tools that will ensure all my students, regardless of language background or any other marker of “difference” have the opportunity to succeed and achieve? While there is ample research in the area of second language writing and translingual writing that supports students’ linguistic experiences in the writing classroom, my personal experiences as an English language learner and an academic in the field of rhetoric and composition teaching at a Hispanic Serving Institution on the Mexico/U.S. border have equally shaped my desire to teach writing through linguistically inclusive approaches.

For this reason, I invite each of you to explore the researched, theoretical, personal, and rhetorical contexts that shape or will shape your writing pedagogies. Instead of “covering” all pedagogical approaches in the teaching of writing, we will “uncover” writing pedagogies by engaging in inquiry, exploration, and reflection on what it means to teach writing effectively. The purpose of course readings and your own primary and secondary research will be to explore and create writing pedagogies from theoretical, rhetorical, and personal perspectives. In order to engage writing pedagogies in these ways, writing will be critical in your inquiry process and development of effective pedagogical approaches. Through course readings, writing projects, and class discussions, you will notice how my own pedagogy is informed by personal inquiry and reflective practices as well as theoretical and rhetorical knowledge. In the end, the goal of the course is to create a collaborative inquiry-based, reflective and exploratory map of pedagogical approaches in the teaching of writing that will inform how you approach teaching and learning.

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 in the teaching of writing. 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 rhetorical 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. As educators, we are in a unique position to create change—the type of change that challenges dominant, hegemonic structures in the educational system and in society. I want to work with you this semester to create the type of change that leads toward inclusivity and equity in learning for all, so we can all learn from each other as we create a more just community of teaching and learning. I look forward to a learning-enriching semester!
Guiding Questions: 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.

- How do we learn to write? Why do we write?
- What is writing? What purpose(s) does it serve?
- How does research and theory inform the teaching of writing? How does the teaching of writing inform how we conduct research about writing and how we theorize writing?
- How do our personal experiences with writing inform our views toward the teaching of writing?
- How does the rhetorical context of where we teach writing and with whom shape our writing pedagogies?
- What is the role of language diversity and linguistic inclusivity in writing instruction?
- How do we teach and respond to writing fairly?
- How do we design writing assignments responsive to students’ linguistically and culturally diverse background?

The guiding questions will assist you in accomplishing the following by the end of the course:

1. Apply a number of theories and practical strategies for teaching writing that will engage students in rhetorically compelling and linguistically inclusive writing;
2. Productively give and receive feedback from peers and veteran teachers on teaching activities, materials, and theories; and
3. Produce and maintain a professional teaching portfolio informed by theoretical, researched, personal, and rhetorical perspectives on teaching writing that will stand out among peers applying for teaching and writing-related professions.

Course Projects

Below you will find a short overview and description of the major course projects and learning expectations this semester. A detailed assignment sheet for each major project will be posted on Blackboard.

Rhetorical Responses (and participation) 30% (6RRs @ 5% each)

This section encompasses written rhetorical responses and participation in in-class and online discussions. Throughout the semester, we will read a variety of academic articles. You will be expected to write approximately 6 one to one and a half pages single spaced rhetorical responses based on assigned texts. In each rhetorical response, you will briefly summarize the main research questions, arguments, and supporting data in the course readings, and you will focus your response on inquiry-based analysis and exploration through theoretical, rhetorical, and personal perspectives. Your analysis can focus on implications of the main arguments in the teaching of writing based on theoretical, personal, and/or pedagogical experiences (see formal assignment on Blackboard). While you can make connections to your professional and personal experiences in each of the RRs, your focus is on engaging in a close rhetorical analysis of each of the reading and making connections among the readings due that week. You will also write reflections and participate in class discussion.
When a reading is due, you are expected to annotate the text, write notes, and respond to questions even when an RR is not due. Rhetorical responses are critical to your success in the course, as they will provide you with the opportunity to analyze ideas, concepts, and issues in the field as well as engage in thoughtful and critical conversations with the readings and your peers’ responses to the readings.

Writing Pedagogy Mini-Ethnographic Study 35%

You will write a rhetorical analysis of the pedagogical approaches of a writing instructor at the college level. This is a mini-ethnographic study consisting of an interview, observation, and analysis of primary texts. You will conduct a personal interview with a writing instructor (30-45 minutes), observe at least two writing class sessions, analyze a writing assignment they designed, analyze their feedback to a student’s project, and analyze their teaching philosophy. In addition to primary research, you will also conduct secondary research on the writing approaches and pedagogical values you investigated in your primary research. Informed by your primary and secondary research, you will then write a Rhetorical Analysis exploring writing pedagogies through a theoretical, rhetorical, researched, and personal perspectives. See formal assignment on Blackboard.

Writing Pedagogy Portfolio Design 35%

Informed by your rhetorical responses, mini-ethnographic study, and inquiry-based research project, you will design a comprehensive Writing Pedagogy Portfolio. Your portfolio will consist of the following documents: a Teaching Philosophy, a Syllabus (with assignment descriptions and tentative schedule), a Writing Assignment Design that reflects your pedagogical approach(es), and feedback to a student’s project. You will also write a Reflective Narrative, modeled after the Course Designs published in Composition Studies, where you analyze how course readings and your writing projects informed your design of the documents submitted in your portfolio. In the end, this Writing Pedagogy Portfolio project will be instrumental in your professional development as an educator. Please see detailed assignment on Blackboard.

Course Readings

The majority of course readings will be available to you via PDF or Website link on Blackboard. Please ensure you have reliable computer and Internet access to ensure you are able to download and read all course readings. In addition to readings available on Blackboard, we will also read A Guide to Composition Pedagogy (2nd Edition). Please ensure you have this book before January 23rd, which is when the first set of readings from this book will be due. The main goal of these readings is to help you become acquainted with major conversations in the field of rhetoric, composition, and literacy studies in order for you to not only make contributions but also inform your theoretical and pedagogical views of the discipline. The readings in this course are challenging. However, I know you will engage with these readings by questioning, challenging, and joining the conversation about our discipline. 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:
1. 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.

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

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

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

Below you will find a list of course readings. 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).

**Introduction to Composition Pedagogy**
- “Writing in the 21st Century” Kathleen Blake Yancey
- "Sp(l)itting Images; Or, Back to the Future of (Rhetoric and?) Composition" Karen Kopelson

**Multilingual Writing**
- “Second Language Writing” Paul Kei Matsuda and Matthew J. Hammill (from *(A Guide to Composition Pedagogies)*)
- “Language Difference in Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach” Min-Zhan Lu and Horner
- “Cultivating a Reflective Approach to Language Difference in Composition Pedagogy” Daniel V. Bommarito and Emily Cooney
- “Doing Translingual Dispositions” Lee and Jenks

**Community Engaged Pedagogies**
- “Community-Engaged” Laura Julier, Kathleen Livingston, and Eli Goldblatt (from *(A Guide to Composition Pedagogies)*)
- “Translingual Communities: Teaching and Learning Where you Don’t Know the Language” by Elizabeth Kimball
- “Inception to Implementation: Feminist Community Engagement via Service Learning” by Johanna Phelps-Hille
- “Engaged Pedagogy” bell hooks

**Collaborative Writing**
- “Collaborative Writing” Krista Kennedy and Rebecca Moore Howard (from *(A Guide to Composition Pedagogies)*)
- “Consensus and Difference in Collaborative Learning” John Trimbur
- “Examining the mediational means in collaborative writing: Case studies of undergraduate ESL students in business courses” Luxin Yang

**Writing about Writing and Transfer**
- “Teaching about Writing, Righting Misconceptions: (Re)envisioning ‘First-Year Composition’ as ‘Introduction to Writing Studies’” Doug Downs and Elizabeth Wardle
- “The Content of Composition, Reflective Practice, and Transfer of Knowledge and Practice in Composition” Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak
• “Transfer and Translingualism” Rebecca Lorimer Leonard and Rebecca Nowacek

**Genre and Rhetorical Writing**
- “Genre Pedagogies” Amy Devitt (from *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*)
- “Sites of Invention: Genre and the Enactment of First-Year Writing” Anis Bawarshi
- “Beyond the Genre Fixation: A Translingual Perspective on Genre” Anis Bawarshi

**Responding to and Assessing Student Writing**
- 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."

**Syllabus, Teaching Philosophy, and Writing Assignment Design**
- “Syllabus and Assignment Design” Institute for Writing and Rhetoric Dartmouth
- “Designing Writing Assignments” Sarah Peterson Pittock (Stanford)
- “Reimagining “English 1311: Expository English Composition” as “Introduction to Rhetoric and Writing Studies” Todd Ruecker
- “World Rhetorics” Ghanashyam Sharma
- Writing effective Teaching Philosophies
- “The Journey towards a Teaching Philosophy” Susan Behrens
- Sample TPs (Alyssa, Javier, Colin, Britt)
Criteria on Assessment

Course Grades & Performance: The evaluation of your performance is based on Rhetorical Responses/Participation 30%, Writing Pedagogy Mini-Ethnographic Study 35%, Writing Pedagogy Portfolio 35%, and each consists of a variety of assignments and thoughtful self-reflections. In order to earn the grade you deserve, you must submit all required components.

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.

Standards for Learning Expectations and Performance
(Adapted from Doug Hesse’s Language and Composition I Course Guide and revised by Dra. Alyssa G. Cavazos)

A Outstanding Performance: The work student produces is outstanding as it demonstrates rhetorical and critical awareness that extends beyond intellectual expectations by offering insightful contributions, self-reflections, and thoughtful revisions. The student is always prepared for class (i.e., completes and annotates readings and brings materials). The student participates frequently and thoughtfully in discussions (orally/electronically), making comments and asking questions that lead to deeper understanding or multiple perspectives. The student makes detailed, insightful, clear, and accurate contributions to peer response activities (written & oral). The student uses class time wisely and productively—working with partners, writing or revising, consulting with the professor.

B Advanced Performance The work student produces is advanced as it demonstrates rhetorical and critical awareness of intellectual expectations; at times, further elaboration/clarification and/or revision is needed and self-reflections are often thoughtful. Student is always prepared for class (i.e., completes and annotates course readings and brings materials). The student participates frequently in class, orally/electronically, making comments/asking questions leading to deeper understanding. If the student participates infrequently, he/she makes valuable contributions. The student makes generous, detailed, and clear contributions to peer response activities; the student makes insightful comments but lacks clarity and detail. The student uses unstructured time productively in most cases, but he/she may benefit from further guidance and practice.

C Expected Performance The work student produces is expected 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 on their learning, thinking, writing, and reading processes. The student is prepared for class (i.e., completes and annotates readings and brings materials). The student seldom takes part in discussion, though attentively follow discussions and react to what others said. The student performs peer response work willingly; often, he/she does not offer commentary that is generous, detailed, and insightful. The student uses unstructured time adequately, although they do not fully demonstrate initiative and fail to ask questions for further guidance.

D Weak Performance 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 rarely uses unstructured time in a productive fashion.

F Unacceptable Performance 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.

Course Policies

Multilingual/Translingual Statement: 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 biliterate, 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/or 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.

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 at the beginning or before class 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 in to 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, 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: coltthelp@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.

Student Services: Students who demonstrate financial need have a variety of options when it comes to paying for college costs, such as scholarships, grants, loans and work-study. Students should visit the Students Services Center (U Central) for additional information. U Central is located in BMAIN 1.100 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 1.145 (Edinburg) or can be reached by email (ucentral@utrgv.edu) or telephone: (888) 882-4026. In addition to financial aid, U Central can assist students with registration and admissions.

Students seeking academic help in their studies can use university resources in addition to an instructor’s office hours. University Resources include the Learning Center, Writing Center, Advising Center and Career Center. The centers provide services such as tutoring, writing help, critical thinking, study skills, degree planning, and student employment. Locations are:

- Learning center: BSTUN 2.10 (Brownsville) or ELCTR 100 (Edinburg)
- Writing center: BLIBR 3.206 (Brownsville) or ESTAC 3.119 (Edinburg)
- Advising center: BMAIN 1.400 (Brownsville) or ESWKH 101 (Edinburg)
- Career center: BCRTZ 129 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 2.101 (Edinburg)

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.

**UTRGV Academic Calendar:** The UTRGV academic calendar and final exam schedule can be found at [https://my.utrgv.edu/home](https://my.utrgv.edu/home) at the bottom of the screen, prior to login. Some important dates for Spring 2019 include:

- **January 14**  First day of classes
- **January 17**  Last day to add a course or register for spring 2019
- **January 21**  Martin Luther King Jr. Day – NO classes
- **April 10**  Last day to drop a course; will count toward the 6-drop rule
- **April 19-20**  Easter Holiday – NO classes
- **May 2**  Study Day – NO classes
- **May 3-9**  Final Exams
- **May 10-11**  Commencement Exercises

**Course Evaluations:** Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account ([http://my.utrgv.edu](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:

- **Module 1**  February 13 – 19
- **Module 2**  April 10 – 16
- **Full Fall Semester**  April 10 – May 1

**Additional Course Resources:** Additional course resources can be found on Blackboard. Please check Blackboard regularly. **Course Evaluations:** Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account ([https://my.utrgv.edu/home](https://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:

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Departmental Goals: Student Learning Outcomes

- SLO1: Students will demonstrate a graduate-level understanding of literary, rhetoric and composition, or linguistic theory.
- SLO 2: Students will demonstrate the ability to interpret literary texts, understand the predominant debates and issues related to rhetoric and composition theory and practice as well as writing in society, or analyze various patterns of language usage.
- SLO 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to conduct rigorous research that involves the evaluation of scholarly arguments as well as the logical organization of evidence, and which leads to the composition of documented, graduate-level research papers, the presentation of such papers at academic conferences, or the production of significant projects relevant to their programs of study.

Course Goals for English 6324 (not necessarily in order of importance) Upon completion of this course:

- Students will demonstrate a graduate-level understanding of rhetorical theories, including the history of rhetoric, as these relate to the field of rhetoric and composition.
- Students will demonstrate a graduate-level understanding of contemporary composition theory, such as core issues, debates, research, history, ethics and technology.
- Students will demonstrate graduate-level understanding of contemporary composition pedagogy, such as core issues, debates, research, history, ethics, and/or technology.
- Students will demonstrate a graduate-level understanding of larger disciplinary issues surrounding writing (for example, the myriad theoretical, pedagogical, and research implications of the “social turn” in writing, and the role of theory or theorizing in the field), not just about the teaching of writing.