

The Teaching of Composition and Literature: Critical Practice CO862



Professor Tom Peele
Thursdays, 6:45-8:35
NAC 6/316A
Fall 2015

Office Hours: T/Th, 5:00-6:00
Office: NAC 6/333C
(212) 650-6328
tpeeel@ccny.cuny.edu

Course Description

This course will help to prepare you to teach introductory college writing and humanities classes; it also provides support for newly hired CCNY instructors. We will study approaches to teaching composition, learning theory, course design, writing assignments, instructional strategies, writing assessment, and classroom management. We will also consider the impact that teaching a wide variety of students, with variable needs, motivations, cultural and social backgrounds, and abilities, has on classroom practices and philosophy. We will also examine print and online resources for college writing instructors.

This syllabus presents a plan for the semester, but that plan will be changed if the need arises. Changes to the syllabus will be posted in the Announcements section of the Blackboard site; they will also be made in the Course Schedule section of the Blackboard site. If you rely on a printed copy of the syllabus, it will be up to you to make revisions to it based on the posted changes.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students who complete this course will be able to

- Design a course and prepare a syllabus
- Develop and write assignments for college students
- Use Web-based platforms to facilitate teaching and learning
- Respond to first and second drafts of first-year students' essays
- Facilitate college students' reading development
- Plan class sessions, organize workshops, and lead discussions
- Meet the learning and literacy needs of diverse students
- Use professional resources for college writing instructors

Required Texts

Bullock, Richard. *The Norton Field Guide to Writing*. 3rd ed. Norton. 2013.

Glenn, Cheryl, and Melissa Goldthwaite. *The St. Martin's Guide to Teaching Writing*. 7th ed. Bedford. 2013.

Course Policies

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is copying and using other people's words without proper acknowledgment or citation as it is indicated in the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity. All writing submitted for this course is understood to be your original work. Plagiarism is unacceptable and has serious consequences that can include a failing grade. In cases where I detect academic dishonesty (the fraudulent submission of another's work, in whole or part, as your own), you may be subject to a failing grade for the project or the course, and, in the worst case, to academic probation or expulsion. You are expected to read, understand, and adhere to CCNY's Policy on Academic Integrity, which is available here:<http://www1.cuny.cuny.edu/current/upload/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf> .

Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class session of this course and to be on time. If you miss two classes, your final grade will be dropped by one-half of one letter (a 90 to an 85, for example). If you miss three classes, your final grade will be dropped one full letter. If you miss four classes, you will not be able to pass the course. Consistent late arrivals and early departures will have a negative impact on your grade. I will notify you by email if course absences (for full or partial classes) are having an impact on your grade. If you have special circumstances, please see me. I'm happy to work with you to help you complete this course.

Student Code of Conduct

All student members of the College community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates mutual respect for the rights and personal/academic well-being of others, preserves the integrity of the social and academic environment, and supports the mission of the College. The College has an inherent right to address behavior that impedes, obstructs, or threatens the maintenance of order and attainment of the aforementioned goals by violating the standards of conduct set forth in the University student conduct policies noted below as well as other policies that may be established by the respective Schools, Global Sites, and administrative offices of the University. The goals of the CCNY Community Standards are:

- To promote a campus environment that supports the overall educational mission of the University
- To protect the University community from disruption and harm
- To encourage appropriate standards of individual and group behavior
- To foster ethical values and civic virtues
- To foster personal learning and growth while at the same time holding individuals and groups accountable to the standards of expectations established by the Code of Conduct:<http://www.cuny.cuny.edu/studentaffairs/community-standards.cfm>

Food and Drinks

Please! No eating in the classroom. Your snack could be a real distraction for other students. Drinks are fine.

Assignments

A Reflective Teaching Journal (5%; waived for non-teaching students)

If you are teaching a class, please spend about a few minutes after each class session to write down your thoughts, impressions, concerns, and questions. The goal is for you to take a few minutes out of your busy day to think about how your class went. We'll use Bb's Journal feature for this, so I'll be the journal's only reader.

Discussion Board Posts (6; 750-1000 words) and Comments (18) (30%)

There will be eight opportunities for you to post to the discussion board; you will be asked to post six times. If you post more than six times, your lowest grade will be dropped. During the weeks that you participate, you should also post at least three comments in response to other students' posts (the responses and the comments should happen on the same weeks). The goal here is to engage in an active, online discussion. Your original posts should begin with a summary of the main points in the assigned reading and then move into an analysis of it. If the text is difficult for you, or if you have questions about it, this is a good time to ask them. Be specific about where you're confused, or what your concerns are. Although you are invited to disagree with any of the authors, please do not use your disagreement as an opportunity to dismiss the writer or, worse, to critique their writing. If you disagree with a writer, tell us, specifically, what, in the text, you disagree with. It doesn't help us to know that you think the text is badly written or that the writer is an imbecile. Those opinions don't help me or your classmates understand your questions.

Classroom Observations (2; 250-500 words) (5% each)

Please observe two instructors or professors over the course of the semester. The observations should take place after the beginning of the third week of class and before Thanksgiving break. For these observations, you'll use the department's observation form. The commentary, though, should be extensive, between 250-500 words. Here, you'll want to comment on what the instructor did and your thoughts on the activity. Since we are mimicking professional documents, you'll want to maintain a professional, supportive tone throughout the document. If we don't have enough instructors in the class to provide resources for these observations, I'll get some volunteers from outside the class.

A Composition Textbook Review (750-1000 words) (15%)

Research the book lists of some of the major publishers in the field: Bedford/St. Martin's, Norton, Pearson, or another publisher. Identify a book that interests you, a book that you think would serve your needs as an instructor. Once you've identified a book, contact the publisher's City College representative and ask for a review copy. There should be no charge for this, but you might have to return it.

- Once you have the book, write a review in which you consider the following:
- What is the author's philosophy of composition? Does she value self-expression, essay forms, or some combination of these (or other) concepts?
- What kinds of assignments are included? What do these assignments say about how the author (or publisher) feels about the student?

- What does the visual layout tell you about the author’s idea of the student?
- Are the students asked to do any Web-based writing? What is it? How effective are these assignments in getting students to communicate?
- How is your textbook different from (or similar to) the *Field Guide*?
- Consider whether or not a composition program should require all instructors to use the same textbook or they should be free to choose their own textbooks.

A Syllabus (15%)

Everyone will complete a syllabus for a first-year writing course. Those of you who are already teaching are free to use the syllabus you created for your current class, revised to reflect what you’ve learned over the course of the semester.

A Syllabus Peer Review (5%)

You’ll be asked to provide a detailed response to one member of the class on the clarity and development of their syllabus. Your review will be graded. Detailed criteria will be provided before the assignment is due.

Writing Assignments (20%)

You’ll be asked to complete detailed, scaffolded writing assignments, with due dates, for four writing assignments: the literacy narrative, the expository essay, the critical analysis, and the research paper. Those of you who are already teaching are free to use the assignments you created for your current class, revised to reflect what you’ve learned over the course of the semester.

Evaluation of Students’ Essays

We will create a scoring guide based on the course learning outcomes and use this guide to score some sample essays. Here, we won’t be aiming to evaluate individual students or their instructors, but rather the (hypothetical) writing program that sets the policy and curriculum agendas.

Date	Assignment
------	------------

August 27	<p>Introductions Syllabus Review</p>
September 3	<p>Read: <i>The St. Martin's Guide to Teaching Writing</i>, Chapter 1: Preparing for the Course, and Chapter 2: The First Few Days of Class</p>
September 10	<p>Read: <i>The St. Martin's Guide to Teaching Writing</i>, Chapter 3: Everyday Activities, and Chapter 4: Successful Writing Assignments</p>
September 17	<p>Read: <i>The St. Martin's Guide to Teaching Writing</i>, Chapter 5: Evaluating Student Essays</p>
September 24	<p>Writing Assignments Due</p> <p>Workshop: Writing Assignments</p>
October 1	<p>Workshop: Evaluating Student Essays</p>
October 8	<p>Read: Down, Douglas, and Elizabeth Wardle. "Teaching about Writing, Righting Misconceptions: (Re)Envisioning 'First-Year Composition' as 'Introduction to Writing Studies.'" 278-304.</p> <p>Murray, Donald M. "The Teaching Craft: Telling, Listening, Revealing." 305-08.</p> <p>DBPost 1 (post by 10/7 at 8:00 a.m.; post responses before class)</p>
October 15	<p>Bishop, Wendy. "Helping Peer Writing Groups Succeed." 309-317.</p> <p>Harris, Muriel. "Talking in the Middle: Why Writers Need Writing Tutors." 318-332.</p> <p>Sommers, Nancy. "Responding to Student Writing." 333-41.</p> <p>DBPost 2 (post by 10/14 at 8:00 a.m.; post responses before class)</p> <p>Syllabus Due Workshop: Syllabus</p>
October 22	<p>Lunsford, Andrea A., and Karen Lunsford. "'Mistakes Are a Fact of Life': A National Comparative Study." 342-64.</p>

	<p>Devitt, Amy J., Anis Bawarshi, and Mary Jo Reiff. "Materiality and Genre in the Study of Discourse Communities." 365-80.</p> <p>DBPost 3 (post by 10/21 at 8:00 a.m.; post responses before class)</p>
October 29	<p>Royster, Jacqueline Jones. "When the First Voice You Hear Is Not Your Own." 401-411.</p> <p>Kerschbaum, Stephanie L. "Avoiding the Difference Fixation: Identity Categories, Markers of Difference, and the Teaching of Writing." 412-36.</p> <p>DBPost 4 (post by 10/28 at 8:00 a.m.; post responses before class)</p>
November 5	<p>Leki, Ilona. "Meaning and Development of Academic Literacy in a Second Language." 436-48.</p> <p>Matsuda, Paul Kei. "The Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity in U.S. College Composition." 449-62.</p> <p>DBPost 5 (post by 11/4 at 8:00 a.m.; post responses before class)</p>
November 12	<p>Wallace, David Foster. "Authority and American Usage." <i>Consider the Lobster and Other Essays</i>. New York: Little, 2006. 66-127.</p> <p>DBPost 6 (post by 11/11 at 8:00 a.m.; post responses before class)</p>
November 19	<p>Workshop: Class Observations</p>
November 26	<p>THANKSGIVING</p>
December 3	<p>Selfe, Cynthia. "Toward New Media Texts: Taking Up the Challenges of Visual Literacy." 481-506.</p> <p>Wysocki, Anne Francis. "awaywithwords: On the Possibilities in Unavailable Designs." 507-13.</p> <p>DBPost 7 (post by 12/2 at 8:00 a.m.; post responses before class)</p> <p>Syllabus Due; Peer Review of Syllabus (online) Due before class, December 10.</p>
December 10	<p>Glenn, Cheryl. "2008 CCCC Chair's Address: Representing Ourselves." 514-29.</p> <p>DBPost 8 (post by 12/9 at 8:00 a.m.; post responses before class)</p> <p>Composition Textbook Review Due</p>