

WRITING AND RHETORIC IN THE HUMANITIES

English 3110.002

Professor Deb Armintor

MWF, 9:05 am - 9:55

Language Building 217

UNT Fall 2026



YOUR PROFESSOR

Dr. Deb Armintor (they/she), a.k.a. "Dr. A"

Email me 24/7 at dna@unt.edu or deborah.armintor@unt.edu (response within 48 hours)

Text my cell 24/7: 940-300-9857 (response within 24 hours)

In-Person Office Hours: LANG 409B, By Appointment

Virtual Office Hours: By Appointment (Email or text me to schedule and receive a Canvas Zoom meeting link. If you are in an off-campus location with bad wifi, we can conduct our meeting by phone instead if that is your preference).

How to contact me with a question or to schedule an Office Hours appointment: Email or Text me with your question or Office Hours appointment request at the email address or cell phone number listed above. Please do not attempt to reach me via Canvas chat, messenger, or any other Canvas interface. Be sure to state the following in the subject heading of every email and the body of each text: your full name, the name or number of the course, and your course section number.

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

"The Humanities" is a fluid academic disciplinary concept that changes over time in response to cultural and political trends and movements. In this class, we will discuss key questions and issues surrounding the state of the Humanities today and how we got here; study various rhetorical strategies and methodologies within the Humanities fields of Literature & Literary Criticism, Philosophy, Religion, Art, & Art Criticism, and Media & Cultural Studies; and explore traditional and non-traditional modes of writing, rhetorical analysis, and critical thinking in and around the Humanities through the work that we read and produce for this course.

REQUIRED COURSE READINGS

All required course readings are linked directly to our electronic Canvas syllabus beneath the course date by which you are to have read them. There are no books that you are required to buy for this class, besides *Understanding Comics* by Scott McCloud (any physical edition, purchased anywhere, new or used), *Maus I*, and *Maus II* by Art Spiegelman (any physical edition, purchased anywhere, new or used).

YOUR 4 COURSE GRADES:

Your final grade for this course is derived from the 4 assignments listed below, each of which is worth 25% of your final grade. There are no additional assignments, no tests, no quizzes, and no final exam:

1. Graphic Essay: 25% of final course grade, due via Canvas by 11:59pm, Saturday, October 24: Make and upload to Canvas a 3- to 4-page well-researched original graphic essay, comic, or zine (think McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, but shorter), making an original argument about or inspired by any *one* of the texts or topics covered in this unit. You will not be graded on artistic prowess, so feel free to be as artistically simple as you wish to be (stick figures are perfectly okay!), as long as you use both words and graphics. Be sure to include an MLA-style

Works Cited list, citing any primary or secondary sources you use. Your Works Cited list does not count towards the total page length. No generative AI or clip art is allowed for this or any other assignment.

2. Research Essay: 25% of final course grade, due via Canvas by 11:59pm, Saturday, November 21 or Friday December 11 (choose one of these 2 dates to submit your Research Essay, and the other to submit your Creative Nonfiction Research Essay): Write and upload to Canvas a 5-page double-spaced, 12-point Arial or Times New Roman, formal (i.e. serious, mature), well-researched academic research essay (intro paragraph, body paragraphs, conclusion paragraph; think Kruger, "Panels and Faces: Segmented Metaphors and Reconstituted Time in Art Spiegelman's Maus," Ryan, "Franz Kafka's Die Verwandlung : Transformation, Metaphor, and the Perils of Assimilation;" or "Thiher, "Surrealism's Enduring Bite: Un Chien Andalou," but shorter), making an original argument about or inspired by any *one* of the texts or topics covered in this unit. Be sure to include an MLA-style Works Cited list, citing any other primary or secondary sources you use. Your Works Cited list does not count towards the total page length. No generative AI is allowed for this or any other assignment.

3. Creative Nonfiction Research Essay: 25% of final course grade, due via Canvas by 11:59pm, Saturday, November 21 or Friday December 11 (choose one of these 2 dates to submit your Research Essay, and the other to submit your Creative Nonfiction Research Essay): Write and upload to Canvas a 5-page double-spaced, 12-point Arial or Times New Roman well-researched "creative nonfiction" research essay, making an original argument about or inspired by any *one* of the texts or topics covered in this unit, using first-person personal anecdote and/or third-person nonfiction journalistic storytelling, combined with well-researched critical argument (think Coates, "The Case for Reparations" by Ta-Nehisi Coates or Gloria Anzaldua, "Atravesando Fronteras / Crossing Borders" but shorter). Be sure to include an MLA-style Works Cited list citing any primary or secondary sources you use. Your Works Cited list does not count towards the total page length. No generative AI is allowed for this or any other assignment.

4. Virtual Writer's Notebook: 25% of final course grade, total. Your virtual writer's notebook will consist of required Canvas Discussion posts about each new course reading, completed prior to the class meeting specified, and following the written instructions provided in the discussion prompt. Any excused missed virtual writer's notebook activities must be completed as soon as possible. Any unexcused missed virtual notebook activities will receive a zero. Students must complete all excused missing Virtual Writer's Notebook activities before Friday, December 11th or receive a zero for each missing activity.

RESEARCH RESOURCES

Contact Reference Librarian, Carol Hargis: <https://library.unt.edu/people/carol-hargis>Links to an external site.

Sample MLA-Style Works Cited List & Formatting Guide:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_sample_works_cited_page.htmlLinks to an external site.

How to find electronic resources online:

1. Go to UNT LIBRARY WEBSITE
2. Click on DATABASES
3. Click on EBSCOhost
4. Click "Select All" & "Continue"
5. Click ADVANCED SEARCH
6. Under "LIMIT YOUR RESULTS," check the boxes for FULL TEXT and PEER REVIEWED
7. Go to "ALL FILTERS" and experiment with refining your results in various ways to help narrow down your choices.

UNT Reference Librarian Carol Hargis's youtube video on using EBSCOHost to find sources online:

<https://youtu.be/WOJVH75MHAs?si=Q0K2f3Yq-9B3yusf>Links to an external site.

CLASS POLICIES

ATTENDANCE AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:

Attendance will be taken daily and is expected daily of all enrolled students. You are allowed 3 "free" unexcused absences in this course, i.e. an absence about which you have not notified the instructor in writing. You are responsible for keeping track of your own absences. After a fourth unexcused absence, you might be dropped from the course. If you reach a fourth unexcused absence, please contact the instructor immediately to discuss your options.

EXCUSED ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS:

It is important for all of us to be mindful of the health and safety of everyone in our classroom community. If you are experiencing any symptoms of illness please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center or your health care provider PRIOR to attending class, and do not attend class if you are or might be contagious. If you choose to do so, you may email your professor to inform them of your absence due to illness or other medical issues. Any and all absences due to illness count as excused absences, as long as you notify the instructor in writing before or after the class missed. Please do NOT email any medical records directly to your instructor.

EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR NON-ILLNESS REASONS:

An absence for non-illness reasons counts as excused if you have notified the instructor in writing, before or shortly after your absence, whenever you are reasonably and safely able to do so. You need not provide detail or documentation to justify your absence. Just the briefest and most general two or three-word explanation will suffice: family emergency, traffic/parking issue, pet issue, mental health day, medical appointment, religious holiday/observance, etc. All absences due to religious observance automatically count as excused.

LATENESS TO CLASS:

Most students, at some point or another, meet with unforeseen circumstances that make them late for class. Although you should ideally arrive to class on time so as not to miss any important material, you are always better off showing up to class, even if you are late. You will not be marked absent simply for arriving to class late.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

No phone or headphone use during class, unless needed for ADA accessibility reasons or otherwise specified by the instructor. While some computer use is permitted, you are expected to be accessing course materials only during class. This policy is important for participation in the course and as a general exercise in focusing our attention and showing respect for the classroom space. If I see you using your phone during class, I can mark you as absent. If you have an issue that requires you to have your phone out during class, please inform me beforehand.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

All writing assignments must be submitted in the order listed in the syllabus, on or before the due date listed in the syllabus, unless you require additional time for ADA accommodation purposes. Outside of ADA accommodations, if you require additional time to work on an assignment for any reason, please contact the instructor to receive permission for an excused late submission without penalty. Special permission to submit late will be granted by the instructor on a case by case basis, erring on the side of trust and generosity. Even in the case of excused late submissions without penalty, written work submitted after the last day of final exam week will result in a zero for the assignment, or --if, and only if, requested of the instructor by the student in writing and granted by the instructor in writing-- a final course grade of "Incomplete," which will revert in your transcript to a regular course grade without penalty once you have

emailed the instructor your remaining missing work as specified by the instructor when granting your requested incomplete.

AI POLICY

This course requires that all written work submitted by each student will be the original work and writing of that student alone. That means the use of any generative (i.e. content-producing) AI tools such as ChatGPT or Grammarly is strictly prohibited. Any student in this course who uses ChatGPT, Grammarly, or any other content-producing AI tool will receive the same consequence that they would for plagiarizing the work of others or for having another person(s) or company write their assignment for them: an automatic zero (F) on the assignment, and a report filed with the Office of Academic Integrity.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

The UNT Policy Manual defines plagiarism as: “(a) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement and (b) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.” (18.1.11). Students must be aware of the strict policies against plagiarism and academic honesty enforced by UNT. All student writing in this course must be original, and all uses of other writer’s material (i.e., for the purposes of research based argumentation) must be acknowledged and clearly cited in any writing submitted for a grade. If I suspect plagiarism, I will ask to meet with you to discuss the matter. If I determine that plagiarism has occurred, I will give you a zero on the assignment and report the incident to the Office of Academic Integrity.

ADA POLICY:

Accessibility to everyone in the classroom is of the utmost importance to me as an educator. For ADA reasonable accommodation protections at UNT, students must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter and submit it electronically to you and your instructors so that you can begin a private discussion with your instructors regarding your specific reasonable accommodation needs in each course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website at

<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>Links to an external site. . You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

REQUIRED PHYSICAL BOOKS TO PURCHASE:

There are three physical books you must purchase for this course: Understanding Comics by Scott McCloud (any physical edition, purchased anywhere, new or used), Maus I, and Maus II by Art Spiegelman (any physical edition, purchased anywhere, new or used), two if you buy the Maus I and II 2-volume boxed set and count it as a single book purchase. The remaining required course readings are free and linked electronically to our Canvas syllabus.

REQUIRED COURSE READINGS (& IN-CLASS SCREENED FILMS), LISTED BY COURSE SECTION:

What Are the Humanities?

Wilson, "A New Definition of the Humanities"Links to an external site.

The Humanities Today

Speri, "Links to an external site.Just not monetizable': humanities programs face existential crisis at US universities"Links to an external site.

Video Panel: "Against University Complicity in Fascist Times: Coalition Politics and Campus Struggles"Links to an external site.

Art & Art Criticism

Foucault, This_Is_Not_a_Pipe

McCloud, Understanding Comics (physical book, required purchase)

Literature & Literary Criticism

Spiegelman, Maus I (physical book, required purchase)

Spiegelman, Maus II (physical book, required purchase)

Kruger, "Panels and Faces: Segmented Metaphors and Reconstituted Time in Art Spiegelman's Maus;"

Kafka, "The Metamorphosis" [Links to an external site.](#)

Ryan, "Franz Kafka's Die Verwandlung: Transformation, Metaphor, and the Perils of Assimilation"

History

Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison

Alexander, The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness

Religion

Quigley, "Religious Traditions and the Human Right to Housing"

Taylor-Seymour, "Troubling Climate and Religion: The Climate Crisis beyond Disenchantment"

Philosophy

Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy [Links to an external site.](#)

Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulation"

Media & Cultural Studies

Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"

Buñuel, [Links to an external site.](#)Un Chien Andalou ([Links to an external site.](#)short film)[Links to an external site.](#)

"Thiher, "Surrealism's Enduring Bite: Un Chien Andalou,

Coates, "The Case for Reparations" by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Coates, The Story of the Contract Buyers League (short film)[Links to an external site.](#)

Coates, "The Gigantic Dream"

Gloria Anzaldua, "Atravesando Fronteras / Crossing Borders"

COURSE SCHEDULE & ASSIGNED READINGS AND WRITING

Students will be notified in advance of any unanticipated schedule changes or syllabus adjustments via Canvas announcements and in our Canvas syllabus. It is each student's responsibility to keep up with the scheduled readings and assignments, and any unanticipated announced scheduling changes and syllabus adjustments that might occur. Reading and writing assignments listed under each course meeting date are due on that date.

INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE & "WHAT ARE THE HUMANITIES?"

WEEK 1:

Mon (8.17):

Discussion/Q&A, Intro to the Class, Day 1

Weds (8.19):

Discussion/Q&A, Intro to the Class, Day 2

In class Activity: Choose your seat mindfully. The seat you choose today will be your seat for the rest of the semester unless you have a good reason to change seats, in which case, please let me know privately. Following Dr. A's instructions, letter and number the index card at your seat. Write your preferred first name, your last name, your pronouns, your major (and minor, if applicable), and why you are taking this course

Fri (8.21):

Discussion: What are "The Humanities"?

Read for today: Wilson, "A New Definition of the Humanities"[Links to an external site.](#)

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on Wilson, "A New Definition of the Humanities"

Discussion on today's reading

THE HUMANITIES TODAY

WEEK 2

Mon (8.24):

Read for today: Speri, "Links to an external site.Just not monetizable': humanities programs face existential crisis at US universities"[Links to an external site.](#)

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on Speri, "Just not monetizable': humanities programs face existential crisis at US universities"

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Weds (8.26):

Screen & discuss in class: Part 1 of Video Panel: "Against University Complicity in Fascist Times: Coalition Politics and Campus Struggles"[Links to an external site.](#)

Fri (8.28):

Screen & discuss in class: Part 1 of Video Panel: "Against University Complicity in Fascist Times: Coalition Politics and Campus Struggles"[Links to an external site.](#)

ART & ART CRITICISM

WEEK 3

Mon (8.31):

Read for today: First half of Foucault, *This_Is_Not_a_Pipe*

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on First half of Foucault, *This_Is_Not_a_Pipe*

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Weds (9.2):

Read for today: Second half of Foucault, *This_Is_Not_a_Pipe*

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Fri (9/4):

Read for today: First third of McCloud, Understanding Comics
Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on McCloud, Understanding Comics
In class: Discussion on today's reading

WEEK 4

Mon (9.7): LABOR DAY (NO CLASS)

Weds (9/9):

Read for today: Second third of McCloud, Understanding Comics
In class: Discussion on today's reading
Fri (9.11):

Finish McCloud, Understanding Comics
In class: Discussion on today's reading

LITERATURE & LITERARY CRITICISM

WEEK 5

Mon (9.14):

Read for today: Spiegelman, Maus I
Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on Spiegelman, Maus I
In class: Discussion on today's reading
Weds (9.16):

Read for today: Spiegelman, Maus I
Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on Spiegelman, Maus I
In class: Discussion on today's reading
Fri (9.18)

Read for today: Kruger, "Panels and Faces: Segmented Metaphors and Reconstituted Time in Art Spiegelman's Maus; "
Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on Kruger, "Panels and Faces: Segmented Metaphors and Reconstituted Time in Art Spiegelman's Maus"
In class: Discussion on today's reading

WEEK 6

Mon (9.21): Religious Holiday for Instructor, No Class

Weds (9.23)

Read for today: First half of Kafka, "The Metamorphosis" [Links to an external site.](#)

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on First half of Kafka, "The Metamorphosis"

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Fri (9.25)

Read for today: Second half of Kafka, "The Metamorphosis" [Links to an external site.](#)

In class: Discussion on today's reading

WEEK 7

Mon (9.28)

Read for today: Ryan, "Franz Kafka's Die Verwandlung : Transformation, Metaphor, and the Perils of Assimilation"

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on Ryan, "Franz Kafka's Die Verwandlung: Transformation, Metaphor, and the Perils of Assimilation"

In class: Discussion on today's reading

HISTORY

Weds (9.30)

Read for today: First half of Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Fri (10.2)

Read for today: Second half of Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison

In class: Discussion on today's reading

WEEK 8

Mon (10.5)

Read for today: First Half of Alexander, The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on First Half of Alexander, The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Weds (10.7)

Read for today: Second Half of Alexander, The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Fri (10.9)

In Class: Graphic Essay Q&A

RELIGION

WEEK 9

Mon (10.12):

Read for today: Taylor-Seymour, "Troubling Climate and Religion: The Climate Crisis beyond Disenchantment"

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on Taylor-Seymour, "Troubling Climate and Religion: The Climate Crisis beyond Disenchantment"

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Weds (10.14):

Read for today: Quigley, "Religious Traditions and the Human Right to Housing"

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on Quigley, "Religious Traditions and the Human Right to Housing"

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Fri (10.16)

Read for today: First half of Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy [Links to an external site.](#)

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on First half of Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy

In class: Discussion on today's reading

PHILOSOPHY

WEEK 10

Mon (10.19)

Read for today: Second half of Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy [Links to an external site.](#)

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Weds (10.21)

Read for today: Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulation"

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulation"

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Fri (10.23):

Finish discussing Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulation"

Graphic Essay due on or before 11:59pm, Saturday , October 24

Media & Cultural Studies

WEEK 11:

Mon (10.26):

Read for today: First half of "The Case for Reparations" by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on "The Case for Reparations" by Ta-Nehisi Coates

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Weds (10.28)

Read for today: Second half of "The Case for Reparations" by Ta-Nehisi Coates

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Fri (10.30)

Watch & discuss in class: Coates, The Story of the Contract Buyers League [Links to an external site.](#), a 10 minute documentary film

WEEK 12

Mon (11.2):

In-class: Research Essay Q&A

Weds (11.4):

Read for today: Coates, "The Gigantic Dream"

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on Coates, "The Gigantic Dream"

Fri (11.6):

Read for today: Gloria Anzaldua, "Atravesando Fronteras / Crossing Borders"

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on Gloria Anzaldua, "Atravesando Fronteras / Crossing Borders"

In class: Discussion on today's reading

WEEK 13

Mon (11.9)

In-class: Creative Nonfiction Research Essay Q&A

Weds (11.11)

Read for today: Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on First half of Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Fri (11.13)

In class: Screen and discuss Buñuel, *Un Chien Andalou*[Links to an external site.](#)

WEEK 14

Mon (11.16)

Read for today: "Thiher, "Surrealism's Enduring Bite: *Un Chien Andalou*

Due before class: Virtual Writer's Notebook Activity on "Thiher, "Surrealism's Enduring Bite: *Un Chien Andalou*

In class: Discussion on today's reading

Wed (11.18)

Fri (11.20)

Finish discussing Gloria Anzaldua, "Atravesando Fronteras / Crossing Borders"

Research Essay or Creative Nonfiction Research Essay Due on or before 11:59pm Saturday, November 21

WEEK 15: THANKSGIVING BREAK, NO CLASS (11.23-11.27)

WEEK 16: PRE-FINALS WEEK

Mon (11.30):

In-Class Writing Lab & Q&A on Remaining Coursework

Weds (12.2)

Last Day of Class!

In-Class: SPOT evaluations

Fri (12.4): Reading Day, No Class

FINALS WEEK (12.7 - 12.11) Note: There is no final exam for this course.

Research Essay or Creative Nonfiction Research Essay (whichever one you did not submit on Saturday, November 21):

Due via Canvas by 11:59pm Friday December 11

Any Missing Virtual Writer's Notebook Activities:

Due via Canvas by 11:59pm Friday December 11