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ENG 3401-001: Methods of Teaching Composition in the Secondary School

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3401-001

Methods of Teaching Composition in the Secondary School

ENGLISH 3401-001
Spring Semester 2007
T/TH 12:30—1:45
Coleman Hall 3120/3130
email: dmmarkelis@eiu.edu

Instructor: Dr. Daiva Markelis
Office: Coleman Hall 3375
Office Hours: T 2:00—3:30
TH 11:00—12:30
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The very first thing I tell my new students...is that good writing is about telling the truth. We are a species that needs and wants to understand who we are. Sheep lice do not seem to share this longing, which is one reason they write so very little.

— Anne Lamott

If you can't annoy somebody, there's little point in writing. — Kingsley Amis

Course Description:

This course explores approaches to the teaching and evaluating of written composition in secondary schools. Course readings focus on theory and application of composition and rhetoric studies at the secondary level. Writing activities allow course participants to explore topics of interest in the teaching of composition and rhetoric. Technology-assisted research will be part of the course. Major assignments include an independent research project. Each class member will also develop a unit plan and a professional portfolio. The School of Education requires LiveText submissions in conjunction with this course.

Books

The English Teacher's Companion. Jim Burke
Inside Out: Strategies for Teaching Writing. Dan Kirby et al.
A Writer Teaches Writing. Donald M. Murray

Course Objectives: Following NCTE Guidelines and Illinois Content Area Standards this course will:

1. demonstrate how reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and thinking are interrelated;
2. recognize the impact of cultural, economic, and social environments upon language;
3. show a respect for and an understanding of diversity in language use, patterns, dialects, across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles;
4. demonstrate the influence of language and visual images on thinking and composition;
5. demonstrate how written discourse can influence thought and action;
6. display an understanding of the role of technology in communication;

7. use major sources of research and theory and understand the relationship between research and practice;
8. examine, evaluate, and select resources;
9. design instruction to meet the needs of all students and provide for students' continuous progress and success;
10. organize classroom environments and learning experiences that promote effective whole class, small group, and individual work;
11. create learning environments that promote respect for and support of individual differences of ethnicity, race, language, culture, gender, and ability;
12. use assessment as an integral part of instruction and learning.

Course Requirements

Journal

Keep a journal where you write down insights from your reading, personal reflections on various themes, in-class responses, and ideas for teaching writing. Your responses and insights as recorded in your journal and used to contribute to class discussion will determine a large part of your participation grade. We may occasionally exchange journals. I will collect journals at the end of the semester and may do so mid-semester.

Writing Pedagogy Essay

Research Essay on Writing Pedagogy & Presentation

Select an area of writing pedagogy to research (i.e. writing-to-learn, Writing-across-the-Curriculum, teaching creative writing, peer responding, revising, literacy, assessing writing, journaling, persuasion, awareness of audience, teaching grammar in context, publishing student writing, gender issues, collaborative writing). Based on substantive research on your chosen topic, prepare a professional, argument-based paper in MLA or APA form on the issue or practice you have selected. Include a Works Cited page. Blend information from your research with assigned readings and your experiences with students to make an assertion. Allow 10-15 min. for your oral presentation based on the essay, plus time to field questions. The initial essay grade counts as 20% of your overall course grade. Later, the graded copy and a revision of the essay should be included in your portfolio. Your oral presentation is worth 50 points.

Unit Plan Project

(Printed copy turned in to me on the initial due date and revised copy turned in with portfolio; additional revised copy turned in through Live Text is a required course element.) As a culminating activity, you are expected to compose a conceptual unit plan demonstrating your awareness of teaching composition. Use the class readings and discussion, oral presentations, and your research to inform your choices. Your unit plan should reflect knowledge of contemporary practices of teaching reading, speaking, and writing.

Clinical Experience

You will need to complete a set number of clinical observation/participation hours. We will talk about the hours as well as acceptable venues in class. You will also need to write a reflective essay that involves applying what you have learned about teaching writing to your prior and/or current clinical experiences.

Professional Portfolio

You will need to submit a professional portfolio that consists of the following:

Table of Contents

Philosophy of Composition Pedagogy

Resume

Essay on Writing Pedagogy (original graded copy and revision)

Unit Plan (original graded copy and revision)

Clinical Experience Essay

NOTE: You must complete all parts of all assignments to receive credit for the class. The School of Education's Live Text requirements apply.

Attendance

Because this course emphasizes writing as process and as collaborative activity, attendance is essential. In addition, many of the ideas used in your essays will be generated in class discussions. I realize, however, that emergencies do occur. Excused absences are those outlined in the student catalogue: "illness, emergency, or university activity." For an absence to be excused, bring proper verification (written documentation approved by me.) Unexcused absences are pretty much all others—oversleeping, hangovers, finishing papers for other classes, out-of-town trips "because I'm homesick." More than two unexcused absences will result in a penalty of one full letter grade subtracted from your final course grade.

Grade Breakdown

Journal/Participation	20%
Personal Literacy Narrative	10%
Clinical Experience Essay	10%
Unit Plan	20%
Essay on Writing Pedagogy	20%
Oral Presentation Based on Essay	5%
Philosophy of Teaching Composition Paper	5%
Portfolio (organization, appeal, labeling, quality of documents)	10%

A= 90% to 100%

B= 80% to 89%

C= 70% to 79%

D= 60% to 69%

F= 0% to 59%

Evaluation

You must hand in all assignments in order to complete the course. There will be particular criteria tailored to each assignment; we will discuss these in class. All final versions of written work must adhere to the conventions of Standard Written English, follow the format for papers outlined below, and have been carefully proofread.

Format for Papers

Type your assignments on standard-size paper. Double-space. NO extra spaces between paragraphs, please, and NO oversized fonts. In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, type your name, your instructor's name, course, and date. In the upper right-hand corner of the following pages, type your last name/page number. Staple or paper clip pages together.

Plagiarism

Here is the English Department policy on plagiarism:

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 original work” (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)--has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including 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.

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEKS 1 and 2: Understanding the Writing Process

T	01/09	Introduction to course
TH	01/11	Read Murray, Chapter 1; Kirby, Chapter 1
T	01/16	Kirby, Chapter 2; Murray, Chapter 2
TH	01/18	Murray, Chapter 3; Kirby, Chapter 4

WEEK 3: Constructing Assignments/Developing Unit Plans

T	01/23	Burke, Chapter 7
TH	01/25	Burke, Chapter 10; Murray, Chapters 4 and 5

WEEKS 4 and 5: Responding to and Evaluating Student Writing

T	01/30	Kirby, Chapter 8; Murray, Chapter 9
TH	02/01	Draft of literacy narrative due for peer response and workshop
T	02/06	Literacy narrative due Murray, Chapter 7; Kirby, Chapter 14
TH	02/08	Murray, Chapter 8; Burke, Chapter 11

WEEK 6: Creative Writing and Other Fun Stuff

T	02/13	Murray, Chapter 6; Kirby, Chapter 11
TH	02/15	In-class creative writing

WEEKS 7 and 8: Not so Fun Stuff

T	02/20	Grammar: Burke, Chapter 6
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TH 02/22 Work on pedagogy essay in library

T 02/27 **Writing Pedagogy Essay draft due for peer response**

TH 03/01 **Writing Pedagogy Essay due**

WEEK 9: Diversity

T 03/06 Burke, Chapters 16, 17, and 18

TH 03/08 Burke, Chapters 19 and 20

SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10: Digital and Media Literacies

T 03/20 Burke, Chapters 12 and 13; Kirby, Chapter 15

TH 03/22 Helping students with internet sources

WEEKS 11, 12, and 13: Oral Presentations (pretty much)

T 03/27 Oral presentations

TH 03/29 Oral presentations

T 04/03 Oral presentations

TH 04/05 Oral presentations

T 04/10 Oral presentations

TH 04/12 **Unit plan draft due for peer response**

ENGLISH STUDIES CONFERENCE, Saturday, April 14

WEEKS 14 and 15: The End is Near!!!

T 04/17 **Unit Plan due**

TH 04/19 **Clinical Experience Essay draft due for peer response**

Journals due

T 04/24 **Clinical Experience Essay due**

TH 04/26 **Portfolio due**

Live Text version of Unit Plan due

NOTE: I may make minor changes to this syllabus in order to suit the needs of the class. Changes will always be announced in advance.