

ENGL 1302-900: Composition II

Term

Spring 2025

Instructor

Christen Barron

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Office: Classroom Hall Room 318

Office Hours: Thursdays 2:00 pm - 3:00pm or [schedule a virtual meeting](#) by appointment

Course Delivery

This course meets in-person once a week with an asynchronous component delivered via Blackboard.

Meeting Times and Location

- Tuesdays 5:30 pm-7:15 pm
- CAB 424

Catalog Description

ENGL 1302 builds on the reading and writing skills developed in ENGL 1301 and invites students to enter into academic discourse through research wherein they will be asked to synthesize and respond to a variety of perspectives on a topic of their choosing. Students will also read and compose a variety of texts, oral, written, and visual.

Course Section Description

This section of ENGL 1302 examines rhetoric and writing through the lens of stories. Through textual research and close analysis of stories in various genres, you will

explore how rhetoric operates in the stories we tell and consume and how knowledge of rhetoric can prepare you to communicate effectively in the context of your daily life.

What to Expect in Class

This class gives students an overview of storytelling and communication strategies across genres and media. From the heartbreaking lyrics of Taylor Swift to the unsettling horror stories of Carmen Maria Machado, we'll draw inspiration from musicians, writers, public figures, and our communities to craft compelling messages for our intended audiences. Class sessions are hands-on and collaborative. Expect to get creative, write during class, and connect with your peers.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this section of Composition II, you will be able to...

- Articulate your writing process
- Analyze and critique a variety of texts for rhetorical effectiveness
- Locate, categorize, evaluate, and cite scholarly and non-scholarly sources
- Adapt your writing in response to different contexts and audiences
- Use collaboration to develop your writing
- Develop an understanding of how storytelling is used to communicate across genres
- Use Generative AI tools as resources for writing and learning
- Compose a digital portfolio with writing samples that demonstrate rhetorical knowledge

Required Materials and Textbooks

- Equipment: desktop computer, laptop, or tablet with a reliable internet connection
- Software: word processor, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs

- Software: Zoom and Google accounts
- Software: [Hulu subscription](#) for streaming TV episodes for class (subscribe to the \$1.99 student discount or a free trial)
- Software: [Canva subscription](#) (subscribe to the free version or use your free account through your university email)
- Textbook: Free Open Access resources posted on Blackboard/linked on syllabus

Course Communication

Important course updates and announcements will be posted regularly on the Blackboard announcements page. You will also receive copies of Blackboard announcements through your campus email account. If you need to contact me directly, please email christen.barron@tamusa.edu through your campus email account. You can expect a response in 1-24 hours during campus business hours. I do not check Blackboard messages!

Labor-Based Grading Agreement

By remaining this course, you agree to be graded on your labor instead of the quality of your writing. This means you'll be graded on the overall work you put towards strengthening your writing skills instead of the quality of a specific piece of your writing. Each assignment in this class is an invitation to practice and strengthen your writing skills. Thus, the more times you practice writing by completing an assignment, the higher your final grade. You'll still receive constructive feedback on your writing from both myself and your peers, but that feedback won't impact your final course grade.

Labor-Based Grading Breakdown

How is labor measured?

It can be difficult to "measure" labor, so I keep track of your writing practice/labor in the class by awarding you points for each assignment you submit. Obviously, not all

writing assignments are created equal, so each assignment receives a point value based on how much time and effort I imagine students will need to complete the assignment. Because I'm grading you on the labor you put into the assignment, you won't earn full credit on any assignments that appear incomplete or unfinished.

How will I know how many points I need to earn a specific final letter grade?

Below is a breakdown of the point ranges for final letter grades

A Range: 450+ points*
points

C Range: 350 – 399 points
F: Below 300

B Range: 400 - 449 points

D Range: 300 – 349 points

Assignments

Writing Lab Exercises (150 points)

Writing Lab Exercises are informal weekly assignments designed to help you apply what you've learned from class discussions and course material. Exercise lengths vary, but expect to write at least one page for each exercise. We'll spend class time brainstorming strategies for these exercises and sometimes we'll finish them during class. Complete all of these exercises to earn a total of 150 points towards your final grade. Writing Lab exercises are due the Sunday following the Writing Lab. See the course calendar for a schedule of labs.

Reading Responses (150)

These informal discussion forum assignments serve as the asynchronous component of our hybrid course. These assignments are designed to help you meaningfully engage with the course material and enhance our in-person sessions.

Creative Project Presentation (75 points)

This project invites you to deepen your digital literacy skills and practice research strategies relevant to your academic or professional career. Specifically, you'll

compose something (short story, video, comic, etc.) that uses research and storytelling techniques to spotlight an important issue or topic of your choice. The project's goal is to apply what you've learned this semester and showcase your strengths as a writer/communicator. Details and instructions for this assignment will be provided at/around midterms. The project is due Sunday, April 13.

Writer's Portfolio (25 points)

The Writer's Portfolio is the course "final" that you'll develop throughout the course. It takes the form of a digital portfolio and reflection essay. You'll submit the assignment through the designated writing prompt submission box on Blackboard. Completing this assignment by the deadline earns you a total of 25 points towards your final course grade. Late submissions are not accepted for this assignment. The assignment is due Sunday, May 11.

Class Participation (50 points)

Taking the time to attend class is valuable labor that supports your success in the course. Therefore, you can earn points for arriving to class on time and actively participating in each class session. You get two free absences to use at your discretion.

Syllabus Quiz (4 points)

Bonus Challenges

Throughout the term, I'll announce the limited-time writing challenges, surveys, quizzes, and events you can attend to boost your final grade. To increase your access to these opportunities, attend class and check your campus email regularly.

Late Work Policy

I'm not a fan of rigid due dates, but they do help to keep coursework manageable. Plan to submit Writing Lab Exercises each Sunday to avoid falling behind in the course. I also recognize that everyone in this class is human. We get sick, we have emergencies, and "off" weeks. **As a result, I offer a seven-day "no questions asked" grace period on all assignments except the Writer's Portfolio assignment.**

If you find yourself struggling to submit work within the grace period, please let me know so we can work together to find a solution.

Classroom Conduct Policy

Sharing our writing and ideas with others can be a vulnerable act. Please be mindful of the unique perspectives and identities of others. There may be situations in class or on Blackboard when you disagree with the assigned readings, your instructor, or a classmate. I ask that you arrive at each class and assignment with an open mind and use respect when communicating with me and your classmates. Another way you can show respect to your classmates and instructor is arriving at class on time and prepared for class discussions.

First-Year Composition Program Policies

Attendance

Your success and development as a writer depends upon your active participation within a community of writers. The health and success of that community, in turn, depends upon the active participation of all of its members. Consistent attendance in your FYC classes is, therefore, crucial. If you are struggling to attend class this semester, we urge you to communicate with your FYC instructor, who will work with you to negotiate a plan for attending, participating in, and completing the class.

Plagiarism

We recognize that what constitutes plagiarism depends upon context. As such, we work with you to learn how different genres, professions, and academic disciplines define plagiarism. In the context of your FYC classes, plagiarism is defined as the intentional use of another's "language, ideas, or original (not common-knowledge) material" without acknowledgement ("Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism"). If you are found to have committed plagiarism as defined here, your instructor may report you for academic dishonesty, and you may be subject to failing the assignment or even failing the class.

Classroom Inclusion

We are committed to fostering inclusive classroom environments where diverse backgrounds and perspectives are not only respected and understood, but are also recognized as powerful resources for building communities of writers both in the classroom and across campus. While working with classmates and instructors, we ask that you:

- respectfully share your unique experiences and perspectives
- demonstrate respect for and openness to the perspectives and experiences of others
- value the opportunity to learn from difference

Demonstrating respect for those different from you not only prepares you for success in the classroom, but it also prepares you for success as citizens and professionals in a global community.

Because we value the respectful expression and exchange of ideas, students who use violent, harassing, and/or discriminatory language, including, but not limited to, sexist, racist, homophobic, classist, ableist, and/or anti-ethnic language, will be reported to the university and may be subject to Student Code of Conduct policies.

GAI Technology

The FYC program expects you to generate your own content this semester. However, there are situations and contexts within our courses where you may use generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools to support your work as a writer. For example, GAI technologies such as ChatGPT can work well as a starting point for written assignments, assisting you with brainstorming, outlining, generating ideas, and collecting basic information about a topic/idea. Note that the emphasis here is on “support.” GAI programs have been shown to provide biased information, to circulate misinformation, and to generate writing that is, at best, mediocre. For these reasons, FYC discourages you from using GAI technology to generate content for you. If you have reason to use GAI to generate content with you, then we ask that you consult with your professor before doing so. If your professor approves your use, you should acknowledge the GAI program you have used, and you should identify which portions of the text you submit were produced by GAI. Using GAI content without your professor’s permission and/or without proper attribution qualifies as plagiarism.

FYC Faculty Commitments

FYC faculty share a responsibility to:

- Celebrate and validate students' language practices
- Encourage linguistic diversity and resist Standard Language Ideology
- Privilege cultural knowledge and provide opportunities to connect it to course content
- Center intersectional understandings of identity and writing practices
- Collaborate with students with care and compassion

FYC Programmatic Goals

The FYC program is dedicated to achieving the following goals:

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

FYC Program Key Terms

- *Languaging*: the ongoing process of developing and communicating meaning and ideas
- *Translanguaging*: the ability to fluidly access and use one's full linguistic repertoire
- *Standard Language Ideology*: the belief that a language has an ideal, consistent, and "correct" form that should be privileged
- *Critical Language Awareness*: the ability to examine and understand the social, political, and ideological aspects of language and communication
- *Rhetorical Awareness*: the ability to assess context and make intentional choices when communicating

- *Audience*: the person or people a text is intended to affect
- *Purpose*: the intended effect or impact of a text
- *Genre*: a specific type or form of writing/communication that is shaped by social convention and audience expectation
- *Context*: the social, historical, and cultural circumstances in which texts are read and composed
- *Reflection*: the act of examining and learning from one's actions, experiences, and writing

University Policies and Resources

[University Policies and Resources](#)

Course Calendar

Below is a *tentative* schedule of course topics and assigned readings. Links to assigned reading and other course assignments are posted on Blackboard.

Week 1: Introduction to English 1302 / Why Stories Matter

- **Tuesday, January 28 (start date reflects snow day schedule adjustment):** Course Overview; Syllabus Quiz; Read “Life’s Stories” by Julie Beck

Week 2: Round Characters vs. Flat Stereotypes

- Tuesday, February 4: Watch *Reservation Dogs* S1E1 and S1E2 (asynchronous class session)

Week 3: Fairy Tales and Genre/Audience Expectations

- Tuesday, February 11: Read “Cinderella” by Charles Perrault and “The Dryad’s Shoe” by T. Kingfisher; Writing Lab 1

Week 4: Love Songs, Love Stories, and Specificity

- Tuesday, February 18: Read “Tiny Love Stories”; Writing Lab 2

Week 5: Memoir, The Essay, and the Power of Personal Experience

- Tuesday, February 25: Read “Girl Fight” by Joey Franklin, “Yale Will Not Save You” by Esmé Wang, and “We Regret to Inform You” by Brenda Miller; Writing Lab 3/4

Week 6: Language, Identity, and San Antonio Storytellers

- Tuesday, March 4: Read excerpts from *How to Kill a Goat and Other Monsters* by Saúl Hernández; Read two pieces of your choice from *Mosaic* Issue 001; Writing Lab 5

Week 7: Spring Break

- Tuesday, March 11: No class

Week 8: Mood, Pacing, and Horror Stories

- Tuesday, March 18: Read excerpts from *Never Whistle at Night: An Indigenous Dark Fiction Anthology* and “Haunt” by Carmen Maria Machado; Writing Lab 6

Week 9: Generative AI, Research, and Storytelling

- Tuesday, March 25: AI Tool/Research Workshop; Intro Course Project

Week 10: Course Project

- Tuesday, April 1: In-class work on Course Project

Week 11: Peer Review and Revision

- Tuesday, April 8: Peer Review

Week 12: Writer’s Portfolio/Reflection and Transfer

- Tuesday, April 15: In-class work on Writer’s Portfolio

Week 13: AI, Authorship, and The Future of Creativity

- Tuesday, April 22: Discuss case studies

Week 14: Presentations/Final Reflection

- Tuesday, April 29: Presentations; Course Wrap-up

Week 15: Finals

- No class. Please make sure all missing work is submitted by May 11!