

ENGL 4313: Visual Rhetoric



Fall 2023 (August 28, 2023, to December 15, 2023)

Modality: This is a blended course with face-to-face meetings on Monday from 12:30-1:45 p.m. in Founders Hall 212 and asynchronous activities throughout the week.

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

ENGL 4313: Visual Rhetoric Catalog Description: This class teaches students how to analyze images through various methodological frameworks as well as use images in compositions for rhetorical purposes.

ENGL 4313: Visual Rhetoric Extended Course Description: This class teaches students how to analyze images through various methodological frameworks as well as use images in compositions for rhetorical purposes. Students will engage with the scholarship on visual rhetoric, analyze and critique a variety of images, utilize and/or create images for their own rhetorical purposes, and research various facets of visual rhetoric in order to deepen their understanding of how visuals persuade and make meaning in a variety of contexts.

For WI Courses: This is a Writing Instructive (WI) course so writing will be an integral part of the instruction and the interactions between teacher and student as well as among students. Writing will also be a fundamental way that student mastery of course content is measured. WI means that you will have several opportunities to work on improving your writing skills throughout the semester.

For this class, writing is better understood as composition. Students will not only be writing about visual rhetoric but will also be composing with visuals, using images strategically in their writing and creating/remixing images for their own rhetorical purposes. As a result, every major project for this class will rely heavily on multimodality, so writing instruction for this class will focus on multimodal writing. You will also compose a substantial multimodal reflection on the course at the end of the semester.

Course Outcomes:

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

- Explain how visuals persuade and make meaning independent from, and in relation to, alphanumeric text and other modalities
- Analyze visuals situated in multiple contexts using various rhetorical theories
- Evaluate the effectiveness of images used for a variety of purposes (e.g., persuasion, symbolism, representation, etc.)
- Construct visual arguments designed for specific rhetorical situations
- Compose scholarly arguments pertaining to various facets of visual rhetoric

Required Textbooks and Materials:

- *Defining Visual Rhetorics*, edited by Charles Hill and Marguerite Helmers, ISBN (13) #9780805844030 (available as eBook through the University Library)
- *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*, Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, ISBN (13) #9780415672573
- Various .pdf articles and selections from texts (available through Canvas)
- Access to a Computer (the university provides a number of computer labs)

Technology Requirements:

This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. We strongly recommend the latest versions of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari

browsers. Canvas will run on Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, android, or any other device with a modern web browser. **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/>] by clicking on the “TAMUCT Online Canvas” tile. You will then log in through our Microsoft portal.

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

Grading Scheme: Various activities and digital gallery walks, three major projects, and a course reflection will comprise students’ grades. The weights for each component are as follows:

Activities and Digital Gallery Walks= 15%

“This is America! Defining America Through Visual Rhetoric”= 20%

“Do You See My Point? Constructing an Argument Predicated on the Visual”= 20%

“Through the Looking-Glass! Exploring Visual Rhetoric”= 30%

“I’m Looking at the Student in the Mirror! A Final Reflection on ENGL 4313: Visual Rhetoric”= 15%

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 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.

Activities: As this is a blended online course, you will have various asynchronous activities to complete. 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.

Digital Gallery Walks:

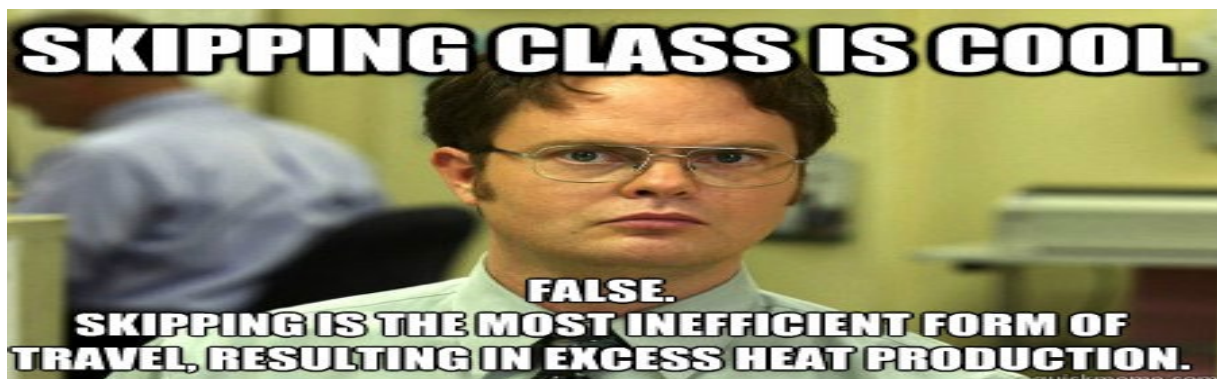
Digital gallery walks are both similar to, and different from, discussion boards. For digital gallery walks, you will be asked to select an image (or images) that reflects a certain theme from the week under discussion, illustrates a certain concept, offers another example of the topic being discussed, etc.

Essentially, you generate content for your classmates to discuss. You will also be asked to provide a few paragraphs to provide context for your picture, articulate what you want your classmates to take from it and discuss about it, etc.



Once everyone has posted, you will then “walk” through your classmates’ postings, leaving comments, asking questions, and engaging with each other’s contributions. **You should post your contribution to the gallery as well as respond to two to three classmates’ gallery images (or as many times as the prompt indicates).** In essence, this is a digital remediation of a museum exhibit with you—the students—as curators! 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.

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 two 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 two uninformed absences by the end of the semester, your grade will be penalized -10 points—an entire letter grade—for each unexcused absence beyond two. I will inform you when you have two 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. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. All academic misconduct concerns will be referred to the Student Conduct Office. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

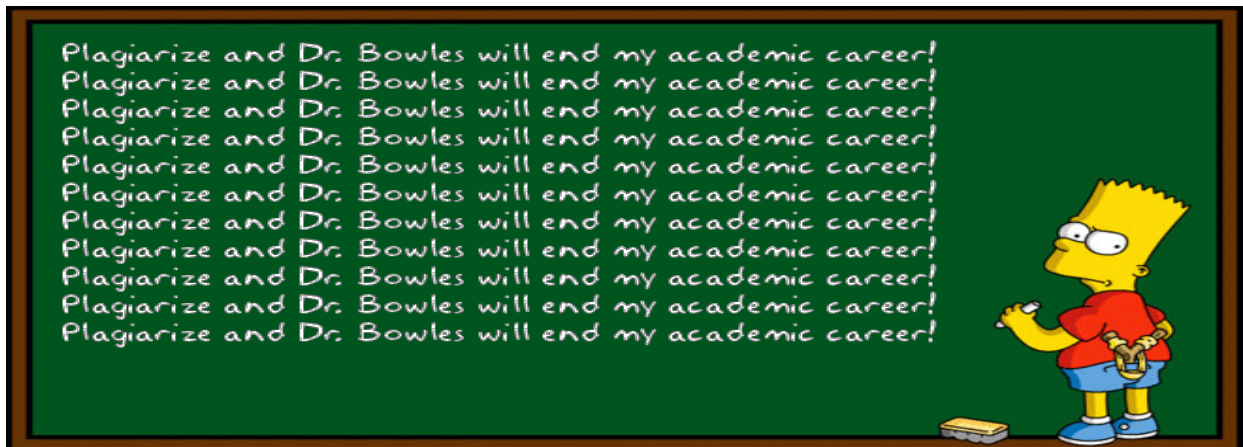
For more [information regarding the student conduct process](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html), [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html>].

If you know of potential honor violations by other students, you may [submit a referral](https://cm.maxient.com/reporting.php?TAMUCentralTexas), [<https://cm.maxient.com/reporting.php?TAMUCentralTexas>].

Class Plagiarism Policy: As an instructor, I operate by the CWPA (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-

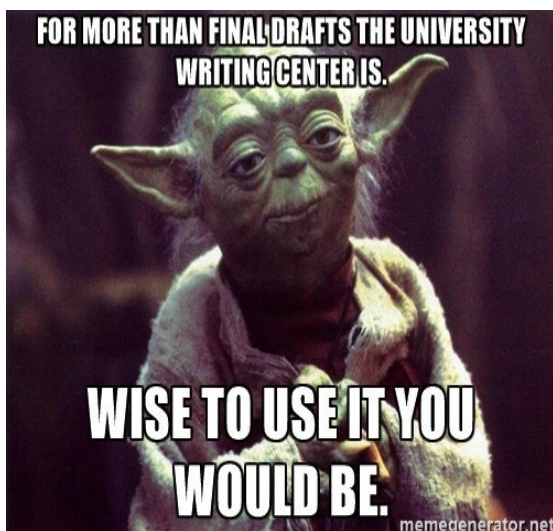
knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.” The key here is deliberate—I do not want you to be so paranoid about plagiarism that it inhibits your creativity.

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 and online, 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. The face-to-face hours of operation are from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday and Thursday in Warrior Hall 416. Online tutoring is available Monday thru Thursday from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and from 6:00-9:00 p.m. and on Saturdays from 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.

Warrior Center for Student Success: The Warrior Center for Student Success is a comprehensive academic support department at A&M-Central Texas, dedicated to fostering an environment of excellence and empowerment among its student body. The center offers a wide range of programs and services to ensure every student reaches their full potential, and is a haven for students seeking guidance, resources, and a strong support network to excel in their educational journey.

ADA Access and Accommodations: Texas A&M University-Central Texas ensures that students with disabilities have equal access to educational opportunities by providing appropriate accommodations and support services. If you believe you have a physical, learning or socio-emotional disability requiring reasonable accommodations, please visit [Access and Inclusion](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html) [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html>] for more details or contact the Office of Access and Inclusion, WH-212; (254) 501-5836. Any information you provide is private and confidential.

Success Coaching and Peer Mentoring: Our experienced Success Coaches work one-on-one with students to develop personalized action plans, set academic goals, and build effective study strategies, time management skills, and resilience. Our Peer Mentors provide a valuable support system, offering guidance, encouragement, and a relatable perspective to help students navigate their academic and personal challenges. For more details call 254-501-5836 or 254-501-5928 or visit [Academic Support](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/academic-support.html) [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/academic-support.html>]. Click the link to schedule a session (virtual or in-person) with a success coach bit.ly/3q7uB50 or visit WH, 111.

Testing Services: We offer a secure and comfortable environment for students and members of the community to take courses and distance learning exams, as well as placement tests and professional certification exams. Our Testing Service also offers resources and support referrals for testing related challenges (test anxiety, learning disabilities, etc.) and supports all approved ADA accommodations. Call (254) 519-5830 or visit the [Testing Center](https://www.tamuct.edu/testing-center/) [<https://www.tamuct.edu/testing-center/>].

University Library & Archives: The University Library & Archives provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 350 electronic databases containing approximately 1,203,947 eBooks and 134,750 journals, in addition to the 96,879

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>].

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 workspaces, 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](#)

[<https://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.

Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University–Central Texas SAFEZONE:

SafeZone provides a public safety application that gives you the ability to call for help with the push of a button. It also provides Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate emergency information quickly via push notifications, email, and text messages.

All students automatically receive email and text messages via their myCT accounts. Downloading SafeZone allows access to push notifications and enables you to connect directly for help through the app.

You can download SafeZone from the app store and use your myCT credentials to log in. If you would like more information, you can visit the [SafeZone](#) website [www.safezoneapp.com].

To register SafeZone on your phone, please follow these 3 easy steps:

1. Download the SafeZone App from your phone store using the link below:
 - [iPhone/iPad](https://apps.apple.com/app/safezone/id533054756): [<https://apps.apple.com/app/safezone/id533054756>]
 - [Android Phone / Tablet](#)
[<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.criticalarc.safezoneapp>]

2. Launch the app and enter your myCT email address (e.g. {name}@tamuct.edu)
3. Complete your profile and accept the terms of service

Other Technology Support: For log-in problems, 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): [http://hdc.tamu.edu]

Please let the support technician know you are an A&M–Central Texas student.

Drop Policy: If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete the [Drop Request](#) Dynamic Form through Warrior Web.

[<https://federation.ngwebsolutions.com/sp/startSSO.ping?PartnerIdpId=https://eis-prod.ec.tamuct.edu:443/samlssso&SpSessionAuthnAdapterId=tamuctDF&TargetResource=https%3a%2f%2fdynamicforms.ngwebsolutions.com%2fSubmit%2fStart%2f53b8369e-0502-4f36-be43-f02a4202f612>].

Faculty cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Records and Admissions Office will provide a deadline on the Academic Calendar for which the form must be completed. Once you submit the completed form to the Records and Admissions 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 Records and Admissions 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.

Title IX Rights and Reporting Responsibilities: Texas A&M University–Central Texas is committed to creating a safe and open learning environment for all students. If you or another student has experienced any form of gender discrimination or sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, and/or sex-based stalking, help and support are available. Our university strongly encourages all members of our campus community to report incidents and seek support for gender discrimination and sexual misconduct through the Title IX Office. You may contact the Title IX Office at 254.519.5716, titleix@tamuct.edu, Founders Hall 317B, or learn more by visiting the [Title IX webpage](#) [<https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html>].

Please be aware that that under [Title IX](#), [Texas Senate Bill 212](#), and [System Regulation 08.01.01](#), [<https://policies.tamus.edu/08-01-01.pdf>] all university employees are mandated reporters and are required to disclose information about suspected or alleged violations as listed above and defined in System Regulation 08.01.01. If the Title IX Office receives information about an incident, they will reach out to offer information about resources, rights, and procedural options as a member of the campus community. Although I have an obligation to report, you will, in most cases, control how your case will be handled. When working with the Title IX Office you

will have access to resources and accommodations but also have the opportunity to express if you wish to move forward with an investigation. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the options available to you as a student. Community members are not required to respond to this outreach.

If you or another student wishes to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact the [Student Wellness & Counseling Center](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-counseling.html), [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-counseling.html], 254.501.5955, or swacc@tamuct.edu, located in Warrior Hall Room 207L or the Student Support Advocate, 254.501.5978 or ssa@tamuct.edu, located in founder Hall Room 317D.

Pregnant and/or Parenting Students Rights and Accommodations: Texas A&M University–Central Texas supports students who are pregnant, experiencing pregnancy-related conditions, and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of [Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights](#), the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs, (254) 501-5909, can assist students who are pregnant, experiencing pregnancy-related conditions, and/or parenting by provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodations. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible through the [Pregnancy & Parenting webpage](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/pregnant-and-parenting-students.html) [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/pregnant-and-parenting-students.html]. For more information, please visit [Student Affairs](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/pregnant-and-parenting-students.html) [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/pregnant-and-parenting-students.html]. 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](#) specifically prohibits discrimination against a student based on pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery from any of these conditions [https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.html]. Students experiencing any form of discrimination due to any of these conditions are encouraged to reach out to the Title IX Coordinator, 254.519.5716, titleix@tamuct.edu, Founders Hall 317B, or the Associate Dean of Student Affairs, 254.501.5909, Warrior Hall 105.

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 Wellness and 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/compliance/titleix.html].

Behavioral Intervention: Texas A&M University-Central Texas cares about the safety, health, and well-being of its students, faculty, staff, and community. If you are aware of individuals for whom you have a concern, please make a referral to the Behavioral Intervention Team. Referring your concern shows you care. You can complete the [referral](#) online

[<https://cm.maxient.com/reporting.php?TAMUCentralTexas>].

Anonymous referrals are accepted. Please see the [Behavioral Intervention Team](#) website for more information [<https://www.tamuct.edu/bit>]. If a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911 or A&M-Central Texas University Police at 254-501-5805.



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 4313: Visual Rhetoric 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.

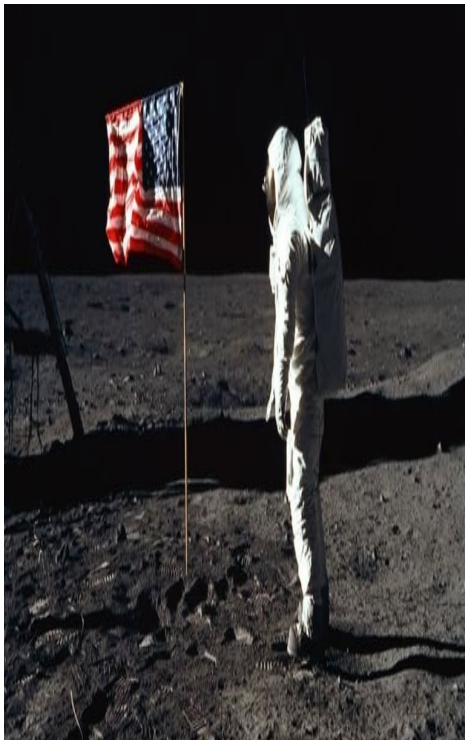
Syllabus Change Policy: Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the grading scheme, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

ENGL 4313: Visual Rhetoric

Major Projects

“This is America! Defining America Through Visual Rhetoric” (presentation of an image along with a 3-4 page double-spaced analysis)

I must profess that I have always been fascinated with various turns of phrase and commentary regarding America. The *real* America. The American Dream. This is what America stands for. This is what it means to be American. 247 years after the founding of our country, we still are grappling and struggling with these definitions. In my estimation, this is great! Ever evolving our definitions for our country and what it means to be a citizen allows for continued growth, negotiation, and exploration of our values and ideals. Yet, such an exercise also leads to numerous conflicting narratives.



Your first assignment asks you to attempt such a definition—or suggestion, if you will—through the use of a single image. This is no easy task! And, admittedly, the rhetorical situation I am providing you with is rather vague. The vagueness, though, presents you with flexibility to approach this assignment in a variety of ways. Your image can be a strident critique of America or a particular facet of America. Conversely, you may wish to offer an image of hope, beauty, or triumph. Your image may be subtle and ask the audience to reflect deeply, or it can be overt and force the audience to face a reality. The choices are endless.

Nevertheless, I do want to present you with a few parameters for this assignment. First and foremost, the image needs to be singular. You can create a collage if you wish, yet you cannot offer more than one image, so the collage will need to be made into an individual entity. Second, you can include words to operate with the image you choose, but you cannot have words be the predominate modality within the image. You will want visuals

themselves to convey most of the meaning. Lastly, manipulation of images is allowed; however, you are not required to manipulate the image nor will manipulation in any way ensure a higher grade. (Actually, completing this assignment without manipulating the image is probably more difficult.)

Your first step will be both the simplest and the most difficult. You will need to select an image to meet this rhetorical situation that has been created for you. The image can be preexisting, one that you manipulate, or one that you take. You will also need to present it at a certain juncture in your analysis. Similarly, you have multiple options. You may present it at the

beginning of your analysis; you could show multiple angles of it throughout your analysis; you may choose to include other images throughout your analysis to support it; you could even opt not to display the image until your analysis is complete. The decision is yours but make it wisely.

The analysis you will construct is key to the assignment. Along with your selection of an image, you will also need to compose a three to four page double-spaced analysis of the image that will discuss your image, provide the context in which it resides (or resided), analyze the image and its significance, and offer a rationale behind its selection. What about your image is so engaging? Where did it come from? In what context does it reside? Why is it such an intriguing reflection of America? Similar to your image selection, the analysis is rather wide-open in the manner you can approach it. The key is to make a convincing argument for why the image is an apt representation of America.

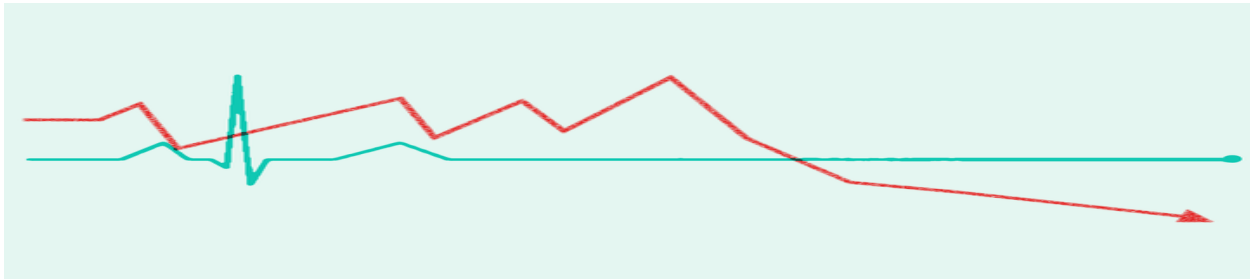


Your analysis should be three to four pages double-spaced and draw upon the work of Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen as well as use one other scholarly source (scholarly sources need to be from academic journals or from books published by academic presses), whether from the class or from outside of it. You may use non-scholarly sources if you wish, yet these will not count toward your final total. Please format your analysis in MLA and include a works cited page. If you present other images in your analysis, that is acceptable, but you should not litter your analysis with images to meet the page requirement. They should be in addition to your own words. Essentially, you should have three to four pages double-spaced beyond the image/images you present.

Assessment of your “This is America! Defining America Through Visual Rhetoric” project will be based on several factors including the quality of the image you choose, remix, or create; the details you provide about the image itself and the context in which it resides; the overall analysis of the image you offer; how aptly your image reflects America predicated on the argument you provide in your reflection; and the overall polish of your work (e.g., grammar, spelling, proper citation and formatting, quality of alignment and placement of images, etc.). After engaging with your image and reading your analysis, I will ask myself: *How well did this student select an image to depict America while offering keen analysis based in visual rhetoric scholarship to justify their choice?*

**“Do You See My Point? Constructing an Argument Predicated on the Visual”
(presentation of an image along with a 3-4 page double-spaced analysis and reflection)**

The expression “Do you see my point?” has always struck me as somewhat funny. Almost always, it is deployed in a conversation where the point is most likely heard and not actually visualized. In spite of this peculiar turn of phrase, there is a tendency to conceive of argument as either spoken or written. Yet, merely glancing at the world around us makes it apparent that many arguments we not only hear or read but see. In this way, they are oftentimes more persuasive since the visual nature makes them more salient but—at times—also less noticeable as arguments.



Your next project asks you to construct a visual argument. While the word *construct* may scare you at first, please realize that you do not have to create an image or video from scratch. You can draw upon preexisting materials in order to make your argument. The keys to success for this assignment will be in selecting and arranging the best materials for the job and then placing them in the proper context to have a rhetorical impact. There is a lot to consider for this project.

I do want to give you a few stipulations for this assignment to start. First and foremost, although you can draw upon existing images and materials, you cannot deploy them in a context they have previously been used. Thus, if an image of a starving child was used to raise money for a charity previously, you are free to use that image but you cannot use it for the purpose of fundraising. You will have to deploy it in a new context in order to make a different type of argument. Second, please remember that visual arguments frequently employ words. You are not relegated to using images alone. You can add words to an image, speak in relation to an image, film a video with a voiceover, etc. And, lastly, the visual argument should make a definitive claim that someone in the context it is used will be able to comprehend; you cannot operate in exceptional levels of ambiguity. The average viewer from your intended audience should be able to get your point, at least at a more basic level.

Accompanying your visual argument will be a three to four page analysis and reflection. For this project, both terms are important. From an analytical standpoint, you will need to discuss the argument you are intending to make, the context you will be making it in, and why you believe it will be impactful. Furthermore, you should draw on scholarship to support your decisions and approach. Consider: Where will this visual argument be deployed? Why will it be successful when viewed and engaged with by the particular audience you have in mind? Did you construct a visual enthymeme? If so, how should it be interpreted? How do any words involved interact with the visuals?

The reflective element should focus on how and why you constructed this visual argument. Guide me through your construction and decision making process. Why is this particular argument important to you? How did you select the image(s) that you used for your argument? What process did you follow to construct this visual argument? What impact are you trying to have on your audience? As far as the analysis and reflection are concerned, you are free to approach this task in the manner you believe is best. You could write the analysis and reflection separately. You may find it more beneficial to place them in conversation with one another. The analysis may work better before the reflection or vice versa. The choices are yours—compose this document in the best way you see fit to convey the rationale and thought processes behind your visual argument.



Your visual argument should be presented along with—or as part of—your analysis and reflection document. Your analysis and reflection document should be three to four pages double-spaced and include enough explanation about the context and purpose of the argument for a reader to understand how you will deploy your argument. You should include at least three sources from class (you can use scholarly and non-scholarly sources from outside of class as well, if you wish) and document them using MLA style, including a works cited page. As with your previous project, including other images to enhance your analysis is acceptable; however, your visual argument and the other images you include should be beyond your three to four pages double-spaced.

The primary emphasis of my assessment of your “Do You See My Point? Constructing an Argument Predicated on the Visual” project will be on how well you constructed your visual argument (including considerations of the context in which it will be placed), the manner in which you justify your visual argument in terms of scholarship and your intended audience, the strength of your visual argument in relation to the intended audience you are trying to persuade, the overall quality of your reflection on the decisions you made and the processes you followed, and the polished nature of your work (e.g., grammar, spelling, proper citation and formatting, quality of alignment and placement of images, etc.). The main question that will inform my assessment is: *If I were a member of this student’s intended audience as they frame it, would I be likely to be persuaded by the visual argument they have constructed?*

**“Through the Looking-Glass! Exploring Visual Rhetoric”
(6-7 pages double-spaced)**

At this juncture in the course, hopefully you have become completely fascinated with visual rhetoric! (Or at least interested enough to research a particular facet of it further, but a professor can wish.) This project is your opportunity to explore a specific topic, a particular image, a visual campaign, a historical moment when visuals were prominent, etc. Essentially, you are going to write a scholarly essay on visual rhetoric, delving into what intrigues you the most about visual rhetoric.



As such, the potential topics you can choose are intentionally limitless. You may potentially be interested in how visual rhetoric impacts emotions. Or perhaps the concept of visual enthymemes has captured your imagination. Images of war might pique your interest. You may even wish to explore a particular image that you find compelling. Beyond a single image, you could also explore an entire visual campaign. The potential avenues to explore are endless. This project—and the topic you choose—are open to negotiation. Feel free to see me after class and/or schedule a conference with me to talk about your topic if needed.

Once you have chosen your topic, you will need to begin your research. A great place to start will be the other chapters in some of the edited collections we have engaged with as well as the journals from which we have read certain articles. As always, the University Library is a great place to start as well. You will want to explore your topic in-depth; for this project, engagement with sources is a primary component.

Since this project is rather wide-open, there are not any definitive pieces of advice with which I can provide you. However, you are going to want to write with your audience in mind. For this project, I want you to envision that you will be publishing your essay in a journal for undergraduate research on visual rhetoric. As such, your audience will primarily be students like

yourself who are taking their first courses in visual rhetoric. This means that you will have to explain your concepts with more depth than if you were writing for a scholarly audience; you also need to assume less background knowledge of your readers. Imagine your readers are similar to your classmates, but they are not from the same class. What will they need to know in order to understand your ideas and follow your arguments? How can you convince them of your line of reasoning? Why might certain appeals work with them, and why might other types of appeals fail to be persuasive? The key to success here is to intrigue your audience and help them gain new insights into visual rhetoric.



Although this project is rather wide open, there are some basic requirements. First and foremost, your project should be six to seven pages double-spaced not counting any images you decide to include. The six to seven pages double-spaced should stand alone from your images. You will also need five to seven scholarly sources (sources from academic journals or from books published by academic presses) with at least three of your sources coming from outside of the course readings. They can, however, be included in the edited collections and journals we have engaged with so long as they are not on the course calendar. Furthermore, you can employ non-scholarly sources as you wish, but they will not count toward your five to seven scholarly sources. Your sources can be documented in either APA or MLA style and should include either a references or a works cited page.

My evaluation of your “Through the Looking-Glass! Exploring Visual Rhetoric” project will emphasize the manner in which you communicate for your audience relevant information and background knowledge about your topic, the logic and effectiveness of the organizational structure you employ in your essay, the overall strength of the arguments you provide in support of your thesis, the impact your arguments will have on your intended audience, how well you draw upon and

integrate sources in support of your thesis, and the polished nature of your final project (e.g., grammar, spelling, proper citation and formatting, quality of alignment and placement of images, etc.). Primarily, my assessment will be predicated on answering these questions: *If I were an editor of an undergraduate journal that published articles and essays on visual rhetoric, how*

likely would I be to accept this essay? Would I publish it as is, accept it with slight revisions, recommend a revise and resubmit, or is this essay unsuitable for publication?

“I’m Looking at the Student in the Mirror! A Final Reflection on ENGL 4313: Visual Rhetoric”
(approximately 3 pages double-spaced)

Your final project for this semester—rather than asking you to look out at the world—asks you to look inward. You will be composing a reflection on your experiences in this class, highlighting what you have learned, how you will carry it forward, and any ways in which you see the world differently. Although the last item of that list may appear as a gross exaggeration, when I have taught visual rhetoric at both the undergraduate and graduate level, many students have told me it had a profound impact on how they view the world. My hope is that by the end of the class, you are looking at the environments that surround you with a more attuned and attentive set of eyes.



The construction of your reflection is entirely up to you. I do not want to dictate any specific organizational structure nor mandate any points of discussion. This is your opportunity to reflect on what you have learned and discuss how you will apply it. As a result, you need to discover the content, organizational structure, tone, etc. that will work best for you.

Nevertheless, I do have a few requirements for your reflection along with a couple of pieces of advice to impart. First and

foremost, your reflection needs to engage with the content and scholarship from the course in a meaningful fashion. What this meaningful fashion looks like is entirely up to you, but—by the end of the reflection—I should be quite aware that you took ENGL 4313: Visual Rhetoric. Additionally, you should include some images in your reflection. Helping you learn to compose with images is a major aspect of this course. I want to see that you can blend alpha numeric text and images together in order to express yourself.

As far as pieces of advice are concerned, my main recommendation would be to make your reflection unique or personal. Try not to get hung up on following any conventions or on needing to accomplish any particular objectives. Use this time to contemplate, think, and process. If you are struggling to come up with ideas to discuss, I recommend looking back on moments in the course where you had a profound realization or suddenly saw something in a different light. Your reflection does not have to be summative—it can focus on only a few moments in the course if you choose. And, lastly, allow yourself the space for your reflection to be unique and personal. Your audience, in many ways, is yourself.

Your reflection should be approximately three pages double-spaced. As mentioned earlier, you need to engage with course content in a meaningful fashion and include images as well.

Assessment for your “I’m Looking at the Student in the Mirror! A Final Reflection on ENGL 4313: Visual Rhetoric” 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 and your own experiences (past, present, and future), how well you articulate the manner in which the way you have viewed visual rhetoric has changed, and the polish you provide for your reflection (e.g., grammar, spelling, proper citation and formatting, quality of alignment and placement of images, etc.). When I am finished reading your essay, the main question I will reflect upon is: *How well did this student articulate their learning experiences in ENGL 4313: Visual Rhetoric while making meaningful connections between the course content and their own life?*