



Stan Brakhage, Still from *Garden of Earthly Delights*, 1981

ENGL 1102 SYLLABUS

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Title: English 1102 – English Composition II
Tender Buttons, Moving Pictures: Ekphrasis, Visual Literacy and Film

Sections: G4 (92471), M5 (89245), P1 (94475)

Credits: 3 credits

Semester and Academic Year: Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Jenessa Kenway

Email: jkenway3@gatech.edu

* Please see Canvas for the weekly schedule and additional course information

CORE IMPACTS STATEMENT

ENGL 1102/ENGL COMPOSITION II

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Writing area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I write effectively in different contexts?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcomes:

- Students will communicate effectively in writing, demonstrating clear organization and structure, using appropriate grammar and writing conventions.
- Students will appropriately acknowledge the use of materials from original sources.
- Students will adapt their written communications to purpose and audience.
- Students will analyze and draw informed inferences from written texts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Critical Thinking
- Information Literacy
- Persuasion

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A composition course that develops writing skills beyond the levels of proficiency required by ENGL 1101, that emphasizes interpretation and evaluation, and that incorporates a variety of more advanced research methods. Develops communication skills in networked electronic environments, emphasizes interpretation and evaluation of cultural texts, and incorporates research methods in print and on the Internet.

COURSE THEME/TOPIC DESCRIPTION

“The [film] screen is the retina of the mind's eye,” Brian O’Blivion explains ominously in Michael Cronenberg’s 1983 sci-fi body horror film, *Videodrome*. But while film happens on the screen, meaning happens in the mind. We will explore how we make meaning in language and images through the ancient Greek rhetorical tool of ekphrasis (description so intense that it becomes visual); from the Greek *ek-* [out] + *phrazein* [to explain, to show, to tell]) to explain our experiences with the visual medium of film, to point out the details we observe in written analyses, and to tell our multimodal stories. Ekphrasis asks a simple question: how do you make an image *speak*? We will look at reels of images and write descriptions so vivid that our readers are transformed into spectators, remembering that to describe is to decide what matters. From flickering frames to vivid sentences, this course teaches us how to describe what’s important so others can literally see what we mean.

We will view experimental films to create ekphrastic responses; select, paint/distress, and edit existing 16 mm. film footage into bespoke experimental films that render unique interpretations of Gertrude Stein’s poems in *Tender Buttons*; and plan movie press kit to showcase and critique peers’ films. The six sections of this course (taught by both Dr. Kari and Dr. Kenway) will interact for peer review and critiquing activities, culminating in a multi-section, end-of-semester film festival. Together, we will work across genres (and classes!) to build critical thinking, adaptation, and visual literacy skills.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Rhetorical Knowledge

Rhetorical knowledge focuses on the available means of persuasion, considering factors such as context, audience, purpose, genre, medium, and conventions.

Explore and use with purpose key rhetorical concepts through analyzing and composing a variety of written texts.

These concepts include:

- Rhetorical situation: purpose, audience, context
- Genre
- Argumentation: controlling purpose, evidence

Develop an understanding of the ways in which rhetorical concepts can be transferred to multimodal artifacts

Gain experience reading and composing in several genres to understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers' and writers' practices and purposes

Develop facility in responding to a variety of situations and contexts calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure

Critical Thinking, Writing, and Composing

Critical thinking is the ability to analyze, synthesize, interpret, and evaluate ideas, information, situations, and texts.

Use composing and reading for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communicating in various rhetorical contexts

Read a diverse range of written texts, attending especially to relationships between assertion and evidence, to patterns of organization, to the interplay between verbal and nonverbal elements, and to how these features function for different audiences and situations

Use strategies—such as interpretation, synthesis, response, critique, and design/redesign—to compose texts that integrate the writer's ideas with those from appropriate sources

Processes

Writers use multiple strategies, or composing processes, to conceptualize, develop, finalize, and distribute projects. Composing processes are recursive and adaptable in relation to different rhetorical situations.

Understand that writing is a process

Develop a writing project through multiple stages

Develop flexible strategies for reading, drafting, reviewing, collaborating, revising, rewriting, rereading, and editing

Use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas

Experience the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes

Learn to give and to act on productive feedback to works in progress

	<p>Reflect on the development of composing practices and how those practices influence their work</p>
<p>Knowledge of Conventions</p> <p>Conventions are the formal rules and informal guidelines that define genres, and in so doing, shape readers' and writers' perceptions of correctness or appropriateness.</p>	<p>Develop knowledge of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling, through practice in composing and revising</p> <p>Learn common formats and/or design features for different kinds of written texts</p> <p>Explore the concepts of intellectual property (such as fair use and copyright) that motivate documentation conventions</p>

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- PERUSALL* (free/on Canvas): this is a social annotation platform and where all our course readings will be posted. You will be responsible for accessing, reading, and leaving comments on texts here.
- *Tender Buttons*, by Gertrude Stein. This material must be purchased as an Ebook on Perusall to complete course assignments.

* Perusall is an online social annotation platform that we will be using to access and annotate our course readings. Reading assignments will be posted on the course schedule on Canvas and accessible through the Perusall site (accessed through our Canvas page). Any special instructions will be posted in Perusall assignments, but as a rule, assume that you should comment 4-5 times per reading. Multiple essays in a single assignment? Comment 4-5 times per essay. Comments include but are not limited to questions, responses to instructor or peers' questions, observations, tracked patterns (use a hashtag!), notes. Try to aim for a mix of substantive comments/questions and casual observations.

GRADING POLICY

At the beginning of the semester, you will also have 3 “freebies.” Each freebie can be exchanged for one of the following:

- A 48-hour, no-questions-asked extension on any assignment (freebie request due by the assignment deadline)
- A no-questions-asked excused absence (freebie request due within one week after the missed class you’d like to excuse)
- An excused process assignment (freebie request due by the final submission deadline for that artifact)

You should notify me by email or Canvas message when you’d like to use a freebie, according to the deadlines listed above. Note that if you use a freebie to excuse a reflection process assignment, you will still need to create that reflection page at some point for the final portfolio. If you use a freebie to get an extension on a process assignment that involves an in-class peer review, you will miss out on the opportunity to receive feedback from your peers and are encouraged to make an appointment with me or the Communications Center to make up the workshop. You will also lose points for not contributing feedback on the drafts of your peers. The only workaround is to make arrangements in advance to participate in a virtual peer review with your assigned partners. Using a freebie on a group assignment means that all members of the group use up one of their individual freebies.

Grades for this course, including the final grade, will adhere to the following scale:

A: 90% - 100%, B: 80% - 89%, C: 70% - 79%, D: 60% - 69%, F: 59% or below

DESCRIPTION OF GRADED COMPONENTS

Project 0: Common First Week Video

Modalities: Oral, Visual, Electronic, Nonverbal

Students will create a 60-90 second video. Instructions: begin by introducing yourself (name, major, hometown) and identifying your course (teacher, theme) in 10-15 seconds. Your video should articulate a challenge relating to one of the modes—written, oral, visual, electronic, or nonverbal communication—that you'll be engaging with in class projects this semester. What challenges do you expect to face in relation to this particular mode (use specific examples from your past experience)? How might you overcome these challenges (again using examples from your past experience)? You might also use this assignment as an opportunity to set goals for yourself in terms of a specific mode of communication or in terms of the development of a specific skill.

Artifact 1: Watching Movies: Sound Bites, Ekphrasis, and Genre

Modalities: Written, Oral, Nonverbal, Electronic

Students will view a selection of experimental films; then, each student will select a single film to write a critical, researched introduction in the form of a 90-second sound bite. This sound bite intro will provide historical context and essential information for understanding the artist and the film. Then, each student will craft an individual ekphrastic response to the film; lastly, students will write a brief reflection on the film's impact on them and argue how it stretches an existing genre.

Artifact 2: Group Project: Experimental Film Ekphrasis, Directors' Vision Statement

Modalities: Written, Visual, Electronic

After reading selections from Gertrude Stein's *Tender Buttons*, students will, in groups, choose a passage to focus on and respond to visually and rhythmically by selecting

existing 16 mm. film footage to treat (distress, paint) and then digitally edit. Each group will write a production company project/directors' vision statement that engages in a close reading of the selected passage from Stein and explains how creative choices made in the film respond and interact with their analysis of the poem.

Artifact 3: Press Kit: Film Review, Film Poster, Film Festival Introduction

Modalities: Written, Visual, Electronic, Print, Oral

Students will compile a "press kit" for a peer group's film that includes a critical film review and a group-designed movie poster; these items will be distributed at a public film festival at the end of the semester, where students will orally introduce the peer group's film before its screening.

Portfolio

Rather than a final exam, ENGL 1102 ends with a multimodal portfolio showcasing your work and growth throughout the semester. This portfolio will include a longer reflective essay as well as shorter reflections for each of your artifacts.

Participation

Because participation is a more subjective measure than cannot easily be broken down into a list of specifications, this part of your grade will be calculated differently. A holistic participation rubric will be made available on Canvas during the first week of the semester detailing the expectations for participation, including engagement, preparedness, respectfulness, and the quality of your contributions. You will be asked to submit a self-assessment of your participation twice during the semester, using the holistic rubric to evaluate yourself and assign a score out of 100. (The self-assessments will count as process assignments for your final portfolio, as they can help you when crafting your reflective essay on your growth and learning throughout the semester.) I will also fill out the rubric and assign you a score out of 100 based on your participation during that part of the semester. Your participation grade for each half will be determined by averaging your score and mine.

Perusall reading assignments are also included in your participation grade, as are submitted in-class activities (discussion boards, surveys, mapping, etc.)

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

Attendance and participation are essential to success in courses in the Writing and Communication Program. Because of this, you are expected to attend class in person. There may be times when you cannot or should not attend class, such as if you are not feeling well, have an interview, or have family responsibilities. Therefore, this course allows for FOUR unexcused absences without penalty, regardless of reason and with no need for any proof or documentation.

Excused absences do not count against your grade or your four allotted absences.

Absences may be excused in the following ways:

- Institute-approved absences for athletic events, academic activities, professional conferences, etc. are counted as excused. Athletic teams and other campus organizations may provide you with a letter if the group has already requested the absences be approved. You can also request an institute-approved absence on an individual basis by submitting [this form](#) at least two weeks in advance.
- Severe illness and medical or other personal emergencies should be reported to the Dean of Students' Office, who can verify your emergency and reach out to your professors on your behalf while keeping your situation confidential. You can contact the Dean's Office by filling out the Class Absence Verification form located on [their website](#). Receiving a notification from the Dean's Office counts, for the purposes of this class, as an excused absence.

Absences are excused for religious holidays, jury duty, and voting in elections, in accordance with the policies in the GT catalog. You should notify me in writing that you need to miss class within the first two weeks of the semester for religious holidays, at least five business days before an election, and as soon as possible for jury duty. Other similar reasons for missing class may be excused at my discretion and only if you ask, with documentation, in advance.

- You can always use one of your freebies for an excused absence. To do so, you'll need to email me and let me know you're using your freebie within a week after missing class.

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. [Review Georgia Tech's Honor Code](#) and the [student Code of Conduct](#).

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, [contact the Office of Disability Services](#) (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. [The Student-Faculty Expectations](#) articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

AI Policy

This course is about growing in your ability to write, communicate, and think critically. Generative AI agents, such as ChatGPT, DALL-E 2, and others can present useful opportunities for learning and communicating. However, AI cannot learn or communicate for you, and so cannot meet the course requirements for you. Furthermore, many gen-AI agents are created, trained, deployed, and powered in unethical and harmful ways. In this class, you can use gen-AI tools to assist in

completing your assignments, but you cannot use AI to generate the content of your submission for you. For example, you could ask ChatGPT to help you brainstorm ideas for your film festival introduction or offer suggestions for revising your script, but you could not ask ChatGPT to write the script (or sections of the script) for you. You are encouraged to keep your use of gen-AI programs to a minimum and to rely on more ethical resources as much as possible. If you do choose to utilize such tools, you should do so critically and intentionally according to the following guidelines:

- **Responsibility:** You are responsible for the work you submit. Any words, images, or other artifacts submitted for a grade should be created by you, not generated by an AI program. In other words, do not copy and paste any output from an AI program and submit it as your own work. Additionally, it is your responsibility to ensure that any factual statements produced by a generative AI tool are true and that any references or citations produced by the AI tool are correct.
- **Transparency:** Any generative AI tools you use in the work of the course should be clearly acknowledged in your reflection for that artifact, including when you use AI for brainstorming, outlining, translation, editing/revision, etc. This acknowledgement should include the name of the AI tool you used and a specific description of how you used the tool. You should also address your use of the AI tool in your reflection and consider how it helped or did not help you to meet the assignment goals. Finally, save copies or screenshots of your interactions with that AI tool and submit these alongside the reflection as part of your process documentation.

If you are unsure about your use of AI or about a particular tool, please ask me ahead of time. A failure to follow this policy will constitute an instance of academic misconduct.

Course Completion

Failure to complete any component of the course, including projects, assignments, and stages of projects or assignments, may result in failure of the course, as determined by the instructor of the course in consultation with the Director of the Writing and Communication Program.

Syllabus Modifications

This syllabus may be modified as the semester progresses to meet course outcomes and address the needs of members of the class.

Late and Missing Work

All assignments should be submitted to Canvas by the posted due date. The specifications for each assignment will lay out the specific penalties for late work, but in general:

Process Assignments (discussion posts, reading checks, reflections, brainstorm, etc.) that are submitted late are marked down 1 point per day late. After 3 days, they will not receive credit.

Peer Reviews: Late Peer Reviews (meaning submission of the feedback you provide other students on their writing and work) are NOT accepted.

Final Artifacts are marked down 5 points off from the base grade for each day late. After seven days, they will not be accepted. You can use your 3 freebies to obtain 48-hour, no-questions-asked extensions on any assignment (including the final portfolio), provided you email me your freebie request by the deadline. You may also use the freebies to excuse an incomplete (missing or late) process assignment so that it won't affect your artifact grade.

If you run out of freebies or need more than 48 hours due to an extenuating circumstance, you will need to ask for an extension. Such extensions are granted at my discretion and only if you ask in advance of the due date (barring emergency situations). You will need to email me with documentation for why you need an additional or longer extension, keeping in mind my email availability listed above.

Missing Class and Making Up In-class Work

If you know in advance that you will be absent from class, please alert me ahead of time. You may use a freebie for your absence, but you are responsible for turning in any work that is due that day. Work completed during the missed class period (discussion posts, peer review, generative activities) cannot be made up but may be excused with a freebie.

Assignment Revision

Artifacts (major projects) for this class are designed to be completed and submitted in scaffolded process documents; as such, the “final” version of an artifact will have received multiple stages of feedback. Because this course emphasizes process over perfection, revision is embedded into the structure of each artifact. Work that has been submitted and assessed will not be eligible for resubmission, but received feedback may be applied to the next iteration of the project.