

FALL 2025 COMPOSITION I SYLLABUS

ENGL 1301-025 | TR 11:00 am - 12:45 pm | STEM 122

Texas A&M University-San Antonio

Professor Robert J. Cavazos, MFA (he/him)

Email: rcavazos@tamusa.edu | Please include ENGL 1301-025 in emails

Office: HALL 314C | Walk-in Student Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9-11 am

Course Description

ENGL 1301 supports your belonging as a writer. The course validates, celebrates, and explores your languaging while introducing concepts and practices essential for writing success. You will examine your language practices and develop a digital writing portfolio.

Required Materials

- All readings will be provided for free on Blackboard.
- Each class, you need to bring with you a notebook, pen, laptop, and charger.
- This course also uses Digication. While instruction will be provided, it is your responsibility to submit work on time. To troubleshoot issues, try a different browser, contact me, or contact the ITS Help Desk: (210) 784-4357 or helpdesk@tamusa.edu.

Assignments

This course is writing-intensive, and will also include a lot of reading and group discussion. Throughout the semester, you will build a digital writing portfolio and complete smaller writing assignments leading up to your Final Portfolio.

This semester, you will complete:

- 3 Unit Reflections
- 3 Unit Assignments
- Weekly Writing Tasks
- Weekly Reading Notes
- In-class writing exercises
- In-class group discussions
- Midterm and Final Conferences
- Final Portfolio with Final Reflection

Writing Communities

This semester, you and your peers will work together in small groups called “Writing Communities.” While you sit down and put words on the page or screen on your own, you cannot succeed as a writer on your own. You need an audience who cares about you and your work to read and to respond to your work. This is how we learn and improve as writers. Your Writing Community will read your work, give you helpful feedback, and support you. They will help you understand readings and complete in-class exercises. To succeed as a university-level writer and critical thinker, you need a supportive group of colleagues.

Grades

I use labor-based grading, which assesses the quality of your labor. Your grade in this course depends on the amount of work you submit, your ability to meet deadlines and fulfill expectations, and the time and effort you put toward growing as a university-level writer over the course of the semester. I grade assignments each week with written feedback. You can check your total grade at any time in Blackboard. Your assignments are incomplete if you submit them on time, but fail to meet expectations. Your assignments are late if you submit them after the deadline, and missing if not submitted. Please email me or visit my office during walk-in student hours to request an extension in advance, or a revision.

Score	Description
100	On-time and complete
75	Late or incomplete
50	Late and incomplete
0	Missing or plagiarized

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the intentional use of another's "language, ideas, or original (not common-knowledge) material" without acknowledgement ("[Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism](#)"). The FYC program expects you to generate your own content this semester. While generative AI tools such as ChatGPT can help you brainstorm, generate ideas, and learn basic information about a topic, they can also provide biased or incorrect information and produce stilted writing which lacks human imagination. Furthermore, relying on generative AI to write content for you prevents you from growing as a university-level writer and critical thinker. If you plagiarize or include any AI-generated content in an assignment, you will receive a permanent zero on that assignment without the opportunity for revision.

Attendance

You are absent if you are not present for class and late if you arrive after attendance has been taken. You must communicate the circumstances with me in advance to be excused for an absence or late arrival. Your success and development as a writer depend on your active participation within your writing community. Consistent attendance is crucial and is graded. You will receive a 75 for an unexcused late arrival and a 0 for an unexcused absence.

Respect

I am committed to fostering a respectful classroom environment in which different backgrounds and perspectives are acknowledged. While working with classmates and instructors, you will respectfully listen to others' experiences and perspectives, share your own experiences and perspectives, and value the opportunity to learn from each other. Demonstrating respect for those different from you not only prepares you for success in the classroom, but also prepares you for success as citizens and professionals. If you use violent, harassing, and or discriminatory language, you will be reported to the university and may be subject to Student Code of Conduct policies.

FYC Faculty Commitments

- Emphasize students' learning and growth
- Collaborate with students with care and compassion
- Encourage students to take risks and embrace failure
- Honor variations in students' reading and languaging
- Center and sustain students' cultural and linguistic identities

FYC Program Goals

- Increasing students' rhetorical awareness
- Increasing students' confidence as writers
- Helping students to see themselves as writers
- Cultivating students' sense of belonging as writers
- Strengthening students' critical language awareness
- Increasing students' appreciation of their languaging
- Increasing students' skills and engagement as readers
- Increasing students' self-determination and resilience as writers
- Deepening students' introspection and self-awareness as writers
- Inspiring creativity, risk-taking, and versatility in student writing

FYC Key Terms

- Context: the situation in which languaging occurs
- Purpose: the intended effect or impact of languaging
- Audience: the person or the group of people a text is intended to affect
- Belonging: the feeling of being valued, respected, and included as you are
- Genre: specific languaging shaped by social convention and audience expectation
- Rhetorical Awareness: ability to assess context and make choices when languaging
- Languaging: ongoing process of developing and communicating meaning and ideas
- Critical Language Awareness: the ability to examine and critique how language functions in society
- Standard Language Ideology: the belief that a language has an ideal, consistent, and "correct" form that should be privileged
- Translanguaging: the process of using one's full linguistic repertoire to interpret, understand, and communicate meaning and ideas

Course Structure

ENGL 1301 features four units, each focused on a specific question. The first unit asks, “Why Language?” It introduces language as the focus of ENGL 1301 and the FYC program, explores what you already know about it, and offers three ways of thinking about its importance: language helps you understand others, compose texts and engage in the world, and define and understand yourself. The unit also introduces you to key terms and practices essential for success in the class, in the FYC program, and in your broader use of language. Important goals for this unit include establishing Writing Communities, introducing you to the Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center, introducing you to major assignments, and creating your digital portfolio. You will complete weekly Reading Notes and Writing Tasks, compose the first draft of your Writer’s Portfolio, and compose your Unit 1 Reflection.

In the second unit, you will begin exploring your languaging. This unit asks, “What Are My Languages?,” and invites you not only to identify and catalog the languages with which you communicate but also articulate what those languages mean to you. You will examine the relationship between language and identity, identify the languages you use, and consider how languaging includes multimodal forms of communication such as imagery, sound, and aspects of culture such as food. You will draft a unit assignment that gives you the option of either creating an archive of your languaging or developing a metaphor representing what your language(s) mean. You will complete weekly Reading Notes and Writing Tasks, and compose your Unit 2 Reflection while updating your Writer’s Portfolio in Digication.

In the third unit, you will consider where your languages come from. This unit asks, “Where Do My Languages Come From?,” and invites an exploration of how you learned your languages, including the influence of family and culture. For this unit’s assignment, you will either complete a series of interviews with people who taught you your language(s) or draft a language biography. You will complete weekly Reading Notes and Writing Tasks, and compose your Unit 3 Reflection while updating your Writer’s Portfolio in Digication.

ENGL 1301 concludes with a fourth unit that asks, “How Do I Language?” You will consider how you language in your daily life and what that looks like in practice. You will examine topics such as codeswitching/codemeshing and translanguaging and articulate when and how you engage in those linguistic practices. You will either draft a language autoethnography or a text that teaches an audience how you language. You will also have time to revise your unit assignments and develop the final version of your portfolio. You will also complete a Final Reflection on what you learned about language, your own languaging, the meaning of language, and why it matters. You will complete weekly Reading Notes and Writing Tasks, and publish your ENGL 1301 Final Portfolio with your Final Reflection.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Student Services and Support

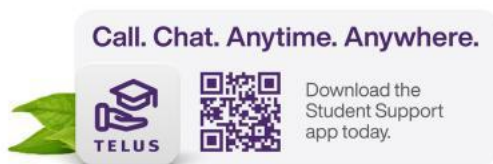
Being a college student can be difficult. You are taking a lot of different classes that are asking you to complete a lot of different work, often at the same time. You are trying to balance that work with other responsibilities you might have like a job (or 2 or 3) and family. And you are doing all of that while you may be struggling with issues involving mental health, food insecurity, and academic success. I know it is not easy, but you do not have to handle it all on your own. The university provides important services that can help you make it as a student. Please check out the list below, and please reach out to any that you might need. There is no shame in asking for and getting help. You can also reach out to me anytime you have a question or concern. Let me know what is going on as soon as you can, and we can work together to figure out some solutions to ensure your wellbeing and success.

Academic Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, Disability Support Services is located in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210. You can call us at (210) 784-1335, visit us at <https://www.tamusa.edu/Disability-Support-Services/index.html> or email us at dss@tamusa.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center: The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the *Tools* section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu, calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting CAB 202.

Counseling/Mental Health Resources: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment, call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120. All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information on SCC services visit <http://tamusa.edu/studentcounseling>

Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2'). Additionally, the TELUS Student Support App provides a variety of mental health resources to including support for in the moment distress, an anonymous peer to peer support network, mental health screenings, podcasts, and articles to improve your mental wellbeing.



Emergency Preparedness: JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>. More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/emergency-management/>. Download the SafeZone App (<https://safezoneapp.com/>) for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900.

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance: According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend by the census date will have their financial aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester, a Care report will be submitted, and you will possibly be dropped from the class. Your financial aid may have to be recalculated and a portion of your federal aid may have to be returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center: The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on "Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center" to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/>.

Meeting Basic Needs: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to submit a CARE referral (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities/file-a-report.html>) for support. Please notify your professor if you are comfortable in doing so to enable them to direct you to available resources.

Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to visit the Office of Military Affairs for any question involving federal or state VA Education Benefits. Visit the Patriots' Casa building, room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances: Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or course work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equal opportunity, and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the University's Civil Rights Officer at 210-784-2061 or titleix@tamusa.edu.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment, sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator (titleix@tamusa.edu, 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit Madla 120.

Pregnant/Parenting Students: Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will provide such reasonable accommodations to pregnant students as would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status (titleix@tamusa.edu; 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).

Texas A&M-San Antonio has designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

Young Jaguars: This service supports parenting students with daycare who meet these criteria: be enrolled in classes at TAMUSA in the current semester and be Pell eligible or a single parent. They serve children ages 3 to 12-years-old. Children must be enrolled in Pre-K-3 through 6th grade. Contact information: youngjaguars@tamusa.edu or (210) 784-2636.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities: The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities inherent to an individual as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio and a citizen of this country.

Students' Rights

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and pregnancy/parenting or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty, and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, and University Catalog, and to comply with them, as well as with federal, state, and local laws.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notifications.

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation, or disability. Conduct that infringes on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated. Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. For more information, review the Student Code of Conduct or OSRR website.

COURSE CALENDAR

Each week's assignments are due on Friday by 11:59 pm.

Important Dates:

Aug. 25 th	First Day of Class
Sept. 1 st	Labor Day Holiday
Sept. 10 th	Census Date
Nov. 27 th -29 th	Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec. 4 th	Last Day of Class
Dec. 8 th -12 th	Final Exams

The complete academic calendar is available online:

<https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/academic-calendar/index.html>

Unit 1: Why Language?

Week 1: Writing Communities and WLDCC presentation

Readings – [“The Danger of a Single Story”](#) by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Assignments – Reading Notes, Writing Tasks

Week 2: How to Read Like a Writer and *Mosaic* presentation

Readings – [“How to Read Like a Writer”](#) by Mike Bunn

Assignments – Reading Notes, Writing Tasks

Week 3: You are a Language Architect

Readings – [“Workin’ Languages: Who We are Matters in Our Writing”](#) by Alvarez, Wan, & Lee

Assignments – Reading Notes, Writing Tasks

Week 4: Writer’s Portfolio Workshop

Readings – Sample student portfolios

Assignments – Reading Notes, Writing Tasks, Unit 1 Reflection

Unit 2: What are My Languages?

Week 5: Language, Identity, and Meaning

Readings – [“How to Tame a Wild Tongue”](#) by Gloria Anzaldúa; [“My Spanish”](#) by Lozada-Oliva

Assignments – Reading Notes, Writing Tasks

Week 6: The Englishes You Speak

Readings – [“3 Ways to Speak English”](#) by Jamila Lyiscott; Student writing samples

Assignments – Reading Notes, Writing Tasks

Week 7: Visual Language

Readings – [“San Antonio’s Murals”](#) by KENS 5; [“Jaguar Spirit”](#) by Suzy González; [“My Greatest Inheritance? A Peanut Butter Taco”](#) by Sandra Cisneros

Assignments – Reading Notes, Writing Tasks, Unit 2 Assignment

Week 8: Midterm Conferences

Readings – No readings this week

Assignments – Complete any pending assignments, Unit 2 Reflection

Unit 3: Where Do My Languages Come From?

Week 9: Familial Language

Readings – “Words” by Rita Ortiz (PDF)

Assignments – Reading Notes, Writing Tasks

Week 10: Language and Culture (No class Tuesday)

Readings – [“The Unexpected Lessons of Mexican Food”](#) by Armando Montano

Assignments – Reading Notes, Writing Tasks

Week 11: Codeswitching/Codemeshing

Readings – [“What is Code Switching?”](#) by Benjamin Abiola; [“Codeswitching”](#) by Zaire Krieger; “Shurshees!” by Armando X. Lopez (PDF)

Assignments – Reading Notes, Writing Tasks, Unit 3 Assignment

Week 12: Translingualism

Readings – [“Beyond Language Difference in Writing: Investigating Complex and Equitable Language Practices”](#) by Christina Sánchez-Martin

Assignments – Reading Notes, Writing Tasks, Unit 3 Reflection

UNIT 4: How Do I Language?

Week 13: Writing Studio

Readings – *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson (excerpt)

Assignments – Writing Tasks

Week 14: Thanksgiving Break

Readings – No readings this week

Assignments – Complete any pending assignments

Week 15: Portfolio Presentations

Readings – [Nobel Lecture](#), Toni Morrison; “Digging” by Seamus Heaney

Assignments – Reading Notes, Unit 4 Assignment

Week 16: Final Conferences

Assignments – Final Portfolio with Final Reflection