

**ENGL 1302W Composition II Syllabus, Spring 2018**  
**Sections 49 (10:00-10:50 a.m.) and 50 (11:00-11:50); Evans 260**

**Researching the Branch Davidian Siege, Waco, TX, 25 Years Later**

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**Course Description**

ENGL1302 continues the study of writing skills in English, emphasizing more complex methods in the writing process than ENGL1301 including academic research. The course prepares students to write research papers that reflect the conventions of academic writing. Students will learn to develop and support arguments effectively, with required and appropriate documentation. ENGL1302 is designed to deepen the students' understanding of how reading, writing, and knowledge acquisition operate concurrently. The emphasis is on critical thinking and problem solving. Through invention (brainstorming, drafting, and revision), students will identify research topics, problems, and concerns of a local and global nature. They will learn to follow and support a coherent line of argument, and they will learn to transition ideas logically and persuasively. Over the course of the semester, students will develop a research project, which in its final form will be a formal paper, with an oral presentation. Students will be required to produce writing throughout the semester, such as proposals, summaries of sources, bibliographies, research reports, and the like. **Prerequisite:** ENGL1301.

**Aims and Outcomes**

Composition II is a core requirement because learning to write developed, organized, and technically proficient research papers is an essential part of a university education. In addition, students also demonstrate effective oral expression and understanding of the varying writing requirements of different disciplines. By the end of ENGL1302, students will be able to write at a level that signifies that they are ready for sophomore writing. Students learn how to develop an effective, logical, and critical argument. They continue to demonstrate that they have a command of the conventions of written English. The instructor will emphasize the importance of university-level reading and will demonstrate the relationship between the reading and writing processes, using a variety of texts such as fiction, non-fiction, poetry, essays, and examples of professional writing across disciplines. This emphasis develops students' perception in interpreting texts (oral, written, and visual). After completing the course, students will be able to express in analytical writing more verbally complex thought and relationships. Because of the in-depth readings and discussions, they will gain an enhanced ability to make responsible moral choices and ethical decisions. In short, the course teaches students that there is a definite correlation between reading, writing, and, in general, life experience.

## Required Textbooks

- (1) Dick J Reavis. *The Ashes of Waco: An Investigation*. Syracuse University Press, 1998. ISBN: 978-0815605027.
- (2) Glenn Cheryl and Loretta Gray. *The Hodges Harbrace Handbbook*. 19<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-305-67644-2 (student edition).

## Course Objectives

Through a sequence of writings, readings, and teamwork, students will learn to

- understand the persuasive nature of language, and respond appropriately to different rhetorical situations and constraints,
- strengthen their composing process to produce quality academic essays and research papers,
- use the recursive nature of writing (pre-writing, writing, revision, editing) to improve texts,
- further strengthen their analytical reading and critical thinking skills,
- strengthen their argumentative skills,
- strengthen their ability to conduct research in order to enable them to perform well in specific sophomore and upper-level courses in their disciplines,
- find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize primary and secondary texts, both print and electronic,
- integrate and document the ideas of others across disciplines in a confident and competent manner, using various citation methods (MLA, APA, *Chicago*, etc.),
- employ collaborative learning strategies effectively in various contexts,
- strengthen their oral presentation skills,
- understand the varying requirements of different academic contexts and across disciplines,
- understand the connection between abundant reading and effective writing,
- further strengthen their knowledge of the conventions of Standard American English grammar and appropriate mechanics.

## Attendance

Attendance is mandatory for successful completion of this course. Even a moderate number of absences may seriously jeopardize your ability to learn the material and pass the course. Because much of the work will build on material previously completed and may include team interaction, you should make every effort to attend class and be on time. Students must be in the classroom for the entire time in order to receive full credit for attendance. **Up to three hours of absence will receive no penalty; for every additional absence students will have 3% deducted from their course grade; students who miss nine or more sessions will automatically fail the course.** Should an emergency arise (such as a serious illness or death in the family) report to the Dean of Students. His office will assist you in gathering the required documentation and make sure all of your instructors are made aware of the circumstances. The instructor will decide whether the documented circumstances qualify as an emergency or not. If you are unable to attend a class, you must make sure you are prepared for the session when you return. Much of what you need to know in order to be prepared will be on the calendar, but unanticipated events can occur during classes that may change the calendar. Contact a classmate to see what unanticipated assignments, discussions, *etc.*, you might have missed; this will help ensure that you are not surprised when the class is doing something for which you are not prepared.

## Grading Plan

This is a “W” course, which means that at least fifty (50) percent of the course grade will derive from writing activities designed to help the student master course objectives.

### Assignments:

Short writing assignments (including 30 reading sheets, 3 reports on <i>Oklahoma City</i> , 5 précis, and 3 reader reports, and a précis presentation) .....	50%
2 position papers (2 x 5%) .....	10%
1 quiz on <i>The Ashes of Waco</i> .....	5%
2 group projects (2 x 5%) .....	10%
Paper proposal .....	5%
Final paper (including reader reports on classmates’ papers) .....	15%
Second oral presentation .....	5%
Total	100%

Over the course of the semester, there will be frequent short writing assignments (41 in total)—principally summaries and responses to readings—the purpose of all of them is to help students process their research for their final paper. Further instructions in regards to these assignments will be distributed in class. These assignments will be graded on a zero (0%) / check minus (.5%) / check (1%) / check plus (1.5%) scale (zero: incomplete or unsatisfactory grade; check minus: fails to meet expectations; check: meets expectations; check plus exceeds expectations). *Short writing assignments will not be accepted late.* Also note that students should strive to earn check pluses on their work. Except for the five précis (which must be typed), these writing assignments may be either hand-written or typed. Any submitted writing that is plagiarized will receive zero credit, and two instances of plagiarized writing will result in an immediate F for the course.

Bonus opportunity: for every three classes that students surrender their cell phones to the TA, they will be awarded .5%

On February 2 and February 12, students will submit—via Blackboard—short (900-word) position papers regarding a controversial issue in the history of the Waco siege. The purpose of these papers is to help students develop conclusions about their research. These papers must include a thesis statement, formulated as a response to a published position, and develop a succinct argument, and they must follow MLA format guidelines, including full citations for sources used. They will be graded by rubric for the focus and precision of their argument including the thesis statement (0-3), rhetorical strategy (0-3), organization of the argument (0-3), use of sources (0-3), and clarity of their prose (0-3); while papers will not be graded for their format, failure to follow MLA guidelines properly may result in substantial penalties (up to 33%) to the grade. Late papers will have 3 points deducted from the tally out of 15 (20%) for every class session they are late, and papers that are 5 or more sessions late will receive zero credit (see academic honesty policy below).

On February 19, there will be one twenty-minute, open-note, short answer quiz on the *Ashes of Waco*. The purpose of this quiz is to establish that each student has a basic command of the events at the Waco siege. There will be no make-up for this quiz for students who are later or absent.

Students will engage with their classmates in two group projects, which will be submitted for a group grade. Students who fail to participate substantially in these projects will receive zero credit. These projects will require teams to collect and organize information about the Waco siege, and to prepare for mock debates over the issues involved. The purpose of these projects is to demonstrate how collaboration can advance research in manifold ways.

Students will make two formal oral presentations. The first will be a very brief (two-minute) discussion of a source (oral presentation of a *précis*). This presentation must be accompanied by a handout, with the student's name, the citation for the source discussed, and a formal *précis* formatted according to MLA guidelines. Both the presentation and the handout will be graded as if they were short writing assignments (see above). The second will be a ten-minute presentation of their paper with two parts: a five-minute formal presentation and a five-minute question period, during which classmates will be invited to ask questions and make comments. The presentation will be graded for its clarity of delivery, quality of its content and organization, and speaker's enthusiasm and awareness of the audience.

Students will compose a 3,600-word (roughly 12 pages, typed and double spaced) research paper on the Waco siege or a similar topic. They will begin this project on day two of the class, and they will not be done until they have completed their oral presentation of the paper. All assignments during the course of this semester are process work for this paper, so while the percentage of the grade for this paper may seem small, it is because much of the already-graded work will appear in this paper; students are expected to incorporate their own thinking and writing from earlier in the semester into this final paper. Students are required to submit a proposal for this paper, which should include provide a clear statement regarding the topic for the paper (which should be sufficiently focused), a thesis statement, discussion of at least two significant sources (with citations), and some indication of the organization of the paper. If any of these elements are missing from the proposal, students will be asked to rewrite it; the grade for the proposal will be either 0 or 5. Once the proposal is approved, students should immediately begin on drafting a fuller outline. The final paper will be graded with a rubric: quality of research and its integration and synthesis (0-4), overall coherence, development, and flow of argument (0-4), and final presentation (including spelling and grammar, format, bibliography format) (0-4). Students will be required to read and provide written comments on three of their classmates' essays (reader reports) before they submit their final paper, and those reports will be factored into their grade for their own final paper (0-3). For every 300 words the paper is short of the required 3,600 words, the paper will be penalized 1 point on the rubric; for every class session late, the paper will be penalized 3 points on the rubric.

At the end of the semester, students who earn a grade of B or better on their final papers will be invited to prepare their paper for inclusion in a book—a collection of the best essays on the Waco siege. All students who contribute an essay will be given a copy of the book. Mr. Ivey, a graduate student in the English Department with skills and knowledge about editing and publishing will oversee the production of this book, and will provide a workshop for all students in the course.

## Classroom Policies

### Individual and group responsibility

During the semester, you will be working in teams whose responsibility will be to read and provide constructive criticism on each member's written and oral work and at times create a document as a team. Because your input is essential to the success of the entire team, your attendance is required. Failure to work as part of the collaborative team will mean that you do not have the proper background to do the assignment and no grade will be recorded.

If you are to bring a draft of an assignment, make sure you are clear about its purpose and have that draft with you. Do not come to class without the needed materials, including your book and your drafts. You must have prepared the proper materials by the calendar deadline in order to be able to participate and get the full benefit of the class interaction. Failure to work as part of a classroom cooperative will jeopardize your individual grade.

### Assignments

Because writing is a process and involves various stages, students are expected to work through projects in a step-by-step fashion and **turn in all of these steps** when the assignments are due. If any step in the process of a particular assignment is missing or completed unsatisfactorily, the final paper will not be accepted.

Your instructor may require that you submit all of your essays to a plagiarism detecting service such as turnitin.com. Your enrolling in the course and electing to stay in that section constitutes your agreeing to submit your work as your instructor requires.

### Cell phones and electronics

The use (including visible presence) of cell phones, text messagers, and all similar electronic devices is prohibited during class-time. Failure to comply to this policy will result to expulsion from the classroom. Even the visible presence of such a device during a test will result in a zero for that test. All such devices should be turned off or put in a silent mode and not be taken out during any class. Using the computer during class for other than class assignments is not allowed. If you access Facebook, Twitter, or any other site not affiliated with our coursework during class, you will be **asked to leave the classroom**. Do not use the computer for any activity other than that assigned while students are working independently. If you need to access the Internet or your email for the assignment, be sure you receive permission before accessing the sites. The penalties for using the computer for other than course work during class include being recorded as absent for that day, or failure on the assignment due that day. Bonuses will be awarded to students who surrender their cellphones at the beginning of class for the duration of the class.

## University Policies

### Academic Honesty

English Department policy states that a paper or assignment, which evidence can support as plagiarized or in any manner not the result of a student's own intellectual endeavors, will receive zero points. **The second offense will result in failure of the course and possible university disciplinary action.** Submitting your own previously written work for a current assignment or submitting an assignment in more than one class without the prior permission of the instructors is also considered academically dishonest. For information on plagiarism and other **Classroom Rules of Conduct**, see the following site: <http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide>.

### Americans with Disabilities Act

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex (tel. 936.294.1720). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.

### Religious Holy Days

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

### Visitors in the Classroom

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom. This policy is not intended to discourage the occasional visiting of classes by responsible persons. Obviously, however, the visiting of a particular class should be occasional and not regular, and it should in no way constitute interference with registered members of the class or the educational process.

### Instructor Evaluations

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.

COURSE SCHEDULE\*

\*NOTE: The syllabus/course schedule is tentative and subject to change.

- 01/22 Introduction, meet and greet with ice-breakers. Read Carl Hoover's "Approaching Branch Davidian Anniversary brings out programs on Waco" in the *Waco Tribune* (28 December 2017), introduction to the semester project, lecture: "On the importance of taking notes, and the writing process."
- 01/24 Read "Introduction" to *The Ashes of Waco, Oklahoma City* film in class, reading sheet #1 due.
- 01/26 Read chapters 1-3, continue film in class, reading sheets #2-#4 and report on film #1 due.
- 01/29 Read chapters 4-6, continue film in class, reading sheet #5-#7 and report on film #2 due.
- 01/31 Read chapters 7-12, reading sheets #8-#13 and report on film #3 due, lecture: "Clustering and mind mapping," open discussion in class in time remaining.
- 02/02 Read chapters 13-15, reading sheets #14-#16 due, lecture: "Research questions," open discussion in class in time remaining.
- 02/05 Read chapters 16-18, reading sheets #17-#19 due, three research questions due, open discussion in class.
- 02/07 Read chapters 19-25, reading sheets #20-#26 due, lecture: "Relevance, joining a discussion, taking a stand," open discussion in class in time remaining.
- 02/09 Read chapters 26-28, reading sheets #27-#29 due, open discussion in class in time remaining.
- 02/12 Read chapter 29, reading sheets #30 due, lecture: bibliography format, open discussion in class in time remaining.
- 02/14 Position paper #1 due, research teams and assignments announced, group work: review and organization of factual information (quiz preparation), formatted bibliography (the book, the film, and two others) due.
- 02/16 Informal internet research for group project, in-class group work continued: review and organization of information (quiz preparation)
- 02/19 Position paper #2 due, group project #1 due, open-notes quiz in class, after-quiz lecture: "What is a précis and what is a research proposal?"
- 02/21 Library visit with library presentation, with bibliographic citation due at the end of class.
- 02/23 Library visit with librarian and TA support, précis #1 and #2 due.
- 02/26 Précis #3 - #5 due, library visit to the Thomason room with library presentation.
- 02/28 Archival research day.
- 03/02 Archival research day.
- 03/05 Possible field trip to Waco?
- 03/07 Draft paper proposal due, in-class discussion of proposals.
- 03/09 Final paper proposal due.

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- 03/19 Lecture: "Outlining to present the conversation, scheduling the writing, and working in the précis," workshop in class on outlining in time remaining.
- 03/21 Possible Writing Center visit, or précis presentations.
- 03/23 Précis presentations.
- 03/26 Announcement of 'debate topics,' research teams prepare for mock debates/trials.
- 03/28 Research teams prepare for mock debates/trials, group project #2 due.
- 04/02 Students work on final paper outside of class, mock debates/trials in class.
- 04/04 Students work on final paper outside of class, mock debates/trials in class.
- 04/06 Students work on final paper outside of class, mock debates/trials in class.
- 04/09 Draft final paper due, lecture: "Conference presentations."
- 04/11 Paper conference day.
- 04/13 Paper conference day.
- 04/16 Workshop with Mr. Ivey: "Preparing a collection of essays."
- 04/18 Research teams workshop projects, reader report #1 and #2 due.
- 04/20 Research teams workshop projects, reader reports #3 due.
- 04/23 Oral presentations, revised final paper due.
- 04/25 Oral presentations.
- 04/27 Oral presentations.
- 04/30 Oral presentations.
- 05/02 Oral presentations.
- 05/04 Oral presentations.