English 322 Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater/ Liz Vogel
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TEACHING WRITING

"Writing is not life, but I think that sometimes it can be a way back to life." Stephen King

"Writing, more than any other task, brings one face to face with important human responsibilities." John Gage

Required Texts:
Gaines, Earnest. A Lesson Before Dying
Kutz, Eleanor and Hephzibah Roskelly. An Unquiet Pedagogy: Transforming Practice in the English Classroom.
Sebranet, Myer and Kemper, Writer's Inc.

Every student is required to have an email account for this course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is specifically designed for future teachers of English at the secondary level.
It focuses on how to teach writing to secondary schools students by introducing future English teachers to a range of theories and practices of using writing and reading in language arts classrooms. The overall course goal is for participants to develop a coherent philosophy of literacy instruction based on the range of course readings, researched topics, fieldwork experiences, and self reflections about writing, reading, and learning.

A number of assumptions inform and give shape to the ability to become a teacher, what Donald Schon calls the "reflective practitioner"–someone who learns her art and trade through the process of doing it. Our course will model the kinds of activities and responses that might take place in a secondary school language arts setting so that we can experience these for ourselves: writing in multiple genres, practicing informal and formal writing, learning about teacher response, integrating media and technology, and designing curriculum. Since teachers of writing need to write themselves, we will organize a reading/writing community where we will practice the stages of the writing process by writing together, responding to each other's drafts, revising, and compiling writing portfolios. The philosophy behind forming this community is that reading, writing, listening and speaking are essentially social acts that gain meaning through dialogue and conversation with others. Language arts teachers need to model their own communication skills in their classrooms by adapting their curriculum for a range of student learning styles and diverse cultural backgrounds.
Nulla dies sine linea (Never a day without a line) Horace
The learning goals for this course can be more explicitly stated as the following skills:

A. Understand the relationships between the theories of writing and teaching writing to classroom practices of students and teachers in a variety of context, including student diversity and learning abilities.
B. Explore methods of combining areas of literacy (reading, writing, speaking) into a coherent program of instruction
C. Reflect in writing on their reading, writing, and learning practices, their potential students, and their realizations about education and language instruction across the course
D. Learn and practice the stages of process writing (invention, drafting, revising, editing and publishing)
E. Learn the differences between small groups and collaboration, and practice strategies for both, particularly in writing groups, in group presentations, and in class activities

F. Write in a range of genres and for various purposes (journal writing, freewritng, essays, case studies, lesson plans, evaluative responses, letters/email to instructor, creative writing genres, writing about literature, and writing portfolios)
G. Learn and practice multiple forms of informal writing along with their purposes and benefits (reading responses, dialectical journals, listing, freewriting, brainstorming, mapping, one minute writings, etc)
H. Experience and learn about various forms of teacher response to writing and writing assessment
I.. Experience and learn about various forms of teacher research (observation, ethnography, interviewing, educational studies and reports, case studies, and theory-
practice articles etc.)
J. Account for various media and technology options, student learning styles, and student language and cultural diversity when discussing and planning teaching methods
K. Design reading and writing activities for the high school English classroom (including literature) that reflect the NC Standard Course of Study
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COURSE RITUALS: ROUTINES AND RULES

Attendance/ Participation: This class is totally dependent upon participation, involvement, and immersion. You are expected to be ON TIME and be prepared to contribute to the ongoing class discussion, and to be engaged with the class writing and peer response activities. You are expected to know everyone's names and use them–a skill you will need when you become a teacher yourself.

"A day in which I don't write leaves the taste of ashes." Simone de Beauvoir

"To be a writer is to sit down at one's desk in the chill portion of every day, and to write." John Hersey

Reading/Writing Notebook: You are asked to keep a journal/notebook, learning log for this class to be used for a variety of purposes. Your journal will include some in-class writing exercises and notes from your peer response groups but will be used primarily to react to the wide range of readings you will encounter in the course. Each time you read a chapter or article, you will write about it in your journal. These responses should not be "summaries" of the readings but show an attempt to weave connections between your own ideas and the readings.

I will expect two pages of handwritten response to each day's readings, sometimes on an assigned journal topic. You may find it most effective to write a one paged response before our class discussion and then write another reflective response after our discussion. You may respond in dialogue, double entry journal, fiction or nonfiction prose style. Your writing should be legible or on a computer and you should leave some room for me to respond. For your first entry, explore the following questions: Why do you write? Why should we teach writing in schools? What do you think should be the focus of writing instruction in schools?

Evaluation/grades Since as a teacher you will be involved in the process of evaluation yourself and you will be asked to evaluate student writing on the Praxis exams, we will practice may different types of evaluative criteria in this course. Your evaluation will be based on ungraded informal writing, formal papers, a mid-term exam and a writing portfolio. Your journal will be collected several times and accounts for a portion of your final grade as does a collaborative project. At least once, you will be asked to share your journal with a peer. Your writing portfolio, which will include several papers that will go through the processes of peer review, conferencing and revision, will be a major part of your final grade. For your portfolio you will be asked to reflect on and evaluate the work you have done for the course by considering your own class participation, the quality of your written work, and your overall understanding and commitment to the ideas and materials of the course. .

READING AND WRITING OUTLINE

8/19 Introductions to the course and each other
Artifact exchange

8/21 Discussion of memorable teachers
Journal writing: Why Write? Why teach writing? What do you teach when you teach writing?

8/26 Getting Started: Invention
Writing: List of 15 possible topics for Family Story paper
Reading: E-Reserve from Black Sheep and Kissing Cousins

8/28 Writing as Composing
Reading: Chapter 6, Unquiet Pedagogy
Writing : Two pages of response about what is important to you in this chapter.
"The writing generates writing." E.L. Doctorow

9/2 Drafting/Sharing
Writing: Draft one of Family Story
Reading: Handout from Elbow and Belanoff's Sharing and Responding

9/4 Reading and Meaning
Chapter 7, Unquiet Pedagogy
Journal Writing: Write about yourself as a reader, your history, tastes, favorite reading memories.

9/9 Writing about Literature
Reading: First half of A Lesson Before Dying
Journal Writing: Description of artifact or quote in the book

9/11 Drafting/Revising
Reading: Don Murray, Craft of Revision on E-Reserve
Writing: Revision of Family Story

9/16 Reading and Meaning
Writing: Design an informal assignment for A Lesson Before Dying for a potential future students which integrates some research based on technology.
Do the assignment yourself and bring three copies to class.

9/18 Writing about Literature
Reading: Finish A Lesson Before Dying
Journal Writing: Write about what literacy means in this novel from at least three perspectives–write an entry from one perspective not included in the novel.

9/23 Writing to Learn
Writing: Design a formal writing assignment for A Lesson Before Dying.
Bring this to class to share.

9/25 Language and Literacy
Reading: Chapter 3, Unquiet Pedagogy
Journal Writing: Respond to an idea that struck you in this chapter about what you learned from your family as opposed to school.

"If you keep working, inspiration comes." Alexander Calder

9/29 The Culture of School
Reading: Chapter 1, Introduction, Unquiet Pedagogy
Journal Writing: Write about a specific film or media image about the culture of school and how that affects both students and teachers.
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10/1 Writing about Literature
Writing: Complete your classmate's formal writing assignment and write about the experience of doing it, offering a critique of what was valuable and what was not The Culture of The Classroom

10/3 Observations and Fieldnotes
Reading: "Ethnographic Inquiry (325-329) Unquiet Pedagogy and handout
on fieldnotes from Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein.
Journal Writing: Write one descriptive paragraph about some natural object that involves close ethnographic observation

10/8
10/10 Writing Workshop
Writing: Share "Hanging out" papers
Name of teacher, student, or learning context you plan to observe due today. Friday October 11 is the last day to drop a course without academic penalty.

10/15 NO CLASS, FALL BREAK

10/17 Creative Writing
Reading: Handouts by Rule and Wheeler
Writing: Try out some dialogue to make a point or argument

10/22 Creative Writing Exercises
Reading: Wheeler and Rule handouts
Writing: Time Expansion exercise due in writing group.

10/24 Writing Workshop
Writing: Observation paper due
Reading: Craft of Revision, Chapters 4,5

10/29 Teacher Response
Reading: Student essays, pp. 274-278, Unquiet Pedagogy, Praxis exam questions
Journal Writing: Write a response to one student essay

11/5 Teacher Evaluation
Reading: pp. 279-285, Unquiet Pedagogy and article by Lape and Glenn
Journal writing: Write about a grade on a paper that you remember well.

" Writing was the only work I did that was for myself and by myself. In the process, one exercises sovereignty in a special way. All sensibilities are engaged, sometimes simultaneously, sometimes sequentially. While I am writing, all of experience is vital and useful and possibly important." Toni Morrison

11/7 Collaboration
Reading, pp. 259-267, Unquiet Pedagogy, online article by Roskelly
Journal Writing: Write about a successful or unsuccessful collaboration

11/12 Group Work

1/14 Group Work

11/19 Group Presentations

11/21 Group Presentations

11/26 NCTE, NO CLASS

11/28 Thanksgiving Holiday, No Class

12/3 Revision Workshop
Reading: Finish Murray, Craft of Revision

12/5 Last Class
Writing: Portfolios due in class

Portfolios will be returned during the scheduled exam time period when each student will read excerpts from her portfolio for five to ten minutes.

Portfolio Outline:
Select 15 pages of your formal and informal writing from this class to be handed in for evaluation. This may come from journal writing, in class exercises, your more formal papers such as the Literacy Moment, Hanging Out, Learning Observation, Lesson Plans on Gaines's novel, or Creative Writing Exercises. In addition to these revisions, you will write a 2-3 paged case study of yourself as a writer and a reflective letter introducing the portfolio which will include your philosophy of teaching writing.

"In teaching writing we are tacitly teaching a version of reality. We are not simply offering training in a useful technical skill that is meant as a simple complement to the more important studies of other areas. We are teaching a way of experiencing the world, a way of ordering and making sense of it." James Berlin