



English Composition II: Rhetoric Across Modalities

Spring 2025
ENGL-1302-005I1 | Online
8-Week Course



Instructor Information:

Ryan Smith

rsmith37@com.edu

Phone: 832-766-8391

Student hours and location: Online course; instructor is available Fridays from 1pm – 2pm

ENGL 1302 Course Catalog Description: Intensive study of and practice in the strategies and techniques for developing research-based expository and persuasive texts. Emphasis on effective and ethical rhetorical inquiry, including primary and secondary research methods;

critical reading of verbal, visual, and multimedia texts; systematic evaluation, synthesis, and documentation of information sources; and critical thinking about evidence and conclusions.

Prerequisite: ENGL 1301 with a grade of "C" or better

Required Text/Materials:

- *The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates*, by Wes Moore | Week 3 + 4
 - COM Library (limited free quantities)
 - Libby app - 2 copies available (1 ebook, 1 audiobook)
 - Ebook Central (1 ebook available to view online)
 - Overdrive (1 ebook available to borrow)
 - [Amazon](#)
 - Paperback: \$13
 - Kindle Ebook: \$14
 - Hardcover: \$16
 - Audible
 - Audiobook (if you sign up for a free trial, you can get access to the audiobook for free)
- Netflix | Week 5 + 6

- Be sure to have access to or know someone who has access to a Netflix account in order to watch selected shows/films
- Please reach out to me if you feel this will be impossible
- Everything else that we read/watch in this course will be accessible for free through D2L Brightspace.

Recommended Materials:

- A reliable place to store your work in the event that your computer crashes (e.g., flash drive, Google Drive, etc.)
- A notebook to take notes on info discussed throughout the week
- A planner of some sort to keep track of due dates

Communication Policy: You can either email me at my campus email (rsmith37@com.edu), message me on Teams via your COM Microsoft Office account, or send me a message through D2L Brightspace. Whichever option you choose, ALL electronic communication with me (your instructor) must be through your COM email/account. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means.

If you send me an email and I do not reply, double-check that you sent it from the right place or that it was sent successfully. I have had some instances where I never receive an email because a student forgot to press "send."

Attendance Policy: Because this is an online class, your attendance will be recorded based on logging into our Brightspace course shell and viewing/completing weekly requirements. Please be mindful of the importance of every assignment/discussion post in this class. Failure to complete required work two weeks in a row may result in being dropped from the course. If not dropped, it more than likely will result in you failing the course.

A Note on the 8-Week Course Format: The shift from the 16-week format to the 8-week one is not something I take lightly as an instructor. However, the reality is that this format requires that you learn more material in less time. This means that my expectations of you are heightened. My biggest hope is that you do not give up or doubt your capabilities, even if it feels like too much at first. Know that I am your resource. I want to help you succeed! Never hesitate to ask questions as they arise. Remember that sometimes learning means not knowing at first.

Student Learner Outcome Chart:

| Student Learner Outcome | Maps to Core Objective | Assessed via this Assignment |
|--|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Demonstrate knowledge of individual and collaborative research processes. | Teamwork (TW) | Assignments Discussions Posts Peer Review(s) |
| 2. Develop ideas and synthesize primary and secondary sources within focused academic arguments, including one or more research-based essays | Unmapped | Assignments Discussion Posts |
| 3. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate a variety of texts for the ethical and logical uses of evidence. | Communication Skills | Assignments Discussion Posts HW Readings/Videos |
| 4. Write in a style that clearly communicates meaning, builds credibility, and inspires belief or action. | Critical Thinking Skills | Assignments Discussion Posts |
| 5. Apply the conventions of style manuals for specific academic disciplines (e.g., APA, CMS, MLA, etc.) | Unmapped | Assignments Discussion Posts |

Course Requirements/Unit Overview:

Course Completion: One of my goals as an instructor is to help students recognize the value of persistence and not giving up. Your completion of the course will therefore factor into your grade (a full letter grade worth). Course completion means completing every assignment and finishing the semester.

Timeliness: Personal responsibility is a crucial part of life. Oftentimes, that means completing tasks within a particular time frame. There are a total of 14 items that you will be tasked with completing this semester. For each item that is submitted late, you will lose 10 points from that grade. See the grade formula below for more details.

Weekly HW (other than major assignments): Your completion of weekly HW is crucial not only to your success, but it is also a way for me to assess whether or not

you are engaging with the learning material. Outside of the major assignments, HW includes watching weekly videos, listening to podcasts, reading articles + books, watching TV shows/films, and completing weekly discussion posts.

Unit 1 (Week 1-2): Understanding + Contributing to Social Discourse

Our first lesson in this class will be centered on the idea that active reading involves social discourse. Before that though, you must learn how to understand what you are reading. We will actively go through this process together with particular scholarly articles and readings.

Summary/Response Essay

You will be completing this essay as proof that you have successfully understood how to find scholarly articles, decipher them, and contribute to the conversation.

Unit 2 (Week 3 + 4): Creative Non-Fiction as Argumentation

In relation to reading scholarly work, reading literature can lead to important discussions about the human experience. Certainly, we can find rhetoric in literature as well. We will discuss the assigned book for this class – *The Other Wes Moore* – at length, and you will learn how to think both specifically and broadly in relation to the text. You will be tasked with creating open-ended questions for your peers and responding to some as well.

Written Response Essays

During this unit, you will be given various prompts to consider. Your task will be to choose two of the questions and generate 2 pages of content per question. This will push you to showcase your in-depth reading of the text and your own thoughts/contributions.

Unit 3 (Week 5 + 6): Recognizing Arguments + Rhetoric in Media

Shifting gears from the written word, we will explore other contexts of meaning-making through digital means, such as social media, music, TV shows, and films.

Rhetorical Analysis

After learning how to recognize rhetoric and discuss it, you will venture into your own individual rhetorical analysis of any genre that interests you.

Unit 4 (Week 7 + 8): Creating Argumentation + Rhetoric

Once you have learned how to recognize and discuss rhetoric, you will create your own through this unit's major assignment.

Podcast Project

You will be tasked with creating your own 15-30 min podcast segment over anything that you wish, though it must result in some kind of "argument." Alongside the process of crafting this podcast, you will write a paper contextualizing and situating it in the scope of the material you have learned in this class, outside sources that surround the conversation, and your take on its applicability to the

human experience. By the time this assignment comes around, I hope that you will feel empowered through understanding that an argument can be anything, and most certainly, can be something you are passionate about.

Grading Formula: With a point system, your grade begins at zero and then increases as you complete assignments. If you are curious to know your current semester total at any point in the semester, email me.

| Course Requirements | # of Items | Point Value | Semester Point Total |
|--|------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Course Completion/Participation | 1 | 100 | 100 |
| Timely Submissions | 14 | 10 | 140 |
| Discussion Posts | 8 | 20 | 160 |
| Summary/Response Essay | 1 | 100 | 100 |
| TOWM Written Responses | 2 | 100 | 200 |
| Rhetorical Analysis | 1 | 100 | 100 |
| Podcast Project - Contextualized Paper (2 parts) - Podcast | 3 | 2 - 50, 1 - 100 | 200 |
| Total Semester Points | | | 1000 |

Grading Scale:

A: 900-1000 | **B:** 800-899 | **C:** 700-799 | **D:** 600-699 | **F:** 599 or less | **FN:** failure due to attendance

Late Work/Make-Up Policy: Listed below are important things to keep in mind regarding late work

- You will have **two 24-hr late submission opportunities** that you can utilize with no grade penalty. You may use either of them on a discussion post or major assignment. If you choose to use one, you must notify me.
- Other than the late-submission opportunities, submitting late will result in 10 points deducted from the "Timely Submission" grade.
- **The max amount of days you can submit something late is 7 days**
- Once the submission portal closes for an assignment, your opportunity to make up that assignment will not be accepted, and you will receive a zero.

A Note on Written Feedback:

You will receive feedback from me on major assignments. If I ever give you feedback that you do not understand, please reach out and we can set up a time to go over it. I understand that you cannot improve if you do not understand the

advice I am giving. Help me help you. *If you submit an assignment late, please do not expect extensive feedback.*

Extra Credit Opportunities:

- Complete and submit ALL assignments on time the entire semester → +20 points on semester point total
- Other opportunities may arise; if you are interested in more opportunities, please reach out.

The Tutoring Center: Located in the ICB, Room 104 (Building #23), the Tutoring Center provides free face-to-face and online tutoring sessions to students, staff, and faculty seeking assistance for writing, reading, and oral presentations for academic and nonacademic assignments/projects. If you ever have any questions about the tutoring center, please let me know. I am a writing tutor at COM as well as an instructor, so I can help answer any questions you might have.

Academic Dishonesty: Any incident of academic policy will be dealt with per college policy and the Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty – such as cheating on exams – is an extremely serious offense and will result in a grade of zero on that exam, assignment, or project, and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate disciplinary action.

Plagiarism/AI Statement: Plagiarism means many things, such as using someone else’s words or ideas and claiming them as your own, paraphrasing someone else’s words without proper citation, copying directly from a website and pasting it into your paper, and/or using someone else’s words without quotation marks. Content generated by an Artificial Intelligence third-party service or site (AI-generated content) without proper attribution or authorization is another form of plagiarism.

Do not use an AI paraphrasing or rephrasing tool like Quillbot or ProWritingAid. Do not use ChatGPT, Grammarly, or any platform with similar functions. Violations *could result in failure of the assignment, failure of the course, and referral to the Office of Student Conduct.*

Student Concerns:

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information on the first page of this syllabus. If after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact the Humanities Department Chair, Dr. Brian Anderson:

Phone: 409-933-8186

Email: banderson@com.edu

Grade Appeal Process:

Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six

months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook https://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student_Handbook_2024-2025_v2.pdf.

An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.

Academic Success & Support Services: College of the Mainland is committed to providing students with the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

ADA Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact:
Kimberly Lachney, Student Accessibility Services Coordinator
Phone: 409-933-8919
Email: AccessibilityServices@com.edu
Location: COM Doyle Family Administration Building, Student Success Center

Textbook Purchasing Statement: A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Withdrawal Policy: Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a "W" grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1st 8-week session is February 26. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is April 21. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is April 30.

FN Grading: The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

Early Alert Program: The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be

contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

Resources to Help with Stress: If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at deanofstudents@com.edu or communityresources@com.edu.

Nondiscrimination Statement: The College District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, veteran status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), or any other basis prohibited by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of College District policy.

Important Course Info

Course Overview:

- This course is split into 4 units (2 weeks per unit)
- Since we are operating on an 8-week schedule, the expectations of personal responsibility, time management, and effort are of great importance.
- You are learning 16 weeks' worth of content in 8 weeks; because of this, do expect to complete a significant amount of reading/writing per week. I have done my best to organize this course so that you are able to begin working on each major assignment within two weeks of its due date. Please be diligent and proactive.

Setting up your Notifications on Brightspace: In order to receive an email of the announcements that I post on Brightspace, you need to change your notification settings. In order to do this, follow these steps:

- Click on your name in the top right corner of Brightspace
- Click on Notifications
- Click "Enable email notifications"
- Make sure that the "new announcement available" section has a checkmark underneath the email column

You can set the same thing up for text messages. The only difference is that the text message will not send you the full announcement; it will only send you a notification that a new announcement has been posted on Brightspace.

I will post a Brightspace tutorial during Week 1 going over this. **In short, you can find my announcements on the Homepage. Everything else can be accessed directly from the content tab.**

Tentative Course Outline/Calendar

Note: Below you can find a general outline of what we will cover each week alongside due dates. Weekly HW (reading/videos/etc.) is not listed below but will be listed on Brightspace each week.

| WEEK | TOPIC OF THE WEEK | DUE DATES |
|----------------|---|--|
| 1 1/13-1/19 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Overview • Intro to Unit 1 • Week 1 Readings | Discussion Post Sunday 1/19 11:59pm |
| 2 1/20-1/26 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 2 Readings | Discussion Post Sunday 1/26 11:59pm Summary/Response NEXT 1/27 11:59pm |
| 3 1/27-2/2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Other Wes Moore</i>, Ch 1- Ch. 4 | Discussion Post Sunday 2/2 11:59pm |
| 4 2/3 -2/9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Other Wes Moore</i>, Ch. 5-Ch. 8 | Discussion Post Sunday 2/9 11:59pm Written Response Essays NEXT Monday 2/10 11:59pm |
| 5 2/10-2/16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basics of Rhetoric • Rhetoric in Media pt. 1 | Discussion Post Sunday 2/16 11:59pm |
| 6 2/17-2/23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhetoric in Media pt. 2 | Discussion Post Sunday 2/23 11:59pm Rhetorical Analysis NEXT Monday 2/24 11:59pm |

| | | |
|------------------------|---|---|
| <p>7 2/24 -3/2</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From interpreting + understanding rhetoric to creating it | <p>Discussion Post Sunday 3/2 11:59pm</p> <p>Contextualized Paper: Part 1 Sunday 3/2 11:59pm</p> |
| <p>8 3/3 -3/5</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work week • Conference week | <p>Discussion Post Wednesday 3/5 11:59pm</p> <p>Podcast Wednesday 3/5 11:59pm</p> <p>Contextualized Paper: Part 2 Wednesday 3/5 11:59pm</p> |