

# ENGL 103

## Rhetoric & Composition I



Northern Illinois  
University

### Class Information

Location: Reavis Hall, 300  
Day/Time: MWF 1:00-1:50  
Texts: PDFs in Blackboard  
URL: <https://webcourses.niu.edu/>

### Instructor Information

Name: Malcolm Reynolds  
Email: [mreynolds@niu.edu](mailto:mreynolds@niu.edu)  
Office: Reavis Hall, 215B  
Office Hours: MWF 12:00-1:00 and by  
Appointment

### Course Description

ENGL 103 is a course designed to introduce students to ideas important to writing and to expand on what students already know about writing. At the heart of this course are ideas such as literacy, rhetoric, purpose, audience, genre, and discourse. Students will analyze and produce both traditional written texts and multimodal digital texts for various audiences and purposes.

The primary goal of ENGL 103 is to help you improve your writing. This will involve thinking about writing, using writing to learn, and reflecting on writing. While this course will help you succeed at NIU, the goal is to connect to all writing taking place in your life: at school, at part-time jobs, in your clubs and organizations, and in your personal life.

Throughout the course, you will work to create an eportfolio of your work that showcases your best writing and what you've learned from it.

### Course Outcomes

By the end of ENGL 103, students will be able to:

- Establish a clear purpose for writing.
- Identify and respond to the needs of different audiences and rhetorical situations.
- Recognize and write in a variety of genres.
- Recognize the relationships among language, knowledge, and power.
- Develop recursive strategies for generating, drafting, and revising texts.
- Write collaboratively with peers.
- Reflect carefully on choices made when writing.

## Major Projects

During the semester, you will complete three writing projects (WP) and an eportfolio.

### WP1: Literacy Narrative 2.0



At the beginning of the semester, you will be asked to write a short narrative in which you detail one piece of your literacy history and how it has affected your writing. For WP1: Literacy Narrative 2.0, you will adapt that narrative into a different form, such as a video, a podcast, a website, a comic, or some other form of media. You'll write a short reflection explaining the adaptation and how it fits your audience.

### WP2: Visual Analysis



You will use what you learned in WP1 to expand your definitions of literacy. In WP2, you will apply this understanding to visual texts, such as a video, image, or comic. You will break down how meaning is made in your text and evaluate the effectiveness of the rhetorical choices on the audience. Your visual analysis will include pieces of the visual text you have selected.

### WP3 Persuasive Essay



Taking what you have learned about writing and rhetoric, you will write an essay persuading a local audience to take action on an issue directly related to them. This essay must address a specific problem you see in your home or university community, and it must address people who can act to solve that problem. You are encouraged to present this essay to the real audience.

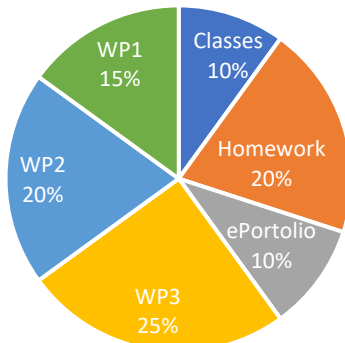
### ePortfolio & Reflection



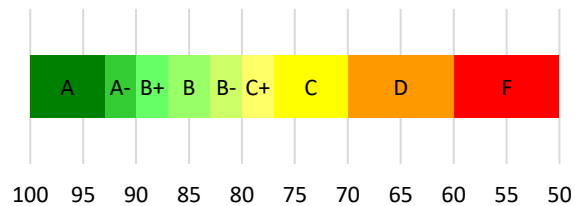
Your eportfolio will include writing you have done throughout the semester as well as a final reflection in which you think back about what you have learned and how you might apply that learning to a future situation. This culminating project will help you not only see the progress you have made but also set you up to continue the practices you have established in other situations outside of class.

## Grading Categories

Your grade will be based on the following categories. For more info on these, see the "Grade Breakdown."



## Grading Scale



- A Exceeds expectations for all or most assignments.
- B Exceeds expectations for some assignments.
- C Met expectations for all assignments.
- D Did not meet expectations for some assignments.
- F Did not meet expectations for many assignments.

## **Class Policies**

### **Syllabus Updates**

This syllabus is subject to change with notification. Any changes made will be posted in Blackboard, and you will be notified via email.

### **Attendance**

You are expected to attend every class and conference. Absence without prior approval may result in all class points lost for that day. If you are late to class or leave early without permission, you may lose half of the class points for that day.

### **Homework**

Homework should be submitted to Blackboard at least 30 minutes before class time. Work submitted after that time will be considered late.

### **Late Work**

Late major projects will be accepted. Without prior approval, late major projects may lose up to 10% per day until they are submitted. Late homework may not be accepted without prior approval.

### **Drafts and Revision**

All major projects will have a minimum of two drafts: a completion draft for comments and peer revision, and a revised draft for grading. Students may submit additional drafts for comments or to be re-graded with permission from the instructor.

### **Discussion**

You are expected to actively engage in class and conference discussions. Please be civil to other members of the class and actively keep dialog open—even when you disagree. When offering feedback, please be polite. If you cannot remain civil, you will be asked to leave class and be counted absent for the day.

### **Tech**

Class will meet in a Bring-Your-Own-Device (BYOD) classroom. You are encouraged to bring a laptop, tablet, or phone to class every day. If you do not have one, a number of school-owned laptops are available. You can get help using your device by calling 815-753-8100. Please use your tech during class time for class-related subjects.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense in which writers use other people's words without giving credit and pass them off as their own. During class, we will go over the English department's plagiarism policy [here](#). If you are unsure if something is plagiarism, please ask me in advance—and always err on the side of caution.

### **Anti-racism & Inclusion**

All students should feel safe and respected in this class and others. This includes a rejection of white supremacy, a commitment to LGBTQ+ rights, and every effort to include people of different cultural backgrounds, abilities, and beliefs. Hate has no home in this class. If you feel unsafe or disrespected in this class or any other, please reach out to me, and I will do all I can to help.

### **Preferred Pronouns**

You will be asked for your preferred pronouns on the first day of class. If these change during the semester, please let me know.

## Resources

### University Writing Center

All students are encouraged to take advantage of the services of the [University Writing Center](#). They can offer an outside perspective and experienced feedback on your writing for this class or any other. The Center is located in Founders Memorial Library, Room 260. They can be reached at 815-753-6636 or [gjacky@niu.edu](mailto:gjacky@niu.edu). Online appointments are available through the [Tutor Matching Service](#).

### Counseling Services

Individual counseling is available through [Counseling and Consultations Services](#), especially for students in immediate need of help. Counseling Services can also be reached at 815-753-1206 or by visiting room 200 in the Campus Life Building. You may also consider getting into touch with [Couple and Family Counseling](#), which offers greatly discounted counseling services for students. They can be reached at 815-753-1684, [familytherapy@niu.edu](mailto:familytherapy@niu.edu), or by visiting room 146 in Wirtz Hall.

### Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability and would like an accommodation for this class, please contact the [Disability Resource Center](#). The center is located in the Campus Life Building in Suite 180. They can be reached at 815-753-1303 or [drc@niu.edu](mailto:drc@niu.edu). I am happy to provide a productive learning environment in any way I can.

### First-Generation Students

If you are a first-generation college student (meaning you are the first in your family to attend college), NIU acknowledges that this comes with additional challenges to those faced by other students. Resources for first-generation students can be found [here](#).

### International Students

We welcome students from all around the world here at NIU. [International Student Scholar Services](#) can assist you if you are facing any problems, such as visas or cultural adjustment. They are located in Willston Hall and can be reached at 815-753-1346 or [isfo@niu.edu](mailto:isfo@niu.edu).

### ESL Center

If English is not your first language, you can receive one-on-one tutoring and support at the [ESL Center](#). Appointments can be [scheduled online](#).

### Language Diversity

You are welcome in this class regardless of your first language or fluency in English. If language barriers are causing problems for you in class in any way, please reach out to me.

### Undocumented Students

You are welcome in this class regardless of your documentation status with the US government. If you are undocumented and need help, you can contact [Undocumented Student Support](#) in the Campus Life Building in Suite 230. They can also be reached at [undocumented@niu.edu](mailto:undocumented@niu.edu).

## **NIU Land Acknowledgement**

The four locations of Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Naperville, Rockford, and Oregon occupy the traditional homelands of Anishinaabe peoples— Niswi-mishkodewinan, also known as the Council of the Three Fires—comprised of the Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Odawa. Other Indigenous peoples who call this land home include the Sac and Fox, Kickapoo, Peoria, Miami, and Sioux. We acknowledge the presence and continued vitality of these and other Native communities in our state and Midwest region.