

**English Composition: Introduction to Academic Writing**  
*Critical Media Literacy for a Stronger Democracy*



**Instructor** Markita N. Schulman  
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**Section #** ENGL 101 – 088  
**Schedule** Tuesday & Thursday, 2:30 – 3:50 P.M.  
**Office Hours** [By appointment via Google Meet;](#)  
On campus, by appointment

Course Description

ENGL 101 is an introduction to college-level writing. In this course, students are introduced to writing's rhetorical dimensions; they are asked to consider the purpose, audience, occasion, and genre that are called for in a variety of writing, speaking, or visual assignments. The course also focuses on writing processes, asking students to brainstorm topics, collect ideas, research, write drafts, and revise their writing based on writing's disciplinary rules, self-reflection, and peer and class feedback. Academic writing begins from the assumption that written, visual, and spoken texts can be in conversation with each other. Students are asked to read challenging articles, essays, and prose (and to consider visual and spoken compositions) which serve as both models of effective communication and as beginning places for students' own arguments and analyses. *This section of ENGL 101 has a special focus on critical media literacy; the relationships between media, information, and power; and the potential uses of communication technology to either empower, enlighten, and illuminate, or marginalize, manipulate, and misrepresent. Students will be asked to critically analyze media and consider strategies for harnessing technologies of communication to enhance democratization and participation.*

Prerequisites

Entrance is determined by assessment results. Students who have successfully completed ENGL 099 are admitted to this class. Students must receive a C or better to pass this course.

Objectives

During this course, you will:

- Gain knowledge of writing's rhetorical dimensions
- Use writing as a tool for critical thinking and reflection
- Practice writing as a process by using various brainstorming, invention, revision, and editing strategies
- Write in several genres that utilize analysis, reflection, narrative, critique, and argument
- Practice using the conventions of written, spoken, and visual composition
- Practice writing and creating in digital environments

No Required Texts

This course makes use of books and resources available through NJIT's library, as well as documents provided by the instructor and Open Educational Resources available for free online.

### Assignments & Assessment

All assignments must be submitted before class begins on Canvas, which automatically checks for plagiarism and AI generation using Turnitin, unless otherwise specified.

✓+ = 100  
✓ = 85  
✓- = 70

A = 100-90  
B+ = 89-87  
B = 86-80  
C+ = 79-77  
C = 76-70  
D = 69-60  
F = 59-0

#### **15% Participation & Attendance**

Class participation includes regular attendance, engagement in class activities and discussions, in-class writing, quizzes, reading responses, and other mini-assignments. Participation requires preparation.

#### **15% Narrative Essay (1,000 words)**

This essay focuses on a piece of media that has impacted your life and the development of your relationship to media, language, popular culture, and textual analysis. It follows the conventions of a first-person personal essay.

#### **20% Argument Essay (1,000 words)**

This essay extracts academic arguments from 2 assigned sources and advances an evidence-backed claim/thesis in response to those sources.

#### **15% Rhetorical Analysis (1,000 words)**

This essay compares and contrasts the rhetorical strategies used in multiple sources, using details from each source to form an overall assessment.

#### **25% Research Paper (1,500 words)**

This essay advances a clear argument supported by 5 academic sources. This work will prepare you for more extended research writing in ENGL 102.

#### **10% Research Presentation**

You will present your research findings (including a visual component) to a group of peers and participate in a Q&A.

### Writing Process

**For the narrative essay, argument essay, rhetorical analysis, and research paper, students must submit both a first and final draft in order to receive credit for the assignment.**

The final draft of each assignment should reflect significant revision and engagement with instructor and/or peer feedback. Students will receive a grade on both the first and final draft of each assignment; when both drafts are submitted on time, the grade on the final draft replaces that of the first draft. (For example, if a student receives a 75 on their first draft, revises their essay, then receives a 90 on their final draft, their grade for the assignment overall is a 90.)

### Late Work

Late work will not be accepted, except in the case of an excused absence. Students should contact their instructor in advance of due dates when having difficulty completing an assignment.

### Writing Center

The Writing Center (G17 Central King) is available for one-hour individual and group appointments with professional writing tutors both onsite and online. [Find more information here.](#)

*Attending office hours with me and/or appointment(s) in the Writing Center will contribute to your Participation grade.*

### Attendance

You may miss up to one week of class (or two classes) without penalty. Every subsequent unexcused absence will result in a grade reduction. More than six unexcused absences (three weeks of the course) can result in failure of the course. Contact the Dean of Students in order to establish an excused absence.

### Accessibility

If you are a student with a documented disability, please see me as early in the semester as possible to discuss necessary accommodations, and/or contact the [Office of Accessibility Resources and Services](#) (Kupfrian Hall 201).

### Electronics

**Technology of all kinds is prohibited in the classroom**, unless otherwise indicated. You will be expected to take notes and complete in-class exercises with pen and paper, so come prepared.

There may be designated opportunities to complete work during class time using a laptop or tablet; I will inform you of these opportunities in advance.

If you need tech for accessibility reasons, let me know. I am happy to work with you and NJIT's Office of Accessibility Resources and Services to make necessary accommodations.

### Academic Integrity

[See NJIT's University Policy on Academic Integrity here.](#) Any student found in violation of the code by cheating or plagiarizing will receive a failing grade and be reported to the department and the Dean of Students. Violating the code may result in suspension or dismissal from the university.

### Generative Artificial Intelligence (ChatGPT)

In concert with NJIT's University Policy on Academic Integrity, which mandates that "each student shall demonstrate honesty and integrity in the completion of all assignments and in the participation of the learning process," this course has been designed to promote your learning, critical thinking, skills, and intellectual development without reliance on unauthorized technology, including chatbots and other forms of "artificial intelligence" (AI). Although you may use search engines, spell-check, and simple grammar-check in crafting your assignments, your assignments must represent your own work, and you may not use any unauthorized or unacknowledged assistance or sources in completing it, including free or commercial systems or services offered on the Internet or text generating systems embedded into software.

**Several mini-assignments will require the use of generative AI in order to build your learning on critical AI literacy; these assignments constitute the exception, not the rule, and will be clearly indicated.**

Please consult with your instructor if you have any questions about the permissible use of technology in this class, or if you have data privacy or other concerns about the mandatory use of AI tools in select assignments.



ENGL 101 – Fall 2023 Schedule (Subject to change)  
Professor Markita N. Schulman

Week	Date		Due
1	Tuesday, Sept. 5	Introductions Syllabus What is critical media literacy?	
	<b>Narrative Essay: Media Literacy</b>		
	Thursday, Sept. 7	Read & discuss: <a href="#">“I’m A Barbie Boy” by Louis Staples</a> “The situation,” “the story,” and the “So what?” In-class prewrite re: impactful media	<a href="#">Register for free online access to <i>The New York Times</i> through NJIT Academic Group Pass</a>
2	Tuesday, Sept. 12	Discuss: “The Nick Cave Song...” Introduce narrative essay Writing process: prewriting, brainstorming, drafting, audience, purpose, genre	Read & respond: <a href="#">“The Nick Cave Song That Changed My Life” by Emily Flake</a>
	Thursday, Sept. 14	Discuss: “Defending <i>The Searchers</i> ” Writing process: thesis, evidence, argument, structure	Read & respond: “Defending <i>The Searchers</i> ” by Jonathan Lethem
3	Tuesday, Sept. 19	Personal narrative essay peer review	<b>Personal narrative essay 1<sup>st</sup> draft</b> (Min. 750 words)
	Thursday, Sept. 21	Discuss: “Thank You, Esther Forbes” Writing process: revision Read & discuss: “Revising One Sentence” by Lydia Davis	Read & respond: “Thank You, Esther Forbes” by George Saunders
<b>Argument Essay</b>			
4	Tuesday, Sept. 26	In-class read: “The Allegory of the Cave” by Plato	<b>Personal narrative essay final draft</b> (1,000 words)
	Thursday, Sept. 28	Introduce argument essay assignment Developing a thesis, using evidence	Read & respond: TBA
5	Tuesday, Oct. 3	Developing a thesis, using evidence	Read & respond: TBA

	Thursday, Oct. 5	Argument essay peer review	<b>Argument essay 1<sup>st</sup> draft</b> (Min. 750 words)
	Friday, Oct. 6	<b>Extra credit opportunity!</b> <a href="#"><u>Critical AI Literacy in a Time of Chatbots: A Public Symposium for Educators, Writers, and Citizens</u></a> Attend 1 or more of the (virtual) sessions; write response (min. 250 words) <b>Submit response by Friday, Oct. 13 for credit</b>	
<b>6</b>	Tuesday, Oct. 10	Media literacy; evaluating sources	Read & respond: TBA
	Thursday, Oct. 12	Logical argument, critical thinking	Read & respond: TBA
<b>Rhetorical Analysis</b>			
<b>7</b>	Tuesday, Oct. 17	In-class read: "The Gettysburg Address" by Abraham Lincoln Intro to rhetorical strategies: ethos, logos, pathos, kairos	<b>Argument essay final draft</b> (1,000 words)
	Thursday, Oct. 19	Introduce rhetorical analysis assignment	Read & respond: TBA
<b>8</b>	Tuesday, Oct. 24	Baldwin v. Buckley debate	Read & respond: TBA
	Thursday, Oct. 26	Rhetorical analysis peer review	<b>Rhetorical analysis 1<sup>st</sup> draft</b> (Min. 750 words)
<b>9</b>	Tuesday, Oct. 31	Visual/multi-media rhetoric	Read & respond: TBA
	Thursday, Nov. 2	Visual/multi-media rhetoric	Read & respond: TBA
<b>Research Paper</b>			
<b>10</b>	Tuesday, Nov. 7	In-class read re: technology, literacy, democracy Finding and evaluating sources	<b>Rhetorical analysis final draft</b> (Min. 1,000 words)
	Thursday, Nov. 9	Introduce research paper Finding and evaluating sources	Read & respond: TBA

11	Tuesday, Nov. 14	Pre-writing, organizing research argument essay	AI writing process mini-assignment
	Thursday, Nov. 16	Pre-writing, organizing research argument essay	AI writing process & source evaluation mini-assignment
12	Tuesday, Nov. 21	<i>Thursday Classes Meet</i> Research paper peer review	<b>Research paper 1<sup>st</sup> draft</b> (Min. 1,000 words, min. 3 academic sources)
	Thursday, Nov. 23	<i>No Class</i> <i>Thanksgiving Recess</i>	
13	Tuesday, Nov. 28	Revision & writing process	Read & respond: TBA
	Thursday, Nov. 30	Editing, proofreading, mechanics Citations	AI & revision mini-assignment
14	Tuesday, Dec. 5	Prepare oral and visual presentation components	<b>Research paper final draft</b> (1,500 words, min. 5 academic sources; submit to me, <u>and</u> share with presentation group members)
	Thursday, Dec. 7	Prepare oral and visual presentation components	
15	Tuesday, Dec. 12	<i>Final Class</i> Research presentations in small groups	<b>Research presentations</b> (Be prepared to present to your small group and submit visual component of presentation; <u>and</u> read other group members' papers, prepare response/Q&A)