

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Preparing Students for Writing in a Technological Society

One of my favorite aspects of teaching is engaging with students from diverse cultural, disciplinary, and professional backgrounds. Each student's unique encounters with writing, particularly in our technology-driven world, inform their perspectives. This diversity not only enriches classroom discussions but also shapes my student-centered and inclusive approach to teaching writing, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued.

Multimodality is central to my pedagogy. It involves creating texts that incorporate multiple modes of communication—such as alphabetic, aural, visual, and digital elements. By teaching multimodal writing, I help students connect writing with their professional fields, emphasizing the importance of visuals in professional and technical presentations. For instance, in a technical writing course, students create graphics and presentations that synthesize complex data visually, preparing them for real-world applications. Additionally, I encourage students to leverage technology in their everyday literate practices, such as using social media to communicate ideas effectively. I design assignments that promote critical approaches to writing and technology, like the “Digital Literacy Narrative,” where students analyze how their lived experiences shape their digital literacies. These assignments bridge academic and professional writing, prompting students to critically examine how writing manifests in various contexts, from academic essays to workplace reports.

As students engage with multimodal writing, many encounter new materials and formats, which necessitates trust-building between us. I foster this trust by adopting a writing-to-learn approach and creating a collaborative classroom environment. At the start of each class, I assign writing journals to help students connect daily concepts to their experiences, encouraging them to reflect on their learning process. They then work in groups to deepen their understanding, drawing on each other's diverse perspectives. This collaborative learning fosters trust and allows students to articulate their understanding in a supportive setting. Peer reviews enhance their discussions about multimodal projects, providing constructive feedback that helps them refine their work. I also incorporate workshop days where students “play” with various materials, such as video recording software or graphic design tools, allowing them to experiment with different modalities and creative approaches to assignments. As the course progresses, these workshops evolve to focus more on students' specific projects, utilizing both low- and high-tech mock-ups. This hands-on approach cultivates an inclusive and supportive environment for sharing ideas and learning from one another.

Finally, I regularly reflect on course materials—readings, activities, and discussions—to enhance students' understanding of writing, particularly in relation to multimodality. This reflective practice allows me to adapt my teaching strategies to better serve my students' needs. The diverse experiences of my students inform my ongoing efforts to make my courses accessible and inclusive for all learners, especially in the realm of professional writing. By continuously refining my approach, I strive to equip students with the skills they need to navigate and excel in a complex, technology-rich writing landscape.