

SUMMER 2025
RWS 305W, SECTION 21 (1705)

COURSE INFORMATION

Class Days: Anachronous
Class Time: N/A
Class Location: N/A

Instructor: Matt Feigner
Email: mfeigner@sdsu.edu
Office location: [Zoom](#)
Office hours: Friday 1:00-
2:00

CREDITS AND PREREQUISITES

Credits 3 Credit hours

Prerequisites Completion or 60 units and
completion of General Education
requirements in Communication and
Critical Thinking

Class Standing Junior, Senior, Graduate

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Required N/A

Recommended N/A

Canvas LMS and Technology Requirements

All materials are accessed through Canvas.

Computer access is required for Canvas posts, Internet links and assignment submissions.

You may use a mobile device for most aspects of our course, but these devices are not always user friendly with Canvas, especially assignment submissions.

You must upload either Microsoft Word documents or PDF files for assignment submissions. If you use Google Docs or Pages software, you must convert to a PDF file or Word doc before submitting.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Successful completion of RWS 305W satisfies the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) for students who have met the prerequisites noted below. Rhetoric and Writing Studies 305W is designed to help upper-level students develop the communication skills needed for

successful professional careers. The course builds on the rhetorical model that students are introduced to in earlier 100 and 200-level courses: attention to audience, purpose, presentation (genre and organization), evidence, and language

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

In RWS 305W students learn to respond not just to academic tasks but a wider variety of genres and settings that require diverse research methods and writing styles. The course also asks students to reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of their own writing style(s) within rhetorical contexts.

- Analyze and evaluate complex print, digital, and multimodal texts that engage significant academic, professional, or civic issues.
- Apply rhetorical principles appropriate to different purposes and goals, within specific disciplinary, professional and civic communities.
- Research and contribute to specific areas of inquiry by evaluating, synthesizing, and integrating strategies and sources appropriate to genre.
- Adapt and employ conventions to communicate with diverse audiences who are members of or affected by a specific area or discipline.
- Compose a variety of texts, working individually and collaboratively, through processes of drafting, critiquing, reflecting, and editing.

ASSIGNMENT AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

The course consists of four major projects arranged in modules, each responding to a different rhetorical situation. Within each module, a revised final draft of the project culminates from a series of assignments, including reflection-oriented journal entries that are informed by the module readings, recorded video sessions, and working (rough) drafts. Point values for assignments are based on the instructor's judgment of the overall quality of submitted coursework as evaluated against a set of published criteria. Due dates, module details and submission instructions for all work are in the course assignment schedule on Canvas. Due dates are critical; all work is carefully sequenced to maximize your learning and

to facilitate completion of the Course Learning Outcomes. To be successful, students must assume a high level of self-discipline and responsibility for meeting all deadlines. Late submissions may not receive points.

The project components and points associated with them are listed in the table below.

Module	Assignment	Points	Total
Introductory Module: Required First Step	Syllabus & Policy Acknowledgment	10	10
Module 1: Career Portfolio	1. Reflection & Direction Journal 2. Cover Letter 3. Resume (Both the resume and cover letter may be revised for the possibility of a higher grade.)	20 100 100	220
Module 2: Labor Market Analysis Report	1. Reflection & Direction Journal (2 entries) 2. Quiz: Plagiarism & Paraphrasing 3. Labor Market Report (not able to be revised for higher grade)	30 10 200	240
Module 3: Rhetorical Analysis Paper	1. Discussions on Canvas 2. Reflection & Direction Journal 3. Rhetorical Analysis Paper (not able to be revised for a higher grade)	30 20 260	310
Module 4: Public Discourse Assignment	1. Reflection & Direction Journal 2. Narrated Presentation and script (not able be revised for a higher grade)	20 200	220
Course Total			1000

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

There are four major projects in this class, along with a number of smaller assignments intended to enhance your understanding of the course materials and content. Below are brief descriptions of these assignments.

- **Introductory Module: Syllabus and Policy Acknowledgment**
The initial assignment familiarizes you with course goals and guidelines. Note that by submitting this acknowledgement, you agree to honor all course policies.
- **Project 1: Career Portfolio**
This module has three parts: a resume, a cover letter—both written in response to a current job announcement—and a reflection on career-related readings that will aid in writing your resume and cover letter, and in applying for future jobs and internships.
- **Project 2: Labor Market Analysis Report**
This module includes a major project: the Labor Market Analysis Report. It also has an online quiz on plagiarism and paraphrasing, and two reflections—one on your strengths and one on areas for improvement. For the Labor Market Analysis, you will research the skills, knowledge, and training needed for your future career, as well as future salary and employment projections.
- **Project 3: Rhetorical Analysis Paper**
This module includes three parts: a discussion board about the main arguments and evidence from each author you read for your Rhetorical Analysis paper; a reflection on how the readings relate to your career choice and preparation; and the Rhetorical Analysis paper itself, which involves analyzing the persuasive strategies used by the authors and how their arguments relate to each other.
- **Project 4: Public Discourse Project**
This module includes two parts: a PowerPoint presentation with an accompanying script on how to build "identity capital" (the sum of your skills, knowledge, and experience); and a reflection on a video discussing the current labor market and its impact on career preparation.

Course grades will be assigned according to the following distribution of points:

$> 933 = A$	$900 - 922.9 = A-$	$877.6 - 899.9 = B+$
$830 - 87.5 = B$	$800 - 822.9 = B-$	$777.6 - 799.9 = C+$
$730 - 77.5 = C$	$700 - 722.9 = C-$	$677.6 - 699.9 = D+$
$630 - 67.5 = D$	$600 - 622.9 = D-$	$< 600 = F$

Course grades will be based on points earned and assigned according to the following scale:

A	Outstanding achievement; available only for the highest accomplishment
B	Praiseworthy achievement; definitely above average
C	Average; awarded for satisfactory performance; the most common undergraduate degree
D	Minimally passing; less than the typical undergraduate achievement
F	Failing

COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

Please follow these protocols for optimal communication:

- Check Canvas announcements daily.
- Use email for individual, personal matters. Email me directly at mfeigner@sdsu.edu or use the Canvas messaging tool. I will respond to your messages as soon as I can, usually in less than 24 hours.
- Check the course assignment schedule, syllabus, and FAQs for any questions about assignments, procedures, and policies **before emailing me**. This saves time for both of us if your question has already been addressed. For current assignments, read the supporting documents or watch the video recordings to see if your concern is covered. If you still can't find the answer, **then** email me.
- Come to office hours: I am happy to discuss any questions or concerns you have about the course or assignments or anything else for the matter.
- Review the feedback I leave directly on your documents using the Canvas grade review and feedback functions. My frank commentary should help you to see areas for improvement.
- Notify me of special circumstances: If serious illness or personal catastrophe threatens to compromise your ability to meet course criteria, please let me know in a timely manner. Usually, adjustments can be made and solutions can be reached, unless you wait too long to deal with your situation

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Accommodations: If you are a student with a disability and are in need of accommodations for this class, please contact Student Ability Success Center at (619) 594-6473 as soon as possible. Please know accommodations are not retroactive, and I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received an accommodation letter from Student Ability Success Center.

Student Privacy and Intellectual Property: The [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA) mandates the protection of student information, including contact information, grades, and graded assignments. I will use Canvas to communicate with you, and I will not post grades or leave graded assignments in public places. Students will be notified at the time of an assignment if copies of student work will be

retained beyond the end of the semester or used as examples for future students or the wider public. Students maintain intellectual property rights to work products they create as part of this course unless they are formally notified otherwise.

Religious observances: According to the University Policy File, students should notify the instructors of affected courses of planned absences for religious observances by the end of the second week of classes.

Academic Honesty: The University prohibits cheating and plagiarism.

Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- copying, in part or in whole, from another's test or other examination;
- obtaining copies of a test, an examination, or other course material without the permission of the instructor;
- collaborating with another or others in work to be presented without the permission of the instructor;
- falsifying records, laboratory work, or other course data;
- submitting work previously presented in another course, if contrary to the rules of the course;
- altering or interfering with grading procedures;
- assisting another student in any of the above; using sources verbatim or paraphrasing without giving proper attribution (this can include phrases, sentences, paragraphs and/or pages of work);
- copying and pasting work from an online or offline source directly and calling it your own;
- using information you find from an online or offline source without giving the author credit;
- replacing words or phrases from another source and inserting your own words or phrases.

AI-GENERATED CONTENT POLICY

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is defined, for the purpose of this course, as any computer system or program that simulates, substitutes, and/or enhances problem-solving that typically requires human intelligence. While students may use simple AI, resembling built-in features of a word processor like spelling and simple grammar checks, they are *not* permitted to use Generative AI at any stage of completing work (graded or ungraded). Generative AI is defined here as AI which has the capacity to ideate, summarize, generate, rewrite, or validate

content; including, but not limited to, tools such as ChatGPT, Bard, and DALL-E.

To be clear, using AI tools (ChatGPT, Dall-E, Grammarly, Chegg, etc.) to create or aggregate content, including:

- Course writing
- Reflective writing
- Substituting or impersonating you in any class activity

is considered academic misconduct similar to plagiarism or violations of the honor code.

* Students may formally request, in writing, an exception to the above. Such requests must include: (1) which assignment the student is requesting to use AI with, (2) which specific AI tool the student wishes to use, (3) what they plan to use the tool for (e.g., to generate ideas, summarize a longer document, create a visual, etc.), and (4) why, specifically, they are requesting the exception (e.g., to reduce time spent on a tedious task, to identify relevant sources for further investigation, etc.). Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The California State University system requires instructors to report all instances of academic misconduct to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities. Academic dishonesty will result in disciplinary review by the University and may lead to probation, suspension, or expulsion. Instructors may also, at their discretion, penalize student grades on any assignment or assessment discovered to have been produced in an academically dishonest manner.

Resources for students: A complete list of all academic support services--including the [Writing Center](#) and [Math Learning Center](#)--is available on the Student Affairs' [Academic Success](#) website. [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (619-594-5220) offers confidential counseling services by licensed therapists; you can Live Chat with a counselor at http://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/cps/therapist-consultation.aspx between 4:00pm and 10:00pm, or call San Diego Access and Crisis 24-hour Hotline at (888) 724-7240.

Sexual violence / Title IX mandated reporting: As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I am a mandated reporter in my role as an SDSU employee. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our

one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep the information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share information regarding sexual violence on SDSU's campus with the Title IX coordinator, Jessica Rentto 619-594-6017. She (or her designee) will contact you to let you know about accommodations and support services at SDSU and possibilities for holding accountable the person who harmed you. Know that you will not be forced to share information you do not wish to disclose and your level of involvement will be your choice. If you do not want the Title IX Officer notified, instead of disclosing this information to your instructor, you can speak confidentially with the following people on campus and in the community. They can connect you with support services and discuss options for pursuing a University or criminal investigation. Sexual Violence Victim Advocate 619-594-0210 or Counseling and Psychological Services 619-594-5220, psycserv@sdsu.edu. For more information regarding your university rights and options as a survivor of sexual misconduct or sexual violence, please visit titleix.sdsu.edu or sdsutalks.sdsu.edu.

Classroom Conduct Standards: SDSU students are expected to abide by the terms of the Student Conduct Code in classrooms and other instructional settings. Prohibited conduct includes:

- Willful, material and substantial disruption or obstruction of a University-related activity, or any on-campus activity.
- Participating in an activity that substantially and materially disrupts the normal operations of the University or infringes on the rights of members of the University community.
- Unauthorized recording, dissemination, or publication (including on websites or social media) of lectures or other course materials.
- Conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person within or related to the University community, including
 1. physical abuse, threats, intimidation, or harassment.
 2. sexual misconduct.

Violation of these standards will result in referral to appropriate campus authorities.

Medical-related absences: Students are instructed to contact their professor/instructor/coach in the event they need to miss class, etc. due to an illness, injury or emergency. All decisions about the impact of an absence, as well as any arrangements for making up work, rest with the instructors. [Student Health Services](#) (SHS) does not provide medical excuses for short-term absences due to illness or injury. When a

medical-related absence persists beyond five days, SHS will work with students to provide appropriate documentation. When a student is hospitalized or has a serious, ongoing illness or injury, SHS will, at the student's request and with the student's consent, communicate with the student's instructors via the Vice President for Student Affairs and may communicate with the student's Assistant Dean and/or the [Student Ability Success Center](#).

SDSU Economic Crisis Response Team: If you or a friend are experiencing food or housing insecurity, or any unforeseen financial crisis, visit sdsu.edu/ecrt, email ecrt@sdsu.edu, or walk-in to Well-being & Health Promotion on the 3rd floor of Calpulli Center.

Suggested: Include information about and encourage students to utilize supplemental instruction, tutoring, or other academic support resources provided by your academic unit.

SCHEDULE

Due dates for assignments and exams:

WEEK OF	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES
7/7	<p>Introduction to the course</p> <p>Principles of reader-sensitive communication</p>	<p>Due: 7/11: Syllabus and Course Policy Acknowledgment</p> <p>Homework:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. View “Overview of the Course” video on Canvas 2. Complete and submit Syllabus and Course Policy Acknowledgment 3. Watch/Read resume and cover letter guidance (“Resume Design”) on Canvas 4. Read career-related articles in Project 1 Module 5. Work on Reflection & Direction Journal entry 6. Work on resume and cover letter for a specific job or internship

7/14	Career Portfolio Project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Due: 7/14: Reflection and Direction journal entry 2. Due: 7/18: Resume, cover letter, and job announcement <p>Homework:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work on resume and cover letter for a specific job or internship 2. Read Labor Market Analysis report prompt and example good and bad papers on Canvas 3. View recorded video lecture on Labor Market Analysis report
7/21	Labor Market Analysis Project	<p>Due: 7/25: Reflection Journals: Strength and Weaknesses; Plagiarism/Paraphrase Quiz</p> <p>Homework:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research desired career field on Bureau of Labor Statistics website 2. Work on Reflection & Direction Journal—Strengths 3. Work on Reflection & Direction Journal—Weaknesses 4. Work on Labor Market Analysis report 5. Revise resume and cover letter <p><i>You may revise your resume and cover letter for the possibility of a higher grade. The higher of the two grades are the ones that are counted in your final course grade calculation.</i></p>

7/28	Labor Market Analysis Project/Intro to Rhetorical Analysis	<p>Due: Due: 7/28: Labor Market Analysis Report</p> <p>Homework</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Rhetorical Analysis paper prompt and guidance on Canvas 2. View supplementary support videos for Rhetorical Analysis Paper 3. Read: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) "Identity Capital" (in Module 4), 2) "My Life Should Look Better on Facebook (in Module 4), 3) "Weak Ties" (in Module 4) 4. Revise resume and cover letter
8/4	Rhetorical Analysis Paper	<p>Due 8/8: Rhetorical Analysis Paper</p> <p>Homework:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise resume and cover letter 2. Work on Reflection Journal for Rhetorical Analysis paper 3. Work on Rhetorical Analysis paper

8/11	Rhetorical Analysis Paper/Intro to Public Discourse Project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Due 8/11: Reflection Journal on "How Useful Is a College or University Degree?" video; 2. Due 8/11: Resume and cover letter revisions; <p>Homework:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Public Discourse Project prompt on Canvas 2. View recorded video for Public Discourse Project 3. View "How Useful Is a College or University Degree?" video 4. Review supplementary articles and videos in Project 2 Module 5. Review career-related readings in Project 1 Module 6. Review "Document Design Principles" in Project 4 Module 7. Work on Reflection & Direction Journal for "How Useful Is a College or University Degree?" video 8. Work on Public Discourse Project PowerPoint presentation and script
FINAL DAY (8/15)	Public Discourse Project	Due: 8/15: Public Discourse Project PowerPoint presentation and script.

QUESTIONS ABOUT AI AND GRADING**QUESTION**

Why don't you want me to put my name on my submissions?

ANSWER

Canvas allows instructors to obscure student names in the grade center and submissions are displayed to me as "Student" along with a number that corresponds with the order of submission. For example, if you were the 8th person to submit a given assignment, I would see your work as "Student 8." So, if your submission does not have your name on it, I will not know I am grading your work (unless I go out of my way).

To be sure, my goal is not to keep authorship obscured entirely. I do this only during the evaluation process to minimize the potential for bias.

QUESTION

Why can't I have AI write my work and pretend it's my own in the class? I'll be using it in the workforce so why can't I use it now?

ANSWER

Firstly, the question is, on its face, dumb. In order to demonstrate that you're a proficient writer, you actually have to write. As an instructor, I am here to guide and evaluate you, not others and certainly not robots.

But the question itself assumes that AI is a proficient writer. Is it? If by "proficient" we mean mechanically correct, then sure, AI writing is generally grammatical. But is it readable? Does it produce texts that you want to read? Does it make good arguments? I invite you to raise these questions throughout your study in this class.

More realistically, if AI offers anything to help your writing process, you will need to first know how to write. After all, how can you discern the good output from the bad if you don't know any better? In this class, I want to see your writing, your thinking. You have to learn to walk before you can run, and right now, you're just crawling.

QUESTION

What will happen if you suspect me of using AI for one of my assignments?

ANSWER

In terms of process, I will first evaluate and score your submission according to the rubric. Subsequently, I will gather and document evidence and file a report with SRR with my findings and they will initiate an investigation. You will receive a notice from them indicating the charges and they will undertake a fact-finding process and ultimately find one way or another for academic dishonesty. If you are found responsible for violating course and university policies, you will receive a zero for the assignment and may fail the course.

QUESTION

Why did you refer me to Student Rights and Responsibilities for academic dishonesty?

ANSWER

First, I am duty-bound to report instances of academic misconduct to Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR). I will honor this policy in accordance with Executive Order 1098 to ensure you receive due process.

Less formally, I can offer a few more reasons:

1. For reasons noted above, it has no place in a writing class. If you submit AI-generated content, you are, beyond complicating my ability to evaluate your performance, wasting my time.
2. SRR is building a database to better identify, record, and track this kind of content to, among other things, maintain the integrity of the academic process. I want to support this process because it contributes to things like rigor, which is directly connected to SDSU's reputation.
3. Finally, unless I am interacting with a chatbot, I dislike reading AI-generated writing. Hence, if it appears in your submissions, you are subjecting me to things I dislike.

Questions about Canvas**QUESTION**

How do I see feedback on my work?

ANSWER

First, written feedback on Canvas comes in two forms: comments and annotations. Comments are located under the "comments" section, and they are external to the document. If I commented on your work, it will usually be a summative remark(s) connected to my annotations, which are on the document

itself. To view that, you must click on the document itself and hover your mouse over the bubbles that are present (see below).

Questions about Due Dates

QUESTION

My internet went out right when I was about to submit my homework assignment. By the time I got to the library to use their computer, I had missed the deadline for submission. Will this be a problem?

ANSWER

Sticking to due dates and times is very important in this online course. For some assignments, however, if you are a day or two late in submitting, you should be able to proceed with the course easily enough and you will not receive a grade reduction. You do not need to email me if you're within this grace period. (Note: Canvas will label your submission late; but again, if you submit within the above-mentioned timeframe, you may simply ignore the alert.)

Questions about Attendance

QUESTION

I cannot attend the live office hours due to my work schedule. Will I be marked down for this?

ANSWER

Nope. Attendance at office hours is optional. All the materials you will need to prepare the course assignments (print documents and video recordings) are in the corresponding project module. You are responsible for reading and viewing all course learning materials to successfully complete the course. Feel free to email me anytime you have questions. I make every attempt to respond to my messages within 24 hours of receiving them during the work week.

QUESTION

I have a family emergency and cannot do anything else for a few days. Will I be able to turn in a few assignments late?

ANSWER

If you have a true emergency, and can document it, I will work to find a way for you to get back on track with the course. You will need to email me and include documentation to verify your situation, and I will respond accordingly.