Course Description

The course description gives students an idea of what to expect from the course and how it falls within the scope of their degree plan – whether it completes part of their core requirements, electives, or part of their main degree study.

*Example from an RWS 1302, previously taught course:*

The primary goal of English 1312 is to develop students’ critical thinking skills in order to facilitate effective communication in all educational, professional, and social contexts. This effective communication is based on an awareness of and appreciation for discourse communities as well as knowledge specific to subject matter, genre, rhetorical strategy, and writing process.

The class presents an approach to communication that helps students determine the most effective strategies, arrangements, and media to use in different rhetorical contexts. It teaches students a systematic approach for analyzing rhetorical situations and then producing a variety of documents and presentations while gaining more confidence and fluency in visual, oral, and written communication. In addition, because communication is central to being an active and engaged member of society, the course also provides a space for informed advocacy.

Course Objectives or Expected Learning Outcomes

These should be short and concise, giving students a list of measurable objectives they can hope to achieve by completing the course.

*For Example:*

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand a theory of discourse communities;
- Engage as a community of writers who dialogue across texts;
- Argue, and build on each other’s work;
- Draw on existing knowledge bases to create “new” or “transformed” knowledge;
- Develop a knowledge of genres as they are defined and within discourse communities;
- Address the specific, immediate rhetorical situations of individual communicative acts;
- Develop procedural knowledge of the writing task in its various phases.
Required Materials

Required texts or materials: any books or other materials, such as software, not made available in the course but required for the course. ISBN information is required.

It is recommended to also provide direct links and/or images for students to become familiar with the correct version of a text/software product they are required to use.

You can provide a link to the UTEP Bookstore as well.

Course Assignments and Grading

When listing the required assignments, make sure to be as specific as possible – though you do not need full assignment instructions in this portion. Let students see what expectations they will be held to. Will there be large projects? How many points/much of a percentage of their grade are these worth? Make sure that you outline the specific requirements for class participation in the online classroom. How many times a week should they log in? List assignments they can expect to complete and how much each is worth and how it weighs toward their final grade.

For example:

Grade Distribution – Students can potentially earn 1000 over the course of this semester:

1000-900 = A  
899-800 = B  
799-700 = C  
699-600 = D  
599 and Below = F

- 200 points: Genre Analysis Paper
- 200 Points: Literature Review Research Paper
- 100 Points: Opinion Piece
- 200 Points: Documentary Final Project
- 200 Points: E-portfolio
- 200 Points: Participation

Genre Analysis: To deepen our understanding of the discourse community concepts you will be introduced to in class, this assignment will ask you to analyze both traditional and multimedia documents as genres.

Literature Review: Students will conduct primary and secondary research on a social, political, or ethical issue to become well-informed experts on the issue. Students will then write a literature review of these sources to summarize and synthesize the arguments and ideas of the research sources.

Opinion Piece: Students will write an online opinion piece on some aspect of the topic of their Literature Review/Primary Research Report to advocate for a policy change.

Documentary: Students will plan, write, film and edit a documentary film advocating a position on a current issue. Students will be provided with opportunities to become more familiar with this software throughout the semester. This will be uploaded on Vimeo or YouTube, and the link copied and pasted on a Word Document.

Personal Website/E-Portfolio: Students will create, design, and maintain a website that presents their work from the semester. Students will design, add additional links, and provide the needed content to this website in any way they want--with the stipulation that it is focused on this course and the topic chosen and draws from their semester’s work and research.
Participation: for this online course, you will be required to participate in weekly discussion boards – both an initial post and responses to your peers. You will also have a collection of smaller assignments throughout the week that will work to build toward the larger projects. Each of these activities will be given point values which add up to the total 200 point participation grade. These cannot be made up.

**Attendance/Participation Policy**

This is where you would want to explain the consequences (good and bad) of participation and attendance in the class. Besides point value, you can explain how participation will lend to their success in the course and what disciplinary actions will be taken.

**Technology Requirements**

This is an example of what technology you may require for your course, dependent on whether you are teaching face-to-face (F2F), hybrid, or 100% online:

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system (LMS). Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web. You may use any of the primary Web browsers—Explorer, Google Chrome, Firefox, Safari, etc. When having technical difficulties, try switching to another browser.

You will need to have or have access to a computer/laptop, printer, scanner, a webcam, and a microphone. You will need to purchase a USB (flash drive). You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe, Flashplayer, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course. If you encounter technical difficulties of any kind, contact the Help Desk.

**Netiquette**

It is important to provide information that discusses the use of proper online etiquette, also known as “netiquette.” Here is an article that explores this idea a little more in-depth: 10 Rules of Netiquette for Students.

**Late Work Policy**

Include point/grade penalties for missing work. The more detailed your expectations are laid out for students, the fewer questions you will receive.

**Drop Policy**

Make sure that you check with your departmental director(s) to determine what typical policy is for your discipline. You can also consult the school catalog for information pertaining to University Drop Policies: 2017-2018 Catalogue.
Accommodations Policy

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must work with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services.

Scholastic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as one's own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more: HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline.

Student Resources

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support:

- **UTEP Library**: Access a wide range of resources including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- **Help Desk**: Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.
- **University Writing Center (UWC)**: Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
- **Math Tutoring Center (MaRCS)**: Ask a tutor for help and explore other available math resources.
- **History Tutoring Center (HTC)**: Receive assistance with writing history papers, get help from a tutor and explore other history resources.
- **Military Student Success Center**: UTEP welcomes military-affiliated students to its degree programs, and the Military Student Success Center and its dedicated staff (many of whom are veterans and students themselves) are here to help personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.
- **RefWorks**: A bibliographic citation tool; check out the RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.