

English 747
Mondays 6:30-9:20
Stone 217

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Theories and Practices in the Teaching of College Writing

Rationale: This course is designed for teaching assistants new to the UNCG English Department. The focus of the course is on teaching composition and rhetoric within our program and assumes that no matter how much teaching experience you may have had elsewhere, this course will be valuable for understanding both the philosophy and pedagogy of our particular first year writing program. As well the course encourages community building within your group of TA's whose backgrounds may be very different but whose goals are similar: to help students new to UNCG become fluent, able, and comfortable writers.

The course is divided between **theories** of teaching writing, providing some philosophical grounding and historical understanding of the field, and classroom **practices** of teaching writing which is best situated within theory. Theory is what makes teachers' pedagogy smart since not only is it concerned with "what works" in teaching writing but with why and how it works. Some of the readings may seem challenging at first because, for some of you, rhetoric and composition is a whole new field. We urge you to stick with it as you read, ask questions, and engage with new ideas. Over time, you'll see how the pieces of the course fit together.

The course has been set up to model the kinds of writing and reading assignments you will ask your own students to do: in-class writing, journals, short papers, reading responses, group work, revisions and a final portfolio. We hope that you will ask questions, participate in our class discussions, and fully engage yourself with the task of teaching writing in our program. Don't hesitate to email or arrange to meet with either of us during the course.

Learning Objectives:

1. To learn how to read professional literature in the field of rhetoric and composition.
2. To understand and critically analyze various philosophical approaches to teaching writing.
3. To become familiar with current debates and professional conversations in the field.
4. To make pedagogical decisions about teaching writing based on the research in the field.

Texts:

Rosekelly, Hephzibah and David Jolliffe. **Everyday Use: Rhetoric at Work in Reading and Writing**. New York: Longman, 2005.

Ballenger, Bruce. **The Curious Writer**. New York: Longman, 2005.

E-Reserve and occasional handouts.

Rituals, Routines, Requirements:**Journals:**

There will be a weekly journal in this class where you'll respond to our readings which should provide you with a jumping off point for our class discussions. You may write about a particular passage, idea or question you may have based on the assigned texts. You'll also write weekly about your class and what you are noticing and thinking about with respect to your students and your teaching. We'll collect these journals frequently and comment on them. Sometimes we'll ask you to trade journals with one another. Keep your journal either on the computer or on loose leaf paper. If you are a first year teacher, you'll find these weekly journal reflections will provide you with interesting fodder for your teaching philosophy statement at the end of the course.

Short Papers:

You'll write several shorter papers (2-5 pages) throughout the course. The requirements for these will be handed out on an assignment sheet and will be due in class. You have the option of revising any of these papers for your final portfolio.

Group Assignments:

There are two group assignments; one is a presentation and one-paged handout on a professional journal for the field. The other is a book club presentation on an additional reading selected by your group. Your group may choose from the following texts or offer one of your own: **The Courage to Teach** by Parker Palmer; **Pedagogy of Hope** by Paulo Freire; **Teaching to Transgress** by bell hooks; **Performance of Self in Student Writing** by Tom Newkirk; **An Island of English: Teaching ESL in Chinatown** by Danling Fu.

Portfolio:

For your final portfolio, you'll select 20 pages of revised writing to submit for evaluation. These pages may come from your journal, group and in-class activities, and short papers. Your final portfolio must have: a table of contents, philosophy of teaching writing statement and a "comp tale" with an analysis of it. Due in last class meeting.

Attendance and Participation:

There is no reason to be absent for this seminar unless it is arranged in advance or represents a real emergency. Participation and preparation for every class session is assumed.

Evaluation:

Everything counts. If you do all your work and do it well, you should be very successful in this seminar. The portfolio represents the major project for the course and should include selections from all aspects of our work together. You will be asked to evaluate yourself as a member of the class and of your group.

Reading Schedule:

Date	Topic	Readings (Theory and Practice)	Assignment
8/22	Rhetoric	Everyday Use (1,2)	Journal: First classes What surprised you? What intrigued you? What disturbed you?
8/29	Theories of Composition	Berlin, Bizzell, Berthoff (E-Reserve)	Design first writing assignment. Bring 3 copies to class
9/5	NO CLASS	Order text for your bookclub	
9/12	History of Composition Guest, Nancy Myers	Ede, Greenbaum (E-Reserve) Comp Tales (handout)	Start your own history as a comp teacher: How were you trained to write, to read, to learn?
9/19	Authority in the classroom	Freire, Elbow, Payne (E-Reserve); Curious Writer 4,5,6,8 (groups)	Begin book clubs Groups choose professional journals to report on
9/26	Invention and Process	Murray, Flower, Yancey Welch (E-Reserve) Curious Writer 1, 14	Complete your first essay assignment and bring to class to share
10/3	Form, Genre, Error	Devitt, Shaughnessy Bartholomae (E-Reserve)	Analyze one of your responses to a student paper with respect to form, genre or error
10/10	NO CLASS/ FALL BREAK		
10/17	Reading and Writing	Rosenblatt, Elbow(E-Reserve) Curious Writer Chapter 2 Everyday Use , 3,4 5	Create questions for Van Jordan's talk Group reports on

			Professional journals
10/24	Ethnography and Research	Fieldworking (E-Reserve) Curious Writer Chapter 10	Take fieldnotes on your own class
10/31	Feminist Pedagogy and Composition Guest, Michele Johnson	hooks, Flynn and others (E-Reserve)	Write about the gender dynamics in your classroom
11/7	Evaluation and Response	Sommers, Elbow Schweikart (E-Reserve)	Take fieldnotes on your peer's classroom
11/14	Conference Responses	Tobin, Murray, Rule (E-Reserve)	Tape a conference: Conference analysis paper
11/21	Book Club Reports		Presentations on book club
11/28	Philosophy Statements	TA Philosophy Statements (check comp website)	Bring draft of your own statement to workshop Ethnography on peer's classroom due
12/5	Portfolios	Comp Tales Reading of Comp Tales	Final Celebration

NOTES/Changes