

The UTD First Year Experience

Rhet 1101

Critical Thinking and Oral Communication

Syllabus

Section: 019

Rooms: Tuesday – SOM 2.115

Thursday – SOM 2.901

Instructor: Blythe Torres

Office Location: MP3.206; Office Number: (972) 883-6309; Office Hours: Flexible

Email: kbt043000@utdallas.edu

First Year Leader: Cameron Dyer; Office Hours: By Appt.

Email: cld022000@utdallas.edu

Required Materials:

- UTD Student Planner & Guide
- Cohen, Harlan, (2005). *The Naked Roommate*, Sourcebooks, Inc. Naperville.
- DiTiberio, John, K. & Hammer, Allen, L. (1993). *Introduction to Type in College*, CPP, Inc. Palo Alto.
- UTD student email account

Course Objectives:

- To enable you to learn from various departments on campus the critical information necessary for successfully navigating UTD.
- To connect you with the UTD campus community by way of meeting other students, getting involved, and learning how to make a difference.
- To provide you with a conceptual understanding of the college experience and the value of a liberal arts-based education.
- To help you discover your personal learning style and ways to use that knowledge to achieve greater success and enjoyment in your classes.
- To present tips, tactics, and techniques for more effective learning, emphasizing time management strategies and critical thinking.
- To enhance your communication skills through opportunities for both oral and written expression.

Coursework & Grading Philosophy

- Rhet 1101 is a required course for all incoming freshmen as it has been effective in raising GPA's, retention from the freshman to sophomore year, and overall student satisfaction and success.
- UTD is a selective admissions institution with one of the highest average Freshman class SAT scores in the state, therefore performance and participation in Rhet 1101 is expected to reflect the caliber of students and academic standards of the university as a whole.
- The course objectives for Rhet 1101 represent goals which are fundamental to student success both inside and outside of the college classroom.
- Grading will focus on two primary elements of students work:
 - College level communication of ideas presented in a high-quality format.
 - Correct, well thought out, and/or researched content which significantly addresses all required assignment elements.

Course Requirements

- Class Attendance & Participation
- Academic Autobiography
- Two Campus Events and Reaction Papers
- Library Tour
- Oral Presentation: Expert Testimony
- Group Project & Presentation: Becoming a Part of the UTD Campus Community

Class Attendance and Participation

Small Class Meetings – We will meet every Thursday in SOM 2.901 to explore a variety of topics through interactive discussions and exercises. Attendance and participation is a significant aspect of this course, thus you will receive a daily participation grade for small class meetings.

Participation Evaluation: This is a discussion-based course in which you will spend a significant amount of time working in small groups. Your participation will be observed and subsequently evaluated by your instructor according to the following guidelines:

10 points/day – Significant participation: assuming roles in group activities, relevant contributions to discussions, and submission of any required written work generated in class.

0 points/day – Minimal to no participation: absent from class, doing homework during class time, letting others complete group objectives with little or no input/insight/feedback from you, not turning in written work generated during class. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior will also result in 0 participation points for the day.

****Participation evaluations are at the instructor's discretion. Point allotments will be based on the objectives for the day and the instructor's determination of the level of participation he or she deems appropriate for the exercise.**

Large Group Meetings – We will meet Tuesdays in SOM 2.115 with several other sections to hear presentations from various departments on campus and engage in various activities. Attendance and participation is a significant aspect of this course, thus you will receive a daily attendance grade form large group meetings. *Note in the schedule that there are several classes that meet in a different location.*

Attendance Policy and Grading: For each **large** group meeting, you will receive 10 points for **full class** attendance.

- Sign-in attendance sheets will be placed in the same location each week in the lecture hall. You must sign in by your name **within the first 5 minutes of class** after which point attendance sheets will be collected and those who have not signed in will not receive attendance points for the day. However, attendance in class – even if you are late – is important so that you do not have an unexcused absence (see box below.)
- Signing in for anyone else will result in loss of attendance points for you and the person you signed in for.
- If you leave early from class, you will not receive attendance points for the day.

****If you know you will be late for any reason, or must leave early, inform your instructor before the class day.**

In addition to the grading policy for attendance (large groups) and participation (small class), your final course grade will be lowered **a full letter grade for each class missed after two unexcused absences.**

Example Coursework Grade = A+

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| 3 Unexcused Absences | B+ |
| 4 Unexcused Absences | C+ |
| 5 Unexcused Absences | D+ |
| 6 Unexcused Absences | F |

Requirements for an **excused** absence (no exceptions!):

- All students participating on UTD competitive teams (athletic and intellectual) must bring an official Intercollegiate Competition Memo signed by John Jackson **prior** to any sanctioned absences. Students must inform the instructor of the impending absence **at least 2 weeks prior** to the absence. If this does not occur, it is at the instructor's discretion to excuse or not excuse the absence.
- Any anticipated absence arranged through Disability Services must be shared with the instructor **at least 2 weeks prior** to the absence. If this does not occur, it is at the instructor's discretion to excuse or not excuse the absence.
- Students observing a holy day must inform the instructor **before** the class day to be missed

Assignment Format

All assignments are due **on the specified due date – NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED!!** Also all work must exhibit the following format:

- A coherent essay that addresses all required elements of the assignment.
- Typed, double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font with one-inch margins.
- Students should include their name, section number, and date on all work.
- Papers should be free of typos, spelling, grammatical, and formatting errors.
- Vocabulary should reflect that of a college student, and writing style should be mature and cognizant of the instructor as audience.
- If submitted via email, papers must be sent as an attachment, from your UTD email account, following the above format **and submitted on or before the specified due date.**

Failure to adhere to any of the above will result in:

- A 10 % deduction for incorrect format.
- A 5 % deduction for multiple typos, spelling and grammatical errors.
- A 5 % deduction for poor language use and/or a disrespectful voice in the paper.
- **No points** for work turned in after the specified due date.

Grading

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Class Attendance | 100 points |
| Class Participation | 100 points |
| Academic Autobiography | 100 points |
| Two Campus Events & Reaction Paper | 60 points (30 each x 2) |
| Oral Presentation: Expert Testimony | 50 points |
| Library Tour | 40 points |
| Group Project & Presentation | 150 points |
| Total | 600 points |

Grading Scale*

| | | | |
|-----------|----|-------------|----|
| 600 | A+ | 462 – 479 | C+ |
| 564 – 599 | A | 438 – 461 | C |
| 540 – 563 | A- | 420 – 437 | C- |
| 522 – 539 | B+ | 402 – 419 | D+ |
| 498 – 521 | B | 378 – 401 | D |
| 480 – 497 | B- | 360 – 377 | D- |
| | | 359 & below | F |

*Point totals prior to adjustments based on unexcused absences.

Your Rhet 1101 grade WILL contribute to your cumulative GPA at UTD.

***Rhet 1101 is a requirement for graduation. If you drop the course or fail it, you must take Study Skills (DRDG 0v94) in the Spring. It will be recoded as Rhet 1101 in order to give you credit for the course and enable you to replace your low grade or W.**

Classroom Policies

- Cell phones should be turned off during class and calls and text messages are not to be answered or placed during class time.
- Laptop computers are not necessary for any reason in this course. Please do not open them at any time during class or you will be counted absent.
- Arriving late is disruptive to class activities and may affect your attendance and participation grade. If you have a legitimate reason for being late, please inform your instructor ahead of time or immediately after class.

The University of Texas at Dallas is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 - The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty of their need for accommodation and in providing **authorized documentation** through designated administrative channels. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at www.utdallas.edu/student/sliffe/hcsvc.html. Please visit the office of Disability Services in Student Union (1.610) or call at 972.883.2098 to obtain proper paperwork for this class.

Small Class Meeting Schedule

| |
|---|
| Thursday, August 25 |
| Introductions, Ice Breakers, Syllabus Quiz |
| Thursday, September 1 |
| Paragon Learning Styles Inventory DUE: Academic Autobiography |
| Thursday, September 8 |
| |
| Thursday, September 15 |
| |
| Thursday, September 22 |
| DUE: Campus Event Reaction Paper #1 |
| Thursday, September 29 |
| Oral Presentations: Expert Testimony |
| Thursday, October 6 |
| NO CLASS! |
| Thursday, October 13 |
| |
| Thursday, October 20 |
| DUE: Campus Event Reaction Paper #2 |
| Thursday, October 27 |
| |
| Thursday, November 3 |
| Group Project Presentations DUE: Group Project Evaluation Papers |
| Thursday, November 10 |
| Wrap up DUE: Last day to turn in proof of Library Tour attendance. |

Large Group Presentation Schedule

| | |
|---|---|
| Tuesday, August 23 | UTD Information Scavenger Hunt: Student Planner & Guide |
| Tuesday, August 30 | Consumer Credit Counseling Service |
| Tuesday, September 6 | UTD Counseling Center |
| Tuesday, September 13 | Judicial Affairs: Academic Integrity |
| Tuesday, September 20 (Meet in SOM 1.118) | Office of the Registrar |
| Tuesday, September 27 | UTD Library |
| Tuesday, October 4 | No Class |
| Tuesday, October 11 (Meet in SOM 1.118) | Women's Center/Health Ed./Campus Police |
| Tuesday, October 18 (Meet in SU Galaxy Rooms) | UTD Multicultural Center: Diversity Table Talks |
| Tuesday, October 25 | Information Technology |
| Tuesday, November 1 (Meet in SOM 1.118) | UTD Career Center & Office of International Education |
| Tuesday, November 8 | TBA |

****Vote for you favorite to receive the Students' Choice Award for Best Presentation!**