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ENG 5500-001: Practicum in Writing Center Theory and Practice

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Course syllabus

ENG 5500: Practicum in Writing Center Theory and Practice

Fall 2021 | Wednesdays 3:00-5:00 | (1 credit)

The practicum is a seminar in the theory and practice (praxis) of writing center consulting. Each week, we will discuss readings and issues related to your work in the writing center.

Attendance and Participation

Because we talk about important issues for our community of practice, because much of the work done in practicum is collaborative, because you are serious scholars and professionals, and because you receive one course credit for this course, it is reasonable to expect you will attend—on time—every class session. *If an emergency arises, contact Dr. Fredrick and Dr. Smith as soon as possible via email or phone.*

Of course, you are expected to come to class with all books and other materials, prepared to contribute to a lively informed discussion of assigned readings.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Grades

You will receive written and oral feedback on your performance in this class, the written work you submit, and your work as a consultant in the writing center. You will not receive a letter grade for this course: the options are “credit” or “no credit.”

Overview of Assignments

Weekly discussion posts in D2L: We have set up a forum for each week of the semester under Discussions. Each week, you should use this space to reflect on your consulting experiences and/or to articulate questions or insights about your work, the readings, etc. By noon each Friday, you should initiate a thread on a topic of your choice. By 11:59 pm each Sunday, you should have replied substantively to at least two other threads from that week.

Formal Responses: Most weeks you will compose a formal written response in which you analyze and reflect on concepts, strategies, and issues presented in one of the assigned readings as part of the development of your praxis and philosophy of

Writing Center consulting. This 300-500 word response—which may have an assigned focus, audience, genre, or citation format—should focus on an aspect of the essay or article that seems worthy of careful analysis and detailed response: a key point, a significant feature of the article’s research methods or approach, an assumption implicit in the argument, a tactic or strategy the article advocates. Use summary to provide context for your discussion of key passages, which should be quoted or paraphrased and cited. Your analytic response should include consideration of both theory and practice: to what extent do these ideas align with what you have learned about peer tutoring, and to what extent are they reinforced—or complicated—by situations you have encountered as a writing consultant.

Leading Article Discussion: You will be responsible for choosing one of the articles on the syllabus (or another one approved by the WC directors) and leading a class discussion of approximately 30 minutes.

Philosophy of Writing Center Consulting: Your personal philosophy—the principles that support your practice as a consultant—will emerge as a synthesis of the ideas and experience you bring to the Writing Center, ideas and approaches you develop through experience, and the research and scholarship we discuss. This document will serve as a capstone for this seminar, and provide a starting point for your evolution as a consultant during the spring semester.



ENG 5500 -- Summary of weekly readings and assignments

PDF document

This overview contains a brief summary of the weekly readings and assignments. More details and the most up-to-date information can be found by going to the weekly module.