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# ENG 3401-001: Methods of Teaching Composition in Secondary Schools

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3401-001

**English 3401: Methods of Teaching Composition in Secondary Schools**

Dr. Robin L. Murray  
Office: CH 3351/314F  
Office Hours: M-R 11:30-1:30 and by appnt.

Fall 2005, Tuesday/Thursday from 3:30-4:45  
Phone: 581-6985 or 345-7983 before 10 p.m.  
cfrlm@eiu.edu or cfrlmgoodgirl@hotmail.com

**Course Objectives:**

**Following NCTE Guidelines and Illinois Content Area Standards during this course each student will**

1. demonstrate how reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and thinking are interrelated by constructing a writing-centered unit;
2. recognize the impact of cultural, economic, and social environments upon language by reading and responding to selections from Burke and EJ handout;
3. show a respect for and an understanding of diversity in language use, patterns, dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles by reading and responding to selections from Burke and EJ handouts;
4. demonstrate the influence of language and visual images on thinking and composing by reading and responding to selections from Romano;
5. demonstrate how written discourse can influence thought and action by reading and responding to Romano and *Inside Out*;
6. display an understanding of the role of technology in communication by reading and responding to *Inside Out*;
7. use major sources of research and theory to understand the relationship between research and practice by completing an argumentative essay addressing writing praxis;
8. examine, evaluate, and select resources for your writing-centered unit;
9. design instruction to meet the needs of all students and provide for students' continuous progress and success by completing your writing-centered unit;
10. organize classroom environments and learning experiences that promote effective whole class, small group, and individual work by completing your unit and sample lesson plan;
11. create learning environments which promote respect for and support of individual differences of ethnicity, race, language, culture, gender, and ability by completing your unit and sample lesson plan;
12. use assessment as an integral part of instruction and learning in your unit/lesson plan.

**Texts (Please note group selections on calendar):**

Burke, Jim. *The English Teacher's Companion*. New York: Heinemann, 1999.

Kirby, Dan, et al. *Inside Out*. Third Edition. 2003.

Murray, Donald. *A Writer Teaches Writing, Revised Second Edition*. Australia: Thomson/Heinle, 2004.

Romano, Tom. *Blending Genre, Altering Style*.

Weaver, Constance. *Teaching Grammar in Context*.

**Course Requirements:**

1. Response Statements to readings each week and to English Studies Student Conference Presentation

These one-page, single-spaced (with MLA-style parenthetical citations, reading responses are perhaps the most important writing you will do in this class because they will help you to think through the readings, and they will form the basis for your contributions to discussions.

Please include the following in each response: A title—this will signal to your readers that you have a clear focus. A clear reference to the title and author of the piece you're referring to. An epigraph, or a brief block quotation from the assigned reading or observation—to demonstrate close reading or observation and to bring readers into your response. A question, or a series of questions raised in the course of the reading. A response to the quotation and the questions it raises.

Note: Please keep all responses with my instructor comments (and/or peer feedback) in a folder/notebook. You will also be asked to lead the class discussion during one class, based on your (and your peers') reading responses.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

**An A Response:** Has an original title that signals that you have a clear focus. You begin with an epigraph—a key quotation from the reading); you offer both a personal and critical reading of the significance of the quotation you've selected. You avoid summary and say something insightful about the reading. Your writing has been "crafted"—that is, carefully constructed with clear, grammatically correct prose and no distracting typos.

**A B Response:** May have many of the markers of the A response but the explanations for why you selected your quotation is less developed. You summarize at times instead of showing insight. There may be a few typos/grammatical errors.

**A C Response:** Lacks focus, no or unconnected title, a number of writing errors (spelling, typos, and grammatical errors), little or no direct reference to our reading, not enough reflection/questioning/evidence to be considered a substantive response.

2. Writing-Centered Unit Framework with writing prompts and assessment/evaluation tools
3. Sample Lesson Plan
4. Argument Paper arguing for your position on an issue related to your chosen composition pedagogy—with evidence attached (5-7 pages)
5. Clinical Experience Journal—one entry per session on green sheet. Required for student teaching. And a two-page response to me.
6. Group Presentation—both in class and at English Studies Student Conference
7. Your theory of teaching composition—two page definition paper
8. Class Participation, quizzes and attendance
9. Responses to secondary student writing (formative—to help students improve their work)
10. Professional Portfolio, continued from other methods classes. Required for student teaching

**Grade Overview:**

Responses and in-class work:	20%
Composition Unit Frame and Lesson Plan	20%
Argument Paper	20%
Group Presentation in class:	10%
Group Presentation at conference —and response to other session	10%
Theory of Teaching Composition:	15%
Evaluative responses to secondary student writing:	5%
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	100%

### **Grading of Papers:**

Paper grades will be based on the following six areas and in compliance with the English Department's guidelines for evaluating writing:

Audience awareness, Organization, Development, Sentence Structure, Word Choice, Grammar/Usage/Mechanics. The first three categories will be weighted more heavily than the second three (60% vs. 40%).

Presentations will be evaluated according to the rubric included in the Burke text.

We will work out evaluation methods for other course requirements.

### **Attendance:**

Please note that attendance is very important in this class. If you miss more than two classes, **your grade will be lowered one letter grade per class beyond two.**

### **Plagiarism Statement:**

"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—has the right and the responsibility to impose the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of "F" for the course."

### **ADA Compliance Policy**

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

**Writing-Intensive Course:** You can submit a document from this course for your EWP, as long as you ask me to approve the submission before the end of the semester.

## Composition Methods Tentative Calendar, Subject to Change: Spring 2005

### August

- T 23 Introduction to the course; discussion of course expectations; discussion concerning types of writing and your writing process. Check out and possibly join NCTE and IATE online. Review Composition Pedagogies in groups. IQuestion to consider for your first response—How Does Murray approach the writing process—how does she envision the idea of process?
- R 25 **Response Due.** Murray. Discuss and respond to responses as a way to review ETIC. Group work with Murray. Discuss Group Presentations—a focused presentation on a composition pedagogy—expressivist? collaborative? cultural studies? Post Process? Genre-Based?—or on a type of writing or element of a writing process. I will pass out and discuss assignments for all requirements today—please keep! and Sign the contract regarding reading and understanding the syllabus. Read the rest of Murray for Tuesday and write a response.
- T 30 **Response Due.** Complete Murray discussion—apply to high school English class taking a workshop approach. What works? What doesn't? Read chapters 1-3 in *Inside Out* for R and write a response.

### September

- R 1 **Response Due.** *Inside Out* discussion. Live Text? Illinois Standards and NCTE website. Read *Inside Out* chapters 4-7 for Thursday and write a response.
- T 6 **Response Due.** *Inside Out Discussion.* Discuss Group Presentations further—will begin next Tuesday. Read *Inside Out* chapters 8-10 and 14 for Thursday and write a response.
- R 8 **Response Due.** *Inside Out* discussion. Prepare for group presentations. Discuss writing centered units. Read chapters 11-13 for Tuesday.
- T 13 **Group I Presentation** Read chapters 15 and 16 *Inside Out* for Thursday. Write an evaluative response to group I.
- R 15 **Group II Presentation** Write an evaluative response to group II. Read Romano, chapters 1-4 for Tuesday.
- T 20 **Group III Presentation** Write an evaluative response to group III. Read Romano, Chapters 5-8 for Thursday.
- R 22 **Group IV Presentation** Write an evaluative response to group IV. Read Romano, chapters 9-12 for Tuesday. Write a response.

Please Note: Responses to Romano should be lesson and/or paper topic ideas—make them practical.

T 27 **Response to Romano due.** Read Romano, chapters 13-16 for Thursday. Write a response.

R 29 **Response to Romano due.** Read Romano, chapters 17-21 for Tuesday. Write a response.

### **October**

T 4 **Response to Romano due.** Read Romano, chapters 22-24 for Thursday. Write a response.

R 6 **Response to Romano due.** Read Romano epilog and appendix for Tuesday. Work on Writing-Centered units. Work on argument papers.

T 11 **Argument Paper drafts due.**

R 13 **Argument Paper drafts number 2 due.** Read Weaver handout for Tuesday.

T 18 Language issues—Weaver handout. In class guided response. Read handouts for Thursday.

R 20 Language issues—Other handouts. Chapters by pairs for Tuesday in Weaver.

T 25 Language issues—Weaver and other handouts. In-class work/discussion. Read handouts for Thursday.

R 27 Language issues—Weaver and other handouts.

### **November—English Studies Student Conference coming up this month!**

T 1 Assessment/Evaluation/Grading.

R 3 Assessment/Evaluation/Grading.

T 8 **Writing-Centered Unit drafts due.**

R 10 **Writing Centered Unit drafts number 2 due.**

T 15 Learning Theory—Read handouts for Thursday.

R 17 Learning Theory

T 22- R 24 Thanksgiving Break—No Classes!

T 29 **Argument Papers due.**

**December**

R 1 **Writing-Centered Units due.**

T 6 Clinical Experience Journals and Comp Theory/Philosophy.

R 8 Portfolio overview/peer review.

T 13 **Portfolios Due** That means that you should have all revisions of unit or argument papers in here, as well as everything listed on your syllabus. Your philosophy of teaching composition, your responses to readings, and your response to the English Studies Student Conference session are due in here, as well. You'll get these back by Friday. There is no final.