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

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

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

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

Our ONLINE Environment: Our online environment will provide a great deal of
autonomy for you as a learner, but with that independence comes responsibility for
making sure you don’t get behind. The Course Orientation Lesson in the Orientation
Unit provides details and specifics about logistics, expectations, and work in our online
environment. You will need to log in to our course at least several times a week to
make sure you stay on track and pay attention to course-related announcements and
email messages. All our course material and assignments are on our Blackboard page
organized into units.

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

**Departmental Goals: Student Learning Outcomes for English (SLOs)**
SLO 1—Students will be able to interpret and analyze a text using different approaches from literary, rhetorical and/or linguistic theories.
SLO 2—Students in certification tracks will demonstrate knowledge and skills in the areas of writing, literature, reading, oral communication, media literacy, and English language arts pedagogy.
SLO 3—Recent graduates who majored in English will demonstrate satisfaction with the programs in the English Department.
SLO 4—Students will be able to use discipline-appropriate technology applications (such as library databases, computer applications, Internet research, non-print media, multi-media applications, desktop publishing, etc.) in preparation and presentation of course projects.

**Student Learning Outcomes for English 3345**
By the end of English 3345, students will be able to:
1. articulate well-informed positions on new constructions of social, political, and economic aspects of literacy (SLO 1, 2, 4)
2. extend understandings of literacy through guided practice, collaborative activities, and independent learning (SLO 2, 3)
3. create writing products that analyze their own literacy experiences in the context of new constructions of literacy (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4)
4. explore means of applying new constructions of literacy to create spaces that promote and support literacy (SLO 2, 3)

5. What we'll do in English 3345

**Course Map**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 11-12</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Orientation Lesson and Orientation Quiz (20) <strong>required</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 11</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>DB 0—Meet &amp; Greet (50) <strong>required</strong></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 15-19</td>
<td>Module 1: Literacy Stories</td>
<td>DB 1—Literacy Story Possibilities/plans <strong>required</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 16</td>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td>Assignment 1—Literacy Narrative</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 22-30</td>
<td>Module 2: Literacy Processes: Reading and Writing</td>
<td>DB 2—Your Literacy Processes: a pivotal story <strong>required</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 29</td>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td>Assignment 2—Response to articles <strong>required</strong></td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 5-Aug. 9</td>
<td>Module 3: Special Literacies</td>
<td>DB 3.1—Special literacy story <strong>required</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 6</td>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>DB 3.2—Article selection <strong>required</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 8</td>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>Assignment 3—Response to articles <strong>required</strong></td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 12-Aug. 16</td>
<td>Reflection Module</td>
<td>Assignment 4—Course reflection <strong>required</strong></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Protocols and Procedures in English 3345**
FEEDBACK: When you submit an assignment, you’ll get rubric-based feedback which tells you how effectively you completed the task. You can decide whether to resubmit the assignment for a higher score on the basis of the feedback as long as you meet the deadline.
RUBRICS: Every one of our assignments includes a rubric which clearly presents the expectations and performance levels. You need to study the rubric for each submission to ensure that you are meeting the expectations. All scores will be based on the rubric for the specific assignment and you will have the option to revise and resubmit every assignment (except the end-of-course reflection) if you do not meet the minimum performance expectations.
6. Course grade calculation:

Your final grade will be based on the percentage of points you’ve accumulated. The course map shows 440 total points for the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Points required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100%-90%</td>
<td>440-394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>89%-80%</td>
<td>392-350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>79%-70%</td>
<td>348-306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>69%-60%</td>
<td>304-262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59%-0%</td>
<td>260-0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Materials Required:

NO BOOKS REQUIRED—All required class readings will be available in the designated module area as PDF files or web links. Dedicated notebook or spiral—I strongly encourage you to keep your class notes and reminders in a writing notebook dedicated to our course content.

8. Meet SOPHIE—our course navigation guide

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

9. Some course logistics and info

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

Location: Casa Bella 613 in Brownsville and Education Complex 2.202 in Edinburg
Phone: 956-882-6792 Brownsville and 956-665-5327 Edinburg
Toll-Free: 1-866-654-4555
Blackboard support: https://www.utrgv.edu/online/getting-support/index.html

DIGITAL LITERACY AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS: In signing up for a completely online course, you will be required to apply and expand your current digital literacy skills. To succeed in our course, you need to be an adept user of learning tools that support online learning, such as discussion boards, blogs, journals, online resources, online feedback and grading, video lessons, digital participation in course work (such as through audio feedback). Our course is founded on the expectation that you already have at least minimal computer and digital literacy skills so that you can participate meaningfully from day 1. Additionally, you must ensure that your software and hardware set ups meet minimal course technology requirements. The RESOURCES section of our 4343 Blackboard menu page includes a Course Technology link.
A caveat: “I don’t have access to internet” is not an acceptable “excuse” for failing to complete course requirements or for submitting work late.

UTRGV offers numerous computer labs all over all campuses to support digital learning, so you will always have access to required course technologies.

**BASIC DIGITAL LITERACY TOOLS AND APPLICATIONS:**
Skilled use of Blackboard, including negotiation of units, modules, assignment varieties, Collaborate, Tegrity, SoftChalk, and micro lessons, Effective use of email communication (SOPHIE includes a section on email protocol), Adept use of word processing as preparation for essay submissions, blog creation, and discussion board posts, Skillful application of Microsoft Word and PPT (both of which are available through Outlook) for creation of learning materials and assignments, Ability to integrate visuals and images into blogs, discussion boards, and traditional essay submissions, Ability to convert Microsoft Word files into PDFs, Access to peripherals (such as a good microphone) for creation of MP3 and MP4 files as options in selected course assignments, Access to updates for minimum course software and hardware to ensure optimal participation in class activities.

**PREREQUISITES:** Each assignment has a threshold score that will indicate you’ve met expectations for the assignment at a minimal level. If you meet this score, then you can move on to the next assignment. Prerequisites are designed to promote success in the major unit assignments. Each assignment includes a rubric which specifies the “meets expectations” requirements; if you don’t meet the success expectations, you’ll get feedback or be sent back to the instructions so that you can resubmit the assignment until you meet the threshold score for the next assignment.

**FEEDBACK:** When you submit an assignment, you’ll get formative feedback which tells you how effectively you completed the task and what you need to do to improve the submission. If you did not meet the minimum score (usually 70%) to move to the next assignment, you will need to apply feedback to revise and resubmit the assignment until you reach the “meets expectations” level described in the rubric. This is to enable you to end all assignments with the highest possible score and optimum learning levels. As a learner, it is your responsibility to check your scores immediately, read feedback, and make suggested revisions and resubmission if you want to safeguard your top score possibilities.

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS and EMAIL:** I will rely on class announcements and emails to stay in touch with you. Since we are in an online, virtual classroom environment, this cyber communication will be vital to staying up with adjustments and updates. You need to check your email every day to ensure you have not missed reading important class updates. Failing to read an email or an announcement will not excuse you from responsibility for the information in the course communication.

**LATE WORK:** Submitting assignments late will hurt your grade, derail your progress in interacting with classmates on our discussion boards, and significantly cut back on your revision and resubmission time. For all other assignments, a late assignment will be eligible for maximum 70% credit, with a sliding scale down to 50% credit.

**SUCCESS ALERTS:** If you fail to meet the deadline for an assignment, you will be sent a reminder about the missed due date. You will be able to submit the assignment through the closing date, but the grade will be reduced.

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

**DISABILITIES AND ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES:** If you have a condition that inhibits your full and timely participation in our class activities and requirements, it is your responsibility to contact Student Accessibility Services (see Institutional Policies in the next section) to request an official accommodations letter. You cannot be granted additional time or other accommodations without such a document. The document is not retroactive, so if you have failed to complete successfully before you obtain an accommodations letter, you will not be able to go back and do those missed assignments.

**DROPS:** If you miss several consecutive assignments or fail to participate in our class for an extended period, you will be sent a drop notice advising you that you will be dropped if you don’t contact your professor immediately and get back on board with your course work. If you fail to start our course by Tuesday, July 16, you will be sent a drop notice.

**ROUGH TIMES:** If you find yourself going through a rough or tough period (and this happens to all of us), do not just stop participating in our online work. A lot of times, if you contact me to explain what’s going on, we can adjust the deadline to provide a bit more time to give you some breathing room and still allow you to stay in our class community. A particularly rough time involving illness or incapacitating condition will require that you contact Student Accessibility Services. I cannot make ad hoc adjustments for medical conditions. Please note that the institution considers pregnancy a condition that requires special accommodations that must be handled through the SAS office.
10. UTRGV Policy Statements

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

Pregnancy, Pregnancy-related, and Parenting Accommodations

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination, which includes discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status. Students seeking accommodations related to pregnancy, pregnancy-related condition, or parenting (reasonably immediate postpartum period) are encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services for additional information and to request accommodations.

Student Accessibility Services:

Brownsville Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at ability@utrgv.edu. Edinburg Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at ability@utrgv.edu.

MANDATORY COURSE EVALUATION PERIOD: Required on all syllabi. Do not modify. Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account; 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 approximately one week before the end of the session.

ATTENDANCE: Recommended on all syllabi; may be modified by the instructor as long as it is not inconsistent with UTRGV policy. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. UTRGV’s attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.

SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY: Recommended on all syllabi. As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, and VIOLENCE: Required on all syllabi. Do not modify. In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “Responsible Employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect that is free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

COURSE DROPS: Recommended on all syllabi; may be modified by the instructor as long as it is not inconsistent with UTRGV policy. According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. 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.

STUDENT SERVICES: Recommended on all syllabi. 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)