Jennifer Falcón
Assistant Director
Rhetoric and Writing Studies-Undergraduate Program
Department of English
The University of Texas at El Paso
Hudspeth Hall
500 W. University Ave.
El Paso, TX 79968

Dear Dr. Denecker and Search Committee:

I am writing to apply for the full-time tenure-track (2017381) position of in the English Department at the University of Findlay. Currently, I am a Ph.D. candidate in Rhetoric and Composition at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) graduating in May 2018.
My experience as a teacher, at the administrative level, and my research make me a candidate that can help sustain, grow and immediately contribute to the Rhetoric and Composition program at the undergraduate and graduate level at the University of Findlay.

My teaching experience in the Rhetoric and Writing Studies-Undergraduate Program (RWS-UP) at UTEP has prepared me to teach a diverse group of students. I believe it is important to not only teach a curriculum, but also to implement student centered learning by negotiating learning goals. This creates an active and engaged learning environment where students reflect and make stronger connections between the coursework and their field of study.

Teaching is at the core of my career goals. I continually strive to be a better teacher so that I can help my students meet their academic goals. Part of improving as a teacher is the ability to critically assess what it is I teach and why. For this reason I chose to focus my dissertation on how a first-year composition curriculum is developed. Specifically, my dissertation researches how multimodal composition assignments are implemented in first-year composition curriculums. I am research what counts as a multimodal assignment, whether these are digital assignments, major or minor assignments, and what theories inform the learning outcomes. To research this topic I begin by tracing the overlap between multiliteracies, digital multiliteracies or digital literacies, multimodal composition, and digital rhetoric, procedural rhetoric, and electracy.

As I see it there exist many similar goals or learning outcomes in the application of theories intended to develop students' digital literacies. I conducted an analysis of survey responses from WPAs and first-year composition instructors, with 55 participants from universities and community colleges, and nine follow-up interviews. My dissertation benefits the field of rhetoric and composition and its students by using the wealth of knowledge of scholarship in digital rhetoric, procedural rhetoric, and electracy to improve composition practices in digital spaces both inside and outside the classroom.

As a graduate instructor I taught 13 sections of first-year composition, in a variety of environments, including hybrid, online, and face-to-face settings. I believe this prepared me to develop assignments specific to the learning environments the students and myself occupied through the duration of a semester. I teach a first-year composition curriculum that focuses on writing in discourse communities, analyzing genres, and building digital multiliteracies. In my first-year composition courses I aim to help students develop students digital multiliteracies by introduce them to elements of digital rhetoric theory, multimodal composition, and technical communication to reflect the demands of a 21st century education.

In addition to teaching first-year composition I taught four sections of RWS 3355 - Workplace Writing. Guided by industry practices I aim to assist students as they begin to transition from academic writing to workplace writing. I challenge students to reflect on their writing process and continuously facilitate a conversation on how their academic and industry goals intersect, which also helps to highlight the assets each student brings to the class. By focusing on the foundational concepts of workplace writing students begin constructing messages specific to their intended audience by first selecting the appropriate medium, and then composing a clear, succinct, and often times collaborative piece of communication.

My administrative experience at the undergraduate and graduate level allows me to immediately contribute to your department. From 2015 - 2017 I served as Assistant Director of the Rhetoric and Writing Studies Graduate Program. In this position I had the opportunity to help PhD students transition into the program through a mentorship role, and lead workshops with the Frontera Retorica, the UTEP chapter of the Rhetoric Society of America, to help students develop research skills, write conference proposals, and apply for travel funding throughout the academic year. Currently I am the Assistant Director of the Rhetoric and Writing Studies-Undergraduate Program where I have the opportunity to assist in continuing to develop the first-year composition curriculum and training graduate assistant instructors, which includes providing opportunities for professional development and continuing mentorship of new instructors.

I have included my curriculum vitae with this letter, and will provide additional documents at your request. I welcome the opportunity to speak to you about how I can contribute to the success of students through teaching and research in the Rhetoric and Composition program at the University of Findlay.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Falcón

Jennifer Falcón
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Education

Ph.D., Rhetoric and Composition   **2014 - Present**
University of Texas at El Paso
El Paso, Texas

Dissertation: Rethinking Multimodality in First-Year Composition: Applying Theories of Digital Rhetoric, Procedural Rhetoric and Electracy to Multimodal Assignments
Committee: Beth Brunk-Chavez (chair), Gustav Verhulsdonck, William Robertson

M.F.A, Creative Writing   **2013**
University of Texas at El Paso
El Paso, Texas

B.A., English   **2008**
The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

Research Interests

Multimodal composition, digital rhetoric, digital literacies, visual rhetoric, composition studies, professional writing, and technical communication.

Teaching

Assistant Instructor   **2014 - Present**
University of Texas at El Paso
Courses Taught:
Rhetoric and Writing Studies 3355: Workplace Writing (f2f and online)
Rhetoric and Writing Studies 1302: Rhetoric and Composition II (hybrid)

Teaching Assistant   **2011 – 2014**
University of Texas at El Paso
Courses Taught:
Rhetoric and Writing Studies 1302: Rhetoric and Composition II (hybrid)
Rhetoric and Writing Studies 1301: Rhetoric and Composition I

University Writing Center Experience

University Writing Center Consultant   2011 - 2012
University of Texas at El Paso

Publications

(Under review) Villa, J., Falcon, J., and Aravelo, M. Cultural Technique and Digital Content management. In Baca, I. Del Hierro, V., and Gonzales, L. (Eds.), *Community Action for Social Change: A Digital Archive*. Anderson, SC: Parlor Press.

Conference Presentations

"Teaching Composition at a Hispanic Serving Institution: Linking Linguistic Practices to Multimodal Writing" *Conference on College Composition and Communication Midwest Summer Conference,* Clermont, Ohio, June 9, 2017

"Social Media/Microblogging: Identity in Digital Spaces"*(with Jasmine Villa, Sarah Bartlett Large) Cultural Rhetorics,* East Lansing, Michigan, October 3, 2016

"Blurring the Lines of Theory and Application: Building Digital Rhetoric and Digital Literacies in the Composition Classroom." *South Central Modern Language Association*, Dallas, Texas November 3, 2016

"The Digital Self-Reflection: Metacognitive Practices through Multimodality." *South Central Modern Language Association,* Nashville, Tennessee, November 3, 2015

"Continuing the Conversation: Empowering Students through Self-Reflective Multimodal Assignments." (with Jasmine Villa) *WIDE-EMU '15*, East Lansing, Michigan, October 10, 2015

Poster Presentations

"Cultivating Wonder through Multiliteracies: Using digital multimodal assignments to enhance student engagement" (with Jasmine Villa) Poster Session at Computers and   Writing Conference, Findlay, Ohio, June 3, 2017

"Using digital multimodal assignments to enhance student agency." (with Jasmine Villa) Digital Praxis Poster Session at Conference on College Composition and Communication, Portland, Oregon, March 16, 2017

Invited Talks

"UTEP Teaching Assistant Success Panel" Invited to talk for UTEP Graduate School
Orientation, El Paso, Texas, August 23, 2017

Service

Assistant Director Rhetoric and Writing Studies-Undergraduate Program University of Texas at El Paso	**2017 - Present**
Assistant Director Rhetoric and Writing Studies Graduate Program University of Texas at El Paso	**2015 - 2017**
Stage 1 Reviewer, CCCC 2018	**2017**
Symposium Chair Frontera Retórica	**2016 - 2017**
Secretary Frontera Retórica	**2015 - 2016**
Review Committee for The Best of Rhetoric and Composition Review content and submit report for edited collection with Dr. Isabel Baca and a group of PhD students	**2015**

Honors and Awards

Rhetoric and Writing Studies Nuestra Gente Award English Department University of Texas at El Paso	$750	**2017**
Student Government Travel Grant University of Texas at El Paso	$578	**2017**
Liberal Arts Dodson Travel Grant University of Texas at El Paso	$500	**2017**
Baker-Hernandez Travel Grant University of Texas at El Paso	$430	**2017**
Baker-Hernandez Travel Grant University of Texas at El Paso	$692	**2016**

Liberal Arts Dodson Travel Grant University of Texas at El Paso	$200	**2016**
Baker-Hernandez Travel Grant University of Texas at El Paso	$1200	**2015**
Baker-Hernandez Travel Grant University of Texas at El Paso	$990	**2015**
Liberal Arts Dodson Travel Grant University of Texas at El Paso	$500	**2015**

Affiliations

National Council of Teachers of English	**2017 - Present**
South Central Modern Language Association	**2015 - Present**
Society of Technical Communication University of Texas at El Paso Chapter	**2015 - Present**
Frontera Retorica University of Texas at El Paso chapter of Rhetoric Society of America	**2014 - Present**

REFERENCES

Dr. Beth Brunk-Chavez   blbrunk@utep.edu

Dr. Lucia Dura   ldura@utep.edu

Dr. Kate Mangelsdorf   kmangels@utep.edu

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Teaching Philosophy

The most rewarding part of teaching for me is witnessing students' progress and gain knowledge throughout a semester. I teach to help them learn, to watch them grow, and this growth is not as a result of what I've done as a teacher, but of the work they've done as students. To help facilitate students' growth as writers, as researchers and communicators, I approach teaching with an eye on four things: draw from theories and concepts in digital composition and digital rhetoric: work hard to create an active and engaged environment in my classes; and create opportunities for meaningful collaboration.

Digital Rhetoric and Multiliteracies

I define digital rhetoric not only as the application of rhetorical theories and practices in a digital environment, but as a relationship between the composer and the device, platform, network, or software individuals and groups use to compose. Students' rhetorical choices speak to their understanding of digital tools, their knowledge, and their effectiveness as much as a final project.

For this reason I use the first-year composition classroom as a space to begin introducing theories and practices in digital rhetoric. I scaffold these theories and practices, so that they first appear as minor or low-stakes assignments and eventually work up to major multimodal, or multimedia assignments. In professional writing classes I require students to compose brochures, presentation aids, or slideshows as supplemental material to enhance their presentations. This urges students to continue to think about the relationship between their audience, the genre they are composing in, and the constraints and benefits using specific software, platforms, and devices to compose. Students are familiar with many devices, software, and frameworks that they don't consider as part of academic writing or communication. As an instructor, this provides me with an opportunity to leverage students' interests and aptitudes with multiliteracies.

Creating an active and engaged learning environment

Students, I believe, are aware of composition that includes more than alphabetic text, as they continually find themselves exposed to and interacting with mixed modes, and/or multimedia compositions. However, this exposure does not always equate to them possessing experience in composing by mixing modes. Knowing that students will enter my composition classroom with a varying degree of experience and skill it is important to me to create an atmosphere that is

inviting, and promotes risk-taking and collaboration. I want them to leave the class not only having improved as writers, but in their approach to writing.

Often students express concern, anxiety, or a general dislike of writing. To make them feel more at ease with the rigors of writing I always begin the semester with a discussion of the writing process. I ask what they think the writing process is, and to describe their own writing process. I believe this helps them to better understand that everyone's process is different, and understanding what works for them and repeating it can help them become more efficient writers. I'm open about my own struggles with sitting down to write, and stress that finding what works best for them and helps them stay organized can only improve their writing process. This is an important conversation to have in the first-year composition classroom because it helps to build a relaxed classroom. Discussions of writing process, and using humor to share my experiences help keep the mood light, but productive by creating a supportive learning environment in order to build a strong classroom community.

Student-centered learning by negotiating learning goals

When students first enter the classroom, we discuss their learning goals for the semester. This approach to discussion begins on the first day when I ask students to explain why there are taking the course. By asking the students why they are in my classroom, and what they hope to learn throughout the semester I can refer to these goals throughout the semester. This allows me to point out the relationship between desired learning outcomes of an assignment to their own goals. I find this to be particularly helpful not only in first-year composition courses, but also when I teach Professional Writing because it provides the students the opportunity to openly discuss their transition form academic writers to professional writers.

We also discuss and negotiate the goals of each assignment in the realm of composition, communication, and/or professional writing. This helps to gauge the student's level of understanding, and open discussion on why a specific assignment is part of their composition curriculum. Essentially, I like to introduce assignments and then immediately begin discussion on why they are asked to complete these assignments. Why do we study genres? Why create a documentary? How does academic writing differ from professional writing? How is this useful for my professional development?

Collaboration

In first-year composition courses, students may view collaboration as a group project or peer review. Students work together, but may not always see the real-life application of this group work. Whereas in workplace writing I use collaboration as an opportunity for students to collectively demonstrate their knowledge of genres and audience expectations as they attempt to effectively deliver a message, and/or their research much like they would in the workplace.

In addition to group projects I provide students with opportunities to collaborate with me and with their audience. I schedule peer review conferences amongst their peers in addition to scheduling one-on-one conferences with me. The one-on-one conferences allow me to provide feedback and discuss each student's project. Much like students will mix and use modes in collaboration with each other; they will collaborate with their peers, their audiences, and me. Helping students to understand that collaboration is a key aspect of writing.

Creating a learning environment where students are comfortable to write, and eager to collaborate is an important component of my approach to teaching writing. I believe in the universal necessity of writing, and I teach writing because it is a large part of our communication both inside and outside the classroom. Writing is difficult to do, difficult to teach, but rewarding on both ends when you see students' progress throughout a semester.