



ENGL 259

Seminar in Composition Studies

Professor: Skinnell

Fall 2018

Section: 44694

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Office Hours: TH 2:00-4:00pm & by appt.

Class Days/Times: TH 4:00-6:45pm

Class Location: BBC 221

Prerequisites: Classified standing or instructor consent

How—and in what limited ways—might reading and writing be made to matter in the new world that is evolving before our eyes? Is there any way to justify or explain a life spent working with—and teaching others to work with—texts? ~ **Richard E. Miller**, *Writing at the End of the World*

If we expect students to be active learners, engaged in conscious theorizing and open to being transformed, we must also approach teaching as active, committed learners and knowers.
~ **Jane E. Peterson**, “Valuing Teaching”

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, and assignment instructions can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for checking the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates.

Engl 259 Course Description

In this course, we will study current approaches to studying and teaching writing. Specifically, we will examine perspectives about writing that inform its instruction: what writing is, how it is studied, how it is taught, how it should be taught, and whether or not it even can be taught. Our overarching goal will be to understand writing/composition as a complex, situated act in order to chart possibilities for developing and improving our work as teachers and scholars. The course will focus on situating issues associated with teaching writing in theoretical frameworks of rhetoric and composition studies, and we will discuss practical teaching issues, as well.

Required Texts

(please bring texts to class when we are discussing them)

Gary Tate, et al., *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*, 2nd ed.

Eodice, Geller, and Lerner, *The Meaningful Writing Project*

Prendergast, *Can I Use I?*

Additional reading (accessible on Canvas)

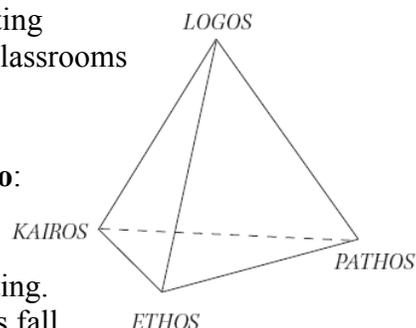
teh world is full of rhetorics

Engl 259 Course Goals

- 1) to explore and evaluate a range of approaches to studying and teaching composition
- 2) to situate composition in relation to values and expectations that teachers, students, and outside influences bring to the scene of instruction
- 3) to engage in productive discussions about teaching and studying writing
- 4) to articulate theoretically informed goals and objectives for writing classrooms
- 5) to practice modes of academic inquiry

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Develop a portfolio of teaching materials and strategies.
2. Explain the portfolio's function and contents.
3. Tie portfolio contents to a specific philosophy of teaching writing.
4. Tie portfolio contents to a specific synthesis of our reading this fall.



How Does This Work Contribute to Your Graduate Studies in English?

Rhetoric is one of the many disciplines that inform literary study, but this course is not about literary studies. Rather, this course asks us to develop and apply an expertise in rhetoric as we contemplate how to teach and study writing. Looking at the English graduate program learning objectives below, it is worth asking how rhetoric & writing studies is like but not like literary studies:

Department of English Graduate Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

- Students will demonstrate an appropriate level of expertise in literary history, literary theory, and rhetoric.
- Students will demonstrate high-level proficiency in literary research and in the synthesis of research.
- Students will demonstrate critical and analytical skills in the interpretation and evaluation of literary texts.
- Students will demonstrate a command of written academic English, including the abilities to a) organize and present material in a cogent fashion, b) formulate and defend original arguments, c) employ effectively the language of their discipline and d) write under time constraints.
- Students will demonstrate a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language

Procedures

This course will be demanding. The reading load is heavy, the material is often challenging, and course requirements are substantial. During most class periods, we will discuss teaching, discuss readings and responses, do group activities, and hear presentations.

Participation

For a class like this one, much of the learning happens in class. Therefore, it is imperative that you be in class every day and participate in class activities and discussions. Class participation entails: (1) demonstrating that you've completed the readings/assignments, (2) contributing to class discussions, and (3) completing in-class assignments.

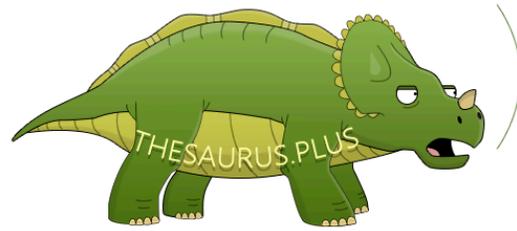
Please note: sometimes projects and class discussions will include material of a sensitive nature. In this course, students may encounter materials that differ from and perhaps challenge their understanding of reality, their ideas, and their beliefs. Students are encouraged to discuss issues that may arise from such material with the instructor.

Please ALSO note: If you have special needs or accommodations requests, see me as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in your forfeiture of the accommodations you may deserve.

synonyms for teacherly:
teacherish, academic, advisory, expository, homiletic,
instructive, moral, moralizing, pedagogic, pedantic

Course Requirements and Grades

- 1) Teaching Portfolio (20%)
- 2) Online activities (20%)
- 3) Class Observation report (15%)
- 4) Presentation (15%)
- 5) Reading Responses (20%)
- 6) Class participation (10%)



Grading Policy

All work must be submitted on time. Any unexcused late work will be graded down a **full letter grade** for every day it is late. If there is a reason you cannot make a deadline, contact me **BEFORE THE DEADLINE**. You must turn in all assignments to pass the class.

Course grades will be calculated using the following scale:

93% - 100% = A	80% - 82% = B-	67% - 69% = D+
90% - 92% = A-	77% - 79% = C+	63% - 66% = D
87% - 89% = B+	73% - 76% = C	60% - 62% = D-
83% - 86% = B	70% - 72% = C-	0% - 59% = F

University Policies

For information regarding the following policies, please see syllabus information web page at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>

General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student
Course Requirements and Assignments
Attendance and Participation
Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays
Dropping and Adding
Academic integrity

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material
Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act
Student Technology Resources
SJSU Peer Connections
SJSU Writing Center
SJSU Counseling & Psychological Services

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Because this is a 4-unit course, students can expect to spend a minimum of twelve hours per week preparing for and attending classes and completing course assignments. This course will have integrated into the syllabus the following 1-unit enhancement:

- collateral readings
- higher level critical thinking exercises
- presentation technologies
- field experience

Assignments

Teaching Portfolio

The major project in this class will be a teaching portfolio. It will include: (1) a teaching philosophy, (2) a teaching CV, (3), a writing syllabus (4) and a “meaningful writing project”.

Online activities

Online activities include two reflection essays submitted on Canvas—one at the beginning of the semester, and one at the end—and a number of peer review activities using Eli Review. These are variations of activities SJSU’s first-year students do.

FYC Observation

You will visit an **experienced writing program instructor**’s class and produce a short (1-2 page) report describing what you learned (e.g., a teaching approach, activity idea, classroom organization/management strategy, etc.). You are strongly encouraged to arrange a follow-up meeting with the instructor. Your report will be due to me at the end of October, and you will also be expected to send a copy to the instruction for his/her records.

Presentation

Each of you will choose one chapter from Tate, et al.’s *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies* to present to the class. Your presentation *must* include a one-page handout briefly outlining the chapter & its relevance to the class. You must also include citations to possible additional sources on the pedagogy. Your presentation should be approximately 12-15 minutes long.

Reading Responses

Members of the class are expected to write responses to 5 readings. Responses should not simply summarize or repeat points raised in the readings or class, but should build upon those points to advance our discussion. You are welcome to discuss your reaction to the reading (liked or disliked, agreed or disagreed, etc., and why), an observation for how it enlightens the work of our class, or the relationship of a reading to your own thoughts about teaching.

Responses should be short (300-600 words is fine), and you will submit them on Canvas. I will evaluate them based on evidence that you have read the assigned readings and have attempted to expand upon the issues raised in a thoughtful way. I will not grade papers based on format, usage, or grammar, but I do appreciate reading error-free prose.

Writing is physical work. It’s sweaty work. You just can’t will yourself to become a good writer. You really have to work at it. ~ Will Haygood

Tentative Course Calendar (subject to change)
READINGS listed should be read BEFORE class
 Readings marked with an asterisk (*) are available on Canvas

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Aug 23	Introduction to the course / Romance (and) Writing Literacy narrative(s) What are we doing? Why are we doing it?
2	Aug 30	Learning what we already think DUE: Literacy Narrative Read: Ball and Loewe* Chapter: "America is Facing a Literacy Crisis" (Jacob Babb) Chapter: "First-Year Composition Prepares Students for Academic Writing" (Tyler Branson) Chapter: "You Can Learn to Write in General" (Elizabeth Wardle) Chapter: "Some People are Just Born Good Writers" (Jill Parrott)
3	Sept 6	That's a terrible idea! DUE: Reading Response #1 Read: Ball and Loewe* Chapter: "The More Writing Process, the Better" (Jimmy Butts) Chapter: "Strunk and White Set the Standard" (Laura Lisabeth) Chapter: "Leave Yourself Out of Your Writing" (Rodrigo Joseph Rodriguez) Chapter: "Teaching Grammar Improves Writing" (Patricia A. Dunn) Chapter: "Grammar Should be Taught Separately as Rules to Learn" (Muriel Harris)
4	Sept 13	If you build it, they will come Read: Tate, et al. (pp. 1-19) Crowley, The Invention of Freshman English* Fulkerson, Composition at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century* Ball and Loewe* Chapter: "Anyone Can Teach Writing" (Seth Kahn)
5	Sept 20	Rhetrickery Read: Parker, Where Do English Departments Come From?* Corder, Argument as Emergence, Rhetoric as Love* Powell, Learning (Teaching) to Teach (Learn)*
6	Sept 27	Let's not forget what we've forgotten DUE: Reading Response #2 Read Royster, When the First Voice You Hear Is Not Your Own* Bloom, Freshman Composition as a Middle Class Enterprise* Rose, Language of Exclusion*

7	Oct 4	Let's not forget II Read: Matsuda, Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity* Williams, Phenomenology of Error* Hartwell, Grammar, Grammars, and the Teaching of Grammar* Ball and Loewe* Chapter: "Official American English is Best" (Steven Alvarez)
8	Oct 11	What are we doing, and why are we doing it? Introduce teaching portfolio Read: Eodice, Geller, & Lerner, Chs. 1-3 Brooke, Underlife and Writing Instruction*
9	Oct 18	I see we're still doing whatever it is that we are doing DUE: Reading Response #3 Read: Eodice, Geller, & Lerner, Chs. 4-6 Smith, The Genre of the End Comment*
10	Oct 25	Responding to Students Guest Speaker: Melissa Meeks Read: Wiliam, "The Secret of Effective Feedback"* Straub, "Responding—Really Responding—To Other Students' Writing"* Meeks, "Givers Gain Teaching Philosophy"* Ball and Loewe* Chapter: Chapter: "When Responding to Student Writing, More is Better" (Muriel Harris) Chapter: "Student Writing Must be Graded by the Teacher" (Christopher R. Friend)
11	Nov 1	I see you made a mistake PORTFOLIO WORKSHOP (post drafts of portfolio materials) DUE: Reading Response #4 DUE: ELI Review activities Read: Lunsford and Lunsford, Mistakes Are a Fact of Life* Ferris and Roberts, Error Feedback in L2 Writing Classes* Robillard, We Won't Get Fooled Again* Ball and Loewe* Chapter: "Plagiarism Deserves to be Punished" (Jennifer A. Mott-Smith)
12	Nov 8	Politics in the Classroom DUE: ELI Review activities Read: Berlin, Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class* Brodkey, Making a Federal Case Out of Difference* Prendergast, <i>Can I Use I?</i> (pg. 1-63)

13	Nov 15	Do we know anything yet? DUE: ELI Review activities DUE: Reading Response #5 Read: hooks, Engaged Pedagogy* Vitanza, Three (Counter)Theses* Prendergast, <i>Can I Use I?</i> (pg. 64-130)
14	Nov 22	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS
15	Nov 29	Presentations
16	Dec 6	CLASS OBSERVATIONS DUE Presentations
Final	DEC 12	TEACHING PORTFOLIOS DUE FINAL REFLECTION DUE FINAL EXAM (2:45-5:00pm)

I will be available during Finals Week to discuss the course, grades, or anything else. Feel free to email me to make an appointment.

it was... ah, words
can't describe!



are you sure?
that's what
they do



1. Basic Writing, *Mutnick and Lamos* _____
2. Collaborative Writing, *Howard and Kennedy* _____
3. Community-Engaged, *Julier, Livingston, and Goldblatt* _____
4. Critical, *George* _____
5. Cultural Studies, *George, Trimbur and Lockridge* _____
6. Expressive, *Burnham and Powell* _____
7. Feminist, *Micciche* _____
8. Genre, *Devitt* _____
9. Literature and Writing, *Farris* _____
10. New Media, *Brooke* _____
11. Online and Hybrid, *Hewett* _____
12. Process, *Anson* _____
13. Researched Writing, *Howard and Jamieson* _____
14. Second Language Writing, *Matsuda and Hammill* _____
15. Writing Across the Curriculum, *Thaiss and McLeod* _____
16. Writing Center, *Lerner* _____

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