

SYLLABUS: THE TEACHING OF WRITING (Graduate-Level Course)

Instructor: Erin Dietel-McLaughlin

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- Villanueva, Victor, Ed. *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory: A Reader*. Second Edition. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 2003.
- Tate, Gary, Amy Rupiper, and Kurt Schick, Eds. *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*. New York: Oxford, 2001.
- Glenn, Cheryl and Melissa Goldthwaite, Eds. *The St. Martin's Guide to Teaching Writing*. Sixth Edition. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to familiarize you with the major approaches and theoretical underpinnings relevant to the teaching composition at the college level. We will survey some of the more prominent topics in composition pedagogy and will consider both theoretical matters (the “why”) and practical applications (the “how”) for the teaching of writing. While we will explore a variety of questions this term, this course will encourage you to continually return to the following starter questions:

- What do we (rhetoric and composition scholar-teachers) *value* about writing? How are these values reflected in the pedagogical approaches we are reviewing?
- How are these pedagogical theories and approaches developed? How do they respond to particular historical/cultural exigencies?
- How are these pedagogical theories and approaches complicated or extended by new media technologies? By changing notions of literacy?
- How are these pedagogical theories and approaches complicated or mediated by institutional constraints? By issues of gender/race/class/sexuality/difference? By other factors?

By the end of the term, you should have a deeper understanding of the major pedagogical movements within the field of rhetoric and composition. You should also begin to develop a sense of which pedagogical theories most directly influence and shape your own teaching philosophy.

DESCRIPTION OF GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

Reflective Autobiography (100 points): This project will ask you to craft a personal essay of 4-5 double-spaced pages that recalls your own experiences as a student in a writing course, as well as any teaching experience you have had so far. Instead of being a mere recounting of events, however, you should analyze how those experiences have shaped your philosophy to composition as it now stands. The purpose of this assignment is to both introduce me to your pedagogical experiences and to facilitate a critical, self-reflexive attitude that will be useful when approaching the readings throughout the term. You may also find this assignment to be a useful springboard into thinking about the midterm essay. Due by Week 4 (9/16).

Midterm Essay: Teaching Philosophy (150 points): You will write an essay of 6-8 double-spaced pages that discusses your personal approach to teaching composition at the college level and the three or four sources we've read this term that have been most influential in developing that approach. This essay will need to describe not only the kinds of activities and assignments (i.e., the "what") you employ in the classroom, but also the major philosophical goals (i.e., the "why") that are met by or otherwise reflected in those activities. The purpose of this assignment is not only to help you synthesize source material from the term, but also to encourage you to use those sources as a starting point for articulating your own pedagogical ethos. Due by Week 10 (10/28).

Textbook Review (100 points): You will write a review of a college composition textbook. I will provide a list of possible titles for you to choose from; however, please let me know if you wish to review a text that is not on the list. Your review should be 3-5 double-spaced pages in length and should offer a brief summary of the text, as well as discussion of the text's audience and purpose, major theoretical underpinnings /values, strengths, and limitations. The review should offer a clear account of your sense of this text's pedagogical value, and why. The purpose of this assignment is to give you experience assessing a textbook designed to assist in the teaching of composition, as you will likely be responsible for selecting a textbook in the future. Depending on how current the book you review, you may also consider submitting this review to a journal for publication. This assignment may also be a useful springboard for thinking about your major unit lesson plan, as you may wish to draw from your chosen textbook as you construct that unit (though this is not required). Due by Week 13 (11/13).

Major Unit Lesson Plan (200 points): You will develop a detailed lesson plan on a topic or theme of your choosing. The lesson plan should cover approximately four weeks of instruction and should include learning outcomes, description of readings, representative assignments and/or handouts, and a schedule for the unit. You should also include a reflective introduction that explains the nature of the unit, rationale, and major theoretical underpinnings (include citations when appropriate) underscoring your curricular choices. The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to apply the concepts and strategies we've discussed to a specific pedagogical context. You are strongly encouraged to develop this unit for a class you are currently teaching or would like to teach in the future. Due by the last class meeting (12/9).

Discussion Facilitation (50 points): Once this term, you will be responsible for leading the class in discussion of the week's readings. This will involve preparing activities and/or questions that encourage us to synthesize the readings for the week and that prompt meaningful discussion. You should prepare a handout or other artifact that will provide your colleagues with additional information on the topic, including texts and resources that may be useful for those interested in pursuing further research on that topic at a future date. Sign-ups will take place the 2nd week of class.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Attendance in this course is mandatory. More than two absences will result in a negative impact on your final grade. Similarly, failure to participate actively in class discussions/activities will negatively impact your grade. For this class, "active participation" involves coming to class with all materials, being prepared to discuss

readings, offering thoughtful contributions to class discussion, and providing meaningful feedback to other students in the course.

MISSING/LATE WORK POLICY

Work is due on the designated due date, and late work will not be accepted, except in the event of a documented medical emergency. If you anticipate problems meeting a deadline, then please discuss it with me ahead of time so that we can make alternate arrangements.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE AND DECORUM

Differing opinions will likely emerge during class, and while you are *not* required to agree with me or your peers, you *are* expected to be respectful and courteous to me, your peers, and yourself during these discussions. You should feel free to express your alternate perspectives at any time, but be sure to keep your focus on the *ISSUE* at hand and not on the *PERSON* you may be disagreeing with. Sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory language will not be tolerated. Additionally, as a courtesy to others in the room, please turn off all cell phones and electronic devices before class begins.

OFFICE HOURS AND CONFERENCES

My office hours for _____ are _____ and by appointment. I encourage you to visit me during my office hour and to make appointments with me to discuss your writing progress or any other concerns you may have about the course.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICY

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in any form. In the event that you are caught violating the University's Academic Honesty policy (see your BGSU Student Handbook under "Codes of Conduct," or visit http://www.bgsu.edu/catalog/Acad_policies/Acad_policies2.html), I will immediately recommend that you be withdrawn from the course and assigned a grade of "WF." Cheating is not worth the risk. You are an intelligent person capable of submitting original material, and I expect nothing less.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

It is university policy to provide reasonable accommodations for students affected by documented disabilities. If you need such an accommodation, then please talk to me after class and contact Disability Services at (419) 372-8495, 413 South Hall.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(KEY: *CTCT* = Cross-Talk in Comp Theory; *GCP* = Guide to Composition Pedagogies; *SMG* = St. Martin's Guide to Teaching Writing)

	Topic of Discussion	Readings (for next class)
WEEK 1 (8/26)	Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berlin, "Contemporary Composition" (p. 255 CTCT) • Murray, "Teaching Writing as a Process" (p. 3 CTCT) • Emig, "Writing as a Mode of Learning" (p. 7 CTCT) • Sommers, "Revision Strategies" (p. 43 CTCT) • Tobin, "Process Pedagogy" (p. 1 GCP)
WEEK 2 (9/2)	Process Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham, "Expressive Pedagogy" (p. 19 GCP) • Elbow, "A Method For Teaching Writing" (handout) • Murray, "Finding Your Own Voice" (handout) • "Remembering and Making Writing Memorable" (SMG)
WEEK 3 (9/9)	Expressive Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flower and Hayes, "A Cognitive Process Theory" (p. 273 CTCT) • Lunsford, "Cognitive Development" (p. 299 CTCT) • Bizzell, "Cognition, Convention, and Certainty" (p. 387 CTCT) • "Freewriting" (SMG)
WEEK 4 (9/16)	Cognitive Processes <i>**Reflective Essay Due</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shaughnessy, "Diving In" (p. 311 CTCT) • Rose, "Narrowing the Mind and Page" (p. 345 CTCT) • Bartholomae, "Inventing the University" (p. 623 CTCT) • Mutnick, "On the Academic Margins" (p. 183 GCP)
WEEK 5 (9/23)	Basic Writing Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ong, "The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction" (p. 55 CTCT) • Ede and Lunsford, "Audience Addressed" (p. 77 CTCT) • Covino, "Rhetorical Pedagogy" (p. 36 GCP) • "Teaching Invention" (SMG)
WEEK 6 (9/30)	Rhetorical Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruffee, "Collaborative Learning" (p. 415 CTCT) • Trimbur, "Consensus and Difference" (p. 461 CTCT) • Howard, "Collaborative Pedagogy" (p. 54 GCP) • "Collaboration: Workshops and Peer Response" (SMG)
WEEK 7 (10/7)	Collaborative Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bizzell, "'Contact Zones' and English Studies" (p. 479 CTCT) • George and Trimbur, "Cultural Studies" (p. 71 GCP)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Research Writing in the Classroom” (SMG)
WEEK 8 (10/14)	Cultural Studies Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hairston, “Diversity, Ideology, and Teaching” (p. 697 CTCT) • Berlin, “Rhetoric and Ideology” (p. 717 CTCT) • George, “Critical Pedagogy” (p. 92 GCP)
WEEK 9 (10/21)	Critical Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flynn, “Composing as a Woman” (p. 571 CTCT) • Ritchie/Boardman, “Feminism in Composition” (p. 587 CTCT) • Jarratt, “Feminist Pedagogy” (p. 113 GCP)
WEEK 10 (10/28)	Feminist Pedagogy <i>**Midterm Essay due</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cushman, “The Public Intellectual” (p. 819 CTCT) • Julier, “Community-Service Pedagogy” (p. 132 GCP)
WEEK 11 (11/4)	Service-Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hobson, “Writing Center Pedagogy” (p. 165 GCP) • McLeod, “The Pedagogy of WAC” (p. 149 GCP) • “Student Conferences” (SMG)
WEEK 12 (11/11)	Writing Centers and WAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anson, “Distant Voices” (p. 797 CTCT) • Moran, “Technology and the Teaching of Writing” (p. 203 GCP) • “Teaching in Wired, Wireless, and Hybrid Classrooms” (SMG) • “Multiple Literacies” (SMG)
WEEK 13 (11/18)	Computer-Mediated Pedagogy <i>**Textbook Review due</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartwell, “Grammar, Grammars” (p. 205 CTCT) • Witte and Faigley, “Coherence, Cohesion” (p. 235 CTCT) • CCCC Position Statement on SRTOL (handout) • “Language Variety” (SMG)
WEEK 14 (11/25)	Language Variety, Grammar & Syntax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yancey, “Looking Back as We Look Forward” (handout) • CCCC Position Statement on Assessment (handout) • Sommers, “Responding to Student Writing” (handout) • “Methods and Criteria for Grading” (SMG)
WEEK 15 (12/2)	Writing Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None – finalize your major lesson plan
WEEK 16 (12/9)	Course Wrap-Up <i>**Major Lesson Plan due</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a great break!