

ENGL 534/LLSS 593: Composition Theory/Writing Theory for Teachers
Professor: Todd Ruecker

Description:

In this course, we will read and discuss key areas of inquiry in the field of Composition Studies, including theories of audience, invention, genre, argument, voice, process, collaboration, second language writing, multimodal composition, and assessment, among others. By the end of the course, students should emerge with a broad understanding of various theories circulating in composition and how these theories are informed by related disciplines such as applied linguistics, literacy studies, and rhetorical studies. Students will have the understanding necessary to pursue further work in a particular area as well as how these theories might inform their own pedagogy, practice, and research.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of this course, you will:

- become conversant in the origins, paradigm shifts, contemporary theory, practices, debates, and key terms of composition studies.
- be able to think through and develop strategies for working effectively with diverse writers, including strategies related to pedagogical approaches, course design, feedback practices, and assessment.
- develop a beginning understanding of composition studies as an interdisciplinary field of study
- investigate a specific issue of interest in composition studies and reflect on how your findings may inform your own teaching and/or research.

Course Readings:

Since this is a graduate course, the reading load will be challenging, averaging the equivalent of 4-5 academic articles weekly.

Grading/Assignments:

There are a total of 1000 points available in the course.

100 points - Participation: As this is a seminar, participation in weekly in class and online discussions is a vital component of the course. In order to participate, it is important that you complete the readings and responses on time and keep absences to a minimum.

50 points - Class Discussion Leader: During one week of class, you'll help lead discussion and/or another type of activity related to the readings for the week.

250 points - Weekly Responses: These 500+ word weekly assignments will ask you to synthesize and respond to the readings of the day, geared to preparing you to discuss them in class. These will sometimes be on a topic of your choosing and sometimes be based around a prompt I provide.

200 points - Research Trace/Book Review: In this 4-6 page paper, you will trace the evolution of thought on a particular issue across 4-5 articles. Alternatively, you may read a recently published book (within the previous 2 years or so; you'll confirm your choice with me) on some aspect of composition theory and write a review for a journal of your choice of around 4-6 pages.

300 points - Final Project: Outside of weekly readings, this will be the largest assignment of the semester. You'll be expected to focus on a topic related to the course, producing roughly 15-20 pages. You'll have a few options for this. You can write a traditional seminar paper, a research proposal (with IRB materials), or an extended literature review related to a particular topic. Other options may be possible--come to me if you have a particular idea.

100 points - Presentation: This presentation will be centered on your seminar paper/research project proposal and will be given before the final paper is due.

General Policies:

1. You should attend **every** class meeting. Emergencies and other activities like professional conferences do arise, however, so exceptions can be made. A successful graduate seminar depends on the participation of everyone. You should not expect an A in the course if you miss more than 2 class meetings, which is the equivalent of two weeks of class.
2. Complete the readings on time and avoid turning work in late. The weekly responses will be accepted late at 60% their total value for 24 hours at which point they will no longer be accepted. The other projects should be turned on the date assigned, with a 10% deduction for each day late unless previous arrangements are made.
3. Incompletes will be given only in the event of an emergency. These are reserved for students who have successfully completed the work all semester and have an extenuating circumstance (death in the family, serious illness, etc.) which prevents them from completing the work by the end of the semester.
4. Academic dishonesty is an issue I take very seriously and something I don't expect to be a problem in a graduate course. If I discover that you have plagiarized for this class, I will follow University policy for reporting the issue.

Semester Schedule:

- This schedule is tentative and subject to change.
- The reading load can look intimidating at times but you'll notice some of the readings are shorter than others and some of the older readings are more accessible and easy to read than more recent work.

Week 1 – 8/21

Theory and Composition

The Bedford bibliography for teachers of writing: A brief history of rhetoric and composition.

Retrieved from <https://www.macmillanlearning.com/Catalog/static/bsm/bb/history.html>

Sommers, N. I. (1979). The need for theory in composition research. *College Composition and Communication*, 46-49.

Ruiz, I. D. (2016). *Reclaiming Composition for Chicano/as and Other Ethnic Minorities*.

Palgrave Macmillan. [Chapter 1: Introduction-pp. 1-19]

Matsuda, P. K. (1999). Composition studies and ESL writing: A disciplinary division of labor. *College Composition and Communication*, 699-721.

Silva, T., & Leki, I. (2004). Family matters: The influence of applied linguistics and composition studies on second language writing studies—Past, present, and future. *The Modern Language Journal*, 88(1), 1-13.

Additional Resources (note that these are for your reference--they aren't required reading):

Fulkerson, R. (2005). Composition at the turn of the twenty-first century. *College Composition and Communication*, 654-687.

Reid, E. S. (2007). Anxieties of influencers: Composition pedagogy in the 21st century. *Writing Program Administration*, 31(2), 241-249.

Berlin, J. A. (1982). Contemporary composition: The major pedagogical theories. *College English*, 765-777.

Week 2 – 8/28

The Role of First-Year Writing/Composition

Berlin, J. (1988). Rhetoric and ideology in the writing class. *College English*, 50(5), 477-494.

Hairston, M. (1992). Diversity, ideology, and teaching writing. *College Composition and Communication*, 43(2), 179-193.

Trimbur, J., Wood, R. G., Strickland, R., Thelin, W. H., Rouster, W. J., Mester, T., & Hairston, M. (1993). Responses to Maxine Hairston, "Diversity, Ideology, and Teaching Writing" and Reply. *College Composition and Communication*, 44(2), 248-256.

Lindemann, E. (1993). Freshman composition: No place for literature. *College English*, 55(3), 311-316.

Tate, G. (1993). A place for literature in freshman composition. *College English*, 55(3), 317-321.

Downs, D. & Wardle, E. (2007). Teaching about writing, righting misconceptions: (Re)Envisioning “First-Year Composition” as “Introduction to Writing Studies.” *College Composition and Communication*, 58(4), 765-89.

CWPA (2014). WPA Outcomes Statement. Retrieved from <http://wpacouncil.org/positions/outcomes.html>

Additional Resource:

Preston, J. (2015). Project (ing) Literacy: Writing to Assemble in a Postcomposition FYW Classroom. *College Composition and Communication*, 67(1), 35.

Week 3 – 9/4

Rhetorical Situation

Bitzer, Lloyd (1968). The rhetorical situation. *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 1(1), 1-14.

Vatz, Richard E. (1973). The myth of the rhetorical situation. *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 6(3), 154-161.

Consigny, Scott (1974). Rhetoric and its situations. *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 7(3), 175-186.

Killoran, J. B. (2009). The rhetorical situations of web resumes. *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*, 39(3), 263-284.

Buck, Elisabeth H.. (2015). Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter -- oh my!: Assessing the efficacy of the rhetorical composing situation with FYC students as advanced social media practitioners. *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, 19(3).

Week 4 – 9/11

Audience

Ong, Walter J. (1975). The writer’s audience is always a fiction. *PMLA*, 90.1, 9-21.

Parks, Douglas B. (1982). The meanings of “audience.” *College English*, 44.3, 247-257.

Ede, Lisa & Lunsford, Andrea (1984). Audience addressed/audience invoked: The role of audience in composition theory and pedagogy. *College Composition and Communication*, 35.2, 155-171.

Elbow, P. (1987). Closing my eyes as I speak: An argument for ignoring audience. *College English*, 50-69.

[pp. 105-113] Villanueva, V. (1993). *Bootstraps: From an American Academic of Color*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Ede, Lisa & Lunsford, Andrea (2009). Among the audience: On audience in an age of new literacies. In M. E. Weiser, B. Fehler, & A. M. Gonzalez (Eds.), *Engaging audience: Writing in an age of new literacies*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Additional Resources:

Ede, L. (1984). Audience: An introduction to research. *College Composition and Communication*, 140-154.

Porter, James (1986). Intertextuality and the discourse community. *Rhetoric Review*, 5.1, 34-47.

Ramanathan, V., & Kaplan, R. B. (1996). Audience and voice in current L1 composition texts: Some implications for ESL student writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 5(1), 21-34.

Week 5 – 9/18

Assessment

Yancey, K. B. (1999). Looking back as we look forward: Historicizing writing assessment. *College Composition and Communication*, 50(3), 483-503.

White, E. M. (1990). Language and reality in writing assessment. *College Composition and Communication*, 41(2), 187-200.

Huot, B. (1996). Toward a new theory of writing assessment. *College Composition and Communication*, 47(4), 549-566.

White, E. M. (2001). The opening of the modern era of writing assessment: A narrative. *College English*, 63(3), 306-320.

CCCC Committee on Assessment (2014). Writing Assessment: A Position Statement.
<http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/writingassessment>

[read to p. 16] Poe, M., Inoue, A.B., & Elliot, N. (2018). "Introduction: The end of isolation." In *Writing Assessment, Social Justice, and the Advancement of Opportunity*.
<https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/assessment/intro.pdf>

Additional Resource:

Huot, B. (2002). (Re) articulating writing assessment for teaching and learning. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press. Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/usupress_pubs/137/

Week 6 – 9/25

Process and Post-Process

Elbow, P. (1968). A method for teaching writing. *College English*, 30(2), 115-125.

Murray, D. (1969). Finding your own voice. *College Composition and Communication*, 20, 118-123.

Murray, D. (1972). Teaching writing as a process not product. *The Leaflet*, 11-14.

Hairston, M. (1982). The winds of change: Thomas Kuhn and the revolution in the teaching of writing. *College Composition and Communication*, 33(1), 76-88.

Flower, L. and Hayes, J. (1981). A cognitive process theory of writing. *College Composition and Communication*, 32(4), 365-387.

Faigley, L. (1986). Competing theories of process: a critique and a proposal. *College English*, 48(6), 527-542.

[video--just watch Sara's] Alvarez, S. (2017) "On Multimodal Composing." *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, 21(2). Retrieved from
<http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/21.2/praxis/devoss-et-al/composing.html#sara>

We'll divide this up: Fulkerson, R. (2001). Of pre-and post-process: Reviews and ruminations [Review Essay]. *Composition Studies* 29(2), 93-119

Additional Resources:

Anson, C. M., & Schwegler, R. A. (2012). Tracking the mind's eye: A new technology for researching twenty-first-century writing and reading processes. *College Composition and Communication*, 64(1), 151-171.

Cooper, Audrey C.; Nguyen Tran Thuy Tien. (2017). Composing with Signed and Written Languages: Our Process [Composing With]. *Composition Studies* 45.1, 13-18.

Week 7 – 10/2

Invention

[pp. 1-10] Lauer, J. M. (2004). *Invention in rhetoric and composition*. West Lafayette: Parlor Press LLC. Retrieved from http://wac.colostate.edu/books/lauer_invention/

Rohman, D.G. (1965). Pre-writing the stage of discovery in the writing process. *College Composition and Communication*, 16(2), 106-112.

Burke, K. (1969). The five key terms of dramatism. Introduction to *The Grammar of Motives*. Berkeley, CA:UCAP, xv-xxiii. Widely reprinted.

Emig, J. (1977). Writing as a mode of learning. *College Composition and Communication*, 28(2), 122-128.

Haas, C., & Flower, L. (1988). Rhetorical reading strategies and the construction of meaning. *College Composition and Communication*, 39(2), 167-183.

Tomlinson, Elizabeth. (2013). The role of invention in digital dating site profile composition. *Computers and Composition* 30.2, 115-128.

Additional Resources:

Burke, K. (1978). Questions and answers about the pentad. *College Composition and Communication*, 29(4), 330-335.

Week 8 – 10/9

Revision

Horning, A. S., & Becker, A. (Eds.). (2006). *Revision: History, theory, and practice*. West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press. [Chapter 2: Definitions and Distinctions]. Retrieved from https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/horning_revision/chapter2.pdf

Sommers, N. (1980). Revision strategies of student writers and experienced adult writers. In T.R. Johnson (Ed.), *Teaching composition: Background readings* (pp. 195-205). New York: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Faigley L. and Witte, S. (1981). Analyzing revision. *College Composition and Communication*, 32(4), 400-414.

Monahan, B. D. (1984). Revision strategies of basic and competent writers as they write for different audiences. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 18(3), 288-304.

Flower, L., Hayes, J. R., Carey, L., Schriver, K., & Stratman, J. (1986). Detection, diagnosis, and the strategies of revision. *College Composition and Communication*, 37(1), 16-55.

Additional Resources:

- Murray, D. M. (1978). Internal revision: A process of discovery. *Research on composing*, 85-103.
- Yagelski, R. P. (1995). The role of classroom context in the revision strategies of student writers. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 29(2), 216-238.

Week 9 – 10/16

Genre

- Miller, C. R. (1984). Genre as social action. *Quarterly journal of speech*, 70(2), 151-167.
- Hyland, K. (2007). Genre pedagogy: Language, literacy and L2 writing instruction. *Journal of second language writing*, 16(3), 148-164.
- Tardy, C. M. (2006). Researching first and second language genre learning: A comparative review and a look ahead. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 15(2), 79-101.
- Reiff, M. J., & Bawarshi, A. (2011). Tracing discursive resources: How students use prior genre knowledge to negotiate new writing contexts in first-year composition. *Written Communication*, 28(3), 312-337.
- Gonzales, L. (2015). Multimodality, translanguaging, and rhetorical genre studies. *Composition Forum*, 31. Retrieved from <http://compositionforum.com/issue/31/multimodality.php>.

Draft of Trace Paper or Book Review for Peer Review

Week 10 – 10/23

Feedback

- Murray, D. (1969). Finding your own voice: teaching composition in an age of dissent. *College Composition and Communication*, 20(2), 118-123.
- Connors, R. J., & Lunsford, A. A. (1993). Teachers' rhetorical comments on student papers. *College Composition and Communication*, 44(2), 200-223.
- Lunsford, A. A., & Lunsford, K. J. (2008). "Mistakes are a fact of life": A national comparative study. *College Composition and Communication*, 59(4), 781-806.
- Truscott, J. (1996). The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning*, 46(2), 327-369.
- Ferris, D. (1999). The case for grammar correction in L2 writing classes: A response to Truscott (1996). *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8(1), 1-11.
- Truscott, J. (1999). The case for "The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes": A response to Ferris. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8(2), 111-122.

Trace Paper or Book Review Due Discuss Final Project Ideas

Week 11 – 10/30

Argument

- Kneupper, C. W. (1978). Teaching argument: An introduction to the Toulmin model. *College Composition and Communication*, 29(3), 237-241.
- Belcher, D. D. (1997). An argument for nonadversarial argumentation: On the relevance of the feminist critique of academic discourse to L2 writing pedagogy. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 6(1), 1-21.
- Lynch, Dennis A., George, Diana, & Cooper, Marilyn M. Moments of argument: Agonistic inquiry and confrontational cooperation. *College Composition and Communication*, 48(1), 61-85.
- Kroll, B. M. (2005). Arguing differently. *Pedagogy*, 5(1), 37-60.
- Lancaster, Zak. (2016). Do Academics Really Write This Way? A Corpus Investigation of Moves and Templates in "They Say / I Say". *College Composition and Communication* 67.3, 437-464.

Finalize Final Project Ideas

Week 12 – 11/6

Language Diversity and Composition Studies

- CCCC. (1974). Students' Rights to Their Own Language. *College Composition and Communication*, 25 (Special Issue), 1-23. Retrieved from <http://www.ncte.org.libproxy.unm.edu/library/NCTEFiles/Groups/CCCC/NewSRTOL.pdf>.
- Matsuda, P. K., & Silva, T. (1999). Cross-Cultural Composition: Mediated Integration of US and International Students. *Composition Studies*, 27(1).
- Martinez, A. Y. (2014). A plea for Critical Race Theory counterstory: Stock story versus counterstory dialogues concerning Alejandra's 'fit' in the academy." *Composition Studies* 42(2), 33-55.
- CCCC (2014). CCCC Statement on L2 Writing and Writers. Retrieved from <http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/secondlangwriting>
- Horner, B., Lu, M. Z., Royster, J. J., & Trimbur, J. (2011). Opinion: Language difference in writing: Toward a translingual approach. *College English*, 73(3), 303-321.
- Matsuda, P. K. (2014). The lure of translingual writing. *PMLA*, 129(3), 478-483.

Additional Resources

See CCCC Statement on L2 Writing and Writers for a bibliography

- Bean, J. et al (2011). Should we invite students to write in their home languages? Complicating the yes/no debate. In P. K. Matsuda, Cox, M., J. Jordan, & C. Ortmeier-Hooper (Eds.). *Second-language writing in the composition classroom* (pp. 225-239). Boston: Bedford/St. Martins.
- Davila, B. (2016). The inevitability of 'standard' English: Discursive constructions of standard language ideologies. *Written Communication*, 1-22. doi: 10.1177/0741088316632186.

Week 13 – 11/13

Collaboration

- [excerpt TBD] Vygotsky, L. S. 1978. *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- George, D. (1984). Working with peer groups in the composition classroom. *College Composition and Communication*, 320-326.
- Holt, M. (1992). The value of written peer criticism. *College composition and Communication*, 384-392.
- Harris, M. (1992). Collaboration is not collaboration is not collaboration: Writing center tutorials vs. peer-response groups. *College composition and communication*, 369-383.
- Villamil, O. S., & De Guerrero, M. C. (1996). Peer revision in the L2 classroom: Social-cognitive activities, mediating strategies, and aspects of social behavior. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 5(1), 51-75.

Additional Resources:

- Lei, X. (2008). Exploring a sociocultural approach to writing strategy research: Mediated actions in writing activities. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 17(4), 217-236.
- Chang, Ching-Fen. (2012). Peer review via three modes in an EFL writing course. *Computers and composition* 29.1 , 63-78.

Week 14 – 11/20

Technology/Multimodal Composition

- Selfe, C. L. (1999). Technology and literacy: A story about the perils of not paying attention. *College Composition and Communication*, 411-436.
- Yancey, K. B. (2004). Made not only in words: Composition in a new key. *College Composition and Communication*, 56(2), 297-328.
- [excerpt] Banks, A. J. (2006). *Race, rhetoric, and technology: Searching for higher ground*. New York: Routledge.
- NCTE (2006). NCTE statement on multimodal literacies. Retrieved from <http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/multimodalliteracies>
- Shin, D. S., & Cimasko, T. (2008). Multimodal composition in a college ESL class: New tools, traditional norms. *Computers and Composition*, 25(4), 376-395.

Additional Resources:

- Clark, J. E. (2010). The digital imperative: Making the case for a 21st century pedagogy. *Computers and Composition*, 27(1), 27-35.
- Cole, Kristi. (Fall 2015). Multimodality in composition, rhetoric, and English studies: Praxis and practicalities [review essay]. *Composition Studies* 43.2, 201-07.
<http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/21.2/praxis/devoss-et-al/composing.html>
<https://www.presenttensejournal.org/volume-6/diversity-technology-and-composition-honoring-students-multimodal-home-places/>
<http://compositionforum.com/issue/31/multimodality.php>

Week 15 - 11/27

No class Thanksgiving week; work on final projects/presentations

Week 16 - 12/4

Presentations

I do not anticipate meeting during exam week.

Final projects due by Wednesday 12/12.

Sample Assignment

Trace/Review Essay Assignment

Overview

A “trace” chronologically tracks and analyzes a topic/issue/concept across different scholars or an individual scholar over time. The purpose is (1) to gain a deeper understanding of how said topic has been treated over time and (2) to gain a general understanding of the significance of each treatment at its historical moment.

Process

1. Choose a topic in which you have some interest. It may or may not be related to the final project.
2. Submit your reading selections via Canvas for approval (4-5 articles; you may include a book or two).
3. Do a close textual reading of each article. Annotate. Take prodigious notes. Make sure you thoroughly understand *each* article: what is being argued (definition of topic/issue/concept and its history if that’s provided), how it is being argued (thesis, claims, support, assumptions), ramifications of the argument, etc. (Tip: check the journal to see if anyone wrote a response to the article and if the writer then responded to their critic.)
4. Compare/contrast your findings.
5. Structure the trace as an argument. (This will be a relatively “thin” argument, but you are, nevertheless, arguing for the quality of your interpretation of the topic/issue/concept, your assessment of its historical significance, and your speculation of its significance to the field.)

Document design

- Use a common 12-pt. font
- Provide a left-justified heading: your name and date
- Title the trace
- Double space
- Number pages
- Target 2500+ words (around 9-12 pages plus references)
- Include a reference list in APA or MLA style

Grading criteria

Point/Category Breakdown	Criteria	Points
20 pts. Article Selection	Selected 4-6 articles/books published over a period of time focused on a particular topic or by a particular author; selections submitted on time and revised/changed if necessary based on professor feedback.	
40 pts. Framing/Argument	Establishes some kind of argument about the readings that guides the analysis and takes the trace beyond mere summary of the articles.	
100 pts. Strength of Analysis	Engages in rich, close, and careful reading of the articles that is fleshed out with details and quotes.	
20 pts. Focus and Organization	Establishes a clear focus in the introduction, transitions between ideas and sections (perhaps including headings), and sums up the major findings in the conclusion.	
20 pts. Voice	Writes in an appropriately formal and clear academic voice.	
Total (out of 200)		

Alternative Assignment:

You may write a review essay for a particular journal of a similar length. See Files/Review Essays for samples of this genre. You may also see a description here:

<https://www.uc.edu/journals/composition-studies/submissions/book-reviews.html>