

ENGL 1302 Composition II: Rhetoric, Misinformation, and the Construction of Reality

Fall 2025 Face to Face

Instructor: Dr. Yvette Chairez

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Student Hours: MW 1:00-2:00, T 2:00-3:00; in-person or on Zoom

Campus Office: CH 226

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Course Description

In ENG 1302, students continue to develop and practice both standard and advanced approaches for composing, interpreting, and researching a variety of texts. Through an introductory survey of the concept of rhetoric (i.e. the study of how we talk about things) as it applies to the discipline of composition, students will learn close reading methods, practice critical thinking, engage in scaffolded writing processes, and nuance their approach to rhetorical analysis. Furthermore, rhetoric is a study that transcends the Composition classroom; it includes concepts that can be applied to course work across every discipline, which is an idea that will be attended to in this course, as well.

Each semester, Dr. Chairez's sections of 1302 take up a contemporary issue in Rhetorical Studies for students to discuss, research, and write about. Fall 2025's issue is Misinformation. As such, this class may touch upon topics pertaining to conspiracy theories, hoaxes, artificial intelligence, and more.

Assignments

Introductions Assignment.....	5pts
Comparative Analysis of Intros.....	5pts
Rhetorical Analysis of Bullshit.....	10pts
Digital Folklore Ethnographic Report.....	15pts
Timeline of Manufactured Needs.....	10pts
Misinformation in Your Field Abstract and Rhet Tri.....	5pts
MYF Annotated Bibliography.....	5pts
MYF First Draft.....	5pts
MYF Peer Review Analysis.....	5pts
MYF Final Draft.....	20pts
Discourse Community Activities.....	15pts

Course Outcomes

All First-Year Composition (FYC) courses are part of the Texas Core Curriculum. They are specifically designated as “Core 10” courses, which focus on communication. According to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, “Core 10” courses “involve the command of oral, aural, written, and visual literacy skills that enable people to exchange messages appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience.” These courses are expected to achieve the following Core Curriculum outcomes:

- **Communication** – The effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
- **Critical Thinking** – Creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- **Personal Responsibility** – The ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making
- **Teamwork** – The ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal

Here are some of the ways your FYC course might help you to achieve these outcomes:

- **Communication** – Your instructor will likely teach you “rhetorical agency,” which is the ability to make intentional choices when composing texts for different audiences and contexts
- **Critical Thinking** – Your instructor will likely ask you to analyze a variety of texts, with particular attention both to the choices the authors/artists made and to the way language functions in society. This is called Critical Language Awareness
- **Personal Responsibility** – You’ll fulfill this outcome mostly through reflection on your writing practices and processes. This could take the form of “labor logs” and “labor journals.”
- **Teamwork** – You’ll do a lot of group-based work this semester. This could look like the formation of “Writing Communities,” but it could also look like small-group discussions and collaborative activities.

Not all FYC courses will help you to achieve the Core Curriculum outcomes the same way, but they are all designed to help you achieve the outcomes.

FYC Program Commitments, Goals, and Key Terms

Faculty in the FYC program help you to achieve the Core Curriculum outcomes through a specific set of commitments and goals. Our commitments guide what we teach, how we teach, and how we interact with you, and our goals support your growth and development as a writer. In short, our commitments and goals give us focus and direction and stand as a representation of what we value and believe in. If you're ever unsure of what you're doing for this course, you can always refer to this part of the syllabus for context.

Here are the things FYC faculty are committed to in our teaching:

1. collaborating with you with care and compassion,
2. emphasizing your learning and growth,
3. encouraging you to take risks and embrace failure,
4. honoring variations in your reading and languaging, and
5. centering and sustaining your cultural and linguistic identity.

And here are the goals we're trying to achieve:

1. cultivating your sense of belonging as a writer,
2. increasing your rhetorical awareness,
3. strengthening your critical language awareness,
4. deepening your introspection and self-awareness as a writer,
5. increasing your skills and engagement as a reader,
6. inspiring creativity, risk-taking, and versatility in your writing,
7. increasing your self-determination and resilience as a writer,
8. helping you to see yourself as a writer,
9. increasing your confidence as a writer, and
10. increasing your appreciation of your languaging

FYC faculty promise to work toward each of those goals in everything we do with and for you this semester.

In addition to the commitments and goals, there's a set of key terms that inform all that FYC faculty do in the classroom. These terms guide the work FYC faculty do with you, and they help us all to deepen our understanding of writing specifically and of languaging generally. If you ever need a reminder of what FYC faculty are trying to teach you, please refer to the list of terms below.

- Belonging: the feeling of being valued, respected, and included as you are
- Languaging: the ongoing process of developing and communicating meaning and ideas
- Translanguaging: the process of using one's full linguistic repertoire to interpret, understand, and communicate meaning and ideas
- Audience: the person or the group of people languaging is intended to affect
- Purpose: the intended effect or impact of languaging
- Genre: a specific form of languaging that is shaped by social convention and audience expectation
- Context: the situation in which languaging occurs
- Rhetorical Agency: the ability to assess context and to make intentional choices when languaging
- 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

Course Policies

All faculty in the FYC program follow a specific set of policies you should be aware of. One of the policies involves plagiarism, one involves our classroom environment, and one involves GenAI programs such as ChatGPT.

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 Environment

We are committed to fostering welcoming classroom environments where all students 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 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.

Academic Freedom

You can access the university's policy on Faculty Academic Freedom [here](#). These protections of Academic Freedom pertain to students, too; meaning, you have "the right to express and explore your opinion on all relevant matters regarding the subject content of the course, within professional norms" during classroom discussions, research projects, and other assignments, as applicable. In all instances, standards of classroom behavior and written decorum are expected and appreciated. My classroom is a space that invites Aristotelian "debate" of the traditional definition: discourse which is spurred in "good faith" and for the purpose of pursuing truth, compromise, and wisdom.

Late Work, Re-works, and Extra Credit

Yes, yes, and yes. I accept, allow, and assign, respectively, all of these. Please schedule a time to talk with me about any of the above should you want to request any of these.

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Title II of the ADAAA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require that students with disabilities be guaranteed equal access to the learning environment through the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodation of their disability. If you have a diagnosed disability that may require an accommodation, please contact Disability Support Services (DSS) for the coordination of services. The phone number for DSS is (210) 784-1335 and email is dss@tamusa.edu.

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 is an appointment based center where appointments are made through the Navigate platform. Students access Navigate through Jagwire in the Student Services tab. The Center is active on campus outreaching to students to highlight services offered. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu or calling (210)-784-1332. Appointments can also be made through JagWire under the services tab.

Counseling Resources

As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you or someone you know is experiencing life stressors, emotional difficulties, or mental health concerns at Texas A&M University – San Antonio, please contact the Student Counseling Center (SCC) located in Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance) or call 210-784-1331 between the hours of 8:00AM and 5:00PM. All mental health services provided by the SCC are free, confidential (as the law allows), and are not part of a student's academic or university record. SCC provides brief individual, couples, and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information, please visit www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling

In a crisis situation, please walk-in to the Student Counseling Center (SCC) any time between the hours of 8:00AM and 5:00PM to be seen by a licensed clinician. After hours, please contact UPD at 911 or text "HOME" to 741-741 24/7/365 to connect with a trained crisis counselor. The National Suicide Prevention hotline also offers a 24/7/365 hotline at 1-800-273-8255.

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 and/or phone call with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>.

More information about Emergency Preparedness and the Emergency Response Guide can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/upd/index.html>.

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 the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend 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 Center

The Jaguar Writing Center provides writing support to graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges. Writing tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. The Writing Center is currently holding all appointments digitally. Students can schedule appointments with the Writing Center in JagWire under the student services tab. 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 at www.tamusa.edu/Writing-Center. The Writing Center can also be reached by emailing writingcenter@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 contact the Dean of Students (DOS@tamusa.edu) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources they may possess.

Military Affairs

Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, and special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots' Casa in-person room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military@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 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.

Instructor policy regarding students who are parents.

Children are allowed in our classroom. Please do not ever feel as though you need to miss a class due to a lapse child care. They may even enjoy some of our group activities! Also, nursing parents are welcome to breastfeed in our classroom.

Respect for Classmates' Autonomy

We understand that our students represent diverse backgrounds and perspectives. When we are equity-minded, we are aware of differences and inequalities and are willing to discuss them so we can act to resolve them. The University is committed to building cultural competencies, or the attitudes, skills, and knowledge that enable individuals and organizations to acknowledge cultural differences and incorporate these differences in working with people from diverse cultures.

Respecting and accepting people different than you is vital to your success in the class, on campus, and as a future professional in the global community. While working together to build this community we ask all members to:

- Share their unique experiences, values, and beliefs.
- Be open to the views of others.
- Honor the uniqueness of their colleagues.
- Value each other's opinions and communicate respectfully.
- Keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature.

Use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in this course and across the A&M-San Antonio community.

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, equality of 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, diversity, pluralism 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, gender identity, or gender expression. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to helping create 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 has staff members trained to support survivors 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 university. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and other healthcare providers 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 or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331, Modular C.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities

The purpose of the following statement is to enumerate the essential provisions for the student freedom and responsibility to learn at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. All students are required to follow all policies and regulations as set forth by The Texas A&M University System. This includes the [A&M-San Antonio Student Code of Conduct](#).

Students' Rights

- A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no university rule or procedure that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
- 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, genetic information or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
- 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.
- Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

- A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty and the administration.
- 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, University Catalog and students must comply with them and the laws of the land.
- A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire university community.

- A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide an environment for learning.
- A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.
- 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

ENG 1302 Rhetoric, Misinformation, and the Construction of Reality

UNIT 1 Rhetoric and Its Basic Elements

Week 1 Jan 19-23

Day 1: **NO CLASS** - MLK Day

Day 2: Introductions; go over the syllabus; discuss "What is Rhetoric?", "What is Misinformation?", and "What does 'the Construction of Reality' mean?"

Week 2 Jan 26-30

Day 1: NO CLASS - severe weather cancellation

Day 2: Read "[A Brief History of Fake News](#)"; define and discuss Rhetoric, Misinformation, Disinformation, and Propaganda; form Discourse Communities, play SideLinks

Week 3 Feb 2-6

Day 1: Read "[Using Rhetorical Strategies of Persuasion](#)"; introduce the three appeals and Logical Fallacies; **DC Activity:** Logical Fallacies of "The Normal Person" (handout); **go over Comparative Analysis of Introductions instructions**

Day 2: Introduce the Rhetorical Triangle and the Rhetoric Appendage; **DC Activity:** read and analyze "[It's the Algorithms, Stupid](#)"

DUE: Introductions Assignment, Sunday 11:59pm

UNIT 2 Creating a Rhetorical Strategy

Week 4 Feb 9-13

Day 1: Read in-class "[In Defense of Mass Censorship](#)"; discuss the Structural Element of Rhetoric: Genre; visit from the WLD Center

Day 2: Read “What is Code Switching?” (handout) and excerpt from *Ghosts of the Rio Grande Valley* (handout); continue discussing the Structural Element: Tone

DUE: Comparative Analysis of Introductions, Sunday 11:59pm

Week 5 Feb 16-20

Day 1: **NO CLASS** - Dr. Chairez in Orlando for Dance Team Nationals; read “[On Bullshit](#)” by philosopher Harry Frankfurt

Day 2: Watch in class [How Cults Use Language to Control](#); look at The Pope’s tweets (in class); continue discussing the Structural Element: Ideologies, Belief Systems, and Their Absence; discuss the differences among Lying, Gaslighting, and Bullshitting; **go over Rhetorical Analysis of Bullshit instructions**

DUE: Rhetorical Analysis of Bullshit, Sunday 11:59pm

Week 6 Feb 23-27

Day 1: Read “[Linguistic Relativity: Language and Thought](#)”; look at in class “[Military Phrases You Have Probably Used in Conversation](#)”; discuss the Linguistic Element: Latent Language Features and Language Invention; **DC Activity**: visit Covid 19 wall; Rhetorics of _____

Day 2: Read “[The Dead Internet Theory](#)”; in-class watch [How Language Nerds Solve Crimes](#); read in-class Elizabeth Browning poem; continue discussing Linguistic Element: Grammar and Style; **DC Activity**: Rhetorical Analysis of AI Content

UNIT 3 Midterms

Week 7 Mar 2-6

Day 1: Read TBD ethnographic report on Digital Folklore; **go over Digital Folklore Ethnographic Report instructions**; in class work time for DFER

Day 2: **NO CLASS** - Dr. Chairez in Cleveland for the Conference on College Composition and Communication

Week 8 Mar 9-13

SPRING BREAK

Week 9 Mar 16-20

Day 1: Introduce the Context Appendage; **DC Activity:** read “Kentucky Farmers Allege Gunfight with Aliens” (handout)

Day 2: Continue discussing Context; discuss Conspiracy Theories and Rhetorical History; in class work time for DFER

DUE: Digital Folklore Ethnographic Report, Sunday 11:59pm

UNIT 4 Responding to Misinformation

Week 10 Mar 23-27

Day1: Read “[I Am A Female Minority at Harvard, and this is Why I Support PC Culture](#)”; “[Political Correctness is Out of Control](#)”; and “[Political Correctness Isn't as Popular as You Think](#)”; Introduce Complementary, Contradictory, and Alternative Rhetorics

Day 2: Read “[Pickleball’s Real Opponent: Public Perception](#)”; discuss Contradictory Rhetorics and combatting misinformation; **DC Activity:** TBD; **go over Timeline of Manufactured Needs instructions**

Week 11 Mar 30-Apr 3

Day1: Read “[Is Anti-Intellectualism Ever Good for Democracy?](#)”; discuss Complementary rhetorics and combatting disinformation; in class peer discussion on TMN topic

Day 2: Read “[The Ancient Greeks’ Guide to Rejecting Propaganda](#)”; discuss Complementary rhetorics and combatting disinformation; in class work time for TMN

DUE: Timeline of Manufactured Needs with Reflection, Sunday at 11:59pm

Week 12 Apr 6-10

Day 1: **NO CLASS** - Easter Monday

Day 2: Watch “Nazis Can’t Take a Joke”; look at the rhetoric of James Talarico; discuss Alternative Rhetorics and combatting propaganda; **go over Misinformation in Your Field Case Study**

DUE: MYF Abstract and Rhetorical Triangle, Sunday at 11:59pm

Week 13 Apr 13-17

Day 1: read [The Children’s Story](#) by James Cavell; **DC Activity:** Create an Alternative Rhetorical Approach; **go over MYF Annotated Bibliography**

Day 2: go over Research Methods; in class work time for MYF Anno Biblio

DUE: MYF Annotated Bibliography, Sunday 11:59pm

UNIT 5: Final Exam

Week 14 Apr 20-24

Day 1: Field Trip to the Library Special Collections room!

Day 2: In class work time for Misinformation in Your Field Case Study

Week 15 Apr 27-May 1

Day 1: in class work time for MYF Case Study

Day 2: in class work time for MYF Case Study

DUE: MYF Case Study First Draft (bring with you on Day 1 of Week 16)

Week 16 May 4-8

Day 1: in class MYF Peer Review - **DUE at end of class**

Day 2: **NO CLASS** - Campus Study Day

DUE: Misinformation in Your Field Case Study, Sunday 11:59pm