English 259: Seminar in Composition Studies

Fall Semester 2012     Robert Cullen
Thursdays 4:00 to 6:45 p.m.     FOB 117, ph (408) 924-4454
Faculty Offices Bldg. 104     rjcullen@att.net
Section 1     Office Hours M 3-4 p.m.
Code 40455     and by appt.

English 259 will address a broad range of topics having to do with the teaching of college writing—assignments, grades, theories of composition, ESL, Basic Writing, assessment, and more. Our primary shared work throughout the semester will be to read and discuss the essays reprinted in *Cross-Talk in Composition Theory*. You will also write a paper and give an oral presentation based on independent research. Finally, you will be expected to complete several smaller assignments as detailed below.

**TEXTS**


Recommended: Tina Lavonne Good and Leanne B. Warshauer, *In Our Own Voice: Graduate Students Teach Writing*. Allyn & Bacon.


**PAPER**

A seminar paper (in hard copy) is due the last day of class, December 6; we will discuss topics and expectations in class and office hours. Please use current Modern Language Association style. Except in extraordinary circumstances, late papers will be penalized as follows: papers that are one day to one week late will be marked down one full letter grade (e.g. B to C); beyond one week papers will not be accepted. Never assume that I will grant you an incomplete.

**ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

In connection with your research paper, you will make a presentation of approximately 20 minutes, to be followed by Q&A or class discussion. Further information about presentations, as well as a schedule, will be provided later in the semester.

"LOCAL LANDSCAPE" REPORTS

Each student will give one 10-minute introduction to some facet of the writing programs here at SJSU. Together these will give us an idea of how one large institution handles writing curricula, placement, testing, and minimum competencies.
PRACTICE TEACHING

I'll ask you to teach one 15-minute segment suitable to a freshman writing course (not a graduate seminar). Details to be announced. I will use “contract grading” for this portion of the seminar requirements: for an A, complete the assignment; for an F, don't.

OBSERVATIONS/REFLECTIONS

Please arrange to visit two composition classes this semester, at SJSU or elsewhere; one of these may be taught by a TA, but not both. As evidence that you have observed the classes and thought about them, please type up short, informal reflections on what you saw (perhaps 400-500 words). Please keep the names of the instructors you observe confidential. I will use “contract grading” for this portion of the seminar requirements: for an A, complete two observation reports; for a B, do one; for an F, none.

GRADING

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar paper</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral presentation related to paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Local Landscape&quot; report</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice Teaching</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

No form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. Sanctions range from receiving an “F” on an assignment to permanent expulsion from the University. If you have any questions whatsoever about how to document any sources you use, see me. Keep a hard copy of your paper as well as all notes, rough drafts, computer files, and research materials for at least six months after the conclusion of the class. Here is the recommended greensheet statement from the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development: “Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University, and the University’s Academic Integrity Policy require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty are required to report all infractions to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The policy on academic integrity can be found [online].”

SPECIAL NEEDS

Students who require accommodation for special needs (physical, learning disability, etc.) must personally contact the Disability Resource Center (Administration 110, ph. 924-6000). The Center can provide a variety of resources including note takers and sign interpreters. The Center approves all individual accommodations. Here is the Academic Senate’s greensheet statement on disabilities: “If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment to meet with me as soon as possible or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with the DRC to establish a record of their disability.”
SCHEDULE, ENGLISH 259, FALL 2012

All readings listed below are in Cross-Talk in Comp Theory by Villanueva and Arola.

8/23  First meeting: enrollment, introductions, overview, organization.

8/30  Foundations and Paradigms, I
      In Cross-Talk, all three Prefaces, xiii – xxii.
      Murray, “Teach Writing as a Process Not Product,” 3 [pub. in 1972]
      Emig, “Writing as a Mode of Learning,” 7 [1977]

9/6    Foundations and Paradigms, II
      Britton, “Spectator Role and the Beginnings of Writing,” 151 [1982]

9/13   Foundations and Paradigms, III
      Berthoff, “Is Teaching Still Possible?…,” 309 [1984]
      Breuch, “Post-Process ‘Pedagogy’: A Philosophical Exercise,” 97 [2002]

9/20   Assigning, Responding, Assessing

      * Bring one copy of any graded/mark ed student essay—not your grades or marks.
         Please remove student and instructor names.
      * Also bring one college “prompt” for a paper, again not yours. Just the prompt
         is enough, and it need not be linked to the student essay you bring.
         Please remove the instructor’s name.

9/27   How Essays and Writers Work
      Rodgers, “A Discourse-Centered Rhetoric of the Paragraph,” 175 [1966]
      Sommers, “Revision Strategies of Student Writers…,” 43 [1980]

10/4   Basic Writing, ESL, and Non-traditional Students, I

      * Bring to class 4 copies of a short paper containing ESL or BW characteristics.
      Shaughnessy, “Diving In,” 291 [1976]

10/11  Basic Writing, ESL, and Non-traditional Students, II

      Rose, “Narrowing the Mind and Page…,” 325 [1988]
      Bizzell, “‘Contact Zones’ and English Studies,” 459 [1994]
10/18 Gender, Race, and Politics in the Composition Classroom, I
   Flynn, “Composing as a Woman,” 581 [1988]
   Ritchie and Boardman, “Feminism in Composition…,” 597 [1999]

10/25 Gender, Race, and Politics in the Composition Classroom, II
   Cushman, “The Public Intellectual, Service Learning…,” 509 [1999]
   Villanueva, "Memoria Is a Friend of Ours...," 567 [2001]

11/1 Technology and Composition, I
   Wysocki and Johnson-Eilola, "Blinded by the Letter...," 717 [1999]
   Student Presentations

11/8 Technology and Composition, II
   George, "From Analysis to Design...," 765 [2002]
   Yancey, "Made Not Only in Words...," 791 [2004]
   Banks, "Oakland, the Word, and the Divide...," 827 [2006]
   Student Presentations

11/15 Student Presentations

11/22 Thanksgiving Holiday

11/29 Student Presentations

12/6 PAPERS DUE. Student Presentations.