

ENGL 3361: Word and Tech

ENGL 5361: Studies in Multimodal Writing and Design



INSTRUCTOR

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Office Hours: [T TH 12:30 pm -1:30 pm](#),
[W 11am-12 pm](#) (via Zoom/in person)
and by appointment

Meeting Time and Place:

001: TTH 2:00 pm-3:20 pm
CAS 258

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines theoretical scholarship and practical applications of multimodal genres and digital media (such as audio podcasts, visualizations, and user interface design and machine-assisted writing) in both educational and professional environments. Completion of a research-based digital project and documentation for incorporating said project into a professional or academic setting is required.

Additionally, this class asks you to engage with texts from different types of new media, including social media, websites, streaming services, and blogs to develop specific rhetorical tactics you can then use in all sorts of areas. You will be encouraged to engage critically with content produced with digital technologies. You will develop your ability to conduct research, to compose writing and to consider how new media presents and uses arguments and stances. Assignments include a short introductory video, a visual analysis, the creation of an infographic and a short podcast along with a short reflection. This course focuses on the possibility of fictional and non-fictional texts to connect us as thinkers, writers, and communicators. You will learn to understand the multimodal aspects of these texts and the audiences that consume them.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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- This course will enable students to navigate multimodal composing platforms and software, including machine-driven writing platforms (AI), podcasting, and visual publishing formats to effectively adapt different genres of writing for digital platforms. Completion of a research-based digital project is required.

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- This course provides advanced students an opportunity to examine theoretical scholarship and practical applications of multimodal genres and digital media and writing.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives	What They Teach Us
Rhetoric	Develop specific arguments—specific to the context, specific to the purpose, and specific to the audience—using the tools available to you. Examine and practice specialized rhetorical genres and practices relevant to various areas of interest.
Critical Analysis	Apply critical thinking when engaging with a variety of digital and multimodal texts and multiple perspectives. Develop writing skills with focused research, a sustained critical analysis and digital technologies.
Processes	Understand the strategical and tactical decision-making processes toward creating finished drafts for different kinds of multimodal writing (including proposals and oral presentations) and work individually and collaboratively to arrive at polished written work.
Multimodal Writing and Literacy	Extending writing skills stressed in earlier-level English courses, writing (and rewriting) at this level will focus on exploring a topic in greater depth while engaging with texts from different types of media and context to practice critical multimodal writing and acquire multimodal literacy.
Research	Research and engage in academic conversations by analyzing and responding to the work of others. Learn several methodologies for conducting written research including the analysis of multimodal texts through evaluation for evidence.
Usability and Accessibility	Create accessible writing assignments while testing their usability and accessibility for specific audiences. The focus will be on delivering information in an accessible manner.
Technological Skillsets	Acquire software knowledge while using software like Audacity, Canvas, and Microsoft CoPilot.

TEXTS AND LAPTOP

- Please create an account with Canva at <https://www.canva.com/education/>.
- Please download the latest version of Audacity for your device at <https://www.audacityteam.org/download/>.
- Access to a laptop/computer and internet access to access course materials and further readings on Canvas (PDFs, links to videos, reports, handouts). Computers can also be accessed in the Muntz Library.

COMMUNICATION

Please make sure to email me if you have any questions about projects, come by during office hours appointment, or set up an appointment in advance if the office hours are inconvenient. Begin every subject line for every email or Canvas message with ENGLISH 5361 and sign the email with your first and last name. Email correspondence should be respectful and appropriate. I only accept correspondence from your UT Tyler email as per [UT Tyler email policy](#).

COURSE RULES

- Listen and learn from one another, respect others' opinions, experiences, beliefs, values, and differences.
- All students are responsible for contributing to both their own learning experience and the learning experience of others.
- There is room for vigorous discussion, and sometimes even heated intellectual disagreement in this class; however, it is expected that each person treats others with the utmost care and respect. Conflict between ideas does not need to become conflict between people. Be kind.

UT TYLER ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND HONOR CODE

This class has a Zero Tolerance Policy for Academic Dishonesty. Any deliberate act of academic dishonesty will result in immediate failure of the entire course. According to the [Manual of Student Conduct](#), "Academic Dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable, in whole or in part, to another person without giving sufficient credit, taking an examination for another person, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student, or the attempt to commit such an act. The [Honor Code](#) is the means through which to apply the ethical ideal of honorable living to the lives of the UT Tyler community. Therefore, every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: "Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do."

ACCOMODATIONS

Students with disabilities, whether physical, learning, or psychological, who believe that they need accommodations, are encouraged to contact the UT Tyler Office of Student Accessibility and Resources as soon as possible to ensure accommodations are implemented promptly. The UT Tyler Office of Student Accessibility and Resources provides students equal access to all

educational, social and co-curricular programs through coordination of services and reasonable accommodations, consultation and advocacy.

- [Apply for Services Here](#)
- [Existing SAR Student Login](#)

Note: The SAR registration process may take up to three (3) weeks to complete.

AI POLICY

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

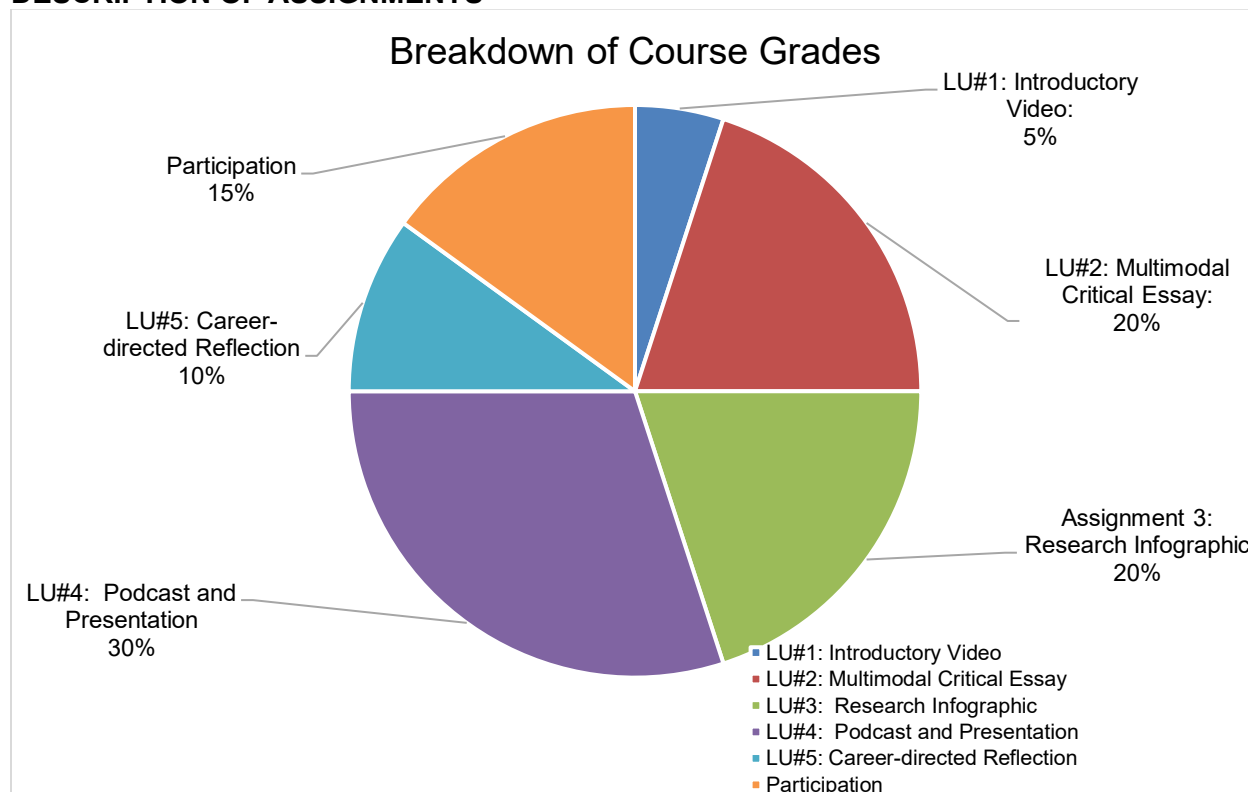
For this course, **AI is permitted only for specific assignments or situations, and appropriate acknowledgment is required.**

This course has specific assignments where artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as ChatGPT or Copilot) are permitted and encouraged. When AI use is permissible, it will be clearly stated in the assignment directions, and all use of AI must be appropriately acknowledged and cited. Otherwise, the default is that AI is not allowed during any stage of an assignment.

Using AI tools outside of these parameters violates UT Tyler's Honor Code, constitutes plagiarism, and will be treated as such.

This document was adapted from AI Syllabus information from Carnegie Mellon University, Stanford University, The University of Texas at Austin, and The University of Texas at San Antonio. This document was edited for grammar using Grammarly, an AI tool for writing.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS



The assignments are organized in Learning Units (LUs).

Participation (15%):	<p>I expect regular and enthusiastic participation in class, especially due to its online format. You can acquire up to 100 points in participation by uploading in-class activities on Canvas, participating in discussion forums, and collaborating with each other in a virtual format. Make sure to fulfill all these three components for a good participation grade:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Be prepared for class (complete the assigned reading and writing) 2) Participate in respectful, engaging discussion with your colleagues on Canvas 3) Collaborate with your peers in group projects. At times you may be divided into smaller groups for small brainstorming sessions in the class so that you have the opportunity to learn from each other.
LU#1: Introductory Video (5%) (individual)	<p>In this assignment, you will create a 60-90 second video to introduce yourself, identify the course you are taking and why you are interested in taking this specific course, and articulate a challenge relating to one of the modes—written, oral, visual, electronic, or nonverbal writing modes that you anticipate facing in the coming semester of. To record your video, use an easily accessible technology: your (or your friend's or classmate's) smartphone,</p>

	tablet, laptop, or desktop computer with webcam and mic and upload it to Canvas or via a third-party platform.
LU#2: Critical Multimodal Essay (20%) (individual)	Write a rhetorical analysis (minimum 1000 words) of a multimodal text of your choosing that relates to a topic that pertains to your scholarly interests. For instance, this image could be a documentary, a website with different sections (i.e. blog posts) or an informative talk or video (i.e. a TED talk). Through this assignment you will develop proficiency in rhetorical analysis by developing a writing piece that closely analyzes how one multimodal text works. You will inquire how the image works (what rhetorical strategies does the text employ, who is the audience and why, is the text's rhetoric successful?)
LU#3: Infographic (20%) (individual and group)	For this assignment, you will review an issue of your choosing related to our scholarly interests by creating a research infographic. This text could be a movie, novel, television show or episode, graphic novel, or video game. This assignment consists of three different parts: 1) Create an infographic in which you position the text in relation to a digital space of your choosing 2) Pitch your infographic to your peers in small groups of 5. Discuss rhetorical choices in designing your poster.
LU#4: Podcast and Presentation (30%) (group)	This assignment consists of a group podcast (20%), a proposal (200-500 words), a script (ca. 1000 words) and a group presentation (10%). You will be recording a well-researched podcast (ca. 15-20 minutes long, recorded with Audacity) that takes a position/makes an argument on a controversial topic or subject of your choosing. You can choose to discuss the topic you have used for critical multimodal essay or infographic, or you can choose to decide on a new topic with your group members. You will also be required to upload presentations on the podcast topics. Each podcast group will be lead by a graduate student who will submit short progress reports (150-200 words).
LU#5: Career-Directed Reflection (10%) (individual)	Complete a final. substantial reflective essay (1000 words) in which you include directed reflection for all assignments. This will help you reflect on the multimodal processes you learned and practiced. You will be asked to reflect how each assignment and acquired skills applies to your future career goals. Graduate students are expected to write a longer, 1500-2000 word reflection with introductions for each of the LUs. Additionally, 3 scholarly sources need to be referenced here.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Your work should be submitted on time. Acceptable file formats for writing assignments are .doc, .docx or .pdf. Acceptable formats for audio recordings are mp3 or mp4. Acceptable formats for video recordings will be outlined on the respective assignment prompts. **All other**

formats are not accepted and will be counted as missing. Quizzes or other classroom activities cannot be made up. If you have a valid excuse that is documented, reasonable effort will be made in helping you to make up the assignment. Late formal assignments are deducted **one grade letter per day**.

EXTENSION LOG POLICY

You will receive a pool of hours that allow you to extend the due date for any formally submitted assignment as you see fit, as long as you remain within the guidelines below (policy developed by Dr. Micheal Rumore and Dr. Franziska Tsufim). The breakdown within each unit is as follows:

LU#1: 24 hours

LU#2: 72 hours

LU#3: 72 hours

To receive an extension for an assignment using these hours, simply submit an **extension log** (see template in each Assignment Description on Canvas) to Canvas in place of the assignment. Your logs should set a new deadline by noting how many extension hours will be used and briefly documenting how you will use those hours. You may divide your extension pool into 24-hour “blocks.” **The extension is considered automatically granted as long as you submit your log by the assignment’s original due date, as your hours cannot be assigned retroactively.** You may submit one additional extension log for a previously extended assignment if you meet your own revised deadline and have the requisite hours in your pool. **Note: LU#4 and LU#5 are not eligible for using your extension hours.**

Personal circumstances, emergencies, or necessary accommodations may require extensions beyond the time granted by this policy. If something unexpected happens during the semester—please do not hesitate to reach out.

GRADES

For determining assignments and final grades, the following scale will be used in this course:

A	90 to 100 points
B	80 to 89 points
C	70 to 79 points
D	60 to 69 points
F	0 to 59 points

STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Please make sure you eat, sleep, and take care of yourself. Make sure to read the policies that outline student responsibilities at UT Tyler:

<http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>.

UT TYLER RESOURCES

- [UT Tyler Writing Center](#)
- [UT Tyler PASS Tutoring Center](#)
- [UT Tyler Counseling Center](#)

CLASS SCHEDULE (Subject to change)

It is the student's **responsibility** to **check the course schedule for changes**. The class schedule will appear in the form of checklists as part of the Canvas modules which will be published at the beginning of every week.

Links to the readings will be indicated on Canvas unless the reading is from one of the textbooks listed on the syllabus.

Date	In Class	Homework
	INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE LEARNING UNIT #1: Introductory Video Week 1	
Tuesday 1/13	No in-person class/ online activities Introduction to the course. Review course syllabus. Post any questions in the Q&A Begin working on LU#1: Introductory Video assignment	Review syllabus. Bring questions to class. Work on script draft Fill out technical expertise survey
Thursday 1/15	Syllabus Q&A Submit Peer Review for Script Draft by the beginning of class for peer feedback and comments Discuss multimodality LU#1: Introductory Video due by Sunday, 1/18 at 5 pm	Read: Excerpt from Writer/Designer (posed on Canvas)
	LEARNING UNIT #2 Week 2: Critical Multimodal Essay	
Tuesday 1/20	Complete first draft of a reflection on LU#1. Introduce LU#2: Critical Multimodal Essay	Read: <i>Writer/Designer</i> , pg. 22-32

	Discuss history of writing technologies (assigned reading) Discussion of communication competence in writing (rhetoric, process, multimodality)	
Thursday 1/22	Discuss history and challenges of machine-assisted AI writing Practice analyzing news articles and opinion pieces	Complete Phase 1 of AI Ethics modules Read: "AI Ethics" by Mark Coeckelbergh, ch. 1 (posted on Canvas)
	Week 3: Critical Multimodal Essay	
Tuesday 1/27	Introduce and discuss AI and tech ethics: Coeckelbergh Practice rhetorical analysis with visuals	Watch: OnCourse Video on Analyzing Texts
Thursday 1/29	LU#2: Critical Multimodal Essay Draft due in class Peer Review workshop	Watch: OnCourse Video on Understanding Context
	Week 4: Critical Multimodal Essay	
Tuesday 2/3	Discuss the importance of context	Read: Purdue OWL MLA guide Watch (optional): On Course " Integrating Quotations "
Thursday 2/5	MLA citation and practice Discuss audience awareness, objections, alternate views, and persuasive writing in a digital writing context Review quoting and paraphrasing	Read: " Seven Design Tips for Making Great Infographics "
	Week 5: Critical Multimodal Essay and Virtual Reality	

Tuesday 2/10	Final LU#2 Workshop <u>LU#2: Critical Multimodal Essay Final due Friday 2/18 by 5 PM</u>	
Thursday 2/12	VR Activity Day	
	LEARNING UNIT #3 Week 6: Infographic	
Tuesday 2/17	Introduction of <u>LU#3: Research Infographic</u> Discuss multimodal composing and design choices: analyze the balance of visuals, data, and written text Brainstorm an Infographic Topic	Read: <u>"Seven Design Tips for Making Great Infographics"</u>
Thursday 2/19	Discuss designing and writing multimodally Collaborative activity: Find examples for infographics online <u>LU#3: Infographic Topic due by 2/27 by 5 pm</u> Discuss helpful feedback	Watch: <u>"When We Design for Accessibility, We All Benefit"</u>
	Week 7: Infographic	
Tuesday 2/24	Discuss tool for multimodal design (infographics) Workshop Infographic in class	Watch: Canva tutorial Watch: OnCourse video <u>"The Revision Process"</u> Read: Smith, Allegra W. <u>"Language and Access: World Englishes, Universal Design for Learning, and Writing Pedagogy."</u> <i>Journal of Global Literacies, Technologies, and Emerging Pedagogies</i> , 6(2), 1144–1161.

Thursday 2/26	Define Accessible writing and look at examples for accessible websites	Read: What is UX? https://uxpa.org/about-ux/ Read: UDL Guidelines
Tuesday 3/3	LU#3: Infographic Draft Peer Review Workshop	
Thursday 3/5	No in-person class.	
	Week 8: Spring Break: 3/9-3/13	
	Week 9: Infographic	
Tuesday 3/17	Discuss visual accessibility and Universal Design Guidelines How can we achieve user-happiness and user-friendliness in digital writing?	Read: Writer/Designer, pg. 37-40 Read: Write helpful Alt Text to describe images
Thursday 3/19	Explore: How do we write 'good' captions and good alt-text? LU#3: Infographic due Friday 3/20 by 5 PM	
	LEARNING UNIT #4 Week 11: Podcast	
Tuesday 3/24	Intro to LU#4: Podcast and Presentation Workshop: Introduction to Podcast Composition and Audacity Discuss auditory accessibility and A.I. as a helper software Podcast Brainstorm Activity	Listen to podcast examples (posted on Canvas) Watch: Audacity Tutorial (playlist) Read: "Charlie Bennett's 10 Step Guide to Starting Your Own Podcast"
Thursday 3/26	Asynchronous class day. No-in Person Clas. Podcast Group Brainstorming and Proposal Workshop Day.	Watch: OnCourse video "Turning a Question into a Claim"

	Week 12: Podcast	
Tuesday 3/31	Brainstorm sub-topics and research context Look at Podcast Examples Discuss research questions and claims <u>LU#4: Podcast Proposal due by 4/1 by 5 pm</u>	Read: Excerpts from <i>Writer/Designer</i> (posted on Canvas) Watch: OnCourse Video " <u>Categorizing Research Sources</u> "
Thursday 4/2	Research Argument Podcast Recording/Workshop Day	Read: " <u>From Analysis to Design: Visual Communication and the Teaching of Writing</u> "
	Week 13: Podcast	
Tuesday 4/7	Review in class: " <u>How can you make your presentation accessible?</u> " and discuss effective means of delivering and designing multimodal presentation	
Thursday 4/9	Workshop: Prepare for Presentation Days	
	Week 14: Podcast Presentations	
Tuesday 4/14	<u>Podcast Presentations Day 1</u>	
Thursday 4/16	<u>Podcast Presentations Day 2</u> <u>LU#4: Podcast Recording due by 4/17 by 5 pm</u>	Read: Burnett, R. E., Cooper, L. A., & Welhausen, C. A. (2013). " <u>How can technical communicators develop strategies for effective collaboration?</u> " In <i>Solving Problems in Technical Communication</i> . Eds. J. Johnson-Eilola and S. A. Selber.
	Week 15: LU#5: Career-Directed Reflection	
	Last week of classes	

Tuesday 4/21	<p>Complete Podcast Check-in Survey due by 4/21 by 5 pm</p> <p>Discuss and review guidelines for LU#4, discuss the value of reflections</p> <p>Discuss multimodal writing in the context of technical writing</p> <p>Course Evaluations</p>	
Thursday 4/23	<p>Final edits and polishing of LU#4. Conclusion and parting thoughts.</p> <p>LU#5: Reflection Paper due by 4/29 by 5:00 pm</p>	Prepare final submission of LU#5

Major Assignments Due Dates (usually due at 5 pm, see extension policy for possible extensions.

- **LU# 1: Introductory Video:** January 18, by 5 pm
- **LU# 2: Critical Multimodal Essay Final:** February 18, by 5 pm
- **LU# 3: Infographic Final:** March 20, by 5 pm
- **LU# 4: Podcast Presentation Days:** April 14 and April 16 (in class)
- **LU# 4: Podcast Recording:** April 17, by 5 pm
- **LU# 5: Reflection Paper:** April 29, by 5 pm

Final Presentation at the Multimodal Exchange (optional): **TBD**