



English 1301, 14E

College Reading and

Writing

COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Sana Nabil Rayyashi

Office Location: David A. Talbot Hall of Languages, Room 215.

Office Hours: Monday- 10:00am-11:00am; Wednesday - 10am-11:00am; Friday- 10:00am-11:00am

University Email Address: Sana.Rayyashi@etamu.edu

Communication Response Time: Within 42 hours on weekdays

COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook(s) Required: For this course, we will be using a platform called Top Hat that is included through A&M-Commerce's Inclusive Access fee that was charged to your bursar account when you registered for this course. **You will not need to make any additional purchases.** Top Hat will be accessible through our course shell in D2L. While you will receive an email about being able to opt out of this inclusive access, Top Hat is required for the course.

To gain access to Top Hat, you will create an account using your LeoMail (university email) when you receive an email from the campus bookstore. Be on the lookout for this email at the start of the semester. If you have any issues with Top Hat, you should contact **support@tophat.com**.

To join Top Hat, you must click on the *Top Hat* link in your D2L course on a web browser. A Deep Link or the Top Hat launch link should be in the "Content" menu. Upon being re-directed to Top Hat, you can create an account if you are new to Top Hat or log in if you have an existing account.

Through Top Hat, you will gain access to the following course materials:

Johnson, Gavin P., Ashanka Kumari, Emily Littlejohn, Brian McShane, and Rachel McShane, Eds. *Writing Inquiry* [2023 edition]. Top Hat.

Software Required:

- D2L
- Top Hat
- LeoMail
- A word processing program: *Students have free access to [Office 365](#).*

Course Description

ENGL 1301: College Reading and Writing. Three semester hours. Introduces students to writing as an extended, complex, recursive process and prepares students for English 1302, which more rigorously examines the forms and structures of argument and means to approach multiple audiences. In 1301 students will write weekly, and will work on essay organization and development. The course will emphasize close reading, summarizing, and analysis of expository texts, including student writing.

Core Curriculum Course Objectives

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

English 1301 Learning Outcomes

- **Define** important terms/concepts including, but not limited to, literacy, sponsor, code-switching, code-meshing, embodiment, and writing processes;
- **Discuss** the ways these terms expand based on cultural and communicative practices;
- **Examine** scholarly, personal, and/or multimodal course texts that detail varying understandings and applications of key terms/concepts;
- **Develop** writing processes that allow for personal exploration of key terms/concepts;
- **Engage** in collaboration that supports individualized and communal understanding and writing development;
- **Consider** the various affordances and constraints of composing using different technologies (analog, digital, and/or multimodal), practices, styles, and/or languages;
- **Compose** texts across different genres and media of writing that further expand key terms/concepts based on personal experiences and engagement with important course texts;
- **Reflect** on your writing experiences and literacy practices;
- **Design** individualized learning goals appropriate for a first-year writing course; and
- **Assess** individualized learning goals based on labor and performance alongside feedback from peers and the instructor.

Instructional Methods: Tuesday and Thursday

- Section 10E: Will be delivered in person from 2:00 pm - 3:15 pm at EDS 128
- Section 11E: Will be delivered in person from 09:30 am - 10:45 am at JOUR 110

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Student Responsibilities

1. **Attendance:** Attend all scheduled classes to stay updated on course material and discussions.
2. **Active Participation:** Actively participate in class discussions, ask questions, and engage with the material to enhance your understanding.
3. **Communication:** If you have questions or concerns, don't hesitate to reach out to the instructor or classmates. Effective communication is key to success.
4. **Review Feedback:** Pay attention to feedback on assignments and assessments. Use it as a guide to improve your understanding and performance.
5. **Collaborate:** Collaborate with classmates on group projects and study sessions. Learning from peers can enhance your understanding of the material.
6. **Self-Care:** Take care of your physical and mental well-being. Ensure you get enough rest, exercise, and maintain a healthy balance between academic and personal life.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

This course uses a Contract Grading system to promote equity, transparency, and student agency. Instead of traditional points-based grading, you will choose the letter grade (A, B, or C) you want to work toward and commit to completing the required work and revision practices for that grade. Grades are based on effort, revision, reflection, and attendance, not just correctness.

You will sign a grade contract during the first week of class, and we will revisit your progress at midterm.

❖ **Assessment Components:**

As an instructor, my approach to classroom assessment is the following:

Course Components

1. Essays (20%)

- Individual writing assignments completed throughout the semester

- Explore key themes including:
 - A. Literacy
 - B. Identity
 - C. Rhetorical strategies
 - D. Language use

2. Group Project (15%)

- Collaborative assignment

- Requires application of course concepts

- Focuses on a shared writing or research-based task

3. Pair Work (15%)

- Short activities (in-class)

- Completed with a partner

- Designed to strengthen:

- A. Communication skills

- B. Analytical abilities

- C. Writing practice

4. Homework Assignments (15%)

- Regular exercises

- Reinforce:

- A. Writing strategies

- B. Rhetorical analysis

- C. Critical reading skills

5. Capstone Project: Semester Portfolio (35%)

- Final portfolio submitted at semester's end

- Includes:

- A. Revised work

- B. Reflective components

❖ **Grading Requirements:**

A Grade

1. Complete 100% of assignments, including the Capstone Portfolio
2. Revise all essays based on instructor feedback
3. Submit thoughtful reflections and polished revisions
4. Attend at least 29 out of 32 class sessions
5. Submit all work on time (one extension allowed)

B Grade

1. Complete at least 90% of assignments, including the Capstone Portfolio
2. Revise at least two major essays based on instructor feedback
3. Submit adequate reflections and show strong effort in revisions
4. Attend at least 27 classes
5. Up to two late submissions allowed

C Grade

1. Complete at least 80% of assignments, including the Capstone Portfolio
2. Revise at least one essay based on instructor feedback
3. Reflections and revisions may be more basic but must show genuine effort
4. Attend at least 24 classes
5. Up to three late submissions allowed

Below C (D or F)

1. Fewer than 80% of assignments completed
2. Failure to submit the Capstone Portfolio

3. Attendance below 24 classes

❖ **Midterm and final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:**

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

❖ **Sample Grade Contract Form**

~~--- You will complete this form in Week 1 of the semester. You may renegotiate your grade contract ---~~
by the midpoint of the course (with instructor approval).

English 1301 – Grade Contract Form

Name: _____

Semester: Fall 2025

Instructor: _____

I am contracting to earn a final grade of:

A

B

C

To earn this grade, I agree to:

Complete the required number of assignments for my contract grade

Meet attendance expectations (____out of 32 class meetings)

Revise the required number of major essays:

A = all 3 major essays

B = at least 2 essays

C = at least 1 essay

Submit the Capstone Portfolio

Participate actively in group and pair work

Communicate with the instructor if challenges arise

Submit work on time or use allowed extensions as needed

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Instructor Signature: _____

Date: _____



The full instructions will be posted gradually on Top Hat, so stay tuned and be sure to keep up with your work.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed[1]

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements.

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

course-specific procedures/policies related to interaction with the instructor:

1. Office Hours:

- Please consider the instructor's office hours, both in-person and virtual.

2. Communication Channels:

- preferred channels of communication (email).

3. Response Time:

- The instructor's commitment to responding to student inquiries within a specific timeframe (e.g., 24-48 hours on business days). Please do not send multiple emails.

Grievance Procedure

Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in-person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with **Dr.**

Gavin P. Johnson, the Director of Writing (gavin.johnson@tamuc.edu). In the case when the Director of Writing is the instructor, the student should contact **Dr. Hunter Hayes, Chair of the Department of Literature and Languages** (hunter.hayes@tamuc.edu). Where applicable, students should also consult University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 ("Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation").

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

AI Use in Courses

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic

Dishonesty

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Collection of Data for Measuring Institutional Effectiveness

To measure the level of compliance with the university's Institutional Effectiveness guidelines, throughout the semester, I will collect some of the ungraded texts you produce. The texts will be part of a portfolio created on your behalf and will be measured to ensure that our program "promotes practices that result in higher student academic achievement; an enhanced student experience; aligned and transparent decisions; and readily available information for improvement, accountability, and accreditation" (see "Department of Institutional Effectiveness," <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutus/institutionalEffectiveness/default.aspx>). This is solely an assessment of program effectiveness and in no way affects students' course grades or GPAs.

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

RESOURCES

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by

calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Writing Center

The Writing Center offers writers free, one-on-one assistance. We welcome all writers, majors, and disciplines—undergraduate and graduate students alike. In fact, we work from the premise that all writers, no matter their ability level, benefit from the feedback of knowledgeable readers. The Writing Center staff is trained to provide writers with just this service. In short, we are here to help you help yourself. The Writing Center offers one-on-one sessions with writers—both face-to-face and online—begin on the hour and last up to 45 minutes. You cannot sign up for back-to-back appointments, but you may sign up for as many appointments as you'd like each day and week. For more information, visit <https://www.tamuc.edu/writing-center>

Library

The Velma Waters Library supports the research, learning and teaching interests of students, faculty and staff. Connect with a librarian, explore our research and course guides, and attend workshops.

- **Chat with a Librarian!** Get immediate assistance with our [chat service](#) on the main Library page: <https://www.tamuc.edu/library/>
- **Email** ask@tamuc.libanswers.com. We will respond to your email within 24 hours, often much sooner.
- **Text** your question to 903.225.2862.
- **Call** the Waters Library at 903.886.5718 or contact the librarian for your college/department to discuss your research needs.
- **Meet With Us!** Don't stay up all night searching Google. Schedule a one-on-one consultation held in-person or via Zoom with the librarian for your college/academic department.
- **Visit Us!** We'd love to meet you in-person!
 - Waters Library Research Office: Second Floor, Room 213
 - Waters Library University Archives: 4th Floor, Room 406A
 - A&M – Commerce at Mesquite Metroplex Center: Second Floor, Study Room

Student Career Preparedness Office

Meet with career advisors who can help you with the resources and tools needed to prepare you for your next phase after graduation and beyond. To schedule an appointment, you can either call 903.468.3223, emailing hirealion@tamuc.edu or go online by clicking [schedule an appointment](#).

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>