Course Information

- **Course Number:** RHET 3140  **Section:** 1
- **Turnitin Class ID:** 18201064  **Turnitin Password:** Section1
- **Days and Hours the Class Meets:** UMTWR 1:00-2:15 pm
- **Location of the Class:** WALEED C146
- **Prerequisite:** RHET 1020

Instructor Information

- **Name:** Dr. Aliaa Hamad
- **Email:** aliaanabil@aucegypt.edu
- **Office Telephone Number:** 26152035
- **Office Location:** WALEED P097
- **Office Hours:** Sundays 11:00 am to 12:00 pm or by appointment

Course Description

This creative writing, student-centered course for children introduces students to children's literature, its development, its organizations, publishers and stakeholders both internationally and in Egypt. As a community-based learning course, writers work on a service project that seeks to aid a community using creative writing through critical thinking and research of what is available, the nature of the audience. Writers work in various settings to draft and redraft their manuscript, and having understood the path to publishing, close the writing cycle by pitching their work to a publisher.

What is the endgame?

This learning experience will culminate in your writing an 8-page short story that targets any age range from 12 to 17.

What is a community-based learning course?

It is a pedagogical approach connecting learning in the community and classroom, enabling students to engage in the world and to reflect meaningfully on those experiences in an academic framework. It is informed by John Dewey's theory of the primacy of experience, community-based learning is interactive and democratic, engaging the whole student in partnership with community and transforming the learning process. You will visit communities both as a class and on your own, both course required and of your own choosing and interact and journal on the experience. You go to these communities in order to identify and better respond to the needs of those in Cairo (and sometimes outside it) for reading material for children.

Please remember that we will have to go on at least 2 field trips on Saturdays or Tuesdays and later reflect on them in a journal. This is an integral part of the course. I feel the need to remind you this early in the semester, because I know most of you have a lot on your plates already. Kindly make sure you are able to do so; otherwise, you might not be able to complete the course.
Learning Outcomes

To fulfill the requirements of this course, students should demonstrate the ability to:

1. analyze the literary needs of audiences and stakeholders for children's in Egypt, based on an understanding of the cultural context and the different stages of childhood.

2. compose and evaluate various children's works to entertain and instruct children of different ages, demonstrating understanding of the phases of research, proposal, writing, peer and self evaluation and revision of work created.

3. participate in discussions on relevant issues and research in children's literature.

4. participate in community-based learning activities that relate to the need of the field of children's literature and child literacy in Egypt.

5. critically reflect on their experiences and interactions with the community, and articulate how their understanding of children's literature was impacted as a result of community interactions.

Course Material

Readings will be posted on Blackboard when assigned. Always check your email for announcements and Turnitin for grades.

Readings


Wolff, J. (2012). *Your writing coach: From concept to character, from pitch to publication: Everything you need to know about writing novels, non-fiction, new media, scripts and short stories* (2nd ed.). Boston;London;: Nicholas Brealey Pub.

**Course Outline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 3rd</td>
<td>Introductions:</td>
<td>Read the syllabus and be ready to discuss it and/or ask any questions you have about it. Bring a sample of a story that you enjoyed reading and be ready to share it with us.</td>
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<td>Who are you? What’s your story?</td>
<td>Screen/Tell the life stories you put together.</td>
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<td>Screen/Tell the life stories you put together.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 4th</td>
<td>Let’s go over the syllabus; share questions you need answered</td>
<td>Reflect on your own writing: Why do you write? Who do you write for? What do you write about? Why? What got you interested in writing? What is special about the stories you tell? Why would they appeal to others?</td>
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<td>Let’s share your favorite stories and talk about them: What were they about? What genre do they fit into? Why did you like them? Is the title informative? What does it mean or suggest? Did the meaning seem to change as you read the story; if so, why? State the theme in a single sentence. How does the theme reinforce or</td>
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oppose popular notions of life? How does the theme provide a new insight or change our understanding of an old one? Explain. What certain passages - dialogue or description - seem to you to point especially toward the theme? Why? What literary elements does the author use to help the reader see his/her theme? Explain how the author does this.

Who is your favorite author? Why? Why do we/writers write? Who do we write for? What do we write about? Why? Why do we read? Why are some authors more popular than others? What are we writing for this course and who is our target audience?

| Tuesday June 5th | First Field Trip: Visit to the Bookstore | Journal #1 (10%): Reflection on our field trip to the Bookstore: Did the trip live up to your expectations? Who and what did you see? What booth stopped you? Why? Who did you talk to? What did you learn from them? What surprised you? What is out there in terms of books? Who is the target audience? What sells more? Who is buying it? Why do you think so? How does that help you as a writer? due June 11th |
| June 6th | • Storytelling: What is it? When and |
where did it start?  
How did it evolve over the years?  
What different genres of writing are there:  
- Fantasy  
- Realistic Fiction  
- Historical Fiction  
- Fairytale  
- Folklore  
- Mythology  
- Legends  
- Adventure  
- Science Fiction  
- Biography  
- Autobiography  
- Drama  
- Satire  
- Comedy/Humor  
- Romance  
- Suspense/Thriller  
- Horror  
- Mystery  
- Non-Fiction?  
Who is the target audience?  

Readings:  

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<tr>
<th>June 7th</th>
<th>Short Story: What is it? What is it</th>
<th>How long is it?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<td>June 10th</td>
<td>Ideas: How do we get started? Where do we get ideas? Where/How can we get inspired? How do we decide the genre we want to write in?</td>
<td>Start thinking about your own short story: What do you see yourself writing about? Who would be your target audience?</td>
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<td>June 11th</td>
<td>Before our second field trip, let’s talk about community-based learning, what this means, and why we’re doing this: What community work do you think you could/want to do? What has always bothered you about Egypt that you wish was different? What do you wish children or teenagers knew? What is an invisible community? How is it different from—if at all—from an underprivileged community? What are some invisible</td>
<td>Think of more questions you want answered about the invisible community we will visit Decide what you will wear and bring with you (other than your notebook and pen)</td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday</strong></td>
<td><strong>Second Field Trip</strong></td>
<td><strong>Journal #2 (10%): Reflection on our second field trip:</strong> Why is this an invisible community? What are some of the characteristics of that community? What did you expect/not expect about that community? How did the visit help you understand more about it? What questions did you get answered? What about this community would you like to highlight? How can you help empower this community? How</td>
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<td>June 12th</td>
<td>Remember that our second journal will be a reflection on our second field trip</td>
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<td>June 13&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Reflection on our second field trip: What did you learn about that community? What surprised you the most about that community? What characteristics/issues/struggles stood out? Now share how you can help empower that community through your writing: Do you want to highlight a certain issue? If so, what is it? Or do you want provide an alternate story? What would it be? How else can you empower it? Can you think of other invisible communities in Egypt? What are they? Tell us what your short story will be about and use the feedback your classmates give you to further refine your idea</td>
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<td>June 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Conferences to finalize Further refine your story based on the feedback you received, refine your idea (5%) and be ready to pitch it to me in our one-on-one conference next week due June 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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**can you translate it into a story? due June 17<sup>th</sup>**

Now decide what your story will be about in light of the field trip to the invisible community and our in-class discussions and be ready to share it with us: Why did you choose this idea? What is one characteristic/issue you want your story to feature? How can it make that invisible community more visible/empowered? Who will be reading this? Who are you writing for?**
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event/Assignment</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td>June 17th-18th</td>
<td>Eid Al-Fitr Holiday</td>
<td><strong>Idea for Short Story (5%) due</strong></td>
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<td>June 19th</td>
<td>Ethics of Storytelling: Before we start talking about the writing process, we need to talk about ethics of storytelling: What to do and not to do when writing? Why? What does this mean for your short stories?</td>
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<td>June 20th</td>
<td>Short Story Structure: What is it? What is a storyline? Is it different from a plot? If so, how? How should a short story develop? What would make a short story engaging? How is suspense maintained? What is a twist? Short story samples are shared</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reading:</td>
<td>Start working on your own structure and how to maintain suspense</td>
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**Group Presentations on Story Structure and Suspense (10%)**

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<th>June 21st</th>
<th>Our Target Audience: Who are you writing for? What are the characteristics of that audience/young adults (age, gender, socioeconomic class, educational background, language, origin, interests, culture, maturity, psyche, etc.)? What else do you need to know about your target audience? Why do you need to know that? How might this affect the idea and structure of your own story? We will try to</th>
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<td>Think about the bearing of your audience on your short story and modify it accordingly</td>
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understand our target readers’:
Cognitive Development
Psychosocial Development
Social and Emotional Development
Moral Development

And answer the following questions:

- What are the typical stages of development that children/young adults go through as they develop this kind of aspect of their identity?
- What are the features of each stage?
- What kind of stories do you think are suited to children/young adults going through each stage?

Reading:

**Group Presentations on Young Adults**
| **June 24th** | **Characters: How should we choose our main character and the other characters? Should we base them on real characters or use our imagination? Why? What details/characteristics do our characters need to have? What should our characters look like? How should they act? How can we make our characters believable/complex/mature? Who is your favorite character from a children/young adults’ book? Why did it stand out?** |
| **Group Presentations on Characters (10%)** | **Start working on your characters** |

Reading:
| June 25<sup>th</sup> | Beginnings: How do we begin a short story? What are examples of strong beginnings that compel you to keep reading? What made them so? Why are they important? What are they meant to accomplish?  
Reading:  
| June 26<sup>th</sup> | Narration, Descriptions, Scenes, and Dialog: What do they mean? What purpose do they serve? How and where are they incorporated? How are they written?  
Reading:  

**Group Presentations on**
<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>June 27th</td>
<td><strong>Narration, Descriptions, Scenes, and Dialog (10%)</strong></td>
<td>Think about how you want to end your own short story and come up with a title for it</td>
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<td><strong>Endings:</strong> How should short stories end? What are some endings you liked and some you did not? Why? What purpose do endings serve? How do you make sure the ending is just as compelling/strong as the beginning of the story? How do you make sure the ending is not abrupt? Is it okay to keep the readers guessing—leave the ending open?</td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> Smith, R. A. (2013). Tell a good story well: Writing tips. <em>New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 2013</em>(136), 73-83.</td>
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<td>June 28th</td>
<td><strong>First Draft of Short Story (2.5%)</strong></td>
<td>Make sure to bring your draft to class with you next session and highlight the paragraphs you find most challenging to write and need help with</td>
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<td><strong>Editing and Proofreading:</strong> What should we be looking at when editing and proofreading? Let's put together a rubric to use when evaluating a short story</td>
<td><strong>First Draft of Short Story:</strong> <em>June 28th</em></td>
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<td>July 1st</td>
<td>Peer Review: Use the rubric we put together to evaluate your partner’s draft and share with them the parts you’re having difficulty writing and need help with</td>
<td>Use the rubric and peer feedback to work on the <strong>Second Draft</strong> of your short story <em>due July 3rd</em></td>
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<td><strong>July 2nd</strong></td>
<td>Writer’s Block: What is it? Why do we have it? What can we do about it? Share your experience and tips</td>
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<td><strong>Reading:</strong> A phenomenological research study on writer’s block: Causes, processes, and results. (2017). <em>Education + Training, 59</em>(6), 605-618.</td>
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<td><strong>July 3rd</strong></td>
<td>Prepare for Publisher’s Visit: Why do you think we’re hosting a publisher? What questions do you want to ask the publisher? Prepare more questions for the publisher based on our discussion and your research</td>
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<td><strong>Second Draft of Short Story (2.5%)</strong></td>
<td>Now that you have completed your second draft, make sure a member of the target audience reads it and annotates it for parts that were not smooth in terms of language or plot, parts that were boring, and record their responses in writing as <strong>Journal #3 (10%) due July 10th.</strong></td>
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<td>1. Do they like your story? Do think it’s engaging? Why?</td>
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<td>2. Could they guess from the title what it would be about? Did they think you chose an appropriate title?</td>
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<td>3. Do they find the plot twists natural/smooth or artificial? What suggestions, if any, do they make to them?</td>
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<td>4. What do they think of the characters? Do they think the characters are believable/complex/mature? What do they think could be done to make the characters better?</td>
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<td>Event Description</td>
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| July 4th   | **Guest Speaker: Publisher**  
You get to ask the publisher the questions you prepared: What are they looking for? Why would they publish your story? What is the public, especially your target audience, looking for? What do you have to do to get published (process) in Egypt? What are some of the challenges of publishing in Egypt? How can you overcome them? |
|            | Based on the guest speaker’s presentation, start putting together your publisher’s pitch |
| July 5th   | **Conferences on final drafts of the short stories**  
Redrafting our short story based on the feedback received (from your instructor, your peers, and the target community member) |
| July 8th   | **Conferences on final drafts of the short stories**  
Redrafting our short story based on the feedback received (from your instructor, your peers, and the target community member) |
| July 9<sup>th</sup> | **Publisher's Pitch**  
(10%) | I might invite a publisher to evaluate your pitches with me (your grade will be an average of both our scores) |
| July 10<sup>th</sup> | **Publisher's Pitch**  
(10%) | **Work on final draft of short story due July 16<sup>th</sup>** |
| July 11<sup>th</sup> | **Title**  
What title would you give your story and why? |
| July 12<sup>th</sup> | **Blurb and Introduction**  
How would your blurb and introduction read and why? |
| July 15<sup>th</sup> | **Book Cover**  
Imagine and design your book cover. Justify your design. |
| July 16<sup>th</sup> | **Last Day of Classes Wrap-up**  
**Final Draft of Short Story due (30%)** |

**Please note that this is a tentative outline that is subject to change. Changes, if made, will be announced in a timely manner.**

**Fuller Details About Major Assignments**

**Idea for your Short Story (5%):**  
**Due: June 14<sup>th</sup>**

Based on our second field trip, you will tell me what you want to write about explaining how you want to empower the invisible community we visited or other invisible communities.
Group Presentations (10%):
Due: June 20th-26th

In groups, read the article you choose/are assigned to understand important ideas around young adults’ literature and prepare a 15-20-minute visual presentation on the relevant ideas from the article to the class.

3 Journal Entries (10% each):
Every journal entry needs to be thoughtfully written and at least 500 words long.

Journal #1 due: June 11th
Journal #2 due: June 17th
Journal #3 due: July 10th

Short Story Drafting (2.5% each):

You will use the rubric and feedback you receive from me, your peers, and member of the target audience to revise your drafts:

First Draft (1-4 pages): due June 28th
Second Draft (5-8 pages): due July 3rd

Final Draft of Short Story (8 pages) due July 16th (30%)

Publisher’s Pitch (10%)
Due: July 9th-10th

You will have 5 minutes to pitch your short story as though to a committee of publishers considering publishing it. It is a good idea to consider the publisher’s presentation and field trip to the Book Fair when presenting.

In the event that we do not host a publisher, we might work on illustrations and a cover for your stories.

Participation (10%):

Participation involves active listening, insightful questions, engagement, and preparation as well as your overall contribution to your own and others’ learning. Much of your preparation and engagement will be reflected in your assignments and in-class writing in addition to what you say in class.

**More elaborate descriptions will be provided in the prompts posted when each assignment is announced**

Instructor’s Policies and Expectations

Students must check Blackboard announcements and emails for assignments, materials, and updates.

A) All assignments and essays must conform to the format specified on the assignment sheet following APA style (http://www.owl.purdue.english.edu):
- Typed, edited, double-spaced
- Font: Times New Roman
- Font Size: 12
- 1-inch margins all around
- References Page (APA)
- In-text or parenthetical citations of sources
- All quotes, paraphrases or summaries, visuals, graphs, etc., must be fully and correctly referenced, cited, and punctuated.
- Include student’s name, course, instructor’s name, the course assignment, date of submission in the upper right hand corner of the paper, and a title related to the topic centered in the paper.

An electronic copy of assignments must be submitted on Turnitin.com on the assignment due date. You will be allowed to view your ‘originality report’, and it is your responsibility to check and make appropriate changes.

B) Late submission of assignments will result in losing a grade letter for every day’s delay. So if your work for a specific assignment is worth a B, you’ll receive a C if one day late, a D if two days late, and so on. Assignments will not be accepted 4 days after the due date.

C) Students are expected to participate in in-class activities. Being “present” in class does not mean a student automatically earns the 10% (for class participation). Students invested in learning, maintaining a positive attitude, and demonstrating progress over the semester are rewarded.

D) Turnitin: All written work should be submitted on Turnitin.com. Make sure you have the class ID and account number written down so you can log in easily and submit assignments on Turnitin.

E) Critical thinking: What is important in your assignments is that you demonstrate critical thinking skills and your ability to analyze, argue, present insights and reflect on the content of the course.

F) Citation Format: The citation format that we will use for all papers/assignments is APA.

***Remember to consider comments on previous work as you work on your assignments/drafts.

Grades and Grading in this Course
A. Available Grades in the Course (Note: D- and IP grades are not available in this course)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A = 100-94</td>
<td>A- = 93-90</td>
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<td>B+ = 89-87</td>
<td>B = 86-83</td>
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<td>B- = 82-80</td>
<td>C+ = 79-77</td>
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<tr>
<td>C = 76-73</td>
<td>C- = 72-70</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+ = 69-67</td>
<td>D = 66-60</td>
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<td>F = 59</td>
<td>I*</td>
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* “I” grades only available under very rare circumstances.
B. Grade Breakdown

Idea for Short Story 5%
Group Presentations 10%
Journals 30%
Short Story Drafting (2 drafts) 5%
Final Draft of Short Story 30%
Publisher's Pitch 10%
Participation 10%

C. Explanation of Final Grades

**Instructor will be available in person (on campus) and via email one week after the final grades are posted to answer any questions.**

For additional information about grading and to get answers to questions like
- How will I know at what level (or grade) I am performing during the semester?
- I’m having trouble completing all the work by the end of the semester. What options do I have?
- Can I appeal a specific assignment grade?
- Can I appeal the final course grade given to me by the faculty?

Visit this link or scan this QR code.

http://schools.aucegypt.edu/academics/rhet/FAQ/Pages/Grading.aspx

**Attendance, Absences, and Tardiness**

Students are highly encouraged to attend all classes, as regular class attendance can significantly help a student do better in the class. A student is not allowed to miss more than six classes without severe consequences, up to and including, failing the course. Also, missing more than 10 minutes of a class counts as half of an absence and missing more than 30 minutes of a class counts as a full absence.

There are many important additional guidelines related to this area. To read complete details and to get answers to questions like
- Who is responsible for keeping attendance?
- What happens if I miss a class? What happens if I exceed six absences?
- What is the policy on tardiness or missing part, but not all, of a class session?
- What happens if I have a medical excuse, family crisis, or extracurricular activity?

Visit this link or scan this QR code.

http://schools.aucegypt.edu/academics/rhet/FAQ/Pages/Attendance.aspx/FAQ

**Academic Integrity**

In accordance with the AUC’s efforts to promote a culture of academic integrity on campus, the Rhetoric and Composition Department strictly enforces the academic integrity principles
found in AUC’s Code of Academic Integrity. Instructors are trained to ensure students are doing their own work; additionally, students must also use Turnitin.com for all drafts of major assignments. Violations of academic integrity can lead to serious consequences, including failing the course and having notes about violations added to your permanent transcript.

For further details about academic integrity and to get answers to questions such as

- How do I know what is legitimate borrowing from a source and what is plagiarism?
- How will the instructor know if I have copied my paper from the Internet, had the paper written by a professional writing service, or tried some other tricky thing?
- What are the consequences of violations of academic integrity?
- What is Turnitin.com and how do I use it?

Visit this link or scan this QR code.

http://schools.aucegypt.edu/academics/rhet/FAQ/Pages/Academic_Integrity.aspx

**Dropping, Failing and Repeating Courses**

While we hope that you complete and pass your RHET course, sometimes disruptions do happen, and students, at times, drop or fail RHET courses. There are a number of important policies that affect these situations.

For further details about dropping, failing, and repeating and to get answers to questions such as

- I’m thinking about dropping my course. What should I do?
- What happens if I miss the drop deadline?

Visit this link or scan this QR code.

http://schools.aucegypt.edu/academics/rhet/FAQ/Pages/Dropping.aspx

**Special Needs, Concerns, or Additional Support**

The Department of Rhetoric and Composition provides practical support to all students in a fair and equitable manner. Students who have special needs or concerns about the class should talk to their instructors the first week of classes or as soon as possible. Students requesting accommodations from their instructors must first provide documentation from the AUC Office of Student Well-being; reasonable accommodations for students are made starting from the date the instructor receives the official documentation (accommodations are not applied retroactively). AUC complies with the American Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

For further details about special needs, concerns or additional support and to get answers to questions such as:

- I have a documented special need. What should I do?
- I feel that I will need some additional support. What should I do?
- I have a concern about the instructor or the course. What should I do?
- What does the writing center offer? How can the writing center help me?

Visit this link or scan this QR code.
Research in RHET
Research is highly valued at AUC, and students are encouraged to participate in research during their time at AUC, however, research, both on-campus and off-campus, MUST comply with a number of important policies and regulations for security, legal, and ethical reasons. Students who plan to do ANY on-campus research involving people (surveys, interviews, etc) or ANY off-campus research of any nature MUST receive approval PRIOR to starting their research. To begin this process a student should discuss their plans with their instructor as well as be familiar with the policies found at the link below.

For important information about the research process, ethical research, extracurricular research opportunities, and to get answers to questions like

- When I conduct a survey or an interview, can I collect data from subjects off-campus?
- Do I need any approvals if I collect data from subjects on-campus?
- What is the IRB and what is CAPMAS?
- What presentation or publication opportunities do I have?

Visit the following link or scan this QR code

http://schools.aucegypt.edu/academics/rhet/FAQ/Pages/Research.aspx

Scope of this Syllabus and Contingency Plans
This syllabus includes all written content, graphic displays, as well as the content referenced in the links/QR codes included in this document. Any student who continues in the course is expected to understand and abide by all policies, guidelines and schedules mentioned therein. However, in the event of the suspension of normal university classes, the initial plan is to continue with the course as long as there is internet accessibility in Egypt, but this may require adjustment to policies, guidelines, and schedules. Thus, in the case of the suspension of classes, please check your email and course website for details about how the course will continue.