Teacher’s Guide to First-Year Writing

UT Arlington English Department

AY 2012-2013
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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Program

Welcome to the First-Year Writing (FYW) Program at The University of Texas at Arlington. The FYW Program introduces students to academic discourse and argumentative writing and develops the reading, writing and critical thinking skills that are essential to students’ social, intellectual, and academic growth.

About the Teacher’s Guide
The Teacher’s Guide explains the philosophy of the FYW Program, describes the curriculum, and spells out relevant policies and procedures of the Program, English Department, and University. The Guide, which was written for UTA’s FYW instructors, is a collaborative effort that spans departments and programs. We are indebted to TCU WPAs Carrie Shively Leverenz and Charlotte Hogg for giving us permission to incorporate materials from TCU’s Guide into ours. Much of the section on “Classroom-Related Policies” is taken from or adapted from the TCU Teacher’s Guide. Thanks also to Jim Warren for his help in developing every aspect of the Guide, from the learning outcomes to the assignments to the pedagogical strategies. Our UT Arlington professors and Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) developed the syllabuses and assignments contained within the Guide. Those materials demonstrate the dedication, enthusiasm, and creativity of our Program’s instructors.

About the First-Year Writing Program
The Program teaches reading, writing, and critical thinking as integrated and mutually dependent processes. These processes are not viewed as skills developed merely with an eye to “getting it right,” but as productive engagements between self, other, and world through the medium of texts. Students write essays as projects over several weeks’ time, during which they read texts, write texts of their own, and discuss their work with teachers and each other. This approach is student-centered; classroom activities involve little lecture and much class discussion and group work. One-on-one student/teacher conferences are also an important part of the approach.

About the Graduate Teaching Assistant Program
The English Department’s GTA program is a competitive program that admits between five and fifteen new GTAs per year.

Appointment
Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) are appointed by a committee composed of English Department faculty. GTAs may not hold another job either on or off campus while they teach for the Program. Reappointment is based upon satisfactory participation in training and supervisory programs, satisfactory progress in University degree programs, a minimum grade point average of 3.0, and generally satisfactory performance as an instructor.

Training
All Graduate Teaching Assistants participate in an extensive training program that introduces them to the field of composition studies, prepares them to teach ENGL 1301 and 1302, and provides them with ongoing mentorship and support. In the first fall semester of their appointment, GTAs enroll in ENGL 5389, a three-hour graduate course team taught by the Director of First-Year English and a member of the graduate faculty. ENGL 5389 introduces them to composition pedagogy, familiarizes them with First-Year English program policies, and prepares them to teach ENGL 1301. Students also establish a mentorship relationship with the Director of First-Year English during this course. In the fall of their second year as instructors, GTAs enroll in ENGL 5359, which prepares them to
teach ENGL 1302 by introducing them to argument theory. Senior GTAs who are ABD and ready for the academic job market may request to teach sophomore literature after successfully completing ENGL 5337; they may request to teach technical writing after successfully completing ENGL 5359 (when technical writing is the special topic for the course). Class assignments are dependent upon course availability and approval of the Director of First-Year English.

**Evaluation and Mentoring**
The English Department has adopted a formative approach to GTA evaluation that includes evaluations by self, peers, students, the Director of First-Year English, members of the graduate faculty, and other instructors.

**Class Visitations**
During their first semester as GTAs, the Director of First-Year English visits the classroom of every new GTA and provides written and oral feedback about their teaching. Before the class, the Director and GTA discuss the goals for the class and the aspects of teaching about which the GTA would like feedback. The Director meets with the GTA after class to discuss what went especially well and to make suggestions for improvement. Thereafter the Director visits classes on request, or when she sees a problematic pattern developing (based on student complaints, student evaluations, requests for help from GTAs, recommendations from the supervising professor or department chair, etc.).

During their second semester as teachers, GTAs are responsible for observing and being observed by a peer. GTAs provide each other with typed feedback and meet in person to discuss their observations. Copies of the observation forms are given to the Director of First-Year English. After their first year as teachers, each GTA will have at least one formal class observation each year by a faculty GTA Mentor; a member of her/his M.A. or Ph.D. committee; the Director or Assistant Director of FYW; or a peer. All observation forms will become part of the GTAs’ personnel files. The Director of First-Year English will report on the observations to the Director of Graduate Studies and the GTA Committee.

**Review of Teaching Evaluations**
GTAs are evaluated by their students at the end of each semester; the Director or Assistant Director of First-Year English reviews the student evaluations for ENGL 0300/0301, 1301, 1302.

**Teaching Portfolios**
GTAs submit a comprehensive teaching portfolio during the spring of their first year. The portfolio includes a self-assessment of their strengths and weaknesses as teachers, teaching philosophy, review of student evaluations from the fall, sample assignments, and student papers with comments from the teacher. The Director of First-Year English reviews the portfolios and provides feedback to the GTAs.

**In-Service Training**
The Director of First-Year English convenes all GTAs at least once each semester to provide ongoing training and support. Workshops on teaching and/or scholarship are also offered each semester.

**Provisions for Emergency Evaluations**
Our objective is to help GTAs become the very best teachers that they can possibly be. The atmosphere is non-threatening; GTAs look at and discuss everything that goes into their personnel files. Because they know that our objective is to help them improve their teaching, they often request class visits when they are having a problem with some aspect of teaching. Even more often, they drop in to talk with the Director or Assistant Director of First-Year English to discuss problems
and successes and to seek advice on an informal basis. The open lines of communication are our most effective evaluative tool. If serious problems do arise (based on complaints from students, unsatisfactory student evaluations, request of department chair or supervising professor, etc.), the Director of First-Year English or supervising professor will visit the GTA’s class and meet regularly with him/her to address the problem. Serious or ongoing problems can be grounds for dismissal.

Team Teaching
GTAs who have not completed at least 18 hours of graduate coursework in English will be required to team teach with another instructor who has completed 18 or more hours of coursework. There are two types of team teaching pairs: 1) an experienced GTA and a new GTA; 2) two new GTAs, one of whom has 18 hours of graduate coursework. In the first scenario, the experienced GTA serves as the lead teacher and mentor. In the second scenario, the instructors function as more of a team, making decisions together and consulting the Director and Assistant Director for help as necessary. In both scenarios, the lead team teachers are the teachers of record through MyMav and are responsible for reporting grades.

In recent years, GTA teams have taken two approaches to team teaching:

1) Split the class during or after the first week. In this situation, the two instructors meet regularly to plan classes, compare grading, etc., and they often bring the classes together for peer review, major presentations, speakers, etc.
   a. Pros: Classes are smaller and more manageable.
   b. Cons: New instructors have fewer opportunities to observe their more experienced teamers in the classroom.

2) Keep the class together for most of the semester. In this situation, the teachers are truly a “team” in that they plan and teach together for the majority of the semester.
   a. Pros: New instructors have many opportunities to observe their more experienced lead teachers in action and to work closely with the lead team teacher. During class, both members of the team can take full advantage of their individual strengths and have another instructor to cover for their weaknesses.
   b. Cons: Classes are much more difficult to manage. Instructors must have very strong classroom management skills to make this approach work.

Regardless of which model the team chooses, team members should meet at least once a week to plan classes, compare grading, discuss successes and concerns, etc. Moreover, the syllabus, course content, assignments, and readings should be the same.

About the Lecturer Program
Lecturers are part-time/occasional faculty who teach between one and five courses per semester on semester-to-semester contracts. Lecturers must have an MA in English or a related field (with 18 credit hours in English) and experience teaching college-level composition courses. Lecturers are required to attend departmental meetings; participate in university and departmental professional development opportunities; subscribe to departmental listservs; and attend departmental functions. Lecturers who teach four or five courses per long semester have biennial reviews that involve a teaching observation and submission of a teaching portfolio that includes a teaching philosophy, student evaluations, and instructor’s response to student evaluations.
Course Descriptions and Learning Outcomes

ENGL 1301 RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION I: Introduction to college reading and writing. Emphasizes recursive writing processes, rhetorical analysis, synthesis of sources, and argument.

ENGL 1301 Expected Learning Outcomes. By the end of ENGL 1301, students should be able to:

**Rhetorical Knowledge**
- Use knowledge of the rhetorical situation—author, audience, exigence, constraints—to analyze and construct texts
- Compose texts in a variety of genres, expanding their repertoire beyond predictable forms
- Adjust voice, tone, diction, syntax, level of formality, and structure to meet the demands of different rhetorical situations

**Critical Reading, Thinking, and Writing**
- Use writing, reading, and discussion for inquiry, learning, communicating, and examining assumptions
- Employ critical reading strategies to identify an author’s position, main ideas, genre conventions, and rhetorical strategies
- Summarize, analyze, and respond to texts
- Find, evaluate, and synthesize appropriate sources to inform, support, and situate their own claims
- Produce texts with a focus, thesis, and controlling idea, and identify these elements in others’ texts

**Processes**
- Practice flexible strategies for generating, revising, and editing texts
- Practice writing as a recursive process that can lead to substantive changes in ideas, structure, and supporting evidence through multiple revisions
- Use the collaborative and social aspects of writing to critique their own and others’ texts

**Conventions**
- Apply knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics
- Summarize, paraphrase, and quote from sources using appropriate documentation style
- Control such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling
- Employ technologies to format texts according to appropriate stylistic conventions

ENGL 1302 RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION II: Continues ENGL 1301, but with an emphasis on advanced techniques of academic argument. Includes issue identification, independent library research, analysis and evaluation of sources, and synthesis of sources with students’ own claims, reasons, and evidence. Prerequisite: Grade of C or better in ENGL 1301.

ENGL 1302 Expected Learning Outcomes
In ENGL 1302, students build on the knowledge and information that they learned in ENGL 1301. By the end of ENGL 1302, students should be able to:

**Rhetorical Knowledge**
- Identify and analyze the components and complexities of a rhetorical situation
• Use knowledge of audience, exigence, constraints, genre, tone, diction, syntax, and structure to produce situation-appropriate argumentative texts, including texts that move beyond formulaic structures
• Know and use special terminology for analyzing and producing arguments
• Practice and analyze informal logic as used in argumentative texts

Critical Reading, Thinking, and Writing
• Understand the interactions among critical thinking, critical reading, and writing
• Integrate personal experiences, values, and beliefs into larger social conversations and contexts
• Find, evaluate, and analyze primary and secondary sources for appropriateness, timeliness, and validity
• Produce situation-appropriate argumentative texts that synthesize sources with their own ideas and advance the conversation on an important issue
• Provide valid, reliable, and appropriate support for claims, and analyze evidentiary support in others’ texts

Processes
• Practice flexible strategies for generating, revising, and editing complex argumentative texts
• Engage in all stages of advanced, independent library research
• Practice writing as a recursive process that can lead to substantive changes in ideas, structure, and supporting evidence through multiple revisions
• Use the collaborative and social aspects of writing to critique their own and others’ arguments

Conventions
• Apply and develop knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics, and be aware of the field-specific nature of these conventions
• Summarize, paraphrase, and quote from sources using appropriate documentation style
• Revise for style and edit for features such as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling
• Employ technologies to format texts according to appropriate stylistic conventions
# FYW Assignments and Texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGL 1301</th>
<th>ENGL 1302</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essays and Assignments</strong></td>
<td><strong>Essays and Assignments</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Response Journals/Summary Responses on selections from clusters and readings from the texts, essay proposals or other homework writing.</td>
<td>Response Journals/Summary Responses, essay proposals or other homework writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discourse Community Analysis (<strong>formerly Lit. Autobiography and Discourse Community Memoir</strong>)</td>
<td>Issue Proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhetorical Analysis</td>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
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<tr>
<td>Synthesis Essay</td>
<td>Mapping the Issue (<strong>formerly Exploratory Essay</strong>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Class Essay</td>
<td>Researched Position Paper</td>
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## Texts and Chapters

**First-Year Writing: Perspectives on Argument** (3rd UTA custom edition)

**This text includes all major essay assignments for ENGL 1301 and ENGL 1302, a sample student essay for each assignment, and the FYW evaluation rubric.**

- Chapter 1: A Perspective on Argument
- Chapter 2: The Rhetorical Situation
- Chapter 3: Reading and Thinking About Issues
- Chapter 4: Finding and Stating Claims
- Chapter 5: Supporting Claims: Appealing to Ethos, Pathos, Logos
- Chapter 6: Reasons and Evidence
- Chapter 10: Visual Argument
- Appendix 1: How to Document Sources Using MLA Style

Assign complete text (even if this duplicates chapters covered in ENGL 1301).

**They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing** (2nd edition)

Preface, Introduction, and Chapters 1-12

Assign and refer to particular chapters as needed.

**The Scott, Foresman Writer** (UTA custom edition)

**This text will include the FYW evaluation rubric and a “translation” of instructor comments that refer students to resources for more information.**

Used as reference.

**Reading clusters**: Race, Social Class; Fat Taxes; Is College Worth It?; Same-Sex Marriage, Beauty, Ethics, The Body, Authenticity, (Essays are available through Blackboard.)

Used as reference.
# Chapter 2: Getting Started at UT Arlington

## Resources

### Important Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Department</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Peggy Kulesz</td>
<td>Mr. Charlie Hicks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of First-Year English</td>
<td>Acting Assistant Director of First-Year English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203E Carlisle Hall</td>
<td>205 Carlisle Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(817) 272-2488; <a href="mailto:kulesz@uta.edu">kulesz@uta.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:chicks@uta.edu">chicks@uta.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Penny Ingram</td>
<td>Dr. Wendy Faris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Graduate Studies</td>
<td>Department Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203E Carlisle Hall</td>
<td>203E Carlisle Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:pingram@uta.edu">pingram@uta.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:wbfaris@uta.edu">wbfaris@uta.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Richard Gaines</td>
<td>Ms. Tammy Dyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Developmental English</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>417 Carlisle Hall</td>
<td>203E Carlisle Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:rgaines@uta.edu">rgaines@uta.edu</a>; (817) 272-0952</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tdyer@uta.edu">tdyer@uta.edu</a>; (817) 272-0560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Dyane Fowler</td>
<td>Ms. Katie Mitchell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Assistant II</td>
<td>Senior Office Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203E Carlisle Hall</td>
<td>203E Carlisle Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:dfowler@uta.edu">dfowler@uta.edu</a>; (817) 272-2692</td>
<td><a href="mailto:katiem@uta.edu">katiem@uta.edu</a>; (817) 272-0466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Tracey-Lynn Clough</td>
<td>Ms. Shelley Christie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Center Director</td>
<td>Director of English Distance Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>413 Central Library</td>
<td>614 Carlisle Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:clought@uta.edu">clought@uta.edu</a>; (817) 272-2517</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rchristie@uta.edu">rchristie@uta.edu</a>; (817)-272-0165</td>
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### UTA Information

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counseling Services</th>
<th>UTA Police Department</th>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.uta.edu/caacs/counseling/">http://www.uta.edu/caacs/counseling/</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.uta.edu/campus-ops/police/">http://www.uta.edu/campus-ops/police/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>(817) 272-3671</td>
<td>(817) 272-2102</td>
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<tr>
<th>Office for Students with Disabilities</th>
<th>Office of Student Conduct</th>
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<td><a href="http://www.uta.edu/disability/">http://www.uta.edu/disability/</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct/">http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>(817) 272-3364</td>
<td>(817) 272-2354</td>
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<tr>
<th>Central Library Instruction &amp; Reference Services</th>
<th>Writing Center</th>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://library.uta.edu/instructionReference.jsp">http://library.uta.edu/instructionReference.jsp</a></td>
<td>411 Central Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:gtrkay@uta.edu">gtrkay@uta.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.uta.edu/owl/">http://www.uta.edu/owl/</a>; (817) 272-2601</td>
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<tr>
<th>Behavior Intervention Team (BIT)</th>
<th>Office of Information Technology (OIT)</th>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/bit/index.htm">http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/bit/index.htm</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.uta.edu/oit/">http://www.uta.edu/oit/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(817) 272-2208</td>
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<tr>
<th>Maverick Resource Hotline</th>
<th>Reporting Problems with Smart Classrooms</th>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.uta.edu/resources">www.uta.edu/resources</a> 817-272-6107</td>
<td>Crystal Livingston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:crystal@uta.edu">crystal@uta.edu</a>; (817) 272-2068.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FYW Administrators
The Director of FYW is Dr. Peggy Kulesz (203E Carlisle, 817-272-2488, kulesz@uta.edu). Her office is located outside the English Office on the second floor of Carlisle Hall. The Assistant Director of FYW is Charlie Hicks (205 Carlisle, chicks@uta.edu). The Directors administer the Program, including hiring and training teachers, budgeting, scheduling, and fielding questions and complaints. If you have any questions or concerns at any point in your teaching experience at UTA, please do not hesitate to contact them. Policies and procedures in this chapter are either general University policies or are instituted by the FYW Committee, which is chaired by Dr. Kulesz.

English Department Office Staff
The English Department Office, located in 203 Carlisle Hall, is open 8 AM - 5 PM Monday through Friday. Try to direct questions and requests to the right English Department support staff member, or feel free to direct questions to the Directors of FYW.

- **Tammy Dyer**: draws up contracts, processes budgetary/financial paperwork (such as appointments and travel reimbursements), purchases office supplies, inventories equipment, keeps department budget.
- **Dyane Fowler**: routes calls, takes messages, distributes mail, completes office paperwork such as grade changes and class roll adjustments, orders keys for offices.
- **Katie Mitchell**: orders class texts and desk copies, maintains copier, collects course descriptions and syllabuses, assigns classrooms, and assists Director of Graduate Studies.

Please note that the office staff is not responsible for your typing, copying, faxing, or other clerical work.

Office Assignments
All GTAs will be assigned an office, and everyone is required to share with one or more instructors. Office computers should never be moved from the office to which they are assigned. All officemates will share this computer. Software should not be loaded on the computer unless it has been purchased or provided through UTA or it is accompanied by a software license kept in the office.

In order to access your office, you will have to pick up your keys at the Wetsel Building on the first floor (located on Mitchell near the UTA Stadium, between Davis and Fielder). There is a $25 charge for each lost key and an additional $12 fee for each lock that the lost key fits. Upon leaving any area, please be sure that the door is locked and securely closed.

Please note that blue containers in your offices are for paper recycling only. Trashcans are located near the elevators on each floor. There is a recycling bin for glass and plastic in the breakroom. The tasks of the university’s janitorial crew are very limited. They will not empty the blue trashcans. The blue containers are for recyclable material (paper). On each floor, there is a large blue bin by the elevators into which each instructor should empty the contents of his/her small blue trash can.

Messages
It is best to ask students to contact you by email. Instructors should return emails within 24 hours. Instructors do not have office telephones. You can instruct students to leave messages for you by calling the English Department (817-272-2692). Messages will be placed in your boxes.

Mail Room and Lunch Room
A kitchen/lounge is located on the second floor of Carlisle Hall in the English department office. This area is equipped with a small refrigerator, a microwave oven, and a coffee maker. Make sure not to
leave food in the refrigerator for more than a couple days. The kitchen motto is: “Clean up after yourself... please.”

The mailroom is located in 204 Carlisle Hall and houses the copy machines and instructor mailboxes. Instructors should check their mailbox each day before leaving campus. Email should also be checked every day in order for all instructors to stay abreast of issues concerning the English Department. Email and mailboxes are the main sources of interdepartmental communication, so please be attentive to them.

**Photocopying and Supplies**
The department is on a very tight budget for photocopies. Please use the overhead projectors in your classrooms as much as possible and provide students with assignments and handouts over email in .doc/.docx or pdf files whenever possible. A very limited amount of office supplies will be available in the English Department Office. Please use them judiciously.

**Computers and Typewriters**
The Writing Center, located in Room 411 of the UTA Central Library, offers fully-equipped PCs for your use. When using computers in either lab, you should save your work on your own exterior drive source, MavSpace, or your J Drive (see oit.uta.edu). Items saved on lab hard drives will be deleted. A typewriter is available in the Department office for you to use when completing necessary Graduate School paperwork/forms. The aforementioned equipment must be shared among all GTAs and faculty.

Many classrooms on campus are now “smart” classrooms in that the instructors has access to an overhead projector and screen connected to the computer. Basic instructions for that equipment should be posted on the desk. Any problems or questions you have may be addressed by Crystal Livingston and her crew at (817) 272-2068 or crystal@uta.edu. Keep her number at hand.

**UTA Email, MavSpace, and Other Instructional Resources**
All GTAs have two email accounts: one student account and one faculty account. The university will assign you a student email; Tammy Dyer will assign you a faculty email. You are responsible for checking both accounts regularly. For help accessing your email accounts, contact the Office of Information Technology at helpdesk@uta.edu.

There are two options for identifying and changing your official UTA email address:

- Through the MyMav system: once logged in, choose the Self-Service Account options from the menu on the left hand side of the screen. This option shows you all of the email addresses associated with your account and allows you to add, delete, and select the one that you want to be the "official" email address of record--this is the one that the University, Office of Graduate Studies, etc. is supposed to use as the default to make notifications.
- Another strategy is to find out what email addresses are associated with your account: from the UTA homepage, choose current student; then choose the e-mail option under the Computing heading; scroll down to NetID self service; choose View Information About Your Accounts, which shows university email addresses associated with your account. OIT staff can help you deactivate accounts that you do not want to use and to set the default to the address you actually use.

*Blackboard*
Blackboard is the primary learning management systems (LMS) for online course material. All UTA courses are linked to Blackboard course shells. No course request or student upload is required.
You will simply have to make your course shell “available” to your students. The UTA Blackboard web address is http://elearn.uta.edu and the log-in and password are your UTA Net ID and password. To preview some of the functions of Blackboard and view tutorials for the LMS, visit http://ondemand.blackboard.com/. Additional information and tutorials are available at: http://www.uta.edu/blackboard/faculty/.

Formal training sessions that cover such topics as Blackboard, Blogs, MavSpace, WebEx, Wikis, and Adobe Connect are offered by the Center for Distance Education (CDE). Both face-to-face training and webinars are available throughout the year. To see upcoming training opportunities go the CDE training website: http://www.uta.edu/blackboard/faculty/training.php. To enroll or ask questions about training contact CDE training by email: cddtraining@uta.edu.

**Blogs**
Blog space is also available to all UTA faculty members. To request blog space, go to http://www.uta.edu/oit/eos/accounts/requests.php. At the bottom of the page, select “blogs for departments/classes” and then complete the necessary form.

**MavSpace**
MavSpace is a web resource for publishing and storing files for students, faculty, and staff at UTA. MavSpace stores copies of important documents and makes these files remotely available via any Web browser; it also helps you share files with other users. To claim your MavSpace, visit https://mavspace.uta.edu. For more information on using MavSpace, make sure to assess the MavSpace training brochure available at https://mavspace.uta.edu/departments/oit/CS/Training/MavSpace/MavSpace.pdf.

**Additional Instructional Resources, Training, and Support**
For more information on additional electronic resources, including requesting web space, visit: http://www.uta.edu/oit/index.php and http://www.uta.edu/oit/accounts.php. These links will also direct you to online support and account information for managing instructional resources administered by the UTA system.

The Director and Assistant Director of FYW are also here to assist you with instructional resources and technology. You may also contact Shelley Christie, the Director of English Distance Education, at rchristie@uta.edu.

**Departmental Listservs**
You will be subscribed to several departmental listservs. Please note that you will be addressing large numbers of faculty, staff, and graduate students when posting to the lists.

- **GTA-L**: All new GTAs, Director and Asst. Director of FYW, Director of Graduate Studies (owned by Peggy Kulesz)
- **ENGGTA-L**: All GTAs, Director of FYW, Director of Graduate Studies (owned by Peggy Kulesz)
- **ENGDEPT**: Entire English Department (owned by Johanna Smith)
- **ENGGRAD**: English Department graduate students (owned by Director of Graduate Studies and Katie Mitchell)
- **FYW**: All First-Year English instructors (owned by Peggy Kulesz)
- **ENGLINFO**: Entire English Department (owned by office staff)
Make sure to observe guidelines for appropriate email decorum when posting to the lists. Also, please notify the lists’ owners if you are not receiving listserv emails.

Accessing Buildings and Classrooms
A MavID card will access the main entrance of Preston and Carlisle before and after official office hours. A Mav card will also access 204 Carlisle Hall (the Mail Room). Most UTA classrooms (including all Preston Hall classrooms) are also accessed by swiping your MavID and entering a pin number. Mav cards are issued by Mav Express located in University Center. You can find out your pin at www.uta.edu/mypin. Tammy Dyer will try to ensure that you have access to your classroom on the first day. Sometimes, however, GTAs do not have pin access to their classrooms during the first week of school. Please plan to arrive early to ensure that you can access your classroom. Contact Tammy Dyer if you have a problem.

Ordering Textbooks
Katie Mitchell is in charge of all textbook orders. Once your courses have been assigned, Katie will order your books. All ENGL 1301 and ENGL 1302 instructors are required to use the assigned texts and the Director of FYW will place these orders.

Creating Course Packs
We discourage the use of printed course packs in FYW and ask instructors to provide electronic copies of all material through Blackboard or by email to students. UTA no longer has a print shop to produce course packs for the UTA Bookstore. If you must provide a course pack you will have to contact a local company near campus to arrange for printing and production. You will be 100% responsible for copyright clearance and permissions. Students who receive financial aid for textbooks will not be able to use their funds at a private copy service. You may create an online course pack and make documents available to students through Blackboard, your MavSpace account, or the Central Library’s e-reserve (http://library.uta.edu/reserves/placingReserves.jsp). E-reserve is the best bet in terms of copyright issues because the library assumes responsibility for copyright.

Submitting and Posting Syllabuses
All syllabuses must be submitted for review to the Assistant Director of FYW one week before classes begin. Once syllabuses have been approved, electronic copies must be emailed to Katie Mitchell and posted online to instructors’ ReSearch Profiles (https://www.uta.edu/ra/real/loginscreen.php). All instructors must provide the course syllabus (whether hard copy, electronic format, or both) on the first day of class.

Professionalism
Although UTA does not have an official dress code for faculty and staff, instructors will have an easier time asserting their authority in the classroom if they are dressed professionally. We do ask that instructors not wear hats or caps while teaching and to consider other aspects of clothing and accessories that might be offensive or distracting to students. Please refrain from wearing logos for alcohol, tobacco or illegal substances as these are banned on campus. Other professional behavior includes: arriving to class on time, or a few minutes early; limiting or avoiding profanity; refraining from off-color jokes; refraining from commenting on students’ appearance; not engaging with students socially; and not meeting with students after regular business hours, unless one teaches at night and must hold office hours in the evening.
Professional interaction with students requires that instructors are aware of professional boundaries and conduct. Social media often blurs the lines of professionalism, and instructors should think very carefully about the implications of having students as “friends” on Facebook or other sites.

FERPA protects the privacy of students, and public conversation about students should never be conducted in public areas, via social media, or in offices with open doors. Even if you do not mention a student by name, referring to any specific writing, conduct, or interaction with students via a public venue is strictly prohibited by federal law and as common practice of professionalism. If you must discuss student issues with colleagues, please take these conversations inside an office and close the door. Hallways, outdoor meeting areas, and any place where one might be overheard are never appropriate sites for conversation about students.

Additionally, posting on Facebook or other public online sites about students is considered highly unprofessional, even when students are not named. Quoting from their writing, even when amusing to us, is considered a violation of FERPA. Facebook (and other social media) is not considered a private space.

Another issue to consider is what students should call you. Opinions on this matter vary widely. The safest option is to ask students to address you as “Ms.” or “Mr.” Although some of your students may default and refer to you as “Dr.” or “Professor,” you should not instruct them to do so unless you have a Ph.D. If you ask students to call you by your first name, keep in mind that you must make clear to them in other ways that you are their teacher, not their friend.

As of August 1, 2011, UTA is a tobacco-free campus. Use of any tobacco product on campus is prohibited except for in one’s own vehicle. As employees of UTA, all instructors are expected to comply with this policy.

**Assistance from Instructional Librarians**

UTA’s instructional librarians provide multiple resources for ENGL 1301 and ENGL 1302 instructors, including classroom workshops in the Central Library, libguides for ENGL 1301 and ENGL 1302, and online and in-person support for students. For more information, please see [http://libguides.uta.edu/FYWlibraryinstruction](http://libguides.uta.edu/FYWlibraryinstruction) or contact Gretchen Trkay, Instructional Librarian, at gtrkay@uta.edu.

**Writing Center**

The English Writing Center, Room 411 in the Central Library, provides support to FYW students and instructors. Undergraduate and graduate student tutors in the Writing Center are trained to help student writers at any stage in their writing processes and are familiar with the course objectives, assignments, and pedagogical methods of the FYW Program. They are trained to attend to the same rhetorical and organizational issues that FYW instructors value in student writing. Although tutors will assist students in identifying and correcting patterns of grammatical or syntactical errors, they are taught to resist student entreaties to become editors or proofreaders of student papers.

The Writing Center offers tutoring for any writing you are assigned while a student at UT-Arlington. During Fall 2012, Writing Center hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Friday; and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. You—or your students—may schedule appointments online by following directions available at [www.uta.edu/owl/appointments](http://www.uta.edu/owl/appointments), by calling 817 272-2601, or by visiting the Writing Center.
The Writing Center Director, Assistant Director, or tutors are available to make classroom presentations describing Writing Center services. The Writing Center also offers workshops on topics such as documentation and will design specialized workshops at the request of instructors. To schedule a classroom visit or inquire about a workshop, please e-mail or call Tracey-Lynn Clough, Director of the UTA Writing Center, at clought@uta.edu or 817-272-2517.

**Classroom-Related Policies**

**Instructor Absence Policy**
Instructors are required to attend their scheduled classes and to be on time. Instructors must meet their classes in person instead of online. **Instructors should not cancel more than two classes per semester because of instructor absences.** If you must be absent, you should arrange in advance for another instructor to teach your classes. If you wish to attend a conference or schedule a job interview during the semester, it is your responsibility to find someone to cover your classes. Prior notification of an absence and plans for covering classes must be given to both the office staff and Dr. Peggy Kulesz.

If you know **in advance** that you will miss class:
1) Find a colleague to teach the **scheduled content** of your syllabus OR
2) Design an assignment that students can complete in your absence that is **verifiable** and equal to the work of a typical class period. If students complete the assignment online or submit it to you online, you can respond before the next class meeting.
   Possibilities:
   a. online discussion
   b. online submission and response to drafts
   c. library research assignment
   d. small group activity

If you have to miss class because of an emergency, you should always notify the following people:
- English Department office staff (call 817-272-2692) and ask them to post a walk sign for students,
- Peggy Kulesz (email kulesz@uta.edu or call 817-272-2488),
- Students in the class (email them through MyMav).

If you are going to be tardy to class, you should call the English Department office and ask the office assistants to notify the students.

In general, keep classes for the full scheduled time; avoid canceling multiple classes for "library work" (does not include library tutorials) or conferences. **Failure to follow the instructor attendance policy could result in the loss of teaching privileges.**

**Office Hours**
Instructors are expected to keep at least three office hours a week. Students and the English Department should be advised of your office hours, and, obviously, you should be in your office during those hours. Your office door must always be open when you are meeting with students. Please include your office hours on your syllabus. Make sure your students know how to reach you. Always notify the English Department office staff if you change your office hours so that they can inform your students if the need should arise. You should also notify your students.
Add/Drop and Census Date
The university has an official Add/Drop period that generally lasts through the first week of classes. Students may add or drop classes during that time as long as there is space available in the sections they plan to add. FYW courses are currently capped at 22 students. **Instructors are never allowed to add students beyond the cap.** Adding beyond the cap cheats students of individual attention and feedback, and also means additional uncompensated work for instructors.

After the add/drop period, students may drop without penalty until Census Date, which is generally during the third week of classes. If your class is not full, you may allow students to add until Census Date. It is important to note, however, that allowing students to add after the official add/drop period has ended means more work for both instructors and students. Please think carefully before allowing students to add after Census Date.

Grading

Z Grade
Grades in FYW are A, B, C, F, and Z. **(There is no D in FYW courses.)** It is the policy of the FYW program that students must be capable of producing C grade work in order to succeed in the kind of academic writing required at UT Arlington. Therefore, a student earning a final averaged grade lower than C will be required to repeat the course.

Please make sure the grades you assign for course work during the semester reflect the overall FYW grading philosophy. For example, if you use number grades, make it clear that any number grade less than 70 is considered a failing grade. If you use letter grades, you might consider using A, B, C, or F grades only. If you do award “Z” grades on assignments during the course, make sure your students understand this as a failing assignment grade. There are differing philosophies on using the “Z” as a course assignment grade. When you are making decisions about grading practices in your course, think through what you want to communicate to students with the grades you assign.

Awarding a “Z” as the final course grade is reserved for students who attend class regularly, participate actively, and complete all the assigned work on time but simply fail to write well enough to earn a passing grade. **If students do not meet these criteria, they are NOT eligible for the Z grade.** This judgment is made by the instructor and not necessarily based upon a number average. The Z grade is intended to reward students for good effort. While students who receive a Z will not get credit for the course, the Z grade will not affect their grade point average. They may repeat the course for credit until they do earn a passing grade.

The “F” grade, which does negatively affect GPA, goes to failing students who do not attend class regularly, do not participate actively, or do not complete assigned work.

Revision
Essays in FYW are written as part of a process of guiding students through several drafts. Revision is an integral part of the pedagogy of the Program and students generally respond well to the idea of using criticism from teachers and classmates to work on their essays before receiving a letter grade. However, because some students have abused the process, the following guidelines have been adopted. While instructors are not required to allow students to re-write every major essay, at least two major essay projects should offer this opportunity. The number of times an essay may be revised and resubmitted is up to individual instructors. Some instructors allow only one re-write per project; others allow students to re-write given essays until a semester ends. Neither the last essay project, however, nor the essay exam may be re-written.
Because some students—secure in the knowledge that they can re-write later—subvert the intention of the re-write policy by handing in very cursory efforts on due dates, the Department recommends announcing that original grades and re-write grades will be averaged. The Department wants to encourage students to put their best efforts into assignments from the beginning. Students may, of course, seek advice in the Writing Center or from their instructors before turning in final projects; however, since judgment is part of the writing process, students should make every effort to make the last project as “good” as they are capable of making it by the final due date.

Grade Appeals
Students have the right to appeal their grades if they feel that they have earned a higher grade than an instructor assigned. They should begin by talking to the instructor, asking for an explicit justification of the grade. If they fail to reach a satisfactory result, they should take their grievance to the Director of FYW. If the instructor, student, and the Director fail to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion, the Director will direct the student to the next step in the grievance procedure.

Grade Reports
Instructors are required to submit three grade reports each semester through MyMav: one early in the semester (for all students with fewer than 30 credit hours), one at midterm, and one at the end of the semester. More specific instructions about how to post grades will be distributed via email close to when grade reports are due. By the first reporting period, be sure you have evaluated enough work that you can communicate an accurate picture of the student’s progress or the danger of failing the course. Instructors are not allowed to enter an I grade for the first or second grade reports. It is imperative that grades be submitted by the deadlines. The Provost has stated that instructors jeopardize their GTA positions and travel funds if they fail to submit grades on time.

Incompletes
Do not give a student a grade of Incomplete without prior approval from the Director of First-Year Writing. A grade of Incomplete is appropriate only when students have been making satisfactory progress (a grade of “C” or better) and experience difficulties that could not have been anticipated or prevented such as an extended illness, documented family emergency, etc. Instructors who give students Incompletes are obligated to follow through with the student until he or she completes the course and should draw up Incomplete contracts with the students that outline the assignments the student must finish and the timeline for completion of the work.

Questions from Parents
From time to time, you may be contacted by parents asking you to report on a student’s progress in your course or inquiring about why a student received a failing grade. In such cases, please refer the email query to the Director of First-Year Writing rather than answer it directly. Because of the Privacy Act (FERPA), we are not allowed to reveal grade information without permission regarding students who are over the age of 18. I typically tell parents that we can’t release grade information without a student’s permission, but that I am happy to talk to the student himself or herself about a grade or progress in the class.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct
Plagiarism is a very complex term, the meaning and significance of which continue to be debated within academe. In writing classes, plagiarism tends to refer to the use of material written by others but submitted by the student as though it is his or her own work. Under this general definition, any of the following could be considered plagiarism:
1) submission of a complete text not written by the student, which may have been downloaded from the Internet or taken from other sources such as student paper files;
2) liberal cutting and pasting of sources into the student’s text without attribution;
3) liberal cutting and pasting of sources, which may include close paraphrase or adoption of whole sentences, mixed with the student’s own language, with attribution but without the use of quotation marks to indicate language borrowed from other sources;
4) occasional misuse of sources, with or without attribution, for example, occasional sentences that do not “sound” like the student writer’s typical prose that may include citation at the end of the paragraph but no quotation marks indicating a direct quote;
5) work done by the student for another class but passed off as new, original work.

In general, this program makes a distinction between cases of academic dishonesty in which students intend to deceive by submitting material they have not written as though it were their own (numbers 1 and 2) and cases that involve the misuse of sources (number 3 and 4). At the same time, we recognize that such distinctions are not easy to make. Because individual cases of plagiarism/academic misconduct/misuse of sources vary widely, penalties are determined on a case-by-case basis. However, all suspected cases must be reported to the Director of First-Year Writing. Please follow the procedure below if you receive a text from a student that you suspect includes unattributed material not written by that student.

1. Photocopy student materials, making one copy for yourself, and one for the Director of FYW OR submit a copy of the Safe Assign report from Blackboard.
2. Consult with the Director immediately to decide on a plan of action to address the particular case. A case of academic misconduct is most easily proven if you can find the source the student is borrowing from. Finding borrowed sources is not as hard as it once was:
   -- Use Google.com and type in the exact words of a sentence that does not sound like the students’ language. Try this on a few sentences in case the student has altered the words of some sentences.
   -- Check the students’ Internet sources to see whether portions have been cut and pasted into the student’s draft without attribution.
   -- Check the UTA library catalog to see if the sources the student used are owned by our library.
   -- Ask teachers in the FYW Program if they have received a paper on the same topic.
3. If you do find the source (or sources), highlight the borrowed passages that have not been attributed on both the source and the students’ text.
4. Refrain from accusing the student of plagiarism prior to a scheduled conference with a witness present. You may give back other students’ papers, letting this student know that you can’t return his or her work until you have a conference about it.
5. During conferences with students to discuss incidents of possible academic misconduct, present the student with evidence and ask the student to explain the use of sources, etc. Generally, if the student admits to academic misconduct or if adequate evidence is present (e.g. copies of the paper or the misused sources indicating that the work is not the student’s own), the minimal penalty will be an “F” for the assignment.
6. During the conference fill out and submit the Student Conduct form for plagiarism, which is available online at http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct/faculty.html, and have the student sign it.
   Students who admit to plagiarism must be made aware that the form will go on file with the university and that a second penalty will likely result in suspension from the university for one year. The form should be submitted to Student
Conduct with the student's essay and evidence within two weeks of the conference with the student.

- If the student does not admit to plagiarism, you have the responsibility to persuade Student Conduct that the student's work is plagiarized. Be careful to provide all documentation and to submit the essay and paperwork to Student Conduct immediately. You cannot give the student a grade on the assignment until Student Conduct meets with the student and resolves the issue. In this case of suspected plagiarism that happens at the end of the semester, you must give the student an incomplete until Student Conduct makes a decision.

Problem Students

The Composition Program recommends that teachers take a proactive stance with disruptive students. It is the teacher's responsibility to do everything s/he can to insure a safe and pleasant learning environment for all students. Any behavior that disrupts the teacher's ability to teach or other students' ability to learn should be addressed. Such behavior may include but is not limited to the following:

- talking at inappropriate times
- class clown behavior
- excessive tardies that disrupt a class in progress
- inappropriate comments to other students on their drafts, during small group workshop, on a class discussion board, or in a large class discussion. “Inappropriate” in this case may refer to any comments that other students find offensive or harmful.
- openly disrespectful behavior directed to the teacher or others in the class
- sexual harassment of the teacher or other students
- threats of violence of any kind
- the submission of texts that mention thoughts of suicide, violence, criminal behavior

Many of these behaviors can be resolved simply by bringing the behavior to the student's attention and asking that the behavior stop. Depending on the severity of the problem, you can address the student directly during class, speak to the student circumspectly at the end of class, or schedule a meeting with the student in your office. Deciding how to respond can be challenging, especially in the heat of the moment. While it can be less effective to openly confront a student during class, since doing so may be equally disruptive, the other students in the class need to see that you are responsive to the problem. When meeting with a disruptive student in your office, it's a good idea to have an office mate present or in an office next door with the door opened slightly. In general, avoid e-mail responses to students, which are easily misinterpreted.

If you have any questions about how to handle a student problem, you should contact the Assistant Director or Director of FYW for advice. Keep in mind that there are resources on campus that we can call on to help resolve problems with students (as well as to help students resolve their problems). It is better to acknowledge the disruptive behavior, consult with someone regarding how to proceed, and come up with a plan of action rather than ignore the disruption and hope that it goes away—it almost never does. The Office of Student Conduct can be particularly helpful in dealing with student difficulties.

A word of advice: It is not unusual for students in first-year writing classes to treat their teachers like counselors or confidants by writing about or talking to you about deeply personal, sometimes disturbing experiences. Although as teachers, most of us care about our students' well-being, we are not qualified to help students with their personal problems. Tell students in your syllabus and in your opening remarks that everything they write in this class is public and will be open to critique. Advise them to choose topics that they feel comfortable talking about and can accept criticism on. If students
persist in writing about disturbing experiences, you should feel free to suggest that they do so only for
their private benefit and not as work to be graded in your class. You may also let the student know that
there are counseling services available to students. If you are ever concerned about a student’s well-
being, contact the Director of FYW and/or the Office of Student Conduct right away.

Returning Student Work
Responding to and evaluating student writing are probably the best means of writing instruction
that we have. It is thus important that students receive response to and/or evaluation of their work
in plenty of time to make use of your comments as they work on the next draft of the assignment. A
general rule of thumb is to plan to return drafts within a week, particularly if students need your
comments to revise. Graded essays should be returned within two weeks of receiving them, so that
students can make use of your comments on one graded assignment as they are working on the
next assignment.

It is against the law to post student grades or to leave graded papers in public areas. Do not leave
graded papers in the English Department, on an office door, or in the hallway by an office. Students
should submit papers during class or during the instructor’s office hours. Please refrain from having
students submit their papers to the English Department office staff unless absolutely necessary.

The following student records should be kept for the indicated length of time:
- Student Complaints: 1 Year
- Syllabuses: 2 Years
- Exams, Tests, Essays: 2 Years

Before leaving the University, instructors MUST forfeit grade books or computer grade records along
with the last two years of unreturned student papers.

Occasionally, a student will dispute a final grade with the instructor or the department. It is extremely
important to keep attendance and grade logs (and backups of grading software) as well as copies of
written warnings or emails to students in case of a dispute. Remind students to keep all graded work
until their final grades are posted.

Using Student Writing
All student writing is considered the property of the student. Student essays may only be used for
other purposes if students have signed permission forms. Keep an eye out for essays which you feel
best represent the kind of work students produced for the given assignments. If you wish to collect
samples of student papers, you may ask students to turn in an extra copy or you may simply ask
individual students for a copy of specific assignments. Make sure to get permission. The Director of
FYW has a sample permission form. Remember that students may request that any or all of their
work not be shared with others. The program will abide by their request.

When sharing student writing with your classes, remove the name from the paper. Choose papers
that have good qualities to be emulated so that discussion of the work will not be excessively
critical. Any discussion of student writing should send the message that we respect students and
their work. If possible, collect the student writing after your students have discussed it. That way,
you’ll have the samples to use in later classes and the writing will not be floating around where it
might be misused.
Teaching Evaluations
Near the end of each semester, students in all classes at the University have an opportunity to evaluate their courses and instructors. Assure students that evaluations will not be seen until after final grades have been submitted. These student feedback forms are reviewed by the Director of FYW.
Chapter 3: Teaching ENGL 1301

Guidelines for Teaching ENGL 1301
Here are guidelines for constructing your ENGL 1301 courses. A syllabus and sample assignments will follow.

Reading
Reading is an integral part of ENGL 1301. Students will read, talk about, and address in writing hundreds of pages, including the OneBook selection, the course rhetoric, and other academic texts. Students should demonstrate reading comprehension through exercises that ask for paraphrasing, summarizing, written response, and class discussion. Other reading/writing exercises, such as journal writing and reading quizzes, may be used at the discretion of the instructor.

Writing
Writing should be a part of almost every class period and/or homework assignment. Students should hand in for grading a minimum of 25 typewritten pages of academic prose. These assignments should include at least three well-developed five-page essays addressed to an academic audience, as well as shorter papers that may include summaries, summary/response essays, and in-class essays. Students are expected to write at all stages of their processes—invention, exploration, drafting, revision, and editing. All written materials will be submitted with the final draft of an essay.

Suggested Graded Assignments for ENGL 1301:
- Summary-Responses/Response Journals
- Discourse Community Analysis
- Rhetorical Analysis
- Synthesis Essay
- In-Class Essay

A significant portion of students' writing should be non-graded and may include, but is not limited to, freewriting, short in-class responses and reactions to texts and questions posed by an instructor, metacognitive reflections on reading and writing processes, and peer critiques. All of these exercises should be sequenced so as to encourage the development of students' abilities to read and write increasingly complex texts.

Revision
Revision is taught as an important means for improving both the writing process and the final written product, and, consequently, should be encouraged. Instructors must allow students to revise at least two major essays after grading. The last major paper, after it has been submitted for grading, cannot be re-written for a higher grade.

Peer Work
Students should participate in peer review of at least one draft of each essay that is written outside of class. Some of this peer review should be in written form and submitted to individual students to facilitate revision.

In-Class Essay
ENGL 1301 students should write at least one in-class essay from a writing prompt. The in-class essay may not be re-written. Strategies and skills necessary to write in-class essays should be taught in a way
that will enable students to see how to apply them to writing essay exams in other courses throughout their academic careers.

**Required ENGL 1301 Texts**

- *First-Year Writing: Perspectives on Argument* (3rd UTA Custom Edition)
- Essay clusters available through Blackboard
Resources for Teaching ENGL 1301

Available in FYC Organization on Blackboard
- Sample Syllabus
- 1301 Essay Assignments
- Sample Essays
- Peer Review Activities
- Reading Clusters
- “How to Teach It” Resources
- Sample Activities and Assignments
- Permission to Use Student Writing Form

Sample Diagnostic Essay Prompts

Diagnostic essays are short, non-graded writing samples that students complete at the beginning of the semester. Instructors often use such prompts to get to know their students and their students’ writing. Some instructors simply review the prompts but do not provide feedback. Others return them with various kinds of comments:
   1) Comments that respond directly to the issues students address in their essays rather than evaluating their writing; and/or
   2) Comments that indicate what the students are doing well and things they can focus on throughout the semester.

Example 1:
Write a letter to me describing your experiences as a writer inside and outside of school. What do you write for fun? What do you write for work or school? What are your strengths and weaknesses as a writer? What do you want/expect to learn in ENGL 1301? What else do you want me to know about you as a writer? You will have 30 minutes to complete the response, which will not be graded. Your response will help us both learn more about you and your writing.

Example 2:
Earlier this week you brainstormed a list of topics about which you are an authority. Now, I would like you to expand your ideas. Select one topic about which you are an authority. Then, write about the debates that experts (members of that particular discourse community) have about the topic you have selected.

For example, if I were to write about the Twilight book series, I could address one or more of the following debates: 1) Are the Twilight books appropriate for elementary school children (5th or 6th graders)? 2) Is Bella Swan a feminist hero/role model for girls or a terrible example of a young woman whose life is dramatically affected by the whims of her boyfriends? 3) Is Jacob or Edward a better match for Bella? Although this example relates to a book series, your own response to the prompt doesn’t have to involve a school-related topic. You can probably describe a debate related to almost any topic on which you are an authority.

Your audience is members of this class. Since we are not likely to be experts on your topic, you should explain why the debate you describe is important to experts. You should also explain where you stand in the debate.
You will have 50 minutes to complete the response, which will not be graded. Rather, I will use your response to learn more about you and your writing. I will return your response with very general comments about your writing.

**Example 3:** (adapted from Lindemann's *A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers*)
Write a letter to me describing the most recent significant writing you did—a letter, an article, a report, a college entrance essay, or something that required more elaborate preparation than putting together a grocery list. Try to reconstruct what you did, from beginning to end, to create the piece. What prompted you to do the writing? Why did writing serve your purposes better than speech? How much time elapsed between the “need” to write and drafting the first words? What mental processes were going on at that time? You will have 30 minutes to complete the response, which will not be graded. Your response will help us both learn more about you and your writing.

**Example 4:** (developed by GTA Wilton Wright)
What is argument? Discuss your personal style of argument. Explain why you think it developed this way. Give examples of arguments you have had or observed and reflect on them. Finally, conclude with how you would like to improve as a writer and arguer this semester.

Explanation:
Before I assign the essay I let them know that because this is an in-class assignment, I know that it may not be indicative of their best work. I read the student essays to find 2-3 things I can tell each student that they do well, and 2-3 things I tell them they can improve upon.

Further, this particular prompt also helps me see what the students know about argument, as well as what they expect from the class in general.
ENGL 1301 Essay Clusters for Papers 2 and 3
(ENGL 1302 Instructors May Use Also Use Readings from Clusters)

Note: There are five essays in each cluster. Students should select one of the five starred essays (***) to analyze for the Rhetorical Analysis Essay. They will write on the same cluster when they complete the Synthesis Essay.

Essay Cluster 1: Fat Taxes
Kelly D. Brownell and Thomas R. Frieden, “Ounces of Prevention — The Public Policy Case for Taxes on Sugared Beverages”
N. Gregory Mankiw, “Can a Soda Tax Save Us from Ourselves?”
Michael Pollan, “Attacks on the ‘Food Police.’”

Essay Cluster 2: Is College Worth It?
Sarah Lacy, “Peter Thiel: We’re in a Bubble . . .”
***Rebecca Mead, “Learning by Degrees”
Louis Menand, “Live and Learn: Why We Have College”
Pew Social & Demographic Trends, “Is College Worth It?”
Jacques Steinberg, “Plan B: Skip College”

Essay Cluster 3: Race
Charles Blow, “Let’s Rescue the Race Debate”
Harlon Dalton, “Horatio Alger”
***Hanna Guthrie, “Black History Month?”
Ken Hamblin, “The Black Avenger” (should be paired with Dalton and/or McIntosh)
Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege, Male Privilege” (from WVFV)

Essay Cluster 4: Same-Sex Marriage
Kerry Howley, “Marriage Just Lets the State Back In”
***Anna Quindlen, “Public and Private; Evan’s Two Moms.”
Ralph Wedgwood, “What Are We Fighting For?”

Essay Cluster 5: Social Class
William Deresiewicz, “The Dispossessed”
***DeeDee Myers, “What Class Warfare Really Looks Like”
Ruby K. Payne, “Understanding Poverty: Hidden Rules Among Classes”
Janny Scott and David Leonhardt, “Shadowy Lines That Still Divide”

(Continued on next page)
Essay Cluster 6: The Body
Susan Bordo "Never Just Pictures"
Will Haygood "Kentucky Town and National Obesity Crisis"
***Raina Kelley "Beauty is Defined and Not By You"
Seed Magazine "The Media Assault on Male Body Image"
Polly Vernon "Thin is in: in search of the perfect male body"

Essay Cluster 7: Authenticity
Ed Dante "The Shadow Scholar"
***Dan Kennedy "Goodwin’s Folly"
Robert Lindsey "Dealer in Mormon Fraud Called Master Forger"
Stacy Teicher Khadaroo "SAT Scandal-- Are stakes getting too high for college admission?"
Laura Tillman "Students Nationwide Say They Cheat"
Sample Claims Lesson for a 50 Minute Class

Freewriting Prompts (5-10 minutes).
1) Think about your writing processes. How do you develop a thesis statement/main claim? (Please discuss both process and product.)
2) What new ideas about developing claims do you get from reading They Say/I Say and Chapter 4 from First-Year Writing?

Discuss students’ responses, listing key ideas about claims development on board. (10-15 minutes)
In this case, your mini-lesson will be embedded in the discussion as students make the relevant points you want to cover (or at least bring up related topics that allow you to make those points).
Some key ideas to consider:
- To whom are you writing?
- Is it clear that you are participating in a conversation about your topic/issue (do you acknowledge what “They Say” in your claim)?
- What do you want readers to think or do after reading your essay?
- Is your claim practical/conceptual?
- Are you agreeing? Disagreeing? Agreeing with a difference?
- Can your claim be contested? Can it be proved wrong? Is it arguable? Is it thoughtful? Is it qualified?
- Have you answered the “So What” question?

This is a lot to think about all at once, so you should begin by drafting a tentative claim (or several tentative claims) and revising it (them) as you learn more about your topic and develop your ideas.

Go through the process of developing a claim with the class (25-30 minutes). Ask the class to help you complete Scenario 1/Task 1(a) p. 120 in FYW. As you work together, ask them to think out loud about all the things they need to consider as they start developing their claims.

Assign independent practice on claims development for homework. Ask students to complete another of the homework assignments and to come to class ready to discuss their work. OR If you are in the middle of a writing assignment, ask them to develop a draft of their claim and bring it to class ready to discuss.
Chapter 4: Teaching ENGL 1302

Guidelines for Teaching ENGL 1302
Here are guidelines for constructing your 1302 courses. A syllabus and sample assignments will follow.

Reading
As in ENGL 1301, reading is an integral part of ENGL 1302. Students will read, talk about, and address in writing hundreds of pages, including the course rhetoric and other assigned texts, as well as the texts they find through library research. Students should demonstrate reading comprehension through exercises that ask for paraphrasing, summarizing, written response, and class discussion. Other reading/writing exercises, such as journal writing and reading quizzes, may be used at the discretion of the instructor.

Writing
As in ENGL 1301, writing should be a part of almost every class period and/or homework assignment. Students should hand in for grading a minimum of 30-40 typewritten written pages of academic prose. These assignments should include one researched position paper (five to ten pages), as well as shorter papers that help the students prepare for the researched position paper and encourage students to practice application of different models of argument theory. Students are expected to write at all stages of their processes— invention, exploration, drafting, revision, and editing. Helping students choose their issue well represents one of the most challenging aspects of teaching 1302; however, this effort pays off with a more enjoyable and rewarding semester for all involved.

A portion of students’ writing should be nongraded and may include summary responses, invention exercises to aid students in finding a compelling issue for their researched position paper, reactions to the rhetoric and readings, and peer critiques. All exercises should be sequenced so as to encourage the development of students’ abilities to read and write increasingly complex arguments.

Graded Assignments for ENGL 1302:
- Summary Responses/Response Journals
- Issue Proposal
- Annotated Bibliography
- Mapping the Issue Essay
- Researched Position Paper

Revision
Revision is taught as an important means for improving both the writing process and the final written product, and, consequently, should be encouraged. Instructors must allow students to revise at least two major essays after grading. The last major paper, after it has been submitted for grading, cannot be re-written for a higher grade.

Peer Work
Students should participate in peer review of at least one draft of each essay that is written outside of class. Some of this peer review should be in written form and submitted to individual students to facilitate revision.
In-Class Essay
An in-class essay is optional in ENGL 1302.

Required ENGL 1302 Texts
- *First-Year Writing: Perspectives on Argument* (3rd UTA Custom Edition)

Resources for Teaching ENGL 1302

Available in FYC Organization on Blackboard
- Sample Syllabus
- 1302 Essay Assignments
- Peer Review Activities
- Grading Forms and Rubrics
- 1302 Readings
- Duncan Robinson Form
Chapter 5: Mini-Lessons and Pedagogical Strategies (by Jim Warren)

The Rhetorical Situation

To this point in your education, you may have been taught to think of texts as “autonomous.” According to this view, the meaning of texts is equivalent to what they say—meaning is conveyed fully and explicitly by the words on the page. Writers are charged with representing meaning as explicitly as possible, and readers are expected to logically analyze the words on the page. In order to demonstrate how autonomous text theories work, read the passage below and try to determine the situation being depicted:

“I worry that our most valuable pitchers could crack in this heat,” said the manager in one of his discouraged moods. I wanted to help, but all I did was hit a fly. “If only we had more fans,” he continued, “we would all feel better, I’m sure. I wish our best man would come home. That certainly would improve everyone’s morale, especially mine. Oh well, I know a walk would perk me up.”

Chances are you can make an educated guess about the situation depicted in this passage because you have learned to interpret texts by analyzing the words on the page.

Alternatives to autonomous text theories are “rhetorical” theories, which take into account textual and contextual clues to determine the rhetorical situation: the writer or speaker and her/his purpose, the broad topic of the text, and the reader or listener. In Classical rhetoric, our impressions of the writer/speaker fall under the category of ethos appeals, the facts and logic of a topic are categorized as logos appeals, and the responses of readers/listeners are categorized as pathos appeals. The rhetorical situation of texts is often represented by a triangle:
Consider how the passage above is clarified when framed by its rhetorical situation:

A day game in August

“I worry that our most valuable pitchers could crack in this heat,” said the manager in one of his discouraged moods. I wanted to help, but all I did was hit a fly. “If only we had more fans,” he continued, “we would all feel better, I’m sure. I wish our best man would come home. That certainly would improve everyone’s morale, especially mine. Oh well, I know a walk would perk me up.”

Texas Rangers baseball player  
Readers of a Rangers fan blog
The words in the passage remain exactly the same, but we understand them more deeply due to our knowledge of the rhetorical situation. Still not convinced? Read the passage one more time, taking note of how the rhetorical situation has changed:

An A/C outage in August

I worry that our most valuable pitchers could crack in this heat,” said the manager in one of his discouraged moods. I wanted to help, but all I did was hit a fly. “If only we had more fans,” he continued, “we would all feel better, I’m sure. I wish our best man would come home. That certainly would improve everyone’s morale, especially mine. Oh well, I know a walk would perk me up.”

Employee at Dallas Glassware, Inc.          Dallas Glassware, Inc.’s top salesman

As you can see, the passage remains exactly the same, but now it “means” something entirely different because the rhetorical situation has changed. This exercise demonstrates the limitations of autonomous text theories and the importance of understanding the rhetorical situation of texts.

How do the assumptions that inform autonomous text theories differ from those informing rhetorical approaches?

Perhaps the best way to illustrate the differences between autonomous and rhetorical text theories is to compare assessments conceived from the perspective of each. For example, let’s compare the TAKS Test and the AP English Language Exam to the reading you will do and the papers you will write in ENGL 1301 and 1302.

READING

On the TAKS and AP exams, students are presented with passages absent any information about the author, his/her purpose, or his/her audience, and students are not expected to possess any prior knowledge of the topic on which the passage is written. In ENGL 1301 and 1302, however, you’ll be given ample time to reread texts and analyze them in detail; you’ll learn and take into account information about the author, his/her purpose, and his/her intended audience; and you’ll learn something about the broader topic/conversation in which the text is participating. We can chart the contrasting assumptions that inform these reading tasks as follows:
### TAKS and AP vs. ENGL 1301 and 1302

1. Texts can be understood with little to no knowledge of their authors.  
2. Texts can be understood without prior knowledge of their topics.  
3. Texts can be understood independent of their intended audience.  
4. Texts mean what they say; meaning exists in the words on the page.

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1. Texts must be understood as the actions of human beings writing from particular perspectives and for specific purposes.  
2. Texts must be understood as moves in ongoing conversations about—and be informed by—specific topics.  
3. Texts must be understood in terms of whom they’re written for.  
4. Meaning varies from readers to reader and from reading to reading; it always depends on a combination of text and context.

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### WRITING

Although the TAKS and AP exams require very different types of writing (personal reflection and rhetorical analysis/argument, respectively), in each case the student’s purpose and topic are predetermined, no prior knowledge of the topic is required, and students are not asked to write for a specific audience. In ENGL 1301 and 1302, on the other hand, you’ll discover your own purpose for writing, all your papers will require activation of extensive prior knowledge, and you’ll write for highly specific audiences. Once again, we can chart the very different assumptions that inform these two types of writing tasks:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAKS and AP</th>
<th>ENGL 1301 and 1302</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. You write because you are told to and because your writing skills must be assessed.</td>
<td>1. You write because you have something to contribute to an ongoing conversation. You write because you want something to change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. You can write well about a topic you know almost nothing about.</td>
<td>2. Since you are joining a conversation, you must know something about the topic and what has already been said about it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Your goal is to produce an ideal object or artifact, the textual equivalent of a “right” answer.</td>
<td>3. Your goal is to move a specific audience in ways you intend. You will never be right or wrong, but you will always be more or less effective.</td>
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</table>
Some Final Words on Reading and Writing Rhetorically

Some of the advantages of reading and writing rhetorically should be clear to you by now. Here are some further reasons why you should ALWAYS consider the rhetorical situation of the texts you read and write:

1. **Rhetorical thinking accords with what we know about how language works.** We all know that even when an entire class reads the same text, not everyone comprehends, interprets, or recalls that text in exactly the same way. The rhetorical situation accounts for this variation because it changes every time the reader/listener changes.

2. **Rhetorical thinking increases reading comprehension.** Studies show that we comprehend texts more deeply when we know something about the person writing, know something about the topic of the text, and read with the expectation of responding in writing.

3. **Expert readers and writers think rhetorically.** Studies show that experts read as if they are in conversation with a friend: they activate everything they know about the topic, they activate everything they know about the writer, and, rather than trying to memorize the text, they think critically about it and respond to it by marking the text, writing notes in the margins, and speaking aloud to the text. When experts write, they do so because they feel the need to say something. They also investigate, and think long and hard about, the topic on which they're writing. Finally, expert writers give a lot of thought to the audience for whom they're writing.

4. **Rhetorical thinking is empowering.** If you've been taught to think that meaning exists in the words on the page, or that there's only one way to write effectively, then you might think that your struggles with reading and writing are a reflection of your intelligence. They're not. Your struggles may simply be an effect of being a newcomer to academic conversations. Rhetorical thinking can show you what is needed: to sit in and listen for a while until what you hear begins to make sense and you discover something to contribute.
Incorporating Sources Effectively
English 5389: GTA Training

1. This is YOUR argument, so make your claims first and then use sources to support your claims — never allow sources to make your claims for you. Introduce your sources before quoting or paraphrasing them, and then follow up by interpreting the cited material and explaining why it is important.

2. You cannot assume that your readers will recognize your sources and accept them as reliable, so you must introduce your sources by including job titles, educational credentials, organizational affiliations, awards, knowledge of the topic, etc.

3. Most students overquote when incorporating outside sources, which makes it nearly impossible for them to maintain speakership of their own arguments. The *MLA Handbook* makes it very clear that direct quotations should be used ONLY

   - when language is especially vivid or expressive
   - when exact wording is needed for technical accuracy
   - when it is important to let the debaters of an issue explain their positions in their own words
   - when the words of an important authority lend weight to an argument
   - when language of a source is the topic of your discussion

Instead of using direct quotations, when at all possible keep yourself the main speaker in your text by paraphrasing the information you need from outside sources.

4. Treat your sources as partners in a conversation, rather than as repositories of information. This means you must position them as allies or opponents, use signal verbs to introduce their ideas, and continue referring to them when appropriate throughout your paper. Always analyze and evaluate cited material rather than just dumping it in your essay.
1. The characterizations of Mr. Shepherd are mistaken because they overlook the ways in which he has taken to heart many of the community’s concerns. One such concern was in regards to his original name of “Marley’z Lounge and Head Shop.” After hearing the public outcry he has shortened the name to “Marley’z Lounge,” completely eliminating his association with being a head shop. In response to a recent protest, Shepherd remarked: “Most of the stuff I saw them standing against, I am against, too. I don’t plan to sell any drug paraphernalia” (qtd. in Rogers). Shepherd makes clear that his business will be simply a hookah bar, and nothing more.

2. America has a huge problem. It seems that our entire country thinks that if we ignore this impending crisis, it will solve itself and go away. Barry Worthington states that “We import more of our petroleum than at any time in our history; we don’t take energy efficiency seriously; we ignore basic signs of impending energy problems; we only react in a crisis; and we don’t insist that our leaders treat energy policy as a national priority. (Worthington 1)” Sadly, it’s almost as if we don’t even care about what happens to us when we run out of our current resources. Or, we do care. We just expect that something will protect us when oil and gas is no longer around to provide for us.

3. I acknowledge that legalizing same-sex marriage is not going to guarantee public acceptance of same-sex couples, but of course not everyone has to approve. Plenty of people believe interracial marriage to be a violation of “natural law,” but their disapproval has no bearing on whether these couples are legally entitled to marry. Anna Quindlen, a Pulitzer Prize winning columnist for the New York Times, has pointed out that the justifications for laws banning interracial marriages, voiced a generation ago, are eerily similar to contemporary justifications for laws banning same-sex marriage (63). Both rely on religious or pseudo-religious definitions of marriage, which, as Quindlen observes, violate the Constitutional separation of church and state. But whereas anti-miscegenation were deemed unconstitutional in 1967, the Supreme Court has yet to hear a case that challenges the constitutionality of marriage laws that discriminate against same-sex couples.

4. Midland is not the only entity to benefit from this reformation. There are the obvious gains to mother earth herself, as we all know the harmful effects of fossil fuels. Fossil fuel use has to be drastically reduced. Jane Burgermeister describes a process already in motion in her observation of the German green movement in her article:

   Germany’s Reichstag in Berlin is set to become the first parliamentary building in the world to be powered 100 percent by renewable energy… Solar energy will be imported via Italy from the solar thermal plants operating in the sun drenched deserts of North Africa. At a cost of €6 billion [US $8.12 billion] the national power grid comprising 60,000 kilometers will have been expanded by 850 kilometers and upgraded by around 2015. It is estimated that introducing tighter energy efficiency measures will reduce total electricity demand in Germany by 10 percent to 550 TWh per year by 2020… slashing the need for oil and reducing greenhouse gas emissions… The costs are acceptable and they need to be seen against the huge costs that will result if Germany fails to take action to cut its carbon emissions. ("Germany")

   In short, Germany has great ambitions for the future of its energy, and I have to bring attention to a certain point she makes. It will cost to make this a reality. The €6 billion fee is no small amount and yet the costs that they see arising from their inaction are much greater.
Evaluating Proofs
English 5389: GTA Training

Compositionist Richard Fulkerson provides a useful heuristic (the acronym STAR) for evaluating proofs. You can ask students to apply the STAR criteria to their own arguments and to their classmates’ arguments during peer review, and you can use the STAR criteria to help you respond to student drafts.

Let’s say I’m attempting to prove the following claim: “Underage drinking on college campuses is an epidemic.”

**Sufficiency:** Is there enough evidence to convince the intended audience?

- If I attempt to prove the claim listed above by conducting interviews with several college students, my audience might object that I’m not providing enough cases to prove the existence of an epidemic. I have a better chance of providing sufficient evidence if I cite a survey of hundreds or thousands of college students.

**Typicality:** Is the evidence typical, representative of the group, generalizable?

- Let’s say I do cite a large survey, but participants are students at UT-Austin, which *Playboy* ranked as the “Top Party School” of 2010. My audience might object that UT students are not representative of the college population as a whole.

**Accuracy:** Is the evidence accurate, up-to-date, and from a reliable source?

- What if I cite a wide-ranging survey of students at many different types of institutions that was conducted in 1990? My audience might object that underage drinking has diminished in the past twenty years as colleges and universities have paid more attention to the issue.

**Relevance:** Is the evidence directly relevant to the claim it’s supposed to support?

- Let’s say I cite a recent survey of thousands of college students from all types of institutions, but participants are responding to the following question: Have you ever consumed alcohol? My audience might object that this question does not indicate frequency of consumption, and thus it isn’t entirely relevant to the claim that underage drinking is an epidemic.
Discussion Pedagogy
As a teacher of rhetoric and composition, you'll devote many class days to discussions of texts. It’s one thing to fill up a bunch of days on your syllabus with entries like, “Workshop essays,” but what do you do when those days roll around and you have to fill up 50 or 75 minutes with unscripted activity? This handout describes a number of strategies that are intended to help you plan all your discussion days.

Justifying class discussion to students
As much as students complain about lectures, sometimes they feel like they haven’t learned anything if they don’t leave class with pages of notes filled with content knowledge. Thus, you may need to convince your students that they really are learning whenever they’re actively engaged in class discussions. You can tell them that educational research supports the effectiveness of discussion teaching in accomplishing both main types of course objectives:

Transfer of knowledge: memory is affected by how deeply we process new knowledge, and simply listening to or writing down information results in low retention. Discussion requires students to think about and consolidate new knowledge, thus improving retention.

Critical thinking: learning new ways of thinking requires practice. Lectures are only minimally effective in changing the way students think because they amount to coaching without practice. Discussion allows you to do some coaching, but more important, it allows students to practice the new ways of thinking that they are learning.

Also consider touting the practical benefits of discussion-based courses. For example, discussion classes are just livelier and more fun than lectures. Your class may be one of the few in which your students can build close relationships with their classmates and their teacher.

How to prepare for a discussion day
A popular perception is that class discussions are off-the-cuff and require little preparation, but your discussion classes will go much more smoothly if you prepare yourself and your students. Here are a few things you should do to prepare for class:

1. Read the text looking for discussion questions: as you read/view/listen to the text for the final time before class, your main goal should be to generate discussion questions. Write down the questions and the place(s) in the text to which they refer, and, assuming it’s a print text, mark the text clearly. Have more questions than you can possibly use in case some of them bomb. Make sure they are good discussion questions, meaning they

   - require students to analyze and/or evaluate the text rhetorically.
   - have no right or wrong answer, or a specific answer you’re fishing for, but instead allow students to form an interpretation, or solve a problem, using textual evidence as support.
   - aren’t too abstract—students should understand what you’re asking and possess the relevant knowledge/experience needed to formulate a response.
   - draw on different parts of the course, requiring students to make connections.

2. Contextualize the text prior to assigning it: your students will comprehend the text more fully, and thus will be better prepared to discuss it, if they know something about its
argument and main ideas, its style and structure, its author, the cultural situation in which it was written, its reception and post-publication history, its continued relevance, etc.

3. **Give your students a specific reading task:** research shows that expert readers usually have a clear sense of what they want to get from a text, so have your students look for something specific. You might give students a discussion question, as described above, prior to reading. You might require that students themselves generate discussion questions that they submit to you before class. You might have students look for, and prepare to talk about, a specific rhetorical element, such as the text’s central argument, its use of evidence, its treatment of opposing views, the ways the author comes across, its appeals to audience values, etc.

4. **Know the text cold:** no matter how many times you’ve read/viewed/listened to the text you’re going to discuss, do it again just before class. You’ll feel more confident; you’ll be better able to clarify students’ miscomprehensions of the text; you’ll have a better chance of locating those places in the text that students want to reference but only vaguely remember; you’ll see more connections between different parts of the text; and you’ll establish credibility with your students by demonstrating a thorough knowledge of the text.

**What to do during a discussion**

In addition to preparing yourself and your students for discussion, here are some things you should do during discussion:

1. **Getting started:** sometimes the most nerve-racking moment in a discussion is just before it begins, when no one is sure anyone will talk. Start with low-pressure, open-ended questions like, “What did you think of X? Did you like it?” This will usually get students talking, and if you ask them to elaborate on their reactions to the text, and then throw things out to the group, you might never need the questions you’ve prepared. This type of discussion is ideal, so long as it stays on the path toward course objectives, because it means students have taken ownership of their own learning.

2. **Give students time to formulate their thoughts:** it can feel awkward to stand in front of a silent class, but if you’re asking students to think, you have to give them time to think. Consider having students write down their thoughts after you ask a question. Not only does this make silence seem less awkward, but also students will be more inclined to speak if they’ve formulated what they want to say. Another good strategy is to divide the class into small groups that work on the problem or question. This reduces pressure on individuals (including you) and involves those who may be nonparticipants in full-class discussions.

3. **Use your chalkboard (or some equivalent):** use a writing surface that is visible to the entire class and that can be changed quickly in order to:
   - write down key questions you want students to study more closely.
   - buy time for you and your students to think (there’s a natural pause whenever you write something on the board, step back, review it, etc.)
   - keep a record of the discussion, which keeps things focused and allows you or your students to return to previous points.
   - exercise some control over the direction of the discussion.
• demonstrate for students that progress has been made, that questions have been answered and problems have been solved.

4. **Be ready for lulls:** at some point the discussion will quiet down (sometimes before it’s even gotten started) and reach an apparent stopping point. Don’t panic. It may be that students are continuing to process and will begin talking again if you don’t rush them. If the discussion truly has stalled, now is the time to break out the questions/notes you prepared prior to class. Have your questions/notes written down, have them handy, and know them well enough that you can choose which one is most relevant to what has been discussed so far. And always, always have more questions than you can use.

**What to do after a discussion**

Often instructors let discussions run until the end of class and then never return to them, but you should *always* have a post-discussion wrap (either at the end of class or at the beginning of the next class) that:

- summarizes the key points that were made and the conclusions that were reached.
- explains in detail how the discussion has helped the entire class move toward course objectives.

A good summary ensures that everyone takes away the most important points of the discussion, and it gives you another chance to convince students that they are learning during discussions.

**Alternatives (or enhancements) to oral discussions: forums and blogs**

Although computer-based discussions work best in tandem with oral discussions (i.e., an oral discussion is continued on-line after class, or an oral discussion begins with a student’s forum or blog post), they can also serve as an alternative. Computer-based discussions offer many advantages over oral discussions:

1. Oral discussions favor students who can think on their feet and are more outgoing, confident, aggressive. Computer-based discussions mostly eliminate the disadvantage of shyness.
2. Sometimes you get a student who monopolizes oral discussions. This is more difficult to do in computer-based discussions.
3. Students are more willing to take risks in their contributions to computer-based discussions because they have less fear of embarrassment.
4. You don’t have world enough and time to require everyone to contribute in oral discussions. You can require everyone to contribute to computer-based discussions.
5. Silence can be awkward in oral discussions, so people don’t always feel like they have time to think. Computer-based discussions allow everyone time to formulate their thoughts.
6. In order to give themselves time to think, students in oral discussions sometimes formulate what they’re going to say before the person before them finishes. Thus, discussions can become like a series of monologues. Computer-based discussions can promote more genuine conversation.
7. You are teaching a writing class, after all, and computer-based discussions allow students to write in a different register.

**Two final pieces of advice**
Whenever students make particularly valuable contributions to class discussions, speak to them outside of class and thank them for their effort. This shows you're paying attention and encourages them to keep it up. Students don't always receive this type of recognition, and they may be more willing to face the scary prospect of speaking in class as a result of it.

Ask your students for help! All good discussions are collaborations, and often students have great ideas for how to improve discussions for their particular class.
Composing Writing Assignments
One of the challenges of teaching a process model of composing is writing paper assignments that get students to engage in the thinking and writing processes we value. After all, no matter how many drafts or process materials we collect, we can't get into our students' heads and monitor their cognition.

The fill-in-the-blanks problem . . .
Research indicates that if overly explicit instructions are given, students take short-cuts to the product and dodge the intended writing/learning processes (e.g., Doyle, 1983; Nelson, 1990, 1993, 1995; Nespor, 1987).

The what-do-you-want-for-this-paper problem . . .
On the other hand, research also indicates that students get frustrated with overly vague writing assignments, and rather than working through their uncertainty in meaningful ways, they often rely on coping strategies: reverting to established procedures for writing assignments, getting clarification from peers, asking advice from family members, etc. Also, as compositionists such as David Bartholomae (1985) and Patricia Bizzell (1982) have argued, it seems unfair to expect novice writers to determine the implicit ways of academic thinking and writing we expect of them—such an approach favors students who are already further along in their acquisition of academic discourse.

So how do you find a middle ground? Research suggests that you should:

**Get explicit with invention strategies.** You should provide highly specific inventionale heuristics, e.g., lists of questions or steps that will turn up information and ideas that students can shape into a paper. Students have no idea what to write about when they take on something new and unfamiliar, and the surest path to writer's block is not having anything to say. And good inventionale heuristics don't predict what will come out. They're sort of like content machines that churn out ideas without determining what those ideas will be. Also, because inventionale heuristics are completed prior to drafting, they don't lend themselves to shortcuts, i.e., there's no point at which students have a product that "looks like what the teacher wants."

**Be vague with arrangement.** The main problem with arrangement templates, such as the 5-paragraph structure, is that they privilege arrangement over invention, i.e., students know how their paper will be organized before they have any idea what they're going to say. Students don't have to grapple with finding the best arrangement for their paper based on its content and the needs of the audience—they know the answer beforehand. This, in turn, produces a backlash against invention—if students know they need to find no more/no less than three main ideas, that's exactly how many they'll find. The same goes for things like page length and number of outside sources. When at all possible, allow the content of students' work itself to determine how long their papers should be (within reason) and how many sources their papers require.

Of course you can be specific about how to construct coherent paragraphs. These are building blocks of arrangement that don't dictate in advance the content of paragraphs, how many there will be, or the order in which they will appear.

**Make drafting and revision a part of every assignment.** This probably goes without saying, but the surest way to prevent short-cuts is to force students to produce multiple products for any single assignment. By requiring multiple drafts, you ensure that every student engages in some
level of extended process. And because peer and instructor feedback is written in response to a student’s particular draft, the draft itself, rather than a preconceived, idealized product, becomes the student’s object of attention.

To model or not to model . . .
At their best, sample papers unlock students and give them a clear direction to go with their own ideas. At their worst, sample papers become just another template that students mimic. There’s no consensus on whether the use of model papers does more harm than good, and it probably depends on the individual student and assignment. My own sense is that if you require sound inventional heuristics, and you wait until students are well into their inventional stages, a model paper can help students come up with a style and organizational plan that prevents writer’s block but is still tailored to their particular paper.

Bibliography


Responding to Preliminary Drafts

The problem with “marking” drafts
Perhaps the most common mistake teachers make when responding to student drafts is to mark mistakes in grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics. According to composition research, marking surface-level errors on developing drafts:

1. leads students to believe that, in general, these issues are just as important as rhetorical effectiveness.
2. encourages students to edit much too soon in the composing process. Students tend to fix surface-level errors first because that is easiest and quickest, and then they may be less likely to engage in global revision and rewriting for fear of undoing what they’ve fixed. On developing drafts students should be attending global concerns of rhetorical effectiveness.
3. hinders students’ natural progression as writers. Surface-level errors increase when students attempt new and more complex forms of writing. Drawing undue attention to errors might impede growth because students, in an attempt to avoid the teacher’s pen, stick with comfortable constructions, refusing to experiment, take risks, try out new forms.
4. produces “low pedagogical yield,” i.e., a lot of time and effort on the part of teachers for very little gain in student learning. Marking errors on student drafts rarely prevents them from making similar mistakes on future writing assignments.

The problem with the “marking” mentality
To tell students what is “wrong” with a text is, to a large extent, to appropriate their writing, to direct them toward “what the teacher wants” instead of facilitating realization of their own intentions. A more productive approach is to be a sounding board enabling the writer to see confusions in the text and encouraging the writer to explore alternatives that he or she may not have considered.

Advantages of producing a separate document or using Word’s “add comment” feature to respond to student writing:

1. Most of us can write more, more quickly, when typing, which makes us more likely to avoid brief, cryptic remarks in favor of clear, complete sentences that are more easily understood by students. And you don’t have to worry about whether students can read your handwriting.
2. Marking a text limits you to the white space available on the page—creating a new document eliminates arbitrary space restrictions and allows you to say everything you want to say.
3. You are less likely to appropriate students’ texts when you create a separate document in response to theirs. You can sustain a sense of dialogue between you and your students, wherein one writer is simply asking another for clarification and expansion.

Bibliography


Grading Student Writing

The most common methods of grading student papers are holistic, rubric, combined holistic/rubric, and portfolio grading.

Holistic Grading
With holistic grading, you simply assign one grade to the entire paper. Many feel this method of grading reinforces the notion of writing we want to instill in our students because it considers the overall effect of the paper. Also, holistic grading allows you to score a paper more intuitively because you are not restricted by overly explicit criteria. At the same time, holistic grading runs the risk of making your expectations seem vague, and your grading arbitrary, to students. You might avoid this problem by providing detailed descriptions of the features of A, B, C, D, and F papers.

Rubric Grading
With rubric grading, you assign a grade or point value to individual segments of a paper and then add up these segments to get an overall grade. Some worry that rubric grading contradicts the message we want to send our students that writing is more than the sum of its parts. On the other hand, you may feel more confident in the grades you assign using a rubric because they are anchored to specific parts of the paper, and students generally feel they have a clearer sense of how their writing will be graded with a rubric. Also, rubrics can help guide students’ revisions when distributed with feedback on a developing draft.

Holistic / Rubric Grading
With combined holistic/rubric grading, you rate individual segments of a paper, but these segments are mere areas of emphases and do not carry pre-assigned point values. This allows you to grade holistically while still specifying which parts of a paper “count.” As with pure holistic grading, consider providing students with a detailed description of A, B, C, D, and F papers, and as with pure rubric grading, distribute your rubric early enough that students can use it to help guide their revisions.

Portfolio Grading
With portfolio grading, you assign one grade to many different writing assignments (and multiple drafts of those assignments) at the end of the term. Portfolio grading has been shown to best reinforce the notion of writing as a process because students write many drafts of every paper and no single draft stands alone as the final-product-to-be-graded. On the downside, portfolios can lead to anxiety among students because they are not receiving grades throughout the term, and, once you do finally grade the portfolio, it can be difficult to develop grading criteria for such a diverse collection of writing. From a teacher’s perspective, because you’ve not been grading papers along the way, you grade all writing at once, which can be an overwhelming task. Please note: Instructors using portfolio grading must provide grades on beginning-of-semester and midterm grade reports.

Regardless of which grading method you choose, you should provide students with end comments that explain what they did well and what they could have done better. Research indicates that, while end comments are helpful to students, marginal comments on a final draft are often ignored by students and do little to improve future performance. Consider limiting your marginal comments to a developing draft of a paper.

Bibliography

