ENGH 302 M 22, 23, 24
Advanced Composition: Multidisciplinary
Fall 2015: Distance Learning - Blackboard 9.1
Instructor: Dr. Mark Rudnicki (mrudnick@gmu.edu)
Office: Robinson A 311A
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 1:00-3:00 and by appointment
Other Contact: Office Phone: (703) 539-2379; Skype: Rudnicki1969

Course Description:
This course is designed to build on the general writing skills you have acquired in previous university courses and to prepare you for completing advanced level writing, analysis, and research in your discipline. Your task this semester, therefore, is to develop skills on how to locate and analyze the various genres of writing in your field of study and on how to communicate effectively within them. While many forms of writing exist in the various disciplines, summary and analysis are the most common. As a result, we will closely examine key points in texts to assist in writing effective summaries, and we will critically investigate logical structures, rhetorical strategies, and arguments to assist in developing insightful analyses.

Course Objective: Students as Scholars:
English 302 is part of GMU’s “Students as Scholars” program. Across campus, students now have increased opportunities to work with faculty on original scholarship, research, and creative activities, through their individual departments and the OSCAR office (http://oscar.gmu.edu).

Assignments in English 302 will help prepare you to be contributors to knowledge in your field, not just memorizers of facts: you will

- understand how knowledge is created and transmitted in a field/discipline
- understand key methods and conventions of scholarly research in your field/discipline
- articulate and refine your own question for scholarly inquiry
- situate your investigation in an ongoing context/conversation in your field
- and design a final project that adds new perspectives and/or data to the conversation

English 302-SAS Student Learning Outcomes:

For primarily text-based research that prepares students to make original contributions: students will

SLO-1, Discovery: Understand how they can engage in the practice of scholarship at GMU
SLO-2, Discovery: Understand research methods used in a discipline
SLO-3, Discovery: Understand how knowledge is transmitted within a discipline, across disciplines, and to the public
SLO-4, Inquiry: Articulate and refine a question
SLO-5, Inquiry: Follow ethical principles
SLO-6, *Inquiry*: Situate the scholarly inquiry [and inquiry process] within a broader context
SLO-7, *Inquiry*: Apply appropriate scholarly conventions during scholarly inquiry/reporting

**Required Texts and websites:**

*Advanced Research guide: [http://advancedresearchguide.weebly.com/index.html](http://advancedresearchguide.weebly.com/index.html)* designed by Mark Rudnicki


* PowerPoints and other articles posted on Blackboard Course Content page

**Other Supplies**

- Please devote a cloud folder to the class. You can, for example, use [drive.google.com](http://drive.google.com) or dropbox.com for this class; all of your notes, assignments, and drafts should be saved in one folder. **A computer crash is not a valid excuse for a late assignment.**

**Course Requirements**

A. **Two (2) Formal Assignment Folders and Discussion Board Participation** are required. All formal writing must consistently follow all of the guidelines of either MLA or APA documentation. These must be submitted on the assignment page of Bb.  
*NB. You can see more detailed descriptions in the prompts at the end of the syllabus.*

1. **Folder #1** will be devoted to analysis for a specialist audience. The folder will be divided into three parts: **Part A** will be a general analysis of your specific discipline. **Part B** will be an analysis (600-900 words) of a review of a scholarly book in your field. **Part C** will be an analysis (minimum 1200 words) of a scholarly article in your field that you locate on the GMU databases or in the Fenwick periodical section. You will be required to evaluate the article. The scholarly article analyzed should be about 3000 words (i.e. 10 pages long).

2. **Folder #2** will be devoted to scholarship in your discipline. It will be divided into 2 parts: **Part A** will be a 4-5 paged review of literature and a statement of the research topic. **Part B** will be a detailed research methodology with a dissemination of results (3-4 pages in total) in a
format and style appropriate for your discipline. **Part C** will be a final metacognitive assignment.

3. **Class Participation (Discussion Board)** – The class preparation grade is around 25% of the grade. Please submit all assignments on time. You must participate in a timely fashion (i.e. by the deadline) in all of the discussion posts. I will check the style and substance of all assignments formal and informal, so please be sure to check all of your work before posting. I suggest using a word program to write your posts and then copy and paste into the discussion board. There will be a total of 22 posts worth 100 points total.

**Course Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder #1 – Analysis</th>
<th>125 points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Folder #2 - Research Proposal</td>
<td>150 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation: Discussion Board</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>375 points</strong></td>
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**Course Grading Scale**

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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>97-100%</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>364-375</td>
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<tr>
<td>93-96%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>349-363</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-92%</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>338-348</td>
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<td>87-89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>326-337</td>
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<td>83-86%</td>
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<td>80-82%</td>
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<td>73-76%</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>262-273</td>
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<td>0 - 239</td>
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**Course Policies**

**Submitting Assignments**: All assignments must be submitted on the due date by the designated time. Throughout the semester, assignments will be due unless otherwise indicated on the following day and time: **Sundays 11:59 P.M.** There will be a 24 hour grace period for submissions. Late submissions (after the grace period) of major assignments will be penalized by one letter grade, and it will only be accepted up to two weeks after the due date. Please note: **Peer review sessions will require you to post your rough draft on Sunday and complete the review by Wednesday.**
**Formal Assignments** should be posted on Blackboard using Microsoft Word Document in the assignment section and under the correct heading. When uploading a file, please use your last name and the folder number and letter. For example, the first formal assignment will be folder 1A, so the document name would be – smith1A.

**Semi-Formal Assignments** will be posted on the discussion board under the appropriate thread heading. If a student replies to the posted thread under a different heading, it will not be counted.

Semi-Formal Assignments are considered “class time,” such as discussions and peer review, while formal assignments are considered the two formal essay “folders” parts A, B, and C.

If you are having problems with an assignment, please contact me as soon as possible, not the day the work is due! **NOTE: I will not accept assignments through email, unless we have previously agreed.**

**Blackboard**

I maintain our course site on blackboard. Please check often for course assignments, announcements, and handouts. The following are the most important sections of blackboard:

**Course Material** Page will contain the all of the handouts, textbooks, and research website for the class. The Rudnicki course manual/textbook will be your guide throughout the semester.

**Class blog** will be used as a complement to my manual. If you have any questions about the current assignment, you should check the blog first and then email me if the answer is not available there.

**Calendar** will have all of the important dates and deadlines for the assignments. You should check this every day to get a sense of when things are due. Some weeks are lighter than others, so it could be a good time to look ahead on those weeks.

**The Assignment Section** will contain all of the formal assignment uploads. (These will also be linked in the course content section.) All of our formal assignments have a part A, part B, and a Part C, so all of them will be posted and uploaded here.

**Discussion Board** will have all of the semi-formal assignments. Please pay attention to style and grammar when posting.

**Peer Review**

Each main formal assignment will have peer reviews. I encourage you to maintain e-mails and contact information for four to five people in the class preferably with the same major. This group will be your peer review group preferably for the entire semester.
Office Hours
I will be available in my office at the time posted above and online throughout the week, so do not hesitate to contact me or to send me a chat invitation. For more pressing matters, I can be contacted via Skype. My username is- Rudnicki1969.

Citing Sources
Be sure to cite and document all sources. Please use the documentation style that is used in your discipline. You can check the Diana Hacker web site, if you need a refresher for documenting sources: http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. In the web links I have a citation machine, which can help you with citing sources.

Academic Integrity (Provost’s statement)
GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process: http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/
The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else’s work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

***Plagiarism will result in an automatic zero for the assignment and possibly a trip to the Academic Integrity Council.

GMU Email Accounts
Students must use their Mason email accounts—either the existing “MEMO” system or a new “MASONLIVE” account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See http://masonlive.gmu.edu for more information.

E-mail Etiquette
Please have two colleagues’ e-mail addresses to get information, if necessary, about the class.

I encourage you to e-mail me if you have any questions, but please check the course materials first. While I encourage an open and friendly atmosphere in the classroom, I do expect a certain degree of respect in e-mail exchanges. Please be formal in e-mail correspondence.

Inappropriate e-mail:
Subject line: URGENT!!!
Hey, What up dawg? I missed class yesterday. Did we do anything important? Get back to me ASAP! Urgent! Thanx
Appropriate e-mail:
Subject line: English 302S Section ___
Dear Professor Rudnicki,
I apologize for missing class yesterday. Unfortunately, I had a medical emergency. I will provide you with documentation at the beginning of the next class. I e-mailed a colleague from class about the assignments due next meeting, but he has not responded. Is there anything due in addition to what is listed on the syllabus and Blackboard? In advance thank you for your help.
Sincerely,
Student

Office of Disability Services
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. http://ods.gmu.edu

Stress of the semester
If you feel overwhelmed this semester due to the academic workload and/or balancing work and/or adapting to a new situation, please let me know as soon as possible. The earlier we can recognize a potential difficult situation, the sooner we can resolve it. I will not consider any requests for special considerations the final week of classes.

Useful Campus Resources

WRITING CENTER: A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200;
http://writingcenter.gmu.edu

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES: “Ask a Librarian”
http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS): (703) 993-2380;
http://caps.gmu.edu

UNIVERSITY POLICIES: The University Catalog, http://catalog.gmu.edu, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.
Assignment Prompts:
Folder 1 Part A: Defining your academic field (25 pts)

Task: Your task is to define knowledge, methods, and processes germane to your discipline. In 3-4 pages, please address the questions below as they pertain to your field of study. The answers may vary in length from a brief sentence to a lengthy paragraph. Nevertheless, please be formal and use complete sentences and coherent, well-developed paragraphs.

Purpose: To address the ways in which your discipline encounters or understands the world. Each discipline examines the world from different perspectives: natural science pays particular attention to the laws of nature in order to explain the physical world; social sciences focus on personal and social behaviors in the world; and the humanities examine language and how it constructs cultures and identities in the world.

Audience: To incoming students who are considering majoring in this discipline.

Document Length and Design: Your responses in total should be 3-4 pages long. Please model it after a “Frequently Asked Questions” section. Follow APA or MLA guidelines when necessary.

Sources: Use reputable online and library resources as well as material from discussions with people in the discipline. Be extremely courteous if you decide to discuss these issues with a professional in the field.

Questions:
1. What is your major and what is the object of study in the field?
2. What academic fields/majors/specialties/subfields comprise your discipline and what does each one focus on? (A sentence on each will suffice.)
3. What are the key research questions and types of questions asked in your field?
4. How do scholars/professionals in your field “go about” answering those questions? In other words, what kinds of experiments, observations, processes, and creative expressions do they use to answer these questions and further knowledge in your field?
5. What are the primary approaches to sharing knowledge and new ideas in the discourse community? What text types are most used or valued?
6. Who are 4 of the most important researchers/scholars in your field (include at least 1 historical and 1 current person) and what is each famous for?
Folder 1 Part B: Analysis of a scholarly book review (25 points)

Task:
Find a review of a scholarly article or book (at least 900 words) relevant to your discipline and write a 600 word summary and evaluation of the review. I suggest using either JSTOR or H-Net Reviews to search for a scholarly book review.

Document Length and Design: The review must be two pages (about 600 words) long. Longer essays will NOT necessarily result in a better grade. Your essay must follow all of the guidelines of either APA or MLA. The outline below offers some areas to consider when writing the review. It should not be considered a template. Please use your own voice and develop coherent, full paragraphs.

General OUTLINE FOR AN ANALYSIS OF A REVIEW
I. Introduction
   A. Author of the review
   B. What is being reviewed?
   C. Brief overview/summary of the review
   D. Your thesis – Is the review good or bad? Example, “While the author skillfully addresses the key points of the article, he never truly addresses the author’s argument.” Or, “The author provides few details and offers no expert opinion on whether to read the text or not.”

II. Evaluation – evaluate and explain whether the argument is sound or not. Some things to consider in evaluating:
   A. Does the review match the intention/theme of the journal?
   B. Does the author provide sufficient information?
   C. Audience – does the author consider the audience? Is it for specialists? For students?
   D. Does the author provide details about the event?
   E. Does the author convince you to read the thing article under review?

III. Conclusion
   A. What would the author have to do to improve the review?
   B. Final thoughts
Folder 1 Part C: Critiquing a Scholarly Article (75 points)

Task: Your task is to find, to read carefully, and to critique a scholarly article in your discipline. The scholarly article must be peer reviewed, a minimum of 4000 words, and located in the GMU library databases or in the periodical section of the Fenwick Library. After locating the article, you must critically examine the text and engage in a dialogue with the author. This means you should critique how well or how poorly the author employs elements of structure, use of English, and, most important, content. You are expected to research the claims made in the paper using other reputable (i.e. scholarly) sources, such as articles, books, and textbooks.

Document Length and Design: Your essay should be about 1200-1500 words long. It must follow all of the guidelines of either MLA or APA.

OUTLINE FOR A SCHOLARLY ARTICLE CRITIQUE
This outline is very general. Use it at your discretion. You may choose to focus on some aspects and not others, but I expect content analysis to be central to the paper. I also expect you to write in your own voice, not as if you are using a template.
I. Introduction
   A. Author of the article. Is the author an expert?
   B. Overview of the article – what is the general argument of the text?
   C. Your thesis – How effective is the article? Example, “While the author skillfully addresses the history of the movement, he offers nothing new in his interpretation of the text.” Or, “The author provides few details and offers no evidence for her position; she relies on ad hominem attacks and straw man arguments.”
II. Evaluation– evaluate and explain whether the argument is sound or not. Consider:
   A. Content:
      1. Does the author provide enough background information?
      2. Does the author provide sufficient evidence – primary sources, secondary sources (i.e. expert opinion), facts, textual references?
      3. For what purpose does the author write the article? – a new discovery, an interesting take on a topic, introducing a subject not well-known.
      4. Does the author logically develop her argument? Objective reasoning?
      5. Based on your knowledge of the topic, is any evidence flawed or inaccurate? Respond to any inaccurate or misleading information.
   B. Structure:
      a. Is there a logical development of the thesis?
      b. Is the introduction clear and informative on the topic?
      c. Are the ideas balanced and well-constructed?
   C. Use of English
      a. Audience – Does the author consider the audience?
      b. Does the author effectively convey her information through good word choices?
III. Conclusion
   A. What would the author have to do to improve the article?
   B. Final thoughts
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Folder 2: Research Proposal:
Part A: Statement of the Problem and Review of Literature (75 points)
Part B: Methodology and Dissemination of the Results (50 points)

Task: For this assignment you will design a project proposal to apply for the Rudnicki Fellowship. To accomplish this task, you must, first, read the Rudnicki Fellowship call for applications carefully, and you must locate two other grants/fellowships in your field of study. Second, after completing step one, you must choose a topic that is current and requires additional research. Third, please complete thorough background research on the topic. Lastly, you must design a project that adds something new to the field and that has a chance to be accepted. The proposal will be divided into two separate submissions. 2 Part A will be the statement of the problem and the review of literature. 2 Part B will be the methodology and the dissemination of the results.

Description of the Rudnicki Fellowship: The Rudnicki Fellowship is a newly developed fellowship that encourages applications from university students developing current or questioning past research in their particular fields of study. The fellowship provides a living stipend for the length of the project which should be conducted over a period of two academic semesters (about one full year). The length may be slightly extended depending on the project. The topic options are open to all fields, but they should be unique to the student’s discipline. The fellowship does encourage one semester involving coursework at any university and research that is guided by a professional mentor, followed by a semester of fieldwork that is relative to the direction of study. Location choice is not specific, but it must be relevant to the topic and enhance research in a meaningful way.

If responding to this fellowship opportunity, applicants are required to provide an extensive introduction, a review research regarding the chosen topic, a methodological layout of coursework and fieldwork plans, and a description of how the results will be disseminated, such as a publication in a scholarly journal or attendance at a conference. This list is not exclusive as there may be several other options that can meet the grant requirements for completion of the research. In some cases a presentation may be required.

Topic: Please choose a topic that explores area(s) of concern in your field of study. You should discuss with a specialist or research in the GMU libraries interesting subjects that could be a lively topic for an extended research project. You will enter the discussion by framing the debate and what you propose to add to it. This is not a research paper, but it does require research to provide background data for a lengthy, in-depth paper. As a result, you will be required to provide a bibliography of 12-15 sources that you could use in a one-year or one-semester fellowship. In your proposal you do not have to refer to all of the sources, but the proposal should be based on 4-5 sources from the bibliography.

Document length and design: Statement of the Problem (300 words), Review of Literature (1200-1500 words), the Methodology (900 words), Dissemination of the Results (150-300 words) should all follow APA documentation and citation guidelines.
Folder 2 Part C: Final Exam (25 Points)

1. Copy/paste the following items from your major scholarly project (Assignments 2A and B) into your Metacognitive Assignment document:
   - **The sentence or two** that best gives your argument or analysis point
   - **One complete body paragraph** (not your introduction or conclusion) that includes at least one reference to a secondary source and demonstrates your best work as a scholarly writer
   - **The full bibliographic entry** (copied from your “works cited” or “references” list) for each source you cite in the paragraph you just copied in

2. Then write three paragraphs (500-700 words total) regarding your work on this project, using the questions below as a guide. Your goal is to demonstrate some ways your work on this project has prepared you for advanced or scholarly writing in your specific field or profession. You should address specific examples from your project: you may refer to the material you copied in and/or provide summaries or short quotations of your other writing from your project.

   A. Describe 2-3 key steps you took as you initially designed your research question/topic and then conducted the research and chose the source material for it.
      - Explain how these steps are similar to what scholars in your field might do for similar projects.
      - Identify one or two places in your final project where readers could see the results of those steps.

   B. Describe 2-3 key steps or you took in drafting and revising to apply scholarly conventions appropriate for your particular field or discipline.
      - Explain decisions you made regarding your focus, your evidence, and/or the structure or style of your project.
      - Identify one or two places in your final project where readers could see how you meet the expectations of scholarly or professional readers in your field.

   C. Explain 1 or 2 ways that your project contributes to a scholarly or professional conversation about the issue: what were some key ideas, arguments, questions, and/or gaps in that conversation that you noticed? What new focus, emphasis, or evidence does your essay introduce into the conversation? What additional research or analysis could happen now, and why might it be important for scholars or professionals in your field?