

# ENGL 4312

## Introduction to Composition Studies

### Course Information

- **Class Meeting Time:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 2:00-3:15 p.m.
- **Class Location:** Classroom Hall, 307
- **Credit Hours:** Three

### Information about the Professor

- **Name:** Dr. Marcos J. Del Hierro (Dr. Del Hierro, Dr. D, or Dr. Del)
- **Pronouns:** he/him/el
- **Student Hours:** 1-2 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays (in Classroom Hall, 314C)
- **Office Location:** Classroom Hall, 314C
- **Email Address:** [mdelhierro@tamusa.edu](mailto:mdelhierro@tamusa.edu)
- **Zoom Direct Chat:** [Click Here](#)
- **Zoom Personal Meeting Room:** <https://tamusa.zoom.us/j/7194005398>
- **Student-Instructor Communication Plan:** I will respond to messages only during the workweek (Monday through Friday), from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. I do not read or respond to messages on the weekends.

### List of Required Reading Materials

- Clark, Irene L., and Betty Bamberg. *Concepts in Composition: Theory and Practices in the Teaching of Writing*. Third edition, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2019.
- All other readings are available on Blackboard.

### Course Description

This course will introduce you to the field of Composition Studies/Writing Studies. We will learn about major concepts, theories, and methods in the field as well as their histories. The course is organized by thematic weeks. High-stakes assignments/projects will measure your level of mastery of the things we read and discuss.

## Student Learning Outcomes

1. You will identify significant concepts and critical issues in Composition Studies.
2. You will assess how theory impacts practice in the writing classroom.
3. You will design strategies that help students improve as writers.
4. You will design teaching strategies that “embrace individual and cultural differences as a strength” of a campus community, and “share in the responsibility to co-create a culture and shared mindset in which each member is accepted, valued, safe, and can thrive.”
5. You will practice academic research skills.
6. You will make use of campus resources.
7. You will predict how this course will help you “achieve academic success, a rewarding career, and engaged global citizenship.”<sup>1</sup>

## Grade Distribution

- 90-100= A (Indicates exceeding expectations)
- 80-89= B (Indicates meeting expectations)
- 70-79= C (Indicates below expectations)
- >70 = D (Indicates an attempt made)
- Missing or unsubmitted work = F

## Low-Stakes Assignments (50% of Total Grade)

Low-stakes assignments include quizzes, one-minute papers, freewriting, and short in-class assignments, and the writing process for high-stakes assignments/projects. These assignments are formative, meaning they are practice/steps towards learning and mastery. These assignments are usually formative and graded as “complete” or “incomplete.” This means you either get all the points for the assignment or none. Because the volume of low-stakes assignments is high, they will have minimal to no feedback. If you want more feedback, you can always ask me during student hours.

## High-Stakes Assignments/Projects (50% of Total Grade)

High-stakes assignments require several steps and reflect mastery of skills and concepts. These assignments will be graded with rubrics so students can see if they met the criteria for mastery. Only the final draft of a high-stakes assignment/project counts towards the high-stakes grade.

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<sup>1</sup> All quotations in Student Learning Outcomes were taken from the TAMUSA “[Mission, Vision, and Values](#)” page.

- **The Zotero Assignment:** You will set up an account with Zotero, an open-source data management system that will help you keep track of research.
- **The Class Observation Assignment:** This assignment will ask you to observe a session of a composition class. Informed by what we learn in our course, you will write a case study based on your observation.
- **The Debate Project:** This assignment will ask you to prepare for and perform a debate on a topic encompassing everything we will read up until Week Seven. You will also be in charge of evaluating and scoring a debate when it is not your turn to compete.
- **The Syllabus Assignment:** This assignment will ask you to prepare a syllabus reflecting what you believe a first-year composition class should look like.
- **The Poster Project:** For our final big project, you will prepare a research poster explaining the ins and outs of a writing assignment that you will design. Everything you've learned will culminate into a glorious moment when we will showcase our posters at the "Dr. Marcos J. Del Hierro Presents: ENGL 4312 : Intro to Composition Studies Annual Student Research Poster Exhibition. A Dr. Marcos J. Del Hierro Joint."

## Resubmission of Work Policy

My primary interest is to help you learn and grow as you journey through your undergraduate education. One of my favorite maxims is "You can always revise." That goes for life as much as it does for this class. If you earn a grade below your expectations, do the following:

- Low-Stakes Assignments: Revise and resubmit the work.
- High-Stakes Assignments: Incorporate the feedback you receive from me and schedule an appointment with a tutor from the WLDCC. Afterward, write me a memo explaining what changes you made and what you learned. Submit your new draft and memo to the same place where you submitted the original final draft.

## Attendance and Late Policy

If you are absent, please notify me. If you are late, do your best to join the class discreetly. If you must leave class early, send me a message explaining why and discreetly leave the class. You may message me either through Blackboard or to my email address ([mdelhierro@tamusa.edu](mailto:mdelhierro@tamusa.edu)).

## Meeting Deadlines

Due dates matter for several reasons:

- You are practicing the professional habit of finishing and submitting work on time.
- Due dates help structure and pace the learning process.
- Due dates help ensure timely feedback of your work.

Please aim to meet deadlines. If you miss a deadline, do your best to get your work done and submitted. If you will miss a deadline, follow the late work policy described below.

## Late Work Policy

If you need more time to turn something in, send an extension to my email address ([mdelhierro@tamusa.edu](mailto:mdelhierro@tamusa.edu)). In this request, please tell me why you need additional time. I will not penalize your work as long as you ask for a request before or on the due date. Any requests sent after the due date will result in an automatic zero.

## Artificial Intelligence Policy

### **No Use of Generative AI Permitted**

ENGL 4342 assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing of any portion of an assignment for them, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

## Student Hours

Student hours, commonly referred to as "office hours," are weekly times reserved for students to meet with me one-on-one. You can attend student hours in person, virtually, or chat (see the "Information about the Professor" section on the first page of this syllabus). While recommended, you do not need an appointment to show up. If this class were a gym membership, student hours would be included as part of what you're paying for. You might as well take advantage of this perk.

# UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

## University Email Policy and Course Communications

All correspondence between professors and students must occur via university email accounts. You must have your Jaguar email account ready and working. If it is not working, contact the help desk at [helpdesk@tamusa.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamusa.edu) or at 210-784-HELP (4357). If you don't hear back within 48 hours, contact them again. They have many requests during the first part of the semester, so you may need to follow up with them.

## 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 also contact us via phone at (210) 784-1335, visit us at the [website](#) or email us at [dss@tamusa.edu](mailto:dss@tamusa.edu). All students are encouraged to discuss their academic accommodation with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

## Academic Learning Center

All currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio can utilize the Academic Learning Center for subject-area tutoring. 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](mailto:tutoring@tamusa.edu), calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202. Online tutoring is also available for after hours and weekend assistance.

While tutoring hours may change based on tutor schedules and availability, the current tutoring hours for MATH in the ALC are as follows:

| Day of the Week | Appointments available | Walk in Tutoring – No appointment needed |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| MONDAY          | 8 am – 6 pm            | 9 am – 5 pm                              |
| TUESDAY         | 8 am – 6 pm            | 9 am – 5 pm                              |

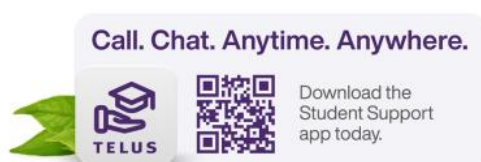
| Day of the Week | Appointments available | Walk in Tutoring – No appointment needed |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| WEDNESDAY       | 8 am – 6 pm            | 9 am – 5 pm                              |
| THURSDAY        | 8 am – 6 pm            | 9 am – 5 pm                              |
| FRIDAY          | 8 am – 5 pm            | 11 am – 4 pm                             |

## 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, visit our website, call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

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. *Crisis support is available 24/7/365 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 or through the TELUS student support App.*

The TELUS Student Support App provides a variety of mental health resources to including 24/7/365 support for in the moment distress, crisis support, 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 system. 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 on emergency response may be found at: Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan. 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. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended by the published Census Date (the first week of class). Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend prior to the published Census Date (the first week of class) will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

## **Jaguar Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center (WLDCC)**

The WLDCC provides support to graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Writing 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. The WLDCC offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. Students can schedule appointments with the WLDCC in JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. Students wanting to work in realtime with a tutor can schedule an “Online Appointment.” Students wishing to receive asynchronous, written feedback from a tutor can schedule an “eTutoring” appointment. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website . The WLDCC can also be reached by emailing [wldcc@tamusa.edu](mailto:wldcc@tamusa.edu).

## **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 report for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to

direct you to available resources. A food pantry is available on campus; [click here](#) for hours and contact information.



## **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](mailto:military.va@tamusa.edu) or (210)784-1397.

## **Religious Observances**

Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the wide variety 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 on our campus and within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees are to 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](mailto: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 discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking based on sex, 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 sex-based misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto: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 them in 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](mailto:titleix@tamusa.edu); 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).

Texas A&M-San Antonio has also 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 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

## **Young Jaguars**

Young Jaguars can support parenting students with daycare if students meet this criteria: (1) must be enrolled in classes at Texas A&M-San Antonio in the current semester, (2) must be Pell eligible or a single parent, (3) child(ren) must be aged 3 to 12-years-old, and (4) child(ren) must be enrolled in Pre-K-3 through 6th grade. Hours of operation is Monday-Thursday 3:30pm-9:00pm. For more information, please contact Young Jaguars at [youngjaguars@tamusa.edu](mailto:youngjaguars@tamusa.edu) or call (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, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as 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, 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, 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 on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the [Student Code of Conduct](#) or visit the resources available in the [OSRR website](#)

## Important Fall 2026 Dates

| Dates                    | Event                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| August 20                | Tuition & Fee Payments deadline                                                                                 |
| August 24                | First day of class                                                                                              |
| September 7              | Labor Day Holiday – No Classes / University Closed                                                              |
| September 9              | Census Date – Students not paid in full or enrolled in a payment plan by 4:59 pm may be dropped for non-payment |
| October 5 – October 16   | Midterm grading period                                                                                          |
| November 13              | Last day to drop with an automatic “W”                                                                          |
| November 25              | Study Day – No classes                                                                                          |
| November 26-November 28  | Thanksgiving Holiday – No Classes / University Closed                                                           |
| November 30              | Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the University                                                       |
| December 4               | Last day of classes                                                                                             |
| December 5 – December 11 | Final exams                                                                                                     |
| December 15              | Commencement                                                                                                    |
|                          |                                                                                                                 |

The complete [academic calendar](#) is available online.