English 3347: Women’s Rhetoric & Language

La voz de la mujer:
Collectively building solidarity through language

Instructors: Dra. Alyssa G. Cavazos and Ms. Denae Dibrell
Office: Cavazos—ELABS 270-A | Dibrell—
Office Hours:
• Cavazos—MW 9:00a.m.-12:00noon or by appointment
• Dibrell--- MW 9:00a-10:30a (B) and Tues 11a- 1p (E) or by appointment
E-mail: alyssa.cavazos@utrgv.edu and norma.dibrell01@utrgv.edu (e-mail both of us)
Introduction
¡Bienvenidxs! Welcome to ENGL 3347: Women’s Rhetoric and Language.

We will explore historical and contemporary contributions diverse women have made in the field of rhetoric y en nuestra comunidad. We will examine and engage in how women’s rhetorical practices are studied through a variety of methodological approaches, such as counterstory, activist research, mestizaje, and feminist methodologies that challenge dominant ideologies. We will also enact rhetorical and linguistic practices that aim to challenge dominant and oppressive systems to carve spaces of inclusivity y solidaridad para todos en nuestra comunidad. Because we will examine women’s rhetorics in different situations and time periods, we can draw on all of our language resources as we engage course readings and as we write and create documents for a variety of audiences.

Some argue that one of the most dangerous phrases in the English language is: “We’ve always done it this way.” Well, in 2019, it’s time to be critical about this phrase. In society, education, and higher education, we have continuously excluded women and non-cis-hetero normative stories, ideas, perspectives, realities, and experiences. We often, consciously or subconsciously, privilege certain identities and languages and resist telling the stories of those who don’t fall into our accepted categories. We must challenge “the way it’s always been done” to understand why it’s done this way and, ultimately, how we can change it. As teachers, it’s our duty to engage with you in these conversations and reaffirm that all languages and identities are equal. In this way, we can build a collaborative and inclusive environment where we challenge dominant ideologies and rewrite our stories. In the Rio Grande Valley, where part of the culture is machista and patriarchal, it is important for us to find ways to keep our culture and the stories of women, our stories, alive while also challenging oppressive conceptions of our cultural norms. By exploring historical and contemporary primary and secondary texts by and about women, we can theorize about the role of language in women’s experiences.
Mujeres Unidas: Our Teaching Philosophy

This co-taught course is a model of feminist theory and pedagogy as collaboration and authentic dialogue are foundational concepts in feminist studies. We are also challenging the norms of academia as courses are traditionally taught by one instructor with specific degrees who teach certain courses. We are broadening representation and expanding inclusivity in academia by engaging in collaborative teaching, inquiry, and research across our respective and diverse academic, professional, and personal experiences. This course is strengthened in theory, pedagogy, and community partnerships by our collaboration. We view this course as a collaborative and mutually beneficial experience for us as teachers, you as learners, and our community partners. We will work together (not for each other) to study new ways to explore what it means to challenge dominant ideologies as we create spaces of inclusivity, collaboration, and solidarity. As bell hooks argues, “the personal is political” and our experiences are shaped by the collective voices of all those we interact with daily. Our daily and private experiences impact the public. Our experiences are not solitary or separate from how we interact with others. Our lives are rhetorical.

We are eager to embark on this learning journey with you, and we are curious about how we will individually and collectively decide to represent our identities, realities, and feminist activism as community residents of the RGV. We believe in the collective impact of our experiences and the intellectual and personal benefits of drawing on all our knowledges, including personal experiences and linguistic differences, to support traditional academic arguments. We teach because we believe in the benefits of validating each other and building our confidence when we communicate in a variety of forms. For this reason, our role as teachers does not center on us sharing our knowledge and experiences with you; instead, our role as teachers centers on building knowledge together and facilitating encouraging spaces where this can happen.

Our role in this class is that of collaborators and facilitators; we want to think of our relationship as one focused on discovering new knowledge, ideas, and possibilities about women’s rhetoric and language and feminist activism. To engage in collaborative learning, we expect you to remain committed to course readings, discussions, and projects throughout the semester. Collaborative thinking entails critical listening; therefore, we also expect that you will attentively and respectfully listen to other’s perspectives. The course readings and outside required community engagement will, at times, be challenging and complex. We have high expectations of your abilities and performance. Feel free to ask questions or express concerns openly as we are more than happy and willing to work with you, especially when we see an equal commitment to learning and thinking on your part. Collectively, we will build an environment where we all feel valued as the purpose of education is to own our educational experiences and learning processes to create change.

We want to create collaborative and linguistically inclusive spaces in the classroom and outside of the classroom as we partner with community organizations so we can create a strong foundation in respect for difference, teamwork building, and inquiry. We will learn about our collective and diverse languages and literacies, conduct primary and secondary research, and design projects that will benefit the community partner and other community stakeholders. Community engaged courses focus on responding to the needs of a community organization by establishing a reciprocal and mutually beneficial learning experience between students and community partners. By partnering and collaborating with community partners, we can accomplish the following: bridge the academic theory and research we study to real feminist activism, understand how Mujer RGV engages in do-it-yourself feminism, and collaborate with Mujer RGV to learn from them and assist in their goals. We look forward to a learning-enriching semester!
Course Expectations
In this class, we will investigate women’s rhetoric and language in diverse contexts by analyzing and enacting rhetorical and linguistic choices that counter gendered, linguistic, racial, and cultural disparities in our communities. It is important for us to analyze and reflect on the portrayal of women and how language and rhetoric have been used by women and about women. We will learn about and from women by analyzing how language is used as well as enact rhetorical and linguistic choices rooted in taking ownership and agency of our lived realities to ensure equitable spaces of inclusion, diversity, and solidarity. We invite you to engage in collaborative partnerships with peers, faculty, and community partners as we think critically and deeply about what just, equal, and quality educational experiences look like in women’s rhetoric and language.

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. Los invitamos a escribir, leer y desarrollar investigaciones en cualquier lenguaje o dialecto que este alineado a sus metas y expectativas. We encourage you to engage in conversation, conduct research, and write in any language and/or dialect that fit your goals and expectations. The following questions aligned to student learning outcomes will guide our course discussions, activities, and projects:

- What language and literacy practices do you use that may define how you self-identify (personal, educational, professional, recreational, community-based, etc.)? How do you adjust your language and literacy practices based on goals, values, and resources of diverse communities? What strategies do you use, consciously and/or subconsciously?
- What rhetorical and methodological approaches are used to analyze women’s rhetorics? How might these approaches create spaces of inclusivity and solidarity?
- What is the relationship between language and reality? How do the lived experiences of women dictate the language used by them or about them? How might the language used perpetuate that reality?
- How do we maintain cultural values while challenging oppressive aspects?
- To what extent does the rhetoric used create gender roles/gender and to what extent does the “gender” influence the language used? How do we move toward inclusivity?
- How do women navigate rhetorical and linguistic choices and for what purposes?
- How can we use our languages and literacies to communicate across differences, create new knowledge, and make a lasting impact on our university and community?

From this point on, then, we’d like you to begin to think of yourselves as researchers, writers, and advocates for our discipline and the people you represent. Each one of us will have something important to contribute to our discussions, a unique and personal perspective that our class depends on, and we are looking forward to talking with you, helping you, learning from you. It is important to us that you feel comfortable sharing your ideas, even when they’re different from others in the class (yes, even ours).
Course Projects (1000 points/100%)

- **Rhetorical Responses (400 points/ 40% of grade):** You will write three 3-4 pages double-spaced rhetorical responses (RR) this semester where you will synthesize course readings in relation to your personal and academic identities. There will be a prompt posted on Blackboard for each RR. The purpose of the rhetorical responses is to ignite your curiosity, openness, and metacognitive abilities that will lead you to create major projects in the course. See Blackboard for more details.

- **Feminist Activism Portfolio (600 points/60%):** Your Feminist Activism Portfolio will consist of three major projects and a reflective analysis. Please see descriptions of each project below.
  
  o **Project 1: Gender Identities and Linguistic Narrative Action:** The first project (and final) project in your portfolio consists of a two-part narrative-action. First, you will reflect on your own identities with regard to gender and language. The intersectionality of your multiple identities is critical, so you might consider how your gender, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, linguistic orientation, religious and political affiliations among others shape your gender and linguistic identities. In the second part, you will return to the narrative you wrote at the beginning of the semester as well as all the projects you've completed in the course. Informed by these experiences, you will take an action toward designing your own do it yourself feminist activism similar to what Mujer RGV is doing with their work. This should include a form of feminist activism in your community, which can include actions such as writing a social media post, writing a letter to a congressperson, joining or creating a feminist group among many other possibilities. You will articulate why you made these choices and how they were informed and even evolved from your beginning of the semester reflection.

  o **Project 2: Historical Mujer Inquiry & Artifact:** The second project consists of a rhetorical analysis of the linguistic and rhetorical practices of historical women. You will work in teams to conduct primary and secondary research about your assigned historical woman. First, you will conduct secondary research focused on what has been written about them. Second, you will conduct a close reading of at least two primary texts (one has already been provided to you) written by your assigned historical woman. While you will engage in collaborative research, analysis, and discussion for this project, you will each write, design, and create a rhetorical analysis of your choice representing the linguistic and rhetorical practices of the historical mujer you studied. You may choose one of the following: a traditional rhetorical analysis paper (6-8 pages), an infographic designed for a specific audience and purpose, or multimedia video for a specific audience and purpose. Regardless of the genre you choose, you are expected to conduct and reference secondary research about the historical mujer you studied as you engage in a nuanced feminist studies critique of their rhetorical and linguistic choices. You will choose to employ a theoretical lens, such as mestiza consciousness, theory of the flesh, rhetorical
listening, counterstory and others we’ve read in class, that aligns with your vision. You will also write a reflective analysis of your theoretical lens and choices.

- **Project 3: Contemporary Mujer Rhetorical Analysis & Reciprocity Artifact**: We will immerse ourselves in the current work of a group of women in the RGV. We will analyze how the theories we explored in class and others are enacted in our community. For this project, we will learn from women leaders in the Río Grande Valley, such as groups like Mujer RGV, a local organization that is about a year old of female musician/artists who are challenging our cultural norms and expectations of women in the RGV, political figures, and organizational leaders. Through ethnographic research (primary research including interviews, observations, and analysis of primary texts such as social media posts and secondary research, such as press releases), you will analyze their rhetorical and linguistic practices in order to create two projects. First, you will write a 3-5 page rhetorical analysis of these women as embodiment of feminist rhetorical activism focused on their linguistic and rhetorical practices to achieve certain aims. You will use theories from our course readings, videos, and discussions as a lens to conduct analysis. Second, because reciprocity is a critical component in developing sustainable and meaningful collaboration, you will design and create a reciprocity artifact that is based on and informed by your research as well as your individual interests, talents, and abilities that shares knowledge/supports her cause/educates the public about the specific woman you have learned from. Based on the woman you work with and your talents, you will create an artifact (e.g., a video, a flyer, a photograph, an article, a song). This artifact should be informed by your personal experiences, insights on course readings, and research findings, and most importantly, it should share the work they are doing.

- **Reflective Analysis**: Reflective writing is integral to integrative and experiential learning. In this piece you will reflect on your learning and writing experiences throughout the semester. The reflective analysis is situated within course readings, your research, and collaborative and individual work in class. All reflections are focused on revisions and new insights, especially as you explore what theories and methodologies you used to conduct analysis and why, what new theories or methodologies would you propose and why, and what does it mean to engage in feminist activist research and enactment. Additionally, you will also explore how you think your work in each area is representative of feminist values and beliefs, such as collaboration, listening, dialogue and why. In the end, your reflective analysis should be a representation of your learning and revision process and new knowledge.

**Grades & Self-Assessment**: The grade in this course is determined based on three major course areas: Rhetorical Responses (30%), Participation (10%), and Feminist Activism Portfolio (60%). In order to earn the grade you deserve, you must submit all required components and actively participate in in-class and outside of class discussions and activities. Your research and collaboration is integral to your grade. 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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<th>Learning Expectations and Performance (Adapted from Doug Hesse’s Language and Composition I Course Guide and revised by Dra. Alyssa G. Cavazos)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A Outstanding Performance</strong> 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 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> 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. 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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<td><strong>C Expected Performance</strong> 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 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 often 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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<td><strong>D Weak Performance</strong> 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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<td><strong>F Unacceptable Performance</strong> 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 Readings:**
This is a list of our course readings. Please check the tentative schedule regularly on Blackboard in case there are changes or revisions to course readings. The purpose of the course readings is to assist you in thinking about and creating your own projects. Please note that the course is designed in such a way that you will apply what you read for homework when you arrive to class. In other words, the purpose of our class sessions is not to “go over the readings;” rather, the purpose of the class is to engage in creating charts, outlines, visuals, timelines, and other tangible materials informed by the readings that will facilitate and strengthen your work on major projects. 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.

Course readings, activities, individual and collaborative projects, and community engagement projects are designed to provide you with opportunities to explore, through ethnographic methodologies, how language and rhetoric are used by and about women and how these choices are negotiated for diverse purposes. The readings written by and about women we engage with this semester, whether academic articles, documentaries, videos, or images, are political. Some will be outwardly political where they address race, riots, systemic oppression. Some will be subtle—works of fiction that address the lived experiences of women that people, to this day, do not want to accept as part of our realities because they do not fit our dominant culture. As we read and analyze these texts and as we conduct primary research, we must listen to understand and suspend judgements to create more inclusive, diverse, and equitable spaces.

Additionally, these readings will also help you engage in reflection, research, and analysis of your own literacy experiences and literacy research. 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 the course calendar 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.

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).
COURSE READINGS
Feminist Theories & Methodologies

• “Introduction: Rhetorical Feminism—Definitions, Terms, Parameters” by Cheryl Glenn
• from This Bridge Called my Back “Theory of the Flesh” readings edited by Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldua
• “La conciencia de la mestiza/Towards a New Consciousness”
• "Consciousness-Raising: A Constant Change of Heart” by bell hooks
• “A Plea for Critical Race Theory Counterstory: Stock Story vs. Counterstory Dialogues Concerning Alejandra’s “Fit” in the Academy” by Aja Martinez
• “Rhetorical Listening” by Krista Ratcliffe
• “Feminist Rhetorical Practices: In Search of Excellence” Gesa Kirsch and Jacqueline Royster

Rhetorical Analysis of Women’s Rhetorics

• “Balancing Mystery and Identification: Dolores Huerta’s Shifting Transcendent Persona” Erin F. Doss & Robin E. Jensen
• “Rhetorics of Possibility: Challenging the Textual Bias of Rhetoric through Theory of the Flesh” by Bernadette M. Calafell
• “Building a Translingua in Latina Lesbian Organizing” by Lourdes Torres
• Cámara Retórica: A Feminist Filmmaking Methodology for Rhetoric and Composition Chapter 1: Introduction to Feminist Filmmaking in Rhetoric and Composition by Alexandra Hidalgo

Primary Women’s Texts

• “Movimento de rebeldía y las cultras que tracionan” by Gloria Anzaldua
• “NFWA march and rally” (transcript and video) by Dolores Huerta
• “La Respuesta” by Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz
• Primary Texts about Doña Marina (La Malinche)
• “The Twilight and Power of Joan Baez” (Washington Post) and Lyrics to songs
• “Y’all better quite down” (1973) by Sylvia Rivera
• “The Gloria Stories” by Rocky Gamez
• Primary & Secondary Research on Mujer RGV

**Additional course readings will be posted on Blackboard and announced in class**
Course Policies

Classroom Atmosphere
We 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 or attacked. We all have different beliefs, lived experiences, 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. We envision peaceful and learning enriching discussions for all. Our classroom interactions 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, researchers, 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. Being physically and mentally in attendance is crucial. To engage in conversations regularly is to provide spaces for all voices to be heard, not just some (and not just the voices of people who fit certain requirements), which aligns with our goals for this course. In order for you to participate meaningfully in class, you must read assigned readings by class time on the day they are due and bring drafts and outside readings and artifacts as assigned. Through your participation, you can make connections to your life, experiences, and knowledge.

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. We 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.

We 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. We are 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 we usually cover within the first few minutes of class, and we will not repeat myself to each student who walks in late. We 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 we 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
In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a responsible employee for reporting purposes under Sexual harassment, Discrimination, and Violence. Sources accurately, please ask me and I am happy to help you. Paraphrased work and how to create a Works Cited page; however, if you are not familiar with documentation, 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.

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.

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](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](http://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. We will not respond to e-mails sent from e-mail addresses other than the e-mail address provided to you by the university. Our e-mail addresses is [alyssa.cavazos@utrgv.edu](mailto:alyssa.cavazos@utrgv.edu) and [norma.dibrell01@utrgv.edu](mailto:norma.dibrell01@utrgv.edu). We 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 us 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; we may be in our offices during other times, but we might not be able to help you outside of our 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.

Spring 2019 Calendar of Activities: The UTRGV academic calendar 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 14</td>
<td>First day of classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 17</td>
<td>Last day to add a course or register for spring 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 21</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr. Day – NO classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 10</td>
<td>Last day to drop a course; will count toward the 6-drop rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 19-20</td>
<td>Easter Holiday – NO classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Study Day – NO classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3-9</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 10-11</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](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 1</th>
<th>February 13 – 19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td>April 10 – 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Fall Semester</td>
<td>April 10 – May 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

*Additional Course Resources*

Additional course resources can be found on Blackboard. Please check Blackboard regularly.