

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Daniel J. Valdez Jr., M.A.
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Office Location: TC Room 222
Office Hours: MWF: 10 AM – 11 AM / TR: 9 AM – 12:30 PM

CREDIT

3 Semester Credit Hours (3 hours lecture, 0 hours lab)

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

In-Person

PREREQUISITE/CO-REQUISITE:

TSI Complete in Reading and Writing.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Intensive study of and practice in writing processes, from invention and researching to drafting, revising, and editing, both individually and collaboratively. Emphasis on effective rhetorical choices, including audience, purpose, arrangement, and style. Focus on writing the academic essay as a vehicle for learning, communicating, and critical analysis.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to

1. Demonstrate knowledge of individual and collaborative writing processes.
2. Develop ideas with appropriate support and attribution.
3. Write in a style appropriate to audience and purpose.
4. Read, reflect, and respond critically to a variety of texts.
5. Use Edited American English in academic essays.

Core Objectives

1. Critical Thinking Skills: To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.

2. Communication Skills: To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.

3. Personal Responsibility: To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

An electronic device with access to the Internet. Your readings can be found in the specific week's folder.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This is an asynchronous course. Students are not required to attend any online class. However, students are expected to check BlackBoard and their LIT e-mail daily. Students who do not engage with the class daily will fall behind.

DROP POLICY

If you wish to drop a course, you are responsible for initiating and completing the drop process by the specified drop date as listed on the [Academic Calendar](#). If you stop coming to class and fail to drop the course, you will earn an "F" in the course.

STUDENT EXPECTED TIME REQUIREMENT

For every hour in class (or unit of credit), students should expect to spend at least two to three hours per week studying and completing assignments. For a 3-credit-hour class, students should prepare to allocate approximately six to nine hours per week outside of class in a 16-week session OR approximately twelve to eighteen hours in an 8-week session. Online/Hybrid students should expect to spend at least as much time in this course as in the traditional, face-to-face class.

COURSE CALENDAR

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS (Due on this Date)	ASSIGNMENTS (Due on this Date)
Week 1: Start Here	Welcome to ENGL 1301 Classroom Orientation Formal Email	Writing a Formal Email (08/27/25)	Professional Introduction Forum (08/27/25) Orientation Quiz (08/27/25) Send Me a Formal Email (08/29/25)
Week 2: The Basics	MLA Format Works Cited and In-Text Citations Nouns and Pronouns	Documents to Help with Academic Writing MLA and Works Cited Examples	MLA Template Assignment Works Cited Page Assignment

		(09/03/25) “English is Not Normal” by John Mchorter (09/05/25)	(09/03/25) Nouns and Pronouns Quiz (09/05/25)
Week 3: The Informative Essay	The Informative Essay AI Ethics Verbs and Adverbs	Essay Examples (09/08/25)	INFORMATIVE ESSAY OUTLINE (09/10/25) AI Ethics Discussion Verbs and Adverbs Quiz (09/12/25)
Week 4: The Informative Essay cont.	Reviewing Papers Common Errors Adjectives	Essay Examples (09/15/25)	INFORMATIVE ESSAY ROUGH DRAFT (09/15/25) Adjectives Quiz Common Errors Quiz (09/19/25)
Week 5: Revising and Making Strong Papers	What is a “Good” Essay Anyway? Rhetoric Conjunctions and Prepositions	Essay and Video Examples	Spot the Difference Assignment (09/22/25) INFORMATIVE ESSAY FINAL DRAFT (09/24/25) Conjunctions and Prepositions Quiz (09/26/25)
Week 6: The Research Essay	The Research Essay Thesis Statements Diction and Syntax	TBD	Thesis Statement Practice (09/29/25) RESEARCH ESSAY OUTLINE (10/01/25) Diction and Syntax Quiz (10/03/25)
Week 7: The Research Essay cont.	Peer Review Punctuation Good Non-Academic Sources	“What’s the Language of the Future” by Henry Hitchings (10/06/25) Essay and Video Examples	RESEARCH ESSAY ROUGH DRAFT (10/06/25) Peer Review (10/08/25) Punctuation Quiz (10/10/25)

Week 8: The Research Essay cont.	Confidence in Writing LU Library, JSTOR, and Google Scholar Phrases, Hyphens, Dashes, and Parentheses	Video Aides	RESEARCH ESSAY FINAL DRAFT (10/15/25) Phrases Quiz Punctuation Quiz (10/17/25)
Week 9: Academic Research and the Annotated Bibliography	Logical Fallacies Finding Good Sources Persuasion	Logical Fallacies Videos and Examples Biased Articles What Academic Research Looks Like	Annotated Bibliography Prewriting (10/20/25) Logical Fallacies Quiz (10/22/25) Sources Quiz (10/24/25)
Week 10: Academic Research and the Annotated Bibliography cont.	Annotated Bibliography Avoiding Bias Citation Practice	Annotated Bibliography Examples MLA Citation Examples	PERSUASIVE RESEARCH ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (10/27/25) Bias Quiz Citations Quiz (10/31/25)
Week 11: The Persuasive Research Essay	The Persuasive Research Essay Rhetoric Overview	“What the F***?” by Steven Pinker (11/05/25) Video Aides Essay Examples	PERSUASIVE RESEARCH ESSAY OUTLINE (11/05/25) Rhetoric Quiz (11/07/25)
Week 12: The Persuasive Research Essay cont.	How to Use Your Research Spelling and Syntax	Essay Examples	PERSUASIVE RESEARCH ESSAY ROUGH DRAFT (11/10/25) Peer Review (11/12/25) Spelling and Syntax Quiz (11/14/25)

Week 13: The Persuasive Research Essay cont.	Revising Overview Grammar Overview Rhetoric Extra Credit Explanation	N/A	Extra Credit Assignments (11/21/25)
Week 14: The Persuasive Research Essay cont.	Workshop	N/A	Workshop Discussion (11/24/25) EARLY TURN-IN: PERSUASIVE RESEARCH ESSAY FINAL DRAFT (11/25/25)
Week 15: Final Prep	Final Exam Prep		OFFICIAL TURN-IN DATE: PERSUASIVE RESEARCH ESSAY FINAL DRAFT (12/03/25) OPTIONAL FINAL EXAM (12/08/25) BY <u>5 PM</u>

COURSE EVALUATION

Final grades will be calculated according to the following criteria:

- Essay #1 10%
- Essay #2 15%
- Persuasive Research Essay--Common Assignment 20%
- Short Writing Assignments 15%
- Daily Grades 25%
- Final Exam 15%
- Total 100%
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GRADING SCALE

90-100 A

80-89 B

70-79 C

60-69 D

0 – 59 F

LIT does not use +/- grading scales

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students found to be committing academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, or collusion) may receive disciplinary action. Students need to familiarize themselves with the institution's Academic Dishonesty Policy available in the Student Catalog & Handbook at <http://catalog.lit.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=80#academic-dishonesty>.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

The latest technical requirements, including hardware, compatible browsers, operating systems, etc. can be online at <https://lit.edu/online-learning/online-learning-minimum-computer-requirements>. A functional broadband internet connection, such as DSL, cable, or WiFi is necessary to maximize the use of online technology and resources.

DISABILITIES STATEMENT

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities. LIT provides reasonable accommodations as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, to students with a diagnosed disability. The Special Populations Office is located in the Eagles' Nest Room 129 and helps foster a supportive and inclusive educational environment by maintaining partnerships with faculty and staff, as well as promoting awareness among all members of the Lamar Institute of Technology community. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Special Populations Coordinator at (409)-951-5708 or email specialpopulations@lit.edu. You may also visit the online resource at [Special Populations - Lamar Institute of Technology \(lit.edu\)](#).

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT STATEMENT

It is the responsibility of all registered Lamar Institute of Technology students to access, read, understand and abide by all published policies, regulations, and procedures listed in the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook*. The *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* may be accessed at www.lit.edu. Please note that the online version of the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* supersedes all other versions of the same document.

STARFISH

LIT utilizes an early alert system called Starfish. Throughout the semester, you may receive emails from Starfish regarding your course grades, attendance, or academic performance. Faculty members record student attendance, raise flags and kudos to express concern or give praise, and you can make an appointment with faculty and staff all through the Starfish home page. You can also login to Blackboard or MyLIT and click on the Starfish link to view academic alerts and detailed information. It is the responsibility of the student to pay attention to these

emails and information in Starfish and consider taking the recommended actions. Starfish is used to help you be a successful student at LIT.

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES/INFORMATION

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE STATEMENT

Lamar Institute of Technology (LIT) recognizes the recent advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, have changed the landscape of many career disciplines and will impact many students in and out of the classroom. To prepare students for their selected careers, LIT desires to guide students in the ethical use of these technologies and incorporate AI into classroom instruction and assignments appropriately. Appropriate use of these technologies is at the discretion of the instructor. Students are reminded that all submitted work must be their own original work unless otherwise specified. Students should contact their instructor with any questions as to the acceptable use of AI/ChatGPT in their courses.

Plagiarism/Cheating: Academic Dishonesty is a crime that Lamar Institute of Technology and I take seriously. Most colleges expel cheating students. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

Directly copying a source into an essay without citing the original source.

Paraphrasing a source without citing the original source.

Paying someone to complete an assignment, having a friend or family member complete an assignment, or using Artificial Intelligence to write a paper. If a paper has a student's name on it, I expect to see that student's work.

Making minor changes to an original source while still retaining up to 75% of the structure of the sentence.

Taking a quiz or test with another student, giving the answers to a quiz or test to another student, or Googling the answers to the quiz or test. My quizzes are not open-book quizzes. Students are only allowed the notes they have taken over an assignment during a quiz.

If I receive a paper that requires a works cited page and in-text citations but does not feature either of those criteria, I will give the paper a zero.

How to Know If Something Is Not Plagiarism: Generally, plagiarism only covers things that are not general knowledge. If a student makes the claim that the sky is blue, then they do not have to cite where they got that information, because it is something that 90% of the world already knows. However, if a student describes *why* the sky is blue, they have to cite their source, since that is not common knowledge.

How to Avoid Plagiarism: First, students should practice good paraphrasing and rewrite sentences *in their own words*. Part of the course will be discussions, assignments, and videos over good paraphrasing.

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES/INFORMATION:

- **Personal Responsibility:**

- It is *my* responsibility to convey the course information to students in a clear and concise manner that is aligned with the course objectives. It is *the student's* responsibility to interact with the material, ask questions as needed, complete assignments in a timely manner, and check Blackboard and their email daily.
- It is the student's responsibility to reach out to me with any questions or concerns they may have.
- Students *must* listen to lectures and take notes in this course.
- Technical issues are not a valid excuse for not completing an assignment if you wait until the day the assignment is due. You should work on assignments before the day they are due.

- **Grading:**

- If a student receives their rough draft and does not correct any of the suggestions from the instructor for the final draft, they will receive an even lower grade than the rough draft.
- Assignment due dates are subject to change at instructor discretion.
- Any assignment containing *any* AI generated work will receive a zero. I do not recommend using AI for grammar correction, as it is sometimes flagged as AI generated content by the checkers I use (Here is a list of them: ZeroGPT, QuillBot, Scribb, GPTZero, CopyLeaks, and Undetectable). However, I understand that sometimes students may need it to identify a comma place or misplaced modifier. Simply be wary. Using AI to generate ideas or compose sentences is not allowed *for any reason*.
- Plagiarized assignments will receive a zero. AI, at least within English courses and essays, is plagiarism.
- Students who collude on assignments will receive zeroes.
- I do not mark every little error on a students' essay. I mark the most frequent errors I notice a student is committing, leave feedback for correction, and it is then up to the student to go through their own essay and find errors on their own.
- Gradebook will be updated weekly, but essays may take up to 2 weeks to grade.
- If a student is allowed to turn something in late, they must inform me that they have turned it in, and even then they may not receive adequate feedback for the assignment.

- **Contact:**

- I will reply to emails over the weekday within 24 hours. However, any email sent after 12 PM on Friday will not receive a reply until Monday.
- I offer walk-ins for my office hours, but I strongly recommend that students email or call me to schedule an appointment.

- If a student must meet with me outside of scheduled office hours, please email or call me and we can work something out.
- **I reserve the right to update my syllabi as needed throughout the semester.**

LATE WORK

All late work will receive a zero. Students must tell me **at least twenty-four hours before the due date** if they are going to miss work. The assignment must *only* be turned into Blackboard. Once the student turns in the assignment, they *must* immediately email me, or I will not know to look at the assignment. **Students who turn in late assignments but do not notify me will not get the chance to have their assignments re-graded.**

Some assignments may be turned in late if approved because of extenuating circumstances, but the student will have to reach out to me so we can discuss them. I reserve the right to define what counts as an extenuating circumstance.

Approved late assignments will be re-graded for full credit. Students who turned in assignments late may not get detailed feedback on how to improve their assignments. Depending on the excuse, I will most likely ask for some kind of proof that the excuse is valid. Extenuating circumstances such as severe illness or death of a loved one are valid excuses for missing assignments.

Extenuating circumstances do **not** include going out of town, going on vacation, Internet/technology issues that can quickly be solved by IT/Blackboard support, time management issues, etc.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

I strive to create an open and respectful environment in which every student feels comfortable expressing their thoughts and opinions without fear of judgment. In our classroom, thoughtful dialogue and mutual respect are essential, and I encourage everyone to participate and engage with different perspectives.

RETAKING ASSIGNMENTS

Other than late work and the major assignments I allow remediation for, I do not allow students to retake assignments. However, I may ask students to resubmit assignments if they do them incorrectly. Once an assignment is graded, it cannot be revised and resubmitted.