

San José State University
Department of English & Comparative Literature
ENGL 259, Seminar in Composition Studies, Section 1, Fall, 2021

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”

Course and Contact Information

Instructor(s): Dr. Ryan Skinnell
Office Location: Faculty Office Bldg. 111
Telephone: 408-924-4207 (this is my office phone—you’re unlikely to reach me here. Please email.)
Email: ryan.skinnell@sjsu.edu
Website: <http://www.RyanSkinnell.com>
Office Hours: Tu 3:00-5:00pm & by appt. (<https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/9715345908>)
Class Days/Time: Tu 7:00-9:45pm
Classroom: <https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/84312285949?pwd=Q0dleTZsT2NGbk4xdjUzUmdVY21RZz09>
Prerequisites: Classified standing or instructor consent.

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.

Course Format: Technology Intensive, Online Course

Our course will be technology intensive with an online delivery format that utilizes both synchronous and asynchronous learning. This will require us to have access to technologies, which may include a device with video conferencing capabilities. We will need internet connectivity to participate in online classroom activities and review/submit assignments. Some software applications we will use include: Zoom, Canvas, SJSU Google Suite, a PDF reader, etc. If you need to borrow laptops, iPads, and more, please contact [Student Computing Services](#). If you need software training, contact [Student Technology Training Center](#).



teh world is full of rhetorics

During our class meetings, the default expectation is that everyone’s cameras should be on. If you need to turn it off for short periods of time for particular reasons, that’s no big deal. If you need to have it off most of the time, please speak with me. We will also discuss and collaborate on Zoom etiquette for our classroom, such as when to mute our microphones, what happens if our internet becomes “unstable” during Zoom, etc.

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging (Delete if not applicable)

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, prompts, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on Canvas (login at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>). Log in and look for “SP21: ENGL-1A Sec 6 - First Year Writing” among the courses in your dashboard. I will use Canvas messaging and announcements to update you, so be sure to check for emails from me via Canvas.

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:

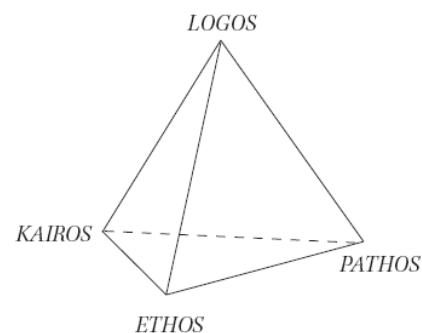
Department of English Graduate Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

- 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

ENGL 259 Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

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

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



Required Texts/Readings

- Asao Inoue, *Labor-Based Grading Contracts* (this can be accessed for free at the Writing Across the Curriculum Clearinghouse, <https://wac.colostate.edu/books/perspectives/labor/>.)
- Gary Tate, et al., *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*, 2nd ed. (Please ensure that you get the second edition of this text—the first one won't be any use to us.)
- Catherine Prendergast, *Can I Use I? Because I Hate, Hate, Hate College Writing*. Out of Pocket Press, 2015. (It does not matter if you get the physical or digital version.)
- Additional reading (accessible on Canvas)

Library Liaison

Our library liaison is Peggy Cabrera. She is available to help you find resources to do your work in this course. She has set up for students [a library resource page for the Department of English and Comparative literature](#). The tutorials on this page will help you to understand academic research processes and tools, and they will help you to develop an eye for the most valuable resources for your work.

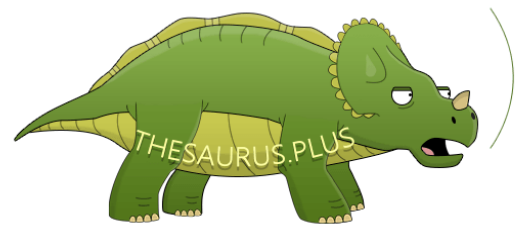
You will find Peggy Cabrera's contact page by clicking on [this link](#).

Other Available SJSU Resources

The University provides all students several resources to help us successfully learn in this course. The services provided include counseling and psychological care, mentoring and tutoring, access to food and housing, to technology, and writing support.

- [Accessible Education Center](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
- [Peer Connections](#)
- [SJSU Cares](#)
- [Spartan Food Pantry](#)
- [Student Technology Resources](#)
- [Writing Center](#)
- [Other Campus Resources](#)

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



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.

Classroom Protocol

For a class like this one, much of the learning happens in class. Therefore, it is imperative that you be in class every time 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.

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. That said, COVID times are what COVID times are, so we're going to need to adjust and manage our expectations appropriately. We're going to try to be like wolves—we'll work together as a pack, leave no one behind, occasionally fight a Kodiak bear (*Ursus arctos middendorffi*).

Please note: sometimes projects and discussions include material that can be contentious and even potentially upsetting. We may encounter materials that differ from and perhaps challenge our ideas, beliefs, and understanding of reality. Students are encouraged to discuss issues about such materials with me. In class, discussion is welcome and encouraged, but comments found to be intentionally offensive, disrespectful, or combative are not allowed.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Assignment	Learning Outcomes	Points possible
Teaching Portfolio	2, 3, 4	250
Online Activities (x6)	1, 2, 3, 5	120
Class Observation Report	1, 3, 5	150
Presentation	3, 5	90
Reading responses (x6)	1, 3, 4, 5	240
Participation / daily writing / in-class work	1, 3, 5	150
Total Points Possible		1000

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 course syllabus (4) and a labor-based grading contract. It may optionally include other materials, such as a writing assignment prompt, activity descriptions, or a daily class plan.

Online activities

There are 6 online activities [literacy narrative, peer review (x2), midterm evaluation, re-mediation, final reflection]. These are variations of activities SJSU's first-year students do.

FYC Observation

You will "visit" an experienced writing program instructor's class (online or in-person) 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, and you will be expected to send a copy to the instruction for their records. **NB:** This is a collegial activity, not a critical one. You're not looking for things you think other teachers do poorly or that you think you could do better. You're looking for things they're doing well as a teacher that you can emulate.

Presentation

Each of you will choose one chapter from Tate, et al.'s *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies* to present to the class. You may choose to do this as a multimodal presentation (e.g., video, podcast, etc.) in line with what many of our first-year students do in ENGL 1A. Irrespective of your chosen modality, your presentation *must* include a one-page handout briefly outlining the chapter & its relevance to the class. You must also include citations to additional sources about the pedagogy. Your presentation should be approximately 12-15 minutes long.

Reading Responses

Members of the class are expected to write 6 reading responses. 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), make an observation for how it enlightens the work of our class, or reflect on 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 edited prose.

Final Examination or Evaluation

Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses, which can include a final examination, a final research paper or project, a final creative work or performance, a final portfolio of work, or other appropriate assignment. The culminating activity for ENGL 259 is the teaching portfolio described in course assignments.

Grading Information

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**. But yeah, again, COVID. Work with me, I'll work with you. You must turn in all assignments to pass the class.

Course grades will be calculated using the following scale:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>93 to 100%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>87 to 89 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>83 to 86%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>77 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>73 to 76%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>67 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>63 to 66%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>

Online Activities: Labor-Based Learning Contract

The “Online Activities” assignments will be graded according to a labor-based learning contract. Labor-based contracts are based on the idea that you earn credit for doing the work of learning. The contract weighs all the work you submit equally— literacy narrative, peer reviews, midterm evaluation, re-mediation, final reflection. Each activity is worth 20 points. You will earn points based on the **Completeness** and **Relevance** of your assignment(s). I will use the following rubric to score each assignment:

Does the work submitted help us to achieve our research goals?		
Criteria	Ratings	Points Possible
Completeness	+ 15 Completes & submits the tasks outlined.	0 – 15 points
Relevance	+ 5 Explicitly applies what we've read and discussed together to each task. Contributes observations, curiosities and questions, confusions or insights useful to our collective study.	0 – 5 points
Total Points		0 – 20 points

Labor-Based Learning Contract: Late Policy

You can submit late work up to three days after an assignment is due and still receive credit with the following late penalties:

- -5 points for one day late
- -10 points for two days late
- -15 points for three days late

Time Commitment

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 three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/ studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. 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

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](#), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](#) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Students are prohibited from recording class activities (including class lectures, office hours, advising sessions, etc.), distributing class recordings, or posting class recordings. Materials created by the instructor for the course (syllabi, lectures and lecture notes, presentations, etc.) are copyrighted by the instructor. This university policy ([S12-7](#)) is in place to protect the privacy of students in the course, as well as to maintain academic integrity through reducing the instances of cheating. Students who record, distribute, or post these materials will be referred to the Student Conduct and Ethical Development office. Unauthorized recording may violate university and state law. It is the responsibility of students that require special accommodations or assistive technology due to a disability to notify the instructor.

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

ENGL 259 / Sem. in Composition Studies, Fall 2021, Course Schedule

Calendar subject to change with fair warning

Readings listed should be read BEFORE class

Readings marked with an asterisk (*) are on Canvas

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Aug. 24	<p>Introduction / Literacy narrative(s): What are we doing? Why are we doing it?</p> <p>Read: Alexie, Superman and I* Skinnell, Reading as an Act of Insubordination* (link) Sommers, I Stand Here Writing*</p> <p>Optional: Explore DALN (link) Optional: Hesse, We Know What Works in Teaching Composition*</p>
2	Aug. 31	<p>Parameters of the Task at Hand</p> <p>DUE: LITERACY NARRATIVE Read: Ball and Loewe* Chapter: "America is Facing a Literacy Crisis" (Babb) Chapter: "First-Year Composition Prepares Students for Academic Writing" (Branson) Chapter: "You Can Learn to Write in General" (Wardle) Chapter: "Some People are Just Born Good Writers" (Parrott)</p>
3	Sept. 7	<p>Parameters II: Parameter Harder</p> <p>DUE: READING RESPONSE #1 Read: Lunsford and Lunsford, Mistakes Are a Fact of Life* Ball and Loewe* Chapter: "Strunk and White Set the Standard" (Lisabeth) Chapter: "There is One Correct Way of Writing and Speaking" (Pattanayak) Chapter: "Grammar Should be Taught Separately as Rules to Learn" (Harris)</p>
4	Sept. 14	<p>Looking Back, Looking Forward</p> <p>Read: Crowley, The Invention of Freshman English* Matsuda, Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity* Ruiz, Introduction to the Field of Composition: Politics from the Start*</p> <p>Optional: Rhetoricity podcast, Andrea Lunsford (link) Optional: Parker, Where English Departments Came From*</p>
5	Sept. 21	<p>Wait, It's People We're Teaching?</p> <p>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*</p> <p>Optional: Rhetoricity podcast, April Baker-Bell (link) Optional: CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Multilingual Writers* (link)</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
6	Sept. 28	<p>Mhm, Yeah, Definitely People</p> <p>DUE: PEER REVIEW #1 Read: Cedillo and Bratta, Relating Our Experiences* Inoue, ch. 1 (pp. 21-48) and Coda (pp. 305-312) from Labor-Based Assessment*</p> <p>Optional: Elon Statement on Writing Transfer (link)</p>
7	Oct. 5	<p>Can We Circle Back to This “People” Thing?</p> <p>DUE: READING RESPONSE #3 Read: Williams, Phenomenology of Error* Green, Expanding the Dialogue on Writing Assessment at HBCUs* Hawisher and Selfe, Becoming Literate in the Information Age*</p> <p>Optional: Hartwell, Grammar, Grammars, and the Teaching of Grammar*</p>
8	Oct. 12	<p>Just Checked Again. Definitely Human People</p> <p>DUE: MIDTERM EVALUATION Read: Young, Should Writers Use They Own English?* Perryman-Clark, African American Language, Rhetoric, and Students’ Writing* Gilyard, Rhetoric of Translingualism* Alvarez, Translanguaging <i>Tareas</i>*</p> <p>Optional: Students’ Right to Their Own Language* Optional: Designing a Curriculum Using a Translingual Writing Approach (link)</p>
9	Oct. 19	<p>Parameters III: Parameter Again Introduce Teaching Portfolio</p> <p>DUE: READING RESPONSE #4 Read: hooks, Engaged Pedagogy* Powell, Learning (Teaching) to Teach (Learn)* Brooke, Underlife and Writing Instruction*</p> <p>Optional: Sinister Myth podcast, Sherita Roundtree (link) Optional: Hesse, Teachers as Students, Reflecting Resistance* Optional: Fedukovich and Morse, Failures to Accommodate: GTA Preparation as a Site for a Transformative Culture of Access*</p>
10	Oct. 26	<p>Process, Now with More People! Introduce Presentation</p> <p>Read: Tate, et al. (pp. 1-19) Prendergast, <i>Can I Use I?</i> Kynard, Teaching While Black* Fleckenstein, An Appetite for Coherence*</p> <p>Optional: Pedagogue podcast, David Green (link)</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
11	Nov. 2	<p>Process II: Keep Peopling!</p> <p>DUE: READING RESPONSE #5 Read: Brodkey, Making a Federal Case Out of Difference* Corder, Argument as Emergence, Rhetoric as Love* Alexander and Rhodes, Queerness, Multimodality, and the Possibilities of Re/Orientation*</p> <p>Optional: Shipka YouTube video (link) Optional: Martin, Using Structure and Form as a Rhetorical Frame for Multimodal Composing*</p>
12	Nov. 9	<p>When Peers Talk</p> <p>DUE: DRAFTS OF PORTFOLIO MATERIALS (FOR PEER REVIEW #2) Read: Oleksiak, Queer Praxis for Peer Review* Meeks, Givers Gain Teaching Philosophy* Meeks, 3 Feedback Design Lessons (link) Hart-Davidson, Describe-Evaluate-Suggest video (link)</p> <p>Optional: Elbow, Ranking, Evaluating, and Liking*</p>
13	Nov. 16	<p>Hey, Teacher! Probably Shouldn't Leave Those Peers (Totally) Alone</p> <p>DUE: READING RESPONSE #6 Read: Ferris and Roberts, Error Feedback in L2 Writing Classes* Bowden, Student Perspectives on Paper Comments* Robillard, We Won't Get Fooled Again*</p>
14	Nov. 23	<p>But Eventually I Have to Give Grades, Right?</p> <p>DUE: RE-MEDIATION Read: Inoue, chs. 3 & 4 (pp. 77-168) Blum, Ungrading (link) Stommel, Ungrading: A Bibliography (link)</p> <p>Optional: Inoue, ch. 6 (pp. 191-236)</p>
15	Nov. 30	<p>Winter is Coming</p> <p>DUE: CLASS OBSERVATIONS Presentations</p>
Final Exam	Dec. 14	<p>This is the End...My Only Friend, The End</p> <p>FINAL EXAM (7:45-10:00 PM) DUE: TEACHING PORTFOLIOS DUE DUE: FINAL REFLECTION Presentations</p>

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

Presentations

1. Basic Writing, *Mutnick and Lamos* _____
2. Collaborative Writing, *Howard and Kennedy* _____
3. Community-Engaged, *Julier, Livingston, & Goldblatt* _____
4. Critical, *George* _____
5. Cultural Studies, *George, Trimbur, & 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. Rhetoric and Argumentation, *Fleming* _____
15. Second Language Writing, *Matsuda and Hammill* _____
16. Writing Across the Curriculum, *Thaiss and McLeod* _____
17. Writing Center, *Lerner* _____
18. Creating Mindful Readers in First-Year Composition Courses, *Carillo* _____

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