

English 1040: Composition and Rhetoric¹

Instructor Information

Course Information



Course Description

English 1040 is designed to provide students with greater breadth of composing experiences across modes and genres. This course specifically focuses on knowledge creation through primary and secondary research appropriate to first-year students. Therefore, the work of the class is a series of student-directed research-based projects. Each project is student-directed, based in their interests, research questions, and experiences. The outcomes of the course focus on student-directed composing, learning, and design goals. Sustained practice across this section includes the following: diverse information gathering strategies, organization, and analysis; inquiry, attention to rhetorical situations, language, peer review practices, and critical thinking, listening, and reflection.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students in Composition and Rhetoric will engage the following learning outcomes across each of the course units, major assignments, and low-stakes work:

- ▶ Develop awareness of rhetorical situations as connected to audience, community, mode, genre, culture, purpose, and power.
- ▶ Evaluate and compose texts that address academic, professional, and/or civic and community concerns.
- ▶ Apply responsive and ethical strategies for researching (collecting and interpreting multiple forms of data, artifacts, texts), developing lines of inquiry, listening, reading, drafting, attributing, reviewing, collaborating, revising, rewriting, rereading, and editing.
- ▶ Engage a continuum of research practices, both primary and secondary, including reflection and integration of multiple voices and perspectives into their writing.
- ▶ Design specific goals for projects that identify, negotiate, and enact decisions related to content, style, usage, tone, and documentation while paying explicit attention to languages of power, practices of assimilation and domination, and identity.







Course Readings

All course readings will be made available on our Canvas course page. This class will use chapters from open source texts as well as academic articles that cover a wide-range of related topics. These readings can be found in our course files on Canvas, and they will also typically be linked to the course calendar. These readings are paired with assignments to help you give you tools for that specific assignment/unit.

1. The content of this course was developed in collaboration with my colleagues at Methodist University as part of the writing program's curriculum revision. Our revisions are designed to create equitable, student-centered outcomes for the First-Year Writing course. Many thanks to the contributions made by Drs. Victoria Houser, Tyler Easterbrook, and Ragan Glover-Rijske. Visual design/syllabus layout from Dr. Victoria Houser.

Course Units

<p>Unit 1</p> 	<p>Place, Space, Embodiment, Access</p> <p>Unit 1 asks students to be primary observers of their own embodied experience, positionalities, histories, access, social roles and identities, and ethical commitments. Assignments explore key terms related to these concerns, synthesis of observations, reading, listening, and information gathering and evaluation.</p>
<p>Unit 2</p> 	<p>Community Knowledge and Practice</p> <p>Unit 2 offers students the opportunity to consider community knowledge making, their roles in their own communities, goals for their future communities and asks for critical reflection on their participation with others in the project of learning. Assignments in this unit examine diversity and type of collective knowledge, how groups work together, deliberate and make decisions and meet challenges and goals for specific purposes.</p>
<p>Unit 3</p> 	<p>Specialized and Disciplinary Discourses</p> <p>Unit 3 examines the knowledge of specialized or disciplinary communities and asks students to map, envision, plan, investigate and imagine their own futures in critical, reflective, relational and generative, ways. Assignments in this unit focus on genres, rhetoric, disciplinary values and communication practices.</p>
<p>Unit 4</p> 	<p>Review, Redesign, Revision and Reflection</p> <p>Unit 4 provides practice in reimagining work from the previous major three units through one or more of the following practices: review, redesign, revision. In addition, unit 4 asks for careful, systematic reflection on learning trajectories, progression and goals for the future. Assignments in this unit may include genres of remix or revision, multiple modes of composing, analysis of previously composed work, and other reflective genres.</p>

Grades and Course Assignments

Space/Place Analysis	20%
Community Deliberation Guide	20%
Disciplinary Rhetoric and Genres	20%
Braided Essay Reflection	20%
Low Stakes Writing	20%

Each writing project in the course will include multiple drafts and revisions. Of particular importance is peer review--the work of supporting your fellow writers in this course. We will spend substantial time building that as a skill set.

Course Policies

Academic Support Services

Methodist University is committed to providing students access to the resources needed to succeed in college. Students can follow [this link](#) to access resources from a comprehensive support network of faculty and staff from across the institution to answer questions and guide them throughout their journey. Support services include Academic Advising, research assistance from Davis Memorial Library, writing assistance from the MU Writing Center, tutoring from the Monarch

Tutoring Center, assistance with Disability Services, information about Career Services, and Personal Development assistance.

Students Accessibility Statement

All of us learn in different ways, and this course is designed to provide universal access to all the class materials. I will make use of closed-captioning, alt-text and screen reader accessible documents. Disabilities can be both visible and invisible, and I am dedicated to making this course accessible to all students. You will never be asked to disclose personal information in your requests for specific accommodations in the course. Methodist University is committed to giving students with disabilities equal access to an education firmly grounded in the liberal arts tradition. If you are a student with a disability, contact Jamaal Doran who is the coordinator of accessibility and disability services (jdoran@methodist.edu or (910) 630-7402). The office of accessibility and Disability will work with documentation and providing accommodation for all courses.

Equity and Inclusion Language

I ask that you keep in mind, relationships of power in this course. Meaning, varying identity categories, seen or unseen have an impact on learning and classroom dynamics. If you have privilege, please be aware of it (listen more, observe more, ask respectful questions). If you are marginalized in any or multiple categories and have been negatively impacted by the course structure or interactions, please communicate with me so I can address the situation directly.

Here is a resource we will use to learn together about social dynamics of learning in classrooms: <https://www.northwestern.edu/searle/initiatives/diversity-equity-inclusion/social-identities.html>

In addition, I ask that you be mindful of inclusive language related to gender identities. Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of any gender (for example, first year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind, etc.). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications and recognizes the difference between biological sex and gender expression. Students, faculty, and staff may share their preferred pronouns and names, and these gender identities and gender expressions should be honored.

Covid-19

We will follow all preventative protocols for Covid-19 in this course. Meaning, if you believe you have symptoms of an infection, do not come to class. Communicate with me. We do not currently have a mask mandate in place but you ARE required to be vaccinated. Additionally, I encourage you to mask in class. Infections spread easily in our building with outdated ventilation systems.

Academic Policies

Academic Policies are established and maintained by the university and apply to all students. Students are expected to adhere to the requirements and regulations applicable to them as defined in the academic catalog. Policies about attendance, the Undergraduate Attendance Policy, the Honor Code & Academic Integrity Policy, and the Equal Opportunity Statement and Title IX Non-Discrimination Policy are provided through the academic policies link: <https://www.methodist.edu/canvas/policies/>

Grading Policy

Your major assignments will receive individual grades, as well as individual attention and feedback from your classmates (via peer review) and your instructor. Every project will include several drafting and revision stages before you receive a final grade. For this course, we will use "specs" grading which allows for continued revision on an agreed upon timeline. Specs grading focuses on learning outcomes and engagement with process.

Late Work

You are strongly encouraged to get all work in on time should you want full credit. See grading policy.

Overview of Assignments

Space/Place Analysis

Academic writing is often understood as a practice removed from our physical (bodily/material) lives—or, as an objective practice that occurs outside our everyday experiences. But what would we have to write about if we were to remove the option to discuss—even in the most objective ways available to us—bodies and space? In asking this question, we quickly see that our bodies, and the spaces where our bodies reside, are intimately connected to our writing process. In this project, students will analyze specific spaces where they live, move, learn, and engage with others. Students will choose a word from the list below (identity, access, diversity, community, inclusion) to observe within the specific contexts of their daily lives. Using the data collected in their observations, students will then compose an analysis of how this word operates in their community spaces.

Community Deliberation Guide

For the second major project, students will write a community deliberation guide: a short document that equips members of a particular community to deliberate about a social or political issue, small or large, that affects them. To be effective, the guide must clearly identify a distinct problem facing the student's community; explain the problem's background, causes, and effects; and outline 3-4 different approaches the community could take to address the problem. A strong community deliberation guide will be even-handed in its coverage of the problem, including approaches the student might personally disagree with, and use diverse sources of reputable information to support the major claims.

Disciplinary Rhetoric and Genres

This project is an opportunity for students to learn a little about their career and how that field uses writing in professional settings. We'll do this through the lens of rhetoric, to see how the community organizes itself around writing to achieve its goals, and to look at how writing supports the practices in the discipline you're looking at. Specifically we'll look at rhetorical analysis and genre.

Braided Essay Reflection

The braided essay is a process of writing that weaves together three (or sometimes more) unique themes or events. Braided essays are a genre of non-linear storytelling, and since writing (and developing a writing process) is non-linear, this genre gives you permission to move from theme to theme without the pressure of completing a chronological sequence of events. This style of writing works by moving from section to section as you weave the threads of your themes together to ultimately build connections between the themes. For example, begin by writing about thread one, then move into thread two, then thread three, then back to thread one and so on. For this project, you'll need to reflect on the projects that you've done this semester and look for themes related to your writing process.