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## **ENGL 610: The Teaching of Composition**

Spring 2016

Thursdays, 7:00 to 9:45pm

This class examines theories and practices of teaching of composition in secondary and higher education contexts. We will reflect on our own experiences as writers, teachers, and learners in conjunction with our reading of texts written by experienced writing instructors and researchers, addressing key concepts in composition, such as reflection, transfer, and multimodality. During this course, students will develop their own emerging, theorized philosophies of composition pedagogy, and practice generating teaching materials that reflect that emerging philosophy.

### **Course Objectives**

After successfully completing this seminar, you should be able to incorporate the following concepts in the formation of your composition teaching philosophy and its application in your teaching practices:

- Writing is both a subject of study (content), as well as an activity (process)
- Writing is a complex social activity, as well as a cognitive activity
- Writing practices develop and change over a lifetime
- Written texts respond to specific social, cultural, historical, and material situations
- Writing operates in concert with many other semiotic modes
- Language and literacy (including writing) reflect and shape identity and ideology

### **Reading List**

Alexander, Jonathan, and Jacqueline Rhodes. "Flattening Effects: Composition's Multicultural Imperative and the Problem of Narrative Coherence." *College Composition and Communication* 65.3 (2014): 430-454.

---. ***On Multimodality: New Media in Composition Studies*. Conference on College Composition and Communication/National Council of Teachers of English, 2014.**

Bizzell, Patricia. "Cognition, Convention, and Certainty: What We Need to Know About Writing." *Pre/Text* 3.3 (1982): 213-243.

- Cleary, Michelle Navarre. "Flowing and Freestyling: Learning from Adult Students about Process Knowledge Transfer." *College Composition and Communication* 64.4 (2013): 661-687.
- Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC). *Students' Right to Their Own Language*. NCTE/CCCC, 1974.
- Council of Writing Program Administrators, National Council of Teachers of English, and National Writing Project. *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing*. CWPA, NCTE, and NWP, 2011.
- Council of Writing Program Administrators. *WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition (3.0)*. CWPA, 2014.
- Coxwell-Teague, Deborah, and Ronald F. Lunsford. *First-Year Composition: From Theory to Practice*. Parlor Press, 2014.**
- Cushman, Ellen. "The Rhetorician as Agent of Social Change." *College Composition and Communication* 47.1 (1996): 7-28.
- Horner, Bruce, Cynthia Selfe, and Tim Lockridge. "Translinguality, Transmodality, and Difference: Exploring Dispositions and Change in Language and Learning." *Enculturation Intermezzo*.
- New London Group. "A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures." *Harvard Educational Review* 66.1 (1996): 60-92.
- Pigg, Stacey. "Emplacing Mobile Composing Habits: A Study of Academic Writing in Networked Social Spaces." *College Composition and Communication* 66.2 (2014): 250-275.
- Porter, James E. "Intertextuality and the Discourse Community." *Rhetoric Review* 5.1 (1986): 34-47.
- Roozen, Kevin. "Tracing Trajectories of Practice: Repurposing in One Student's Developing Disciplinary Writing Process." *Written Communication* 27.3 (2010): 318-354.
- Rose, Mike. "Writing for the Public." *College English* 72.3 (2010): 284-292.
- Royster, Jacqueline Jones. "When the First Voice You Hear Is Not Your Own." *College Composition and Communication* 47.1 (1996): 29-40.
- Wardle, Elizabeth, and Douglas Downs. "Teaching about Writing, Righting Misconceptions: (Re)Envisioning 'First-Year Composition' as 'Introduction to Writing Studies.'" *College Composition and Communication* 58.4 (2007): 552-584.

Yancey, Kathleen Blake. *Writing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Report from the National Council of Teachers of English*. NCTE, 2009.

**Yancey, Kathleen, Liane Robertson, and Tara Taczak. *Writing across Contexts: Transfer, Composition, and Sites of Writing*. Utah State UP, 2014.**

## **Other Course Materials & Requirements**

### *Blackboard*

We will be using Blackboard (<https://umb.umassonline.net>) as a hub for course material distribution and online discussions, so you will need access to a computer and an Internet connection at least once a week outside of class in order to complete your assignments. Please let me know if you need any assistance with Blackboard.

### *Class Preparation*

Please bring your own copies of the readings to class. It might also help to have access to your weekly blog post, in case you have a chance to comment or elaborate on what you had written. Further, although there are no exams in this course, you will be expected to synthesize what we discuss in your final portfolio; dutiful note taking is therefore strongly encouraged.

### *Library Barcode*

In order to conduct research for class assignments, you will need to make sure that you have access to the UMass Boston library. Please be sure that you have obtained your library bar code (a sticker on the reverse side of your UMass ID card) from the Circulation Desk on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Healey Library.

## **Graded Assignments**

*Reading Response Blog* (20%): Each week—except during weeks when other written assignments are due—you will post a 250-word response to the week’s reading(s) in a course blog on Blackboard. Rather than simply recapping the content of the readings, generate an original response by extending the discussion into new territory, raising critical questions (and suggesting possible answers), drawing connections to other texts, and so forth. In addition to posting your own reading response, you should also comment on at least ONE other classmate’s blog post. Response posts are due WEDNESDAYS by 11:59pm on the week the reading has been assigned; comments are due before class begins on Thursdays.

*Annotated Bibliography + Presentation (20%):* In the middle of the semester, you'll assemble an annotated bibliography of high-quality sources on a particular issue in the teaching of composition, such as revision, peer review, responding to student writing, plagiarism, reading in the composition classroom, social media and composition, service learning, and so on. Informal proposals for this research project are due week 6. You will give a brief (8-minute) presentation of your research in class during week 8.

*Leading a Discussion (10%):* With a partner, present on a chapter from *First-Year Composition: From Theory to Practice*. In addition to summarizing the theoretical framework and its practical applications, you should also comment on how the chapter does (or does not) reflect the theoretical approaches to composition we have discussed thus far in class, and kick off a short (20-minute) group activity or discussion that helps us to examine the pedagogical approach.

*Composition Philosophy Portfolio (40%):* In this final project, you will assemble a basis for your own future practices as a teacher of composition. In this portfolio, you will revisit your synthesis papers in a formative reflection; present your current philosophy of composition, in which you articulate your theorized understanding of language and literacy; and present a small set of teaching materials (such as an assignment sequence) that demonstrates your philosophy of composition in practice. This portfolio will be due by noon on Tuesday, May 10. It can be submitted in print or in digital form.

*Class Citizenship (10%):* This general category is reserved to reward consistent professional behavior in our class, which includes regular and on-time attendance, and contributions to online and in-class discussions, and constructive and respectful response to peers' work.

## **Policies & Resources**

### *Attendance*

As a discussion-based, graduate-level seminar, uninterrupted and on-time attendance is absolutely expected. If you must miss a class for exceptional circumstances, please notify me ahead of time. If you have a disability or illness that might inhibit regular attendance, please consult the disability resources (below).

### *Assignment Deadlines*

With the exception of blog posts, and unless otherwise stated in writing, all assignments are due by the start of class (7:00pm). Late work will be penalized by one letter grade per day, unless you have received written permission for an extension. If

you believe you will need an extension, you must reach out to me before the day the assignment is due.

### *Academic Honesty*

All students are accountable to the definitions and the regulations concerning Academic Honesty contained in the UMass Boston "Code of Student Conduct" (see: [http://www.umb.edu/student\\_services/student\\_rights/code\\_conduct.html](http://www.umb.edu/student_services/student_rights/code_conduct.html)). Instances of deliberate plagiarism will be reported to the English Department's Director of Undergraduate Studies, who oversees adjudication of academic dishonesty violations. If you have questions about how to incorporate source material into your own work, please do not hesitate to ask! (Please note: self-plagiarism, or submitting the same piece of work for credit in two different classes, is also a form of academic dishonesty! If your work is dovetailing with another class, please speak with me to develop a plan to make progress on both fronts, rather than simply recycling work.)

### *Students with Disabilities*

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to UMB students with disabilities, contact the Ross Center for Disability Services:

Campus Center, UL Room 211

Phone: 617-287-7430 Fax: 617-287-7466

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Ross Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type, (3) return the signed letter to the Ross Center. This should be done during the first few weeks of class. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible.

## Course Schedule

Week 1 (January 28): Introductions; History of Writing Instruction; blog demonstration

Read *FYC* Introduction<sup>1</sup>

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### UNIT 1: THE SOCIAL LIFE OF COMPOSITION

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Week 2 (February 4): Writing Is a Social Activity

Blog entry 1 due the day before class, comment before class

Read Bizzell; Porter; Alexander & Rhodes, "Flattening Effects"

Week 3 (February 11): Writing Responds to (and Shapes) Particular Situations

Blog entry 2 due the day before class, comment before class

Read Cooper; Ede & Lunsford; Pigg; *FYC*, chapter 1 (Anson)—no discussion leaders

Week 4 (February 18): Language and Literacy Are Not Neutral

Blog entry 3 due the day before class, comment before class

Read Royster; Matsuda; CCCC, *Students' Right to Their Own Language*; *FYC* chapter 2 (Canagarajah)

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### UNIT 2: COMPOSITION'S TRAVELS

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Week 5 (February 25): Writing Is a Lifelong Learning Process

Blog entry 4 due the day before class, comment before class

Read Roozen; Wardle & Downs; Cleary; *FYC*, chapter 11 (Wardle & Downs)

Week 6 (March 3): Teaching for Transfer

Blog entry 5 due the day before class, comment before class

Read Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak, chapters 1 and 2; *FYC* chapter 5 (Mathieu)

Proposal for annotated bibliography due this week—meet and discuss with me.

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<sup>1</sup> *FYC* = *First-Year Composition: From Theory to Practice* edited by Coxwell-Teague & Lunsford

Week 7 (March 10): Teaching for Transfer, continued

Blog entry 6 due the day before class, comment before class

Read Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak, chapters 3, 4, & 5; *FYC*, chapter 3 (Hesse)

Spring Break - No class March 17

Week 8 (March 24)

Annotated bibliography presentations.

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UNIT 3: COMPOSITION IN A NEW KEY

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Week 9 (March 31): (Not-So-)New Literacies

Final annotated bibliography presentations (if necessary)

Blog entry 7 due the day before class, comment before class

Read New London Group (1996); Yancey; Horner, Selfe, & Lockridge; *FYC* chapter 6 (Redd)

Week 10 (April 7) - No class meeting (CCCC)

Read Alexander & Rhodes, *On Multimodality*, chapters 1 and 2; *FYC* chapter 8 (Shipka)—no discussion leaders

Blog entry 8 due Wednesday (comments still due by 7pm)

Begin working on final portfolio.

Week 11 (April 14): Multimodal Composition

Blog entry 9 due the day before class, comment before class

Read Alexander & Rhodes, *On Multimodality*, chapters 3, 4, and 5; *FYC* chapter 12 (Yancey)

Week 12 (April 21): Going Public

Blog entry 10 due the day before class, comment before class

Read Rose; Cushman; *FYC* chapter 9 (Tinberg)

Week 13 (April 28): Attempting the Impossible

Teaching philosophy draft due. Meet this week to discuss.

Read *WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition 3.0*

(<http://wpacouncil.org/positions/outcomes.html>); *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing*;

*FYC*, chapter 13 (Coxwell-Teague and Lunsford)—no discussion leaders

Week 14 (May 5): Portfolio Workshop & Course Evaluations

Teaching portfolios due by noon on Tuesday, May 10.