

ENGL 4388: Rhetoric in Democracy



Spring 2022

Modality: This is a face-to-face course that meets on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. in Founder's Hall 312.

Instructor: Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr.

E-mail: bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu

Office: Warrior Hall 420A, the University Writing Center, or WebEx Meeting

Office Hours: Walk-in or Email for an Appointment

TAMUCT Course Description: A course featuring independent reading, research, and discussion under personal direction of instructor, topics to vary according to student need.

Dr. Bowles' Course Description: This course actively involves students in applying rhetorical theories in order to create various texts as part of a rhetorical campaign for a community partner to encourage voting (or other forms of civic participation).

Course Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Theorize the impact rhetoric has on democracy across a multitude of contexts
- Conduct research on voting procedures, various candidates, ballot issues, etc. in order to inform and persuade citizens to vote and engage in civic life
- Compose texts in a neutral tone that can provide valuable information to citizens without being viewed as partisan
- Create persuasive texts that encourage citizens to vote in upcoming elections in relation to issues that are important for specific audiences
- Design a digital campaign that takes advantage of virality in order to gain attention for voting in upcoming elections
- Revise texts in accordance with evolving understandings of the rhetorical situation and in collaboration with classmates and community partners

Required Textbooks and Materials:

- *The Language of Persuasion in Politics: An Introduction*, by Alan Partington and Charlotte Taylor, ISBN (13) #9781138038486
- Various .pdf articles and selections from major texts (available through Canvas)
- Access to a Computer (the university provides a number of computer labs)

Service-Learning Designation: This course utilizes a service-learning framework which is an evidence-based teaching strategy supported by a large volume of research. Service-learning can be defined as a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students learn to relate theory to practice by participating in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and then by reflecting upon the service activity in such ways as to meet instructional objectives, and gain a broader appreciation for the discipline and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.

In an effort to provide you with authentic audiences and writing contexts, this class is partnering with the Killeen chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). You will be working in groups (or individually if you so choose) to tailor each of your three major projects to the needs of the Killeen NAACP. Once a month, during our Wednesday workshop classes, Ms. TaNeika Driver-Moultrie—President of the Killeen NAACP—will be visiting to discuss initiatives the organization is working on, their goals in relation to voter registration, key issues important to the organization, etc. You will also be able to contact her throughout the semester with any key questions you have.

Additionally, you will be providing five engagement hours to the Killeen NAACP throughout the semester (or to another community partner of your choosing). The purpose of these engagement hours is to allow you the opportunity to get to better understand the organization, the people it serves, its goals and mission, etc. While you need five engagement hours, you are free to negotiate these hours with Ms. TaNeika Driver-Moultrie (or your contact person with any other community partner) in any fashion you like. These hours can be in relation to assisting with events for Black History Month. You may wish to participate in helping with events for the Killeen NAACP that promote civic engagement. You may even choose to

volunteer to register voters. (Visit https://www.bellcountytexas.com/departments/elections/bell_county_volunteer_deputy_registrar_procedures.php for information on how to become eligible to register people to vote.)

If you do not wish to provide your five engagement hours to the Killeen NAACP or complete your projects with them in mind, you are free to partner with another non-profit organization that promotes voting and provide your five engagement hours to them along with completing your projects with that organization in mind. In this case, you will need to make arrangements with this community partner and place me in contact with a member of the organization. This will allow me to verify your five engagement hours and ensure you are meeting the objectives of the class.

Technology Requirements:

This course will use the A&M–Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. We strongly recommend the latest versions of Chrome or Firefox browsers. Canvas no longer supports any version of Internet Explorer.

Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/>] or access Canvas through the TAMUCT Online link in myCT [<https://tamuct.onecampus.com/>]. You will log in through our Microsoft portal.

Username: Your MyCT email address; Password: Your MyCT password

Grading Scheme: Various activities, discussion board posts, reflective memos, and engagement hours; three major projects; and a course reflection will comprise students' grades. The weights for each component are as follows:

Activities, Discussion Boards, Reflective Memos, and Engagement Hours= 20%

“Making Sure Our Audience Members are High-Information Voters! Composing a Neutral, Informative Text Pertaining to Voting”= 20%

“Rock to Get Out the Vote or Die! A Persuasive Text to Encourage Voting for a Particular Audience”= 20%

“Coming Down with the Urge to Vote! Creating a Viral Digital Rhetoric Campaign to Encourage Voting”= 20%

“Peering into the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool! Reflecting on ENGL 4388: Rhetoric in Democracy”= 20%

Once you submit a final assignment (not a draft) through Canvas, it is the text I will grade, and you will not be given the opportunity to revise. Make sure that the text you are submitting is one you can be proud of and is the text you want me to grade. (If, for any reason, you believe you have submitted the wrong text, please contact me as soon as you submit to rectify the issue.) **Remember, once you submit—that is it!**

Posting of Grades: All assignments will be returned to you through Canvas as a .doc or—in the case of discussion board posts—as feedback in Canvas. When your assignments are returned as a .doc, you will receive your grade after the end comment in the comment box.

I do not use Canvas to calculate grades. Instead, I use a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. A sample of the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for this course is available on the “Syllabus” page of our course Canvas site so you can see how your grade is calculated. I will go over this the first day of class as well.

At any time, you are free to email me to ask me to send you the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with your grades inputted. I can also provide you with a rough estimate of where your grade stands at that time. However, be alert that as a result of the weight of various assignments, your grade can change substantially when major projects are submitted.

Journals: For certain classes, you will write in your journals for the first few minutes. You can either write by hand or type your journal entries. Most days, I will dictate a topic for you to write about. Think thoroughly about the topic, yet try to write continuously throughout the duration of the exercise. Sometimes, merely writing down your thoughts can help you to gain a better understanding of the topic and your own thought processes.

Activities: You will have a few asynchronous activities to complete throughout the semester. The activities you are asked to complete will vary substantially depending on the content being covered in class. However, you are expected to read the instructions for the activity carefully and complete all of the requirements of the activity within the parameters set forth.

Your activities will be graded on a 0-100 scale. Mere participation does not ensure a 100—you are expected to offer quality work in order to receive an exemplary grade.

Discussion Boards: You will participate in discussion boards at other times as well. Most often, the initial discussion board topics and/or questions will be predetermined. Some weeks, however, they will be more wide open.

You should contribute a total of at least three times (or as many times as the prompt indicates) to the discussion board throughout the week, including making your first post by the date indicated. Your initial contributions should be roughly the equivalent of one to two pages double-spaced each; your replies to classmates should be two to three paragraphs. Furthermore, make sure to directly engage with what other students in the class are discussing and questioning.

Your discussion board posts should form a cohesive thread and narrative with the discussions of your classmates. Just posting to the board is not enough—you need to enter into a conversation with your peers!

As with your activities, grades will be awarded on a 0-100 scale and will account for both your initial post as well as your contributions throughout the week.

Reflective Memos: For each of the three major projects, you will be expected to complete a reflective memo along with turning in your final project. You will be responsible for responding to all of the questions for the reflective memo. For each question, you should provide at least one to two solid paragraphs for your answer.

Additionally, you will need to pay special attention to the final question on each reflective memo if you elect to work in a group. This question will ask you about how you specifically

contributed to the composition of the text. **This is crucial since it can be used as evidence to resolve disputes among the group and will factor into your grade for the assignment itself.**

Essentially, you are expected to contribute your fair share to the group. **If any accusations arise as to a student not contributing their fair share, or one student appears not to be contributing their fair share, your reflective memo will potentially be sent to your groupmates for verification that you indeed made the contributions you are claiming.** You are held to the Texas A&M University–Central Texas Academic Integrity policy in regard to honesty.

Your reflective memos will also inform my assessment of your projects. For group submissions, your grade can oscillate from the grade of your groupmates depending on how you frame the project in your reflective memo—be careful!

Each group member will submit their own, independently written reflective memo. You will also receive an individual grade on your reflective memos which will be awarded on a 0-100 scale.

Class Attendance Policy: Attending class is vital if you are to get the most out of this course and to build a productive community of engaged learners. As a result, I do require that you have **no more than three uninformed absences** throughout the semester. You will lose points for every uninformed absence thereafter.

The distinction between uninformed and informed absences is critical here. An uninformed absence occurs when you do not contact me ahead of class (or immediately after) to alert me to your absence, do not provide a reasonable rationale for the absence, and do not discuss how you will engage with the material from the class that day in order to account for the absence. If you inform me of your absence, though, provide a reasonable rationale for the absence (in rare instances, I may ask for documentation), and discuss with me how you will engage with the material you missed, your absence will be considered an informed absence and will not be counted against you. I am more than willing to work with you if you miss class. **However, these issues cannot be dealt with retroactively at the end of the semester. This is your one and only warning.**



If you have more than three uninformed absences by the end of the semester, your grade will be penalized 10 points—an entire letter grade—for each unexcused absence beyond three. I will inform you when you have three uninformed absences; additionally, I will inform you each time you receive a 10 point penalty. You may contest any uninformed absence, yet you

will need to provide tangible evidence as to how you informed me or why you were unable to inform me.

Lastly, incompletes should be reserved for unexpected, life altering situations that develop after the drop deadline. Students should drop a course should something happen that prevents them from completing the course ahead of the drop deadline. Failure to do so may result in failing grades on assignments or the course if missing work is not completed and submitted before the last day of the semester. Please let me know immediately if serious health or life issues prevent you from attending class or submitting assignments.



Class Civility Policy: This class will tolerate neither disruptive language nor disruptive behavior. Disruptive language includes, but is not limited to, violent and/or belligerent and/or insulting remarks, including sexist, racist, homophobic or anti-ethnic slurs, bigotry, and disparaging commentary, either spoken or written (offensive slang is included in this category). While each of you has a right to your own opinions, inflammatory language founded in ignorance or hate is unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately.

Disruptive behavior includes the use of cell phones, pagers, or any other form of electronic communication during the class session (email, web-browsing, etc.). Disruptive behavior also includes whispering or talking when another member of the class is speaking or engaged

in relevant conversation (remember that I am a member of this class as well). This classroom functions on the premise of respect, and you will be asked to leave the classroom if you violate any part of this statement on civility.

However, please do feel free to engage in constructive criticism and debates. This policy is not meant to discourage disagreement or passionate conversation. We will be engaging in discussions and/or debates about a host of potentially controversial topics; it is not my intention to censor your opinions. Yet, I do feel it is important to foster an environment conducive to learning where no one feels threatened and/or not entitled to their opinion.

Remember, if you disagree with someone (including myself), always remember to argue against the **IDEA** the person is presenting—not the individual.

Late Work: While I understand that circumstances may arise that could prevent you from turning an assignment in on time, **I penalize late work severely! You will lose 10 points from your grade for each day that the assignment is late.** Here is a breakdown of how the penalties will be applied:

15 minutes–24 hours late= -10 points

24 hours, 1 minute–48 hours late= -20 points

48 hours, 1 minute–72 hours late= -30 points

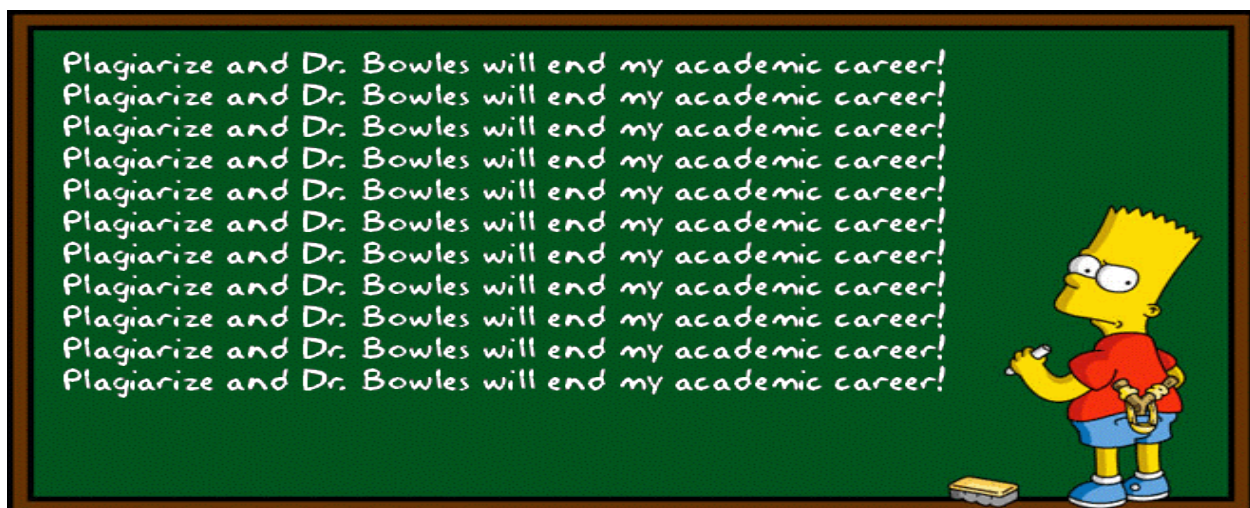
72 hours, 1 minute–96 hours late= -40 points

96 hours, 1 minute–120 hours late= -50 points
120 hours, 1 minute–144 hours late= -60 points
144 hours, 1 minute–168 hours late= -70 points
168 hours, 1 minute–192 hours late= -80 points
192 hours, 1 minute–216 hours late= -90 points
216 hours late or more= 0 for the assignment

However, **I am always willing to discuss extensions ahead of time.** If you have a reasonable reason why you believe you should be entitled to an extension, either come see me after class, arrange to visit me in my office or the UWC, or e-mail me. **Once an extension is agreed upon in writing, the due date of the extension will become your new due date. Penalties will then only be incurred predicated off of the new due date.**

Academic Integrity: Texas A&M University–Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M–Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student’s academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student’s work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university’s Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university’s standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

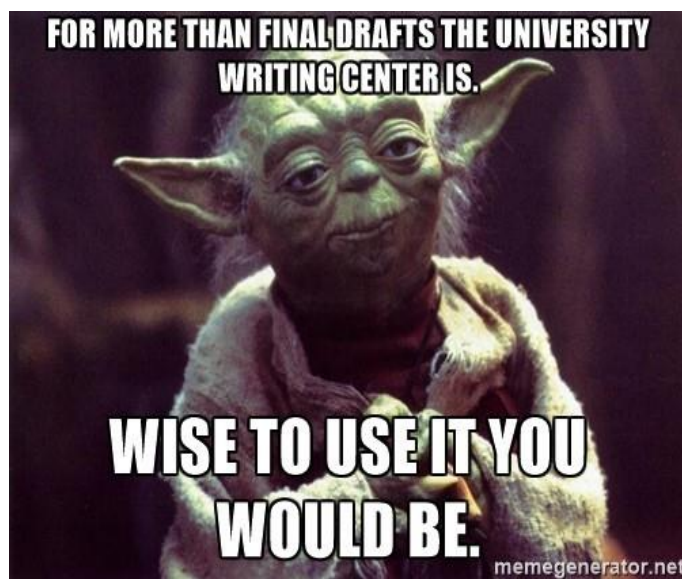
Class Plagiarism Policy: As an instructor, I operate by the WPA (Council of Writing Program Administrators) definition of plagiarism: “In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer **deliberately** uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.” The key here is deliberate—I do not want you to be so paranoid about plagiarism that it inhibits your creativity.



To that extent, any instance of “plagiarism” that **does not appear to be deliberate in intent** will be dealt with “in house.” You may be asked to revise; I may even deduct from your grade if this was a result of negligence. However, unless intentional, you will not fail merely as a result of plagiarism nor will you be brought up on plagiarism charges.

That being said, **deliberate plagiarism will not be tolerated in any manner.** If you willfully steal someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledgment, or submit an assignment for this class that you submitted for another (without previously discussing it with me), **be forewarned—you will receive a 0 for the assignment, and I will pursue plagiarism charges with the utmost zeal!** Such behavior hinders your learning, is unfair to your classmates, is a violation of my trust, and—above all else—is highly unethical. **This is your one and only warning—you would be wise to heed it!**

University Writing Center: Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (A&M–Central Texas) is a free service open to all A&M–Central Texas students. For the Spring 2022 semester, the hours of operation are from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday in Warrior Hall 416 (with online tutoring available every hour as well) with satellite hours available online only Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. and Saturday 12:00-3:00 p.m.



Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students’ ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students’ texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on

writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help!

Students may arrange a one-to-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by making an appointment via WOnline at <https://tamuct.mywconline.com/>. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu if you have any questions about the UWC, need any assistance with scheduling, or would like to schedule a recurring appointment with your favorite tutor.

Tutoring: Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both virtually and in-person. Student success coaching is available online upon request.

If you have a question, are interested in becoming a tutor, or in need of success coaching contact the Warrior Center for Student Success, Equity and Inclusion at (254) 501-5836, visit the Warrior Center at 212 Warrior Hall, or by emailing WarriorCenter@tamuct.edu.

To schedule tutoring sessions and view tutor availability, please visit [Tutor Matching Services](https://tutormatchingservice.com/TAMUCT) [https://tutormatchingservice.com/TAMUCT] or visit the Tutoring Center in 111 Warrior Hall.

Chat live with a remote tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log in and receive online tutoring support at no additional cost. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas except writing support. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

University Library: The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 400,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 96,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available 24 hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place virtually through WebEx, Microsoft Teams or in-person at the library. [Schedule an appointment here](https://tamuct.libcal.com/appointments/?g=6956) [https://tamuct.libcal.com/appointments/?g=6956]. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index].

Canvas Support: Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select “Chat with Canvas Support,” submit a support request through “Report a Problem,” or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953. For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Technology Support: For technology issues, students should contact Help Desk Central. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

Web Chat: <http://hdc.tamu.edu>

When calling for support please let your support technician know you are a TAMUCT student. For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Drop Policy: If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a Drop Request Form:

https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the University Calendar for which the form must be completed, signed, and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Academic Accommodations: At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier-free education. The Warrior Center for Student Success, Equity and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the university's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations, please contact the Office of Access and Inclusion, WH-212; or call (254) 501-5836. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such. For more information, please visit our [Access & Inclusion](#) Canvas page (log-in required) [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717>].

Important Information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students: Texas A&M University–Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more information, please visit the [Student Affairs](#) web page: <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html>. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines](#) online, please visit the website: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>.

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University's Title IX Coordinator.

A Note about Sexual Violence at A&M-Central Texas: Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. The university offers support for anyone struggling with these issues. University faculty are mandated reporters, so if someone discloses that they were sexually assaulted (or a victim of Domestic/Dating Violence or Stalking) while a student at TAMUCT, faculty members are required to inform the Title IX Office. If you want to discuss any of these issues confidentially, you can do so through Student Counseling (254-501-5955) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L).

Sexual violence can occur on our campus because predators often feel emboldened, and victims often feel silenced or shamed. It is incumbent on ALL of us to find ways to actively create environments that tell predators we don't agree with their behaviors and tell survivors we will support them. Your actions matter. Don't be a bystander; be an agent of change. For additional information on campus policy and resources visit the [Title IX webpage](https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php): <https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php>.



Artifact Collection: To ensure the learning outcomes are met in the B.A. in English program, there is a program-wide artifact collection process. To that end, artifacts from ENGL 4388: Rhetoric in Democracy this semester may be used for programmatic assessment. Please note that all efforts will be made to keep your identity anonymous; as such, all identifying markers will be removed from your work if used for programmatic

assessment. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu.

Syllabus Change Policy: Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the grading scheme, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

ENGL 4388: Rhetoric in Democracy

Major Projects

“Making Sure Our Audience Members are High-Information Voters! Composing a Neutral, Informative Text Pertaining to Voting”

One of the first—and most crucial—barriers to voting is learning how to get registered to vote, what you will be voting for, etc. Before you can make your decision, you need to have the appropriate information to engage in the democratic process. With constantly changing voting laws and a plethora of candidates and issues on the ballot, this can be quite a daunting task. This is where you and your groupmates come into play!



For the first project of the semester, you will be working in groups (or alone if you so choose) to compose a neutral, informative text pertaining to voting. The possibilities for this assignment are endless. You may wish to create a document that instructs people on how to register to vote through step-by-step directions. You could create a video walking citizens through the process of voter registration. Your group may decide to construct an annotated ballot that provides information on the different candidates and ballot measures. Similarly, you may opt to create a document that provides information related to one particular ballot measure. There are a variety of options here. You will also have time to consult with Ms. TaNeika Driver-Moultrie during class about the types of documents she believes would be helpful for the people the Killeen NAACP serves.

As with all of the three major projects this semester, there are no specific requirements for this assignment as I wish to provide you and your groupmates with as much agency as possible. As such, you will negotiate these parameters with me after you have formed your group. This will allow for us to create specific requirements once we know the rhetorical situation your group wishes to address, the genre you will be writing in, etc.

That being said, there are a few general guidelines you should follow for this project. First and foremost, the purpose of your text is to be informative. Therefore, you need to adopt a neutral and factual tone. You should not be employing any evaluative language unless your informational strategy is to present both sides of an argument or another approach that will equally balance information. You also will need to be factually accurate. Remember, these documents will be used by the Killeen NAACP (or another community partner you choose); you must ensure that they provide users with the information they need to register to vote, make informed decisions, etc. And, lastly, your document needs to be written in language and designed in a manner that will make it easy to use for your intended audience.

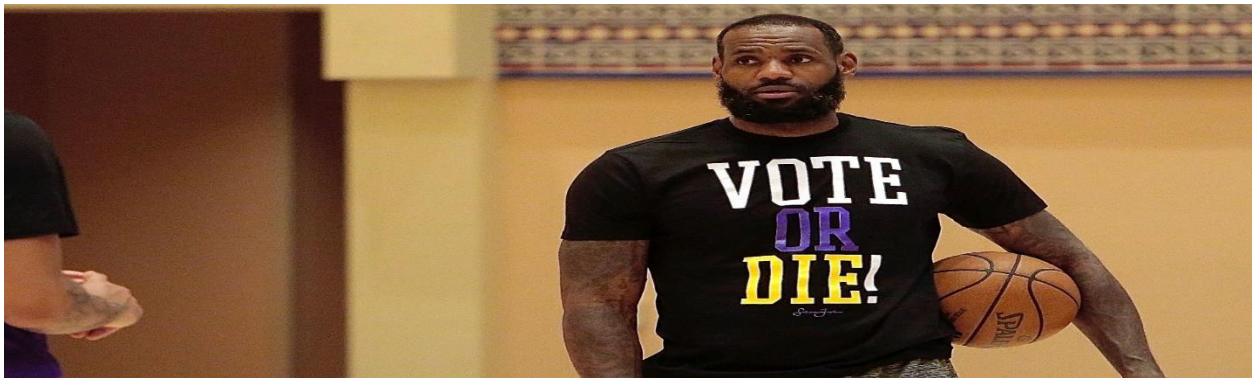
Assessment for your “Making Sure Our Audience Members are High-Information Voters! Composing a Neutral, Informative Text Pertaining to Voting” projects will focus on your ability to maintain a neutral and informative tone, how easy your text is to comprehend and use for your intended audience, the quality of your research and the factual accuracy of the information you provide, the likelihood your audience will engage with your text, and the overall polish of your text (e.g. grammar, spelling, design, alignment, transitions, editing, etc.). After engaging with your informative text, the main question I will ask myself will be: *How helpful is this informative text in helping the intended audience gain the information they need to vote in, and make informed decisions during, the 2022 mid-term elections?*

Reflective Memo

1. What is the primary information you are intending to convey in your text? Why is this information important for voters?
2. How did you conduct research to collect the information you used in this text? Why is your information credible?
3. Who was your intended audience for this text? Why did you believe this information is important for your intended audience? How did you tailor your text to this intended audience?
4. What specific contributions did you make to the construction of this text (if you worked in a group)? Be precise.

“Rock to Get Out the Vote or Die! A Persuasive Text to Encourage Voting for a Particular Audience”

You probably already know the importance of voting. If not, why would you be taking this class? However, some people can be reluctant to vote as a result of having felt disenfranchised in the past, believing their vote will not matter, not understanding the importance of voting, etc. As rhetors and lovers of democracy, it is our mission to persuade these citizens about the importance and privilege of voting in every election!



Your second assignment asks you to create a persuasive text in order to convince a particular audience to vote in the upcoming 2022 mid-term election. This can be either an individual or group project depending on your inclinations. This leaves you with a plethora of options to consider. You may wish to create a pamphlet that can be handed out in the local community. You could write an editorial covering the history and importance of voting. With a group, you could film a video that speaks to a particular issue that will be important to your intended audience. A website could even be in the works if you are so inclined. You have many

options, but you will want to consider the audiences that the Killeen NAACP (or the community partner you are working with) wishes to reach.



Similar to last project, you will negotiate the parameters with me in class. The requirements we decide upon will depend greatly on the rhetorical situation you choose, the genre you employ, and how many authors are involved. These will all be used to negotiate the stipulations for your text.

Nevertheless, I do have some general advice to guide you. For starters, you will want to identify your audience and think about what types of persuasive appeals will work best with them. Additionally, contemplate what modalities they are most likely to engage texts in. If you are aiming

at a middle-aged audience, print may work well. If you want to reach the younger generations, a digital approach may be more fitting. You also want to be attentive to the fact that this project asks you to persuade people to vote, not convince them to vote for certain candidates or issues. As a result, you can discuss political issues that are important to your intended audience; however, you cannot directly advocate for a particular candidate. You can advocate for the importance of voting on a certain proposition, though. Finally, be original. There are a ton of rhetorical campaigns that encourage voting. Make yours stand out among the rest so that it will work with audiences that have previously not been persuaded.

When I go to assess your “Rock to Get Out the Vote or Die! A Persuasive Text to Encourage Voting for a Particular Audience” project, my assessment will primarily be predicated upon your choice of medium and genre in relation to your intended audience, the logical and emotional effectiveness of your persuasive appeals for your intended audience, the quality of the organization of your text, your use of impactful words and phrases optimal for political communication, and the overall polish of your text (e.g. grammar, spelling, design, alignment, transitions, editing, etc.). Once I am finished your persuasive text, the main question I will ask myself is: *If I were a member of the intended audience for this text, how likely is it that I would be persuaded to vote in the 2022 mid-term elections?*



Reflective Memo

1. Who was your intended audience for this text? Why did you select this audience to try and persuade to vote?
2. Why did you choose the medium and genre that you did? How are they beneficial to the audience you are attempting to reach?
3. What types of persuasive appeals did you employ in this text? Why do you believe they will be successful for your intended audience?
4. Why did you use some of the words and phrases that you used in your text? How are they optimal for political persuasion?
5. What specific contributions did you make to the construction of this text (if you worked in a group)? Be precise.

“Coming Down with the Urge to Vote! Creating a Viral Digital Rhetoric Campaign to Encourage Voting”

In the Digital Age, going viral is what it is all about! For your final major project, your goal will be to create a digital rhetoric campaign to promote voting in the 2022 mid-term election that is destined for virality. Your mission is not only to create persuasive messages; you want to create persuasive messages that will garner a wide circulation with your intended audience.



How you develop your digital rhetoric campaign is entirely up to you. You can employ a variety of mediums, including memes, videos, etc. You can use a host of different platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Your goal may be to repeat the same message over and over again; conversely, you may wish to have diverse messages that may potentially circulate to a variety of audiences. You can consult with Ms. TaNeika Driver-Moultrie to collaborate on what types of audiences the Killeen NAACP might want to reach with such a campaign. Your creativity and technological capabilities are your only limitations!

Although this assignment is fairly wide open, it does have a few parameters. First, you are expected to produce drafts of all the content you will use (e.g., memes, Twitter posts with hashtags, images for various social media platforms, videos, etc.). You do not have to circulate them yet, though. You can choose to hold off on that circulation until closer to the 2022 mid-term elections. Second, you will be required to compose—as a group or individually—a three page delivery and circulation plan. For this document, you will need to discuss your plan for how this digital rhetoric campaign will be executed and argue for why you believe it has a high potential to go



viral. When will you begin the campaign and for how long will the initial content be posted? Where will you post the various content? How do you expect this content to circulate? What steps will you take to support this circulation? What elements of your campaign are likely to make it go viral? Overall, your delivery and circulation plan should be easily executable by anyone with basic technological and social media skills.

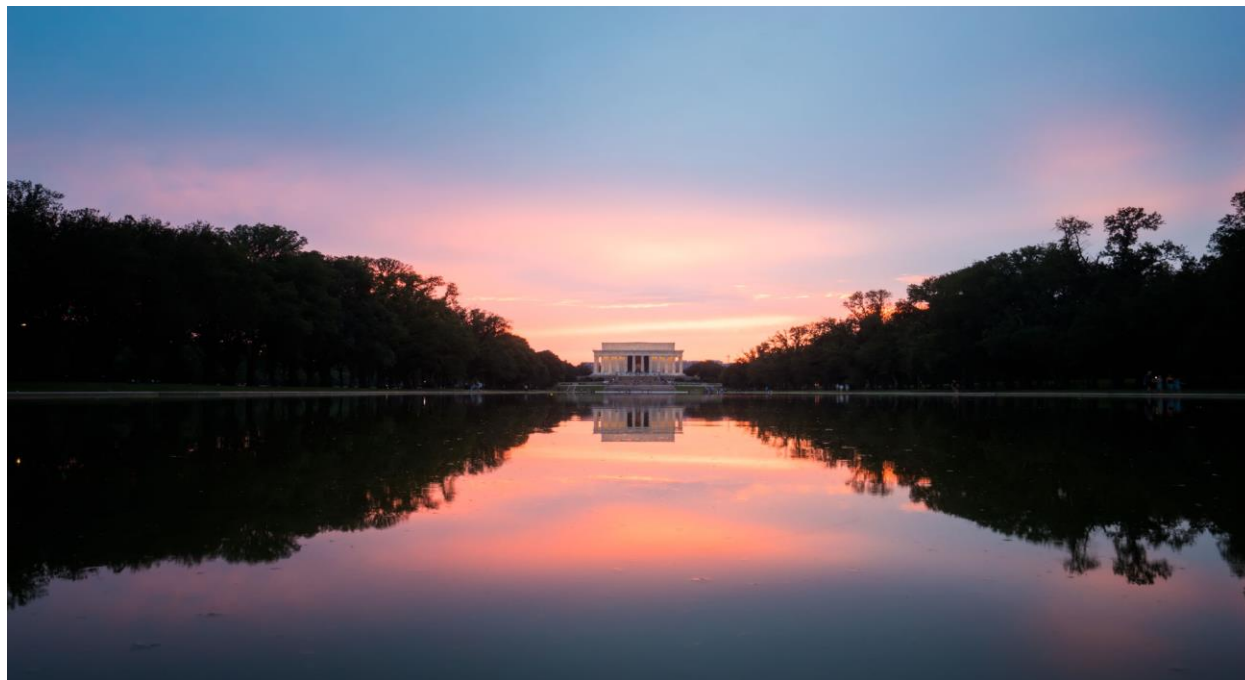
My evaluation of your “Coming Down with the Urge to Vote! Creating a Viral Digital Rhetoric Campaign to Encourage Voting” project will emphasize the overall quality of the content you create for your campaign, the manner in which that content is adapted to the platforms you will employ and the audience you seek to address, the feasibility of your delivery and circulation plan, the viral potentiality of your content as part of your delivery and circulation plan, and the overall polish of your content materials and delivery and circulation plan (e.g. grammar, spelling, design, alignment, transitions, editing, etc.). When I am finished viewing your content and evaluating your delivery and circulation plan, the main question that will drive my assessment will be: *How likely will it be for this content to go viral considering the delivery and circulation plan put in place?*



Reflective Memo

1. Who is your intended audience for this digital rhetoric campaign? How did you design your content and delivery and circulation plan in order to have the greatest impact on your audience?
2. Why did you choose the specific platforms to deliver your digital rhetoric campaign? What about these platforms—and the affordances they provide—proved useful for you?
3. What aspects of your digital rhetoric campaign do you believe makes it most conducive to virality? How did you design it in order to garner the most engagement with your intended audience?
4. What specific contributions did you make to the construction of this digital rhetoric campaign (if you worked in a group)? Be precise.

“Peering into the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool! Reflecting on ENGL 4388: Rhetoric in Democracy”



To close out the semester, the final piece of writing I am asking you to complete is a reflection on your experiences in ENGL 4388: Rhetoric in Democracy. I want you to contemplate your experiences in this class, focusing on what you have learned, how you intend to use it in the future, and how—if in any way—it has changed your perspectives on politics, rhetoric, and the democratic process. Hopefully your work creating a variety of texts for the Killeen NAACP (or whichever community partner you worked with) has had an impact on your previous perceptions. This reflection is your opportunity to contemplate this impact and express it through writing.

Since—contrary to your other projects—this reflection is rather personal in nature, I cannot dictate any set structure for you nor any particular points of discussion. You will want to focus on the aspects of this class, and moments in this class, that had the greatest impact on your learning and perceptions. You can focus on particular class discussions, the work you did to complete certain projects, your engagement with the Killeen NAACP or other community partners, etc. Take time to contemplate these experiences and their connections between and amongst one another. This will probably assist you greatly in determining the best organizational structure, topics of discussion, and tone.

I do have a few requirements for your reflection along with a couple of pieces of advice to impart, however. For starters, your reflection needs to engage with the content and scholarship from the course in a meaningful fashion; by the end of the reflection, I should be quite aware that you took ENGL 4388: Rhetoric in Democracy. How you engage with the content and scholarship, though, is completely up to you. I also want you to discuss your community engagement with the Killeen NAACP or the community partner you chose. Speak directly to the service-learning component of the course and how it impacted your learning, perceptions of the democratic process, knowledge of your community, etc.

My primary recommendation for this reflection would be to make your reflection unique and personal. Use this time to contemplate, think, and process. There is no need to get hung up on following any conventions or on needing to accomplish any particular objectives as this genre is rather wide open. Remember, too, that your reflection does not have to be summative; it can focus on only a few moments in the course if you choose. Lastly, remember that your audience is more you than me—this reflection is for your benefit, so take the time to make it accomplish what you wish for it to accomplish.

When completed, your reflection should be approximately three pages double-spaced. As mentioned earlier, you need to engage with course content in a meaningful fashion and discuss the service-learning component of the class. Please use either APA or MLA format to cite any scholarship in your reflection.

My assessment of your “Peering into the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool! Reflecting on ENGL 4388: Rhetoric in Democracy” project will focus on the manner in which you convey what you have learned in relation to course content; the quality of the connections you make between course content, your service-learning experiences, and your own perspectives, views, and prior dealings with the democratic process; how well you articulate the manner in which the way you view rhetoric’s relationship to democracy has changed throughout the course; your ability to highlight how the content and experiences of the course has led to those changes; and the polish you provide for your reflection (e.g. grammar, spelling, proper citation and formatting in APA or MLA, etc.). When I am finished reading your reflection, the main question I will contemplate is: *How well did this student articulate their learning experiences in ENGL 4388: Rhetoric in Democracy while making meaningful connections between the course content, their service-learning experience, and their own political perspectives and experiences?*