THRIVING IN COLLEGE ENVIRONMENTS ISN'T ABOUT WINGING IT. IT'S ABOUT KNOWING WHAT YOU KNOW, LEARNING WHAT YOU CAN IMPROVE, AND EFFECTIVELY ADAPTING TO SITUATIONS WHEN SOMEONE ASKS YOU TO READ, RESEARCH, OR WRITE SOMETHING NEW.

In Jumpstart, we're dedicated to helping you make a successful transition to our university. That means learning about how and why students read, research, and write in a variety of college situations. We want you to understand how to summarize and rhetorically read an unfamiliar text. We want you to learn how to compose complex texts that combine different types of media to get engaged reactions. We want you to experiment with how to deliver your messages in effective forms to real audiences. And we also want to help you build a peer and instructor network. That network will help you make your transition to UTRGV, and it will last long after this class. Your future at UTRGV begins now. Let's get started:)

Jumpstart Student Learning Outcomes

Through your work in this class, you should begin to do the following things:

1. Develop a rhetorical understanding of your learning processes and their consequences:
1. How and why you read, question, and write and the results of those strategies.
2. Develop and build confidence in your abilities to create, interpret, and evaluate texts in all types of media.
3. Develop an understanding of the importance of getting and giving feedback when reading, researching, and writing.
4. Establish a sustainable network of people, strategies, and tools, ones that you are comfortable accessing, that will contribute to your success as a college student doing #1-3.

Building Networks that Work

We all have networks that connect us to a variety of people, places, experiences, and opportunities. They are made of combinations of family, friends, acquaintances, professionals, bosses, classmates, and even strangers. People often think that the primary role of a network is to be supportive. But that word is a tricky one. Support comes in a lot of different shapes and sizes. A network of people, even a small one, can provide an alternative perspective, an outlet for your frustration when you’re stuck and getting nowhere, or a positive reinforcement when you need to get started or follow through with a project. They can also be a target for your fears as well as your successes. The way that a network should work is by giving you a reliable and engaging feedback loop. You throw an idea at someone in your network, and he/she listens and throws back a response.

Sustainable and valuable networks frequently emerge over a long period of time. The problem with making a transition--from one class to another, from one school to another, from one house to another, from one city to another--is a problem of connection. Your networks before UTRGV are not necessarily hooked up with the networks and people you'll meet now that you're here. There are at least three very different ways that people cope with that disconnection. One, you can take some time. You have four years to make a degree happen, so maybe it's normal to expect it to take years to find or build a community. Two, you can find a ready-made community, like a student organization, and you can do what you need to in order to belong to and get along with that group of people. Both of these go on at colleges and universities all the time, and many students find success using them. But we’re going to suggest that we don’t need a lot of time to let a network develop, and we don’t have to shop around for a group with like interests. We have peers and partners and faculty who want you to hit campus on your first day of the fall semester with a network that is flexible, one that grows out of the work and communication you’ll face in your classes every day. Just imagine walking into your first class of the semester with a contact list in your phone--names, numbers, and notes on the questions each person can help you with. At Jumpstart, we want to help you build that contact list this summer, making our partners yours.

Who Are These Partners?

Peers
Some of your first points of contact are your classmates, and you'll be forming a peer group the first week of Jumpstart that will stay together the entire semester, through the good and even the not-so-good times:). That peer group of 4-5 people will keep you up to date with class if an emergency keeps you out for a day; they will bounce around ideas about what to ask a student intern or teacher about an assignment; they will create a schedule for work outside of class; and, most importantly, they will give you an immediate feedback loop for the work you do in class and the ideas you have each day.

Teachers

In Jumpstart, you will also have an opportunity to learn about, and not just from, your teacher. What does your teacher value, how does your teacher design classroom space? Why does your teacher do certain things for the class? These are all details that surround learning, and we want to bring out those details so that we can have more conversations about how classrooms work. We'll even go further and you'll learn about your teacher's colleagues teaching up and down the hallway. Together, this community of teachers has many years of experience working with first-year students. And while we have a variety of backgrounds, interests, and particular strengths that we bring into the classroom, we all have shared goals for this program.

We want to help you understand yourself and your literacy (ability to read and write) as multimodal. That means that what we read, research, and write happens in a variety and mix of language forms or modes. Even a print essay has a physical dimension (ink on paper), a visual dimension (reading the words with our eyes, or a textual dimension if we're using brail), and a structure (paragraphs don’t naturally occur in the wild). It’s easier to imagine a YouTube video as multimodal because we could be reading words, seeing images, listening to sounds, and interacting with hotspots through manipulating a cursor on screen, but all texts are multimodal. So being a successful student means recognizing that working with texts is a complicated process, and we have to own our ability to be multi-literate from day one.

We also want to help you understand the rhetorical choices you make, or should be making, when you communicate. When you decide to call a parent to ask for money instead of texting because the parent will be more persuaded by hearing your voice, that’s a rhetorical choice. When you write an essay for a class because, well, what else would you write . . . that’s not a very rhetorical choice. Being rhetorical means thinking about your message, how to design it, who you’re designing it for, and how to deliver that message to have a desired effect. You’ll spend a great deal of time and energy in the class learning about the rhetorical situation of questions you pursue, readings you study, and writings you develop.

And we want you to be a compelling writer. Whether you’re writing for yourself or for a history professor who has given you an in-class exam that requires short and detailed answers, good writing is most often the result of a writer having a purpose and working towards that goal. To compel is to move, and with the unprecedented amounts of information circulating today, compelling messages are the ones that move people to think, respond, and interact. Good writing is writing that an audience just can’t walk away from, and there are rhetorical ways to stack the odds of compelling writing in your favor.

The Hauser Communication Research Lab
One of the most emphasized areas of UTRGV's core curriculum—you know, those first 42 hours that irritate people who want to get on with it—is communication. An emphasis on communication takes up 6 of those core hours with English 1301 and English 1302, but communication is also part of every class in the core. How you listen, how you read and write, and how you share information through language (written and spoken) affects everything you'll do at UTRGV, and JumpStart is here to give you room to experiment and grow as a communicator, to grow into what we'll call a sophisticated rhetorician. More on that phrase later. Right now, you have your JumpStart teachers who are experts in areas like rhetoric, composition, and even reading. But you'll also have access to the staff and technology of the Hauser Communication Research Lab. They can answer questions you have about aspects of effective communication, and they can coach you as you walk through real presentations that make sense in college environments. Their summer hours are: MON-THUR 10am - 2pm, FRI 10am - 1pm.

As you'll see on the Hauser flyers around campus, students can easily make an appointment by visiting hauserlab.appointy.com. When you visit the site, you can provide basic information to set up a visit to the lab (name, e-mail, contact number, and type/time of appointment). Once you've confirmed your appointment on the final page, the Hauser Lab will send you a confirmation email. Twelve hours before your appointment they will also send a reminder email.

To get you used to thinking about and developing your presentations skills, each Jumpstart group will need to have at least one appointment this semester at the Hauser Lab. It will be up to the group to discuss with your teacher what kind of consultation would best suit the group. You could focus on anything from how to present an idea to the class in the middle of discussing an article to designing an oral presentation with visual support in a digital slideshow. Only one student needs to make an appointment for each group. Also the lab is equipped with technology to record presentations through USB ports. Each group then can receive a recorded copy of their work on USB for later review and a receipt as proof of attendance.

Embedded Librarians/Research on the Run

You also have a dedicated group of librarians who have been working with your instructors in classes like this for the last four years, learning about who college students really are, what they respond to, and even what they run away from. We’ll have roving and embedded librarians hanging out with us in class, adding examples and details to the questions you ask, and helping you with projects at the moment you have a concern. Our hope is that, once you have a connection to the library, you’ll be more likely to look up people like Susan, Carl, and Andrew in future semesters to help you when you have a research question. They live to answer questions and see how your interests turn into public projects that have real audiences who act on your words and your discoveries.

Student Interns

Adding to that sense of real-time support is a team of student interns who have first-hand experiences in writing and reading intensive classes at UTRGV. These students have a diverse range of majors and interests, but they are well-equipped to with you as mentors for the reading, questioning, and writing you'll need to do well to excel in your college classes. Each of our interns will be attending one or two Jumpstart classes and working with you outside of class during
face to face and online conferencing sessions. Their background and interest in mentoring is going to serve all of us well as we work on developing our strengths and reforming our weaknesses as communicators and knowledge makers. The interns are available with support from The Learning Center at UTRGV, and they will be having conference times outside of class at The Learning Center and online. You should find out your Intern’s schedule as soon as possible and start taking advantage of their availability and feedback . . . about Jumpstart, about your work, about your other classes, and about any questions you have regarding UTRGV. If they can’t answer your questions, they’ll hook you up with someone on campus who can.

Why All This Support?

Research on student success and all of our experiences as teachers support one of our core beliefs: as students and learners, we don’t believe that you’re missing much of anything. Maybe you don’t do well on tests, maybe you registered late, maybe English and/or math classes didn’t engage you, maybe, maybe, maybe. There are many reasons why college placement tests keep students out of their first classes in rhetoric and composition and math. The fact is that learning is hard, and we can’t explain every situation where it does or doesn’t happen. We don’t have direct access to the brain yet, but we do know about some important patterns. All the support we’ve built into Jumpstart is what any successful college student would collect over time. The difference with Jumpstart is that we want your access to be now. While we’re at it, we want to give you an immersive college experience that will challenge you to develop your learning strategies and challenge us as teachers to be more responsive to your needs as they emerge. Life doesn’t take a time out for us to catch up, so we have to learn to respond quickly, we have to build stamina for the work college requires, and we have to know the right person to ask when we are faced with challenging questions.

Whenever learning is happening, there are questions. We may be confused and asking simple questions like What? on day one. But by the end of Jumpstart, the goal is to be more aware of our learning processes and to be asking What are we going to do next?

From this point forward, then, the Jumpstart team wants you to think of yourself as a reader, a researcher, and a writer. They may not be identities you are comfortable with, but the truth is that you’ve made it through a lot of classes and a lot of life already. Those years made you communicate, theorize about, and read a lot of information. So it’s time to own those processes and see what more we can do with them moving forward to this fall at UTRGV. Every one of us will have something important to contribute to our discussions, and we are looking forward to talking with you, helping you, and learning from you. It is important to all of us at Jumpstart that you feel comfortable sharing your ideas, even when they’re different from others in the class (yes, even your teacher’s ideas).

Because our specific experiences with writing and teaching writing, we know that you can learn a great deal from reading and responding to each others’ work. The networks you form will be an integral component of the class. You will often work in groups, reading each other’s writing and commenting on it, sharing ideas about readings, and explaining how you pursue questions. This work is designed to give each of you an opportunity to get a fresh pair of eyes, to get feedback and
response from others who may not see the same things you do or respond to the words in the ways that you had expected. We know you'll take this work seriously and give your peers attention and respect. Everyone benefits from constructive feedback and from talking through their ideas, so this will hopefully be a part of the course that you will come to appreciate and even enjoy.

This course isn’t designed to make you a perfect college student in five weeks. It is designed to help you become more reflective and thoughtful about your reading, research, and writing, about why you do these things, and about how you can do them differently depending on the learning situation. What we hope to do in Jumpstart, and in the Writing Program at UTRGV that you will join in the fall, is to give you some strategies for dealing with reading, research, and writing. We also want to give you some opportunities to experiment with those strategies and to take some risks in an environment that is encouraging, constructively critical, and ultimately helpful. Hopefully, you’ll end up finding that this work in communication can be a way of understanding yourselves and others, of sharing ideas in meaningful ways that can have tangible effects on your lives both as an individual and as a part of pre-existing and emerging networks that will support you in the future.

Netiquette

Netiquette is internet etiquette, or a set of expectations that describe appropriate behaviors when interacting online. It is important to understand that you will be held to the exact same standards of students taking a face-to-face course. In fact, for 100% online courses, your online classroom behavior may be the only interaction you have with your faculty and classmates, therefore making your netiquette even more important. Remember, you only get to make a first impression once, irrespective of the course delivery method.

Be courteous.

You only get one chance for an online first impression. Make it count. Do not say or do anything in an online classroom that you would not do in a face-to-face classroom. This includes not “YELLING” (typing in all caps), not “flaming” (attacking someone, such as insults and name-calling), and/or not dominating the discussion.

Be a good classmate.

Remember your own role as a student. Follow your instructor’s directions at all times. Be authentic and collaborative with fellow students. Be aware of cyberbullying and make every attempt to eliminate it. Appreciate the diversity and different communication styles of your peers. Remember, since this class is online, you may have classmates from all over the world.

Be professional.

Proofread your own writing for spelling, grammar, and punctuation to prevent miscommunication. Avoid slang, sarcasm, or emotionally-charged writing, as tone can be difficult to translate online. Profanity and offensive language will not be tolerated. Do not use abbreviations (2moro, 2T, B@U) or emoticons in your online class unless your professor approves and supports such writing styles.
Jumpstart Requirements

Attendance

Be in class every day. If an emergency keeps you away, be in contact with your teacher and your group every day. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Some of you may receive test scores or retest after the class has started. If you receive passing TSI scores in Reading AND Writing, you are technically eligible to drop this JumpStart class. Please make sure that you talk to your advisor and your teacher if you are eligible and choose to drop so that everyone knows your situation. Just disappearing from class leaves your peers and instructor confused and concerned.

Blackboard

Your class has a Blackboard site that our teachers may use to provide course materials; use apps; manage discussion of projects with your teacher, peers, and interns; and give you a place to turn in assignments. Whether your teacher uses Blackboard by itself or in combination with other software like Google Drive, you’ll need to learn how to use the technology to do your assignments. And always ask questions about how to make things work sooner rather than later.

Readings

All of your readings will be available online, but you’ll need to find them, download them or link to them, and figure out an effective way for you to comment on them. We’ll give you links to required and suggested readings at the beginning of each chapter/week.

Email
UTRGV has a policy about student-teacher email correspondence. This policy “requires all electronic communication between the University and students be conducted through the official University supplied systems,” like UTRGV Mail or Blackboard for course specific correspondence. Please use your UTRGV email address or Blackboard account for all future correspondence with UTRGV faculty and staff.

Grade Breakdown

Major Assignments-40%

Each chapter of this book is built around a single major assignment. Here they are by chapter: (1) Process Maps & Explanations, (2) Collaborative Writing Project, (3) Multimodal Profile, (4) Feedback Philosophy, and (5) Reflection. The names may not mean anything now, but they will as you and your teachers explore different forms and audiences for your composing. And they aren’t each worth a certain percentage. You do them, you get feedback, you revise them, and at the end of the semester your teacher will evaluate all of them as a collection. Of course, your teacher will let you know how you’re progressing through the class and the quality of your work, but there won’t be grades on major assignments as you revise them throughout the semester.

Daily Work-40%

There is a lot of work that goes into the major assignments, and there will be a lot of activities you do each day to get to know your classmates, your network, and other people as you practice your reading, research, and writing. Your teacher will give you those activities and grade them to keep you on track and let you know how you’re progressing.

Participation, Including any “Big Live Discussions”-20%

This is not a sit-back-and-let-it-happen class. There shouldn’t be any long PowerPoint slideshows, YouTube videos, or busy work. That means you have to be in class, you need to be engaged, and you need to be interacting on a daily basis. If you’re quiet, experiment with ways to put your ideas out there. If you’re all over the place, experiment with ways to draw other people out and channel your energy. We all have different strengths as members of a group, but you’ll need to make your presence known to your peers and your teacher to get the most out of the class.

Your teacher may also design several “Big Live Discussions” that you’ll participate in. These could be online chats through Blackboard that involve multiple Jumpstart classes. They could be Twitter exchanges that all Jumpstart students participate in. Could be something else. Your teacher will walk you through these activities and any questions that drive them, but it’s your responsibility to experiment with them and find ways to get engaged with these discussions. They’ll add to the diversity of perspectives in the class, and they are great practice for working with large groups of students, an experience you’ll likely have at some point in your college career.
Feedback

Throughout the semester, we have a set of feedback guidelines that we'll use to respond to major assignments. Giving feedback—honest, detailed, and interactive—is a key to effective teaching and learning. While your teacher will not grade the major assignments until you've revised them at the end of the semester, you'll get weekly grades on your daily work and participation that should let you know how you’re doing in the class.

We are going to try to develop your feedback by integrating a daily activity that will get everyone to give feedback and to analyze what works and what doesn’t in different situations. Your teacher will work with you to figure out the best way to make this happen, but here is one version of an approach that we can all consider and build on.

The way we usually format/manage workshops in our rhet/comp classrooms is to divide them into small groups, distribute their drafts to the group, and comment on them at home to discuss the next class session. During peer review, we might have time to sit with one group and then join another mid-conversation. We could eventually get to the other groups during future workshops, but sometimes, we hear from students who don’t receive the feedback they were hoping for, or conversations may go off-topic outside of our supervision, etc.

What we will try is having each of you do a feedback presentation individually to the class, at least one each day. The draft can be displayed and the commenting will happen live. Other students can also respond to the feedback given and possibly discuss conflicting opinions on the draft. Presentations can either be done on the spot or with preparation. If time allowed, we could also ask pairs of you to show us a small sample of a draft, the feedback, and the resulting revision.

There are many benefits to giving you experience with feedback this way. Teachers get to see first-hand how you give feedback and employ the writing vernacular (Gillam) we’re promoting. When you present feedback, you can receive feedback on your feedback, improving your process. You may also be able to better see that feedback is not necessarily based on right and wrong. Opinions can differ among the class and that can lead to discussion on which comments are best suited to meet the draft’s goals and purpose(s). Finally, because of the format, it’s possible to build in a reflective activity at the end of the presentations asking students: “Based on these presentations, what issues do you see in your own draft? What specific revisions do you think need to be done? Create a revision plan for your next draft.”

While we’re discussing feedback, your teacher will have you fill out several surveys this semester. One pair will help us see how you’re doing before and after the class. These are required, so make sure you do them when your teacher prompts you to:

Opening Survey
https://utrgv.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_ddmrBk4EteYf9Y1

Closing Survey
https://utrgv.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_3faMZ WenUN5eiAR

Two others will give you a chance to respond to what’s going on in class so your teacher can take
that feedback into account when planning

future classes. Your teacher may remind you to do either of these for a specific class, but you should feel free to take them, print them, and turn them in (anonymously if you’d like) whenever you have something constructive to add to our ongoing conversations about JumpStart.

*Immediate Student to Guest Feedback*

https://utrgv.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_4HMKZaPva8km9A9

*Immediate Student to Teacher Feedback*

https://utrgv.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6lC3Ngz7Fnl7HjT

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**Evaluation**

We do want you to have a clear idea of the assessment ranges for a first year college reading and writing class. Below, you’ll find a set of guidelines describing a **piece of writing** at each grade level. Of course, when we are talking about a specific assignment, there may be other variables at play. If you don’t understand the expectations for you to achieve a C or better composition for any assignment, please talk to your teacher and refer to his/her feedback. The course is technically a pass/fail course, so the goal is to get a C (70) or better.

**A: An "A" composition is of exceptional quality.**

"A" work addresses assignments thoroughly, appropriately, and insightfully. It demonstrates a strong understanding of the rhetorical context for writing; is sophisticated in content, purpose, structure, and form; makes effective use of language, mechanics, and style; and follows the appropriate citation and documentation conventions required by the genre. "A" work also demonstrates (explicitly or implicitly depending on project guidelines and limitations) a reflective sophistication in making choices. In other words, you know and can articulate how you wrote something and weren’t just winging it. Revision is always possible, but not necessary.

**B: A "B" composition is above average quality.**

"B" work exceeds baseline expectations and addresses assignments thoroughly and appropriately. Work is clearly focused; demonstrates a sound understanding of rhetorical context; is solid in content, purpose, and form; uses language, mechanics and style appropriately; and follows the citation and documentation conventions required by the genre. There may be errors, but they do not distract from the overall content. "B" work isn’t as rhetorically sophisticated as "A" work.

**C: A "C" composition completes an assignment and is satisfactory.**

"C" work meets baseline expectations but may need some revision to successfully meet the goals of assignments. Work may require an identifiable focus; a clearer understanding of the rhetorical context for writing; or some strengthening of content, purpose, structure, and form. Work may also need improvement in using language, mechanics, and style appropriately; and follows the citation and documentations required by the genre. "C" work is often marked by a basic, not sophisticated,
understanding of rhetorical choices.

**D: A "D" composition is dominated by unsatisfactory elements.**

"D" work lacks completeness in message, form, and/or audience awareness. This may involve failure to address assignment requirements; unclear focus or purpose; confusion with content, structure, or form; or numerous errors in language, mechanics, style, and in usage of important genre conventions. The writer will benefit from taking the class again and is not ready for 1302 work.

**F: An "F" composition is incomplete and fails to meet assignment requirements.**
The work does not meet the expectations expressed above in the A, B, C, and D guidelines. Although not the only reason, not coming to class or completing the required assignments is frequently the reason for failure.

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**Late Work**

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

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**Materials in Class and Punctuality**

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

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**Accommodating Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability that will make it difficult for you to carry out the work as we have outlined and/or you need special accommodations/assistance because of the disability, please contact immediately the Disability Services Office (DSO) on your campus. For students in Edinburg, the DSO is located at University Center Rm. 322. In Brownsville, DSO is at Cortez Hall 129. Appropriate arrangements and accommodations can be made. Verification of disability and processing for special services, such as note takers, extended time, separate accommodations for testing, is required and will be determined by DSO. Consult DSO Coordinator at (956) 665-7005 (Edinburg) or (956)-882-7374 (Brownsville).
UTRGV 4U

UTRGV is There for You :: About This Page

Here is where you'll find information on anything that might help you succeed at UTRGV, including (1) my contact info, (2) UTRGV student support services, and (3) Blackboard support.

Getting in Touch with Dr. C

I'll be on campus this semester MTWRF from 9-2:00. The best time to catch me outside of class will be from 9-9:40 in our classroom or from 1-2 in my office.

- CLASSES - ELABS 246 9:40-11:10 & 11:20-12:50
- OFFICE - ELABS 329 (WLS main office, 3rd floor, across from Coke machines)
- EMAIL - colin.charlton@utrgv.edu
- PH# - 956-250-5613 (text or call)

Student Support Services

This link provides access to UTRGV support services for learner success, including academic and student services.

Blackboard Support

https://mycourses.utrgv.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContentEditable.jsp?content_id=_2393136_1&course_id=_46507_1&mode=reset
If you need assistance with course technology at any time, please contact the Center for Online Learning and Teaching Technology (COLTT).

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<th>Campus</th>
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<td>Phone</td>
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<td>Toll-Free</td>
<td>1-866-654-4555</td>
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<td>Support Tickets</td>
<td>Submit a Support Case via our Ask COLTT Portal</td>
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24/7 Blackboard Support

Need Blackboard assistance after hours? You can call our main office numbers, 956-882-6792 or 956-665-5327, to speak with a support representative.

Blackboard Orientation Course

To actively participate in this course you will need to get familiar with the course environment. We will be using different tools such as Discussion Board, Wikis, etc. If you are not familiar with how to navigate this environment as a student or use any of these tools, please self enroll and review the orientation provided.

1. In Blackboard, use the Course Search box (located at the bottom of your My Courses list in Blackboard)
2. Enter: Student Orientation
3. Press Go
4. Click on the Enroll button on the right side of the listing and your course will be listed in your Blackboard MyCourses list