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ENG 5011-600: Studies in Composition and Rhetoric

Tim Taylor

Eastern Illinois University

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ENG 5011-600/5011Z-600 Course Policy & Syllabus
Studies in Composition-Rhetoric
The Praxis of Responding to and Evaluating Student Writing
Summer 2019, Eight-Week Session

Dr. Tim N. Taylor
email: tntaylor@eiu.edu

“Great writing is created in revision—rethinking, rewriting, adding, subtracting, repositioning, editing. In effect, fine writing is born in change.”

~Ralph Wahlstrom, *The Tao of Writing*

“Whoever does not study rhetoric will be a victim of it.”

~Ancient Greek wall inscription

“Having to say something is a very different matter from having something to say.”

~John Dewey, *How We Think*

Texts

- *Evaluating Writing*, Eds. Cooper and Odell
- *Key Works on Teacher Response*, Ed. Straub
- Articles, websites, and other materials available via D2L

Materials

Writing instruments, paper, paper clips, a good college dictionary, a typewriter or computer, and other appropriate supplies

Course Description

In *A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers*, Erika Lindemann outlines the importance of instructor feedback quite well:

Writing comments is a form of teaching, a conference on a paper. Comments that enhance learning differ from traditional methods of hunting errors and identifying what’s wrong with a paper. They also must point out what the student did well, why certain problems undermine effective communication, and how to improve the paper. Comments that teach help students develop effective prewriting, writing, and rewriting strategies. Comments that teach are an open-ended form of evaluation that allows students, guided by responses from the teacher and classmates, to rewrite their drafts and engage in the next assignment. (226)

Some would argue that the responses a teacher provides on student writing is one of the most important, if not the most important, set of interactions and practices an instructor has with writers in a composition course. With that idea in mind, this online graduate seminar will have students consider the various perspectives of how to effectively provide feedback and evaluate student writing.

Throughout this graduate seminar, we will examine a range of questions related to providing feedback on, evaluating, and grading student writing:

- What does research tell us about the kinds of comments and evaluations that help students learn?
- How do we as instructors make it clear what we want in a paper?
- What types of feedback and evaluation work best at different stages of the writing process?
- What do we value about writing, and how can those values be transparent to students and translate to our evaluative methods?
- What roles do technologies play in our evaluation of student writing?
- How do different learning environments restrict or open up the types of evaluations we can provide?
- How can we handle stacks (online or paper) of papers effectively while providing quality feedback that leads to student learning and growth?
- What role does and should correctness affect the evaluation of and grades of student writing?
- What is college-level writing?
- What do grades really mean?

In addition to daily discussions related to readings related to these important topics and questions, during the course students will have a number of assignments. Students will evaluate sample pieces of student writing. Participants will create a standard rubric that reflects what they value in student writing. In addition, the seminar will have two capstone projects: a) an inquiry-based research project and b) a teaching philosophy that describes your approach to commenting on and evaluating student writing.

Learning Objectives

Participants will...

- Grow as critical thinkers and writers
- Gain knowledge about writing pedagogy and effective commenting and evaluating strategies
- Explore and question ideas and arguments about transfer of learning, classroom management techniques, and response/evaluation of student writing
- Reflect on current practices in writing classrooms and experiences in classrooms
- Connect disciplinary knowledge to specific contexts that you work in currently and you will be part of in the future
- Analyze the arguments, evidence, assumptions, and research methodologies of scholarship
- Evaluate and critique scholars' arguments based on the efficacy of their evidence, assumptions, and research methodologies
- Analyze rhetorical contexts and craft cogent documents appropriate to those contexts
- Assemble a cohesive and persuasive philosophy of responding to and evaluating student writing

Expected Performance Outcomes

Participants will ...

- Work effectively, ethically, and professionally as a member of a graduate seminar
- Participate in discussion of reading assignments throughout the semester
- Craft cogent, rhetorically effective documents for multiple purposes and contexts
- Craft pedagogically sound lesson plans and assignments
- Create a philosophy of teaching grammar that reflects appropriate pedagogical approaches for writing instruction
- Be prepared to teach

Success in this course includes (1) finding your own creative ways to make topics and assignments personally interesting--especially if your first instinct is to label them “boring” or “too hard,” (2) believing that you have something worthwhile to say, and (3) expressing it after you’ve debated/ pondered/ listened/ read/ explored beyond the surface.

Course Requirements

Class consists of assigned readings, online discussions of assigned readings, and small and large writing assignments. Active and constructive class participation will make a positive impact on your overall grade. In fact, in an online class, keeping up with the work and making deadlines is crucial.

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Your Instructor

If you are having any trouble with the material covered in this course, or if you simply want reassurance that you are on the right track, please do not hesitate to contact me. Many times a short discussion to go over a paper or to clarify a concept can save you time in the long run and improve your chances of success in this course.

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Instructor Response Time

I will routinely check discussion posts and email during weekdays. I do not usually check my email on Saturday, but I plan to check my email by 8pm on Sundays if not sooner.

Learner Interaction

This online classroom community demands good manners, careful listening, respect for diverse backgrounds and opinions, and equal time for everyone who wants to share his or her perspective.

I expect students to act in a mature and collegial manner. You should have read the material, should be eager to participate, and should be ready to write.

Guidelines to Abide by in Any College Course and Life in General:

1. Have opinions and ideas and support your opinions and ideas with details and examples.
2. Play well with others by respecting others' opinions and being open to them.
3. General rudeness and disrespect is not tolerated.

Discussion Board Participation Guidelines

Since we cannot talk in a face-to-face classroom setting, discussion forums serve as our way to interact with each and learn from each other.

There are seven modules for the course, and each module requires multiple discussion forums. For each discussion forum, you need to post one substantive, quality reply (a paragraph of at least five sentences that clearly answers the prompt) to the discussion post question/s and then later reply to two of your peers' posts with depth and attention. You are more than welcome to respond to more than two peers. While I have a minimum requirement of sentences for posts, the most important criterion is the **quality of the post**—whether the response exemplifies critical thinking and has details to support one's points, observations, assertions, or arguments.

Deadlines for the posts will be indicated on the syllabus. If a student provides a quality response to the questions in the discussion forum and also provides a substantive reply to a peer's response (Pass), the student earns 10 out of 10 for that discussion forum. If a student does not provide substantial comments or only one of the two types of comments (Fail), he or she earns 0 out of 10.

Late Work Policy

Because this is a compressed class, an eight-week session, I do not accept late work.

Email Policy

I welcome emails if you have questions or concerns about your work in this class. However, I expect you to write emails in a professional manner—not like you are texting a close friend. Emailing in a professional manner will help you with other professors and also give you practice in effective communication.

If you want to send me an email, follow the guidelines below. Emails should:

- Have a clear and concise subject line that provides gist of the email, such “Absent This Friday” or “Question about Revision” or “Availability for a Meeting?”
- Begin with a formal address, such as “Dr. Taylor:” or “Dear Dr. Taylor:”
- Use a respectful tone
- Provide questions or information in a succinct manner
- Use paragraph breaks for reading ease and strong organization
- Be edited and proofread effectively so as not to cause confusion
- Refrain from using abbreviations or “text-prose”
- Close with a short statement followed by a comma and your name, such as “Thanks for your time,” or “Sincerely,” or “Have a good weekend,”

If an email does not follow these guidelines, I will simply reply to the email with this message: “Please resend this email once it’s been revised to fit the standards of a professional email. See page 5 of my course policy.”

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Here is the official statement on plagiarism by the EIU English Department: “Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—“The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s own original work” (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.”

In this class, if a student is found to have plagiarized in a paper, the paper will earn a zero for the assignment, and I will report the occurrence to the EIU Judicial Affairs Office.

Generally, if you have to have a source before your eyes as you write, you need to copy it accurately, put quotation marks around it, and acknowledge your source. If you are paraphrasing information from a source, you need to use an introductory phrase and properly cite what page or paragraph (if it’s online) the information is located.

For further clarification, here is an explanation of plagiarism from my previous English department that explains this important concept:

Plagiarism

To present someone else’s work or ideas as one’s own is plagiarism. A student can commit in these ways:

- Copying, word for word, someone else’s writing without putting that passage in quotation marks and identifying the source.
- Taking someone else’s writing, changing some of the words, and not identifying the source;
- Taking someone else’s ideas or organization of ideas, putting them into his/her own words and not identifying the source;
- Having someone else change the student’s writing—a tutor, friend, or relative, for instance—and creating the impression that this is the student’s own work; or
- Purchasing or downloading papers or passages from the Web.

A Social Contract of Honesty

In this class, there is a social contract between the instructors and students that the work submitted will be the students' own documents, not someone else's work. To put it simply, do your own writing.

Composition of the Overall Grade
(All assignments and point totals are tentative)

Online Discussion Topics 270 (36%) points
 Discussion posts and follow-up posts related to each module
 (One substantive post and a substantive follow-up post to a peer
 required: Pass = 10 points, Fail = 0 points)

Draft Deadlines 150 (20%)
 The major writing assignments (below) requires full drafts for my commentary
 before they are submitted
 (Full draft due: Pass = 50 points, Fail = 0 points)

Shorter Writing Assignments 20 (3%)

Memo of Introduction	10
Feedback Memorandum	10

Major Writing Assignments 300 (41%)

Rubric & Rationale	100
Research Project	100
Philosophy of Responding to & Evaluating Student Writing	100

Tentative Grand Total 740 points

Grading Scale for Formal Documents:

100-92% = A	89-88 = B+	79-78 = C+	69-60 = D
91-90 = A-	87-82 = B	77-72 = C	59 and below = F
	81-80 = B-	71-70 = C-	

Overall Grading Scale:

100-90% = A	69-60 = D
89-80 = B	59 and below = F
79-70 = C	

ENG 5011 Syllabus Summer 2019

All assignments and deadlines are tentative

EW = *Evaluating Writing*

KW = *Key Works on Teacher Response*

= Article on D2L

CT = Central Standard Time

Module 1: Responding to Student Writing—Principles & Methods

- Tu 5/28 #Hesse, “13 Ways of Looking at Responding to Student Writing”
View *Beyond the Red Ink*
View *Across the Drafts*
Discussion forum post “Initial Thoughts” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due
- W 5/29 #Sommers, “Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers”
Discussion forum post “The Goal: Getting Students to Revise” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due
Memo of Introduction due 11am CT
- Th 5/30 Knoblauch and Brannon, “Teacher Commentary on Student Writing” (69-76 KW)
Discussion forum post “Distilling Knoblauch & Brannon” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due
- F 5/31 Ziv, “The Effect of Teacher Comments on the Writing of Four College Freshmen” (94-111 KW)
Discussion forum post “Comments, Effects, & You” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due
- M 6/3 Lunsford and Straub, “Twelve Readers Reading” (159-89 KW)
Discussion forum post “Your Response Styles” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due
- Tu 6/4 Connors and Lunsford, “Teachers’ Rhetorical Comments on Student Papers” (135-58 KW)
Discussion forum post “Stay Positive” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due
- W 6/5 #Smith, “The Genre of the End Comment”
Discussion forum post “Genre of the End Comment” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due
- Th 6/6 #Elbow, “Ranking, Evaluating, and Liking”
Discussion forum post “Hard-Assed Liking” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due
- F 6/7 Sommers, “Responding to Student Writing” (287-95 KW)
Discussion forum post “Rubber Stamps” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

Module 2: Foundations of Composition & Round 1 of Commenting

- M 6/10 #Bitzer, “The Rhetorical Situation” & Murray, “Write Before Writing”
Discussion forum post “Founding Principles” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT

due
Tu 6/11 **Round 1 of Commenting on Sample Student Papers—Comments**
due

11am CT

W 6/12 Discussion forum post “Reflecting on Your Comments” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

Module 3: Considering Error

Th 6/13 #Williams, “The Phenomenology of Error”
Discussion forum post “Looking for or Noticing?” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

Research Question/s due

F 6/14 #Lunsford and Lunsford, “Mistakes Are a Fact of Life”
Discussion forum post “Mistakes ~ They Happen” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

M 6/17 Diederich, In Praise of Praise (221-24 KW)

Draft of Rubric & Rationale due 11am CT

Tu 6/18 #Haswell, “Minimal Marking” & Ransdall, “Directive Versus Facilitative Commentary”
Discussion forum post “Synthesizing Diederich, Haswell, and Ransdall” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

W 6/19 #Blauuw-Hara, “Why Our Students Need Instruction in Grammar”
Discussion forum post “How to Address Error” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

Module 4: Thinking about Paragraphs & Formulas

Th 6/20 #Braddock, “The Frequency and Placement of Topic Sentences in Expository Prose”
Discussion forum post “A Proposal” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

F 6/21 #Wiley, “The Popularity of Formulaic Writing”
Discussion forum post “Agree or Disagree” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

M 6/24 #Duncan, “Whatever Happened to the Paragraph?”
Discussion forum post “What Guidance?” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

Rubric & Rationale due 11am CT

Tu 6/25 **Draft of Research Project due 11am CT**

Module 5: Principles & Methods Revisited

W 6/26 Elbow, “The Teacherless Writing Class” (261-86 KW)
Discussion forum post “” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

Th 6/27 #Haswell, “The Complexities of Responding to Student Writing”
Discussion forum post “3-2-1” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

F 6/28 #Fredrick, “StopThinkGrade” & Boynton, “See Me”

Discussion forum post “Implementing Their Advice and/or Ideas” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

M 7/1 **Round 2 of Commenting on Sample Student Papers—
Comments due
11am CT**

Tu 7/2 Discussion forum post “Reflecting on Your Commenting” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

W 7/3 **Research Project due**

Th 7/4 Independence Day—No Class Activity

F 7/5 O’Neill and Mathison Fife, “Listening to Students” (190-202 KW)
Discussion forum post “” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

M 7/8 #Mellon and Sommers, “Audiotaped Response”
Discussion forum post “” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

Module 6: Considering L2 Learners & Dialectical Interference

Tu 7/9 #Reid, “Eye’ Learners and ‘Ear’ Learners”

W 7/10 **Draft of Philosophy due 11am CT**

Th 7/11 #Land Jr. and Whitley, “Evaluating Second-Language Essays in Composition”

F 7/12 View *Writing Across Borders*
Discussion forum post “Complicating Response” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

M 7/15 Ball, “Evaluating the Writing of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students” (225-48 EW)
Discussion forum post “Addressing Dialect” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

Module 7: Wrapping It Up

Tu 7/16 Discussion forum post “Classroom Assessment” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

W 7/17 **Philosophy due 11am CT**

Th 7/18 Discussion forum post “Strengthening & Changing Practices” 11am CT & replies 7pm CT due

F 7/19 **Reflection Memo due 11am CT**