

**English 589/489:
Studies in Rhetoric and Composition: History, Theory, Practice.
Fall 2015. OC 231**

Tom Pace
TR 5:00-6:15
Office: OC 233
Office Hours: W 11-2; TR 3-5, and by appointment
Office Phone: x1736
E-mail: tpace@jcu.edu
Canvas:
First-Year Writing Website: <http://www.jcu.edu/english/compositionprogram/fyc.htm>

A philosophy of composition entails a set of assumptions concerning the aim of writing instruction and the nature of language and learning. . . . You cannot adopt an “atheoretical” or “nonphilosophical” approach to a course, as every act of teaching arises from some set of assumptions about what teachers should teach and how students learn.

--Stephen W. Wilhoit (*Teaching Assistant's Handbook* 28, 31)

The challenge is not to get rid of complexity or to put it off, but to clear away distractions so that structure can be apprehended, to assure that the natural processes of forming by means of which we make sense of the world can take place when students are learning to read and write.

--Ann E. Berthoff (*The Making of Meaning* 12).

About this Seminar

English 589/489 is a rigorous introduction to the history, theory, and practice of teaching writing and rhetoric. Entering a field as dynamically interdisciplinary as Rhetoric and Composition requires intellectual daring and flexibility, and so we will keep both Steve Wilhoit's and Ann E. Berthoff's phrases in mind as our collective mantras. This semester we will engage in a number of research, writing and collaborative activities designed to help us put theory into practice, to practice our theories, and to think carefully about how the history of rhetoric informs the work we do in the classroom.

I believe that serious intellectual engagement and a basic understanding of pedagogical theory and history is necessary for good teaching. But I also believe that there cannot be intellectual engagement with theory without direct conversations about practice. To that end, this course invites you to explore where the lines of theory and practice blur, and where the history of this discipline informs the way we teach writing.

Because we are a diverse group working from different backgrounds and intellectual traditions, we should expect considerable disagreement over the historical, theoretical, and practical issues we address. We should all welcome such disagreement and hope to learn from one another as we proceed.

Learning Goals and Outcomes

The learning goals for this course derive from the goals for the John Carroll University Academic Learning Outcomes and from the English department's learning goals.

Learning Outcomes for the EN Major and Course

1. Read texts with active, critical skill to form and articulate accomplished interpretations.
2. Produce written analyses that demonstrate awareness of audience, organizational sophistication, and clear argumentation.
3. Recognize the employment and contextual use of the formal elements of language and genre.
4. Build oral communication skills by listening to others' ideas and articulating their own responses and questions clearly to situate themselves in the conversation.
5. Demonstrate understanding of contemporary composition pedagogy and theory, including core issues, debates, research, history, ethics, and technology.

By successfully completing the writing assignments, you will have met learning outcomes #2, 3, and 5. By completing the readings, you will have met learning outcomes #1, 3, and 5. By participating actively in the class, you will have met learning outcome #4.

Note: These goals derive from the John Carroll University Academic Learning Goals. Specifically, they derive from the following:

- Develop habits of critical analysis
- Apply creative and critical thinking
- Communicate skillfully in multiple forms of expression
- Act competently in a global and diverse world
- Apply a framework for examining ethical dilemmas
- Employ leadership and collaborative skills.

Textbooks

- *St. Martin's Guide to Teaching Writing*. 7th ed. Glenn and Goldwaithe, 2014
- *Lives on the Boundary: A Moving Account of the Struggles and Achievements of America's Educationally Underprepared*. Mike Rose. 2005 (reissue).
- *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*. 2nd ed. Gary Tate, et al. 2014.
- *Writing Across Contexts: Transfer, Composition, and Sites of Writing*, Yancey, et al, 2014.
- *Toward a Composition Made Whole*. Jody Shipka, 2011.
- *Remixing Composition: A History of Multimodal Writing Pedagogy*. Jason Palmeri, 2012.
- *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*. 3rd ed. Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein. 2014.
- Frequent handouts that I will provide either through Canvas or in class.

Note: I apologize for the price of the books, but I do hope (and think) you'll find them useful and will want to keep them on your shelf as references for teaching in the future.

Also, all writing done in this class is public. You are writing to a public, academic audience. Anything that may be of a personal nature should be revised to fit such an audience.

Course Requirements

In order to complete the learning outcomes successfully, you must complete successfully the following assignments:

Assignments: Detailed explanations for some of these assignments will be distributed. Keep in mind, all writing for this class is public. If you wish to write about personal matters, please keep

in mind the public nature of your audience.

Thought Papers: (150 points): Students will write weekly “thought papers” comprised of reflective, critical, and autobiographical pieces related to classroom discussion and assigned readings from texts. One singled-spaced page each Thursday (500 words) is required.

Classroom observation and reflexive writing assignment (150 points): Students will participate in approximately 2 hours of observation, one in a 50 or 75 minute writing classroom and one in the University Writing Center.

After observing your teacher in action, students will write reflection pieces about their class they witness (500 words). Later, students will return to their Teaching Observation piece and use course materials to theorize about the teacher’s pedagogy (500 additional words for a total of 1000). Consultation with instructors before and after students observe is a must.

Also, students will schedule a Writing Center consultation to work one-on-one with a consultant on a piece of writing from any class (including this one). After your visit, you will write a 500-word reflection on the session. Later, students will return to their Writing Center reflection piece and use course materials to theorize about the consultation (500 additional words for a total of 1000). These final reflections will be due **December 1**.

Teaching Philosophy (150 points): A 1-2 page, single-spaced document of your philosophy of teaching writing, based on the theories and practices we examine in this seminar. **Due: December 15**

Paper Proposal/Bibliography (150 points): A 1-2 page paper proposal with 4-5 page annotated bibliography (10-12 items) in preparation for the final paper. **Due: October 30, via e-mail.**

Final Paper (300 points): Students will compose an academic essay (8-10 pages) in which they begin to negotiate a current pedagogical position (or a hybridized position) for the instruction of writing. Scholarly research required. **Due: December 14, via e-mail.**

Incompletes: Please do not assume that an incomplete will be given upon request. University and departmental policy on the handling of incompletes will be followed; only in the case of verified emergencies and illnesses will an incomplete be given.

Policies: I assume you will attend every class, will be on time, and complete all the readings. This is your chance to gain a firm foundation in the field and use it to become more reflective and informed in your own teaching, writing, and reading. If you find yourself falling behind, please talk to me.

Grading:

I will evaluate your work as follows:

Final Paper	30%
Paper Proposal/Bibliography	15%
Thought Papers	15%
Observation Reflections	15%
Teaching Philosophy	15%
Class Participation	10%

Preliminary Schedule

ASSUMPTIONS AND FOUNDATIONS TO THE FIELD

Week One (September 1-3)

Assumptions: The Givens in the Field

T 9/1 Course Introduction.

R 9/3 Ruppier, et al, “What is Composition Pedagogy? An Introduction” and Anson, “Process” (GP). *TS/IS*, “Introduction: Entering the Conversation”

Week Two (September 8-10)

Assumptions: Humanizing Our Students

T 9/8 *Lives on the Boundary*.

R 9/10 Humanizing our students. Marshall, “Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Teacherly Ethos” (Handout); Murray, “The Teaching Craft: Telling, Listening, Revealing” (St. Martin’s); *TS/IS*, “Part 1: They Say”

Week Three (September 15-17)

Foundations. Competing Theories of Process and Rhetoric

T 9/15 Bizzell, “Composing Processes: An Overview” (Handout); Bartholomae, “Inventing the University” (Handout); *TS/IS*, Chapters 4-5.

R 9/17 Read: Fleming, “Rhetoric and Argumentation” (GP); Covino, “What is Rhetoric?” (Handout); *TS/IS*, Chapters 6-7.

Week Four (September 22-24)

Foundations: Multimodality and the Composition Classroom

T 9/22 Shipka, *Toward a Composition Made Whole*, Chapters 1-3

R 9/24 Shipka, *Toward a Composition Made Whole*, Finish

Week Five (September 29-October 1)

Foundations: Multimodality and Process

T 9/29 Palmeri, *Remixing Composition*, Part One

R 10/1 Palmeri, *Remixing Composition*, Part Two

Week Six (October 6-8)

Foundations: Genre and WAC Pedagogy

T 10/6 Read: Devitt, “Genre” (GP); Devitt, et al, “Materiality and Genre in the Study of Discourse Communities” (St Martin’s). *TS/IS*, Chapter 15.

R 10/8 Read: Thaiss and McLeod, “Writing in the Disciplines and Across the Curriculum” (GP). Slevin, “A Letter to Maggie” (Handout). *TS/IS* Chapters 16-17. **Turn in first Writing Center reflection.**

Week Seven (October 13-15)

Foundations: Transference in First-Year Writing

T 10/13 Yancey, et al, *Writing Across Contexts*, Chaps 1-3

R 10/15 Finish Yancey, et al.

APPROACHES TO THE TEACHING OF WRITING

Week Eight (October 20-22)

Approaches: Designing Writing Assignments and Rhetorical Practices

T 10/20 Writing Assignment Design. Read: St. Martin’s, Chapters 4 and 6.

R 10/22 Teaching the assignments. St. Martin's, Chapter 7. **Meet with Observation professor, either this week or next, for follow-up.**

Week Nine (October 27-29)

Approaches: Peer Review and Conferences

T 10/27 Conferences with students. Stancliff, "Why Student Conferences are Important" (Handout).

R 10/29 Peer review: Bishop, "Helping Peer Writing Groups Succeed" (St. Martin's);

F 10/30 **Annotated Bibliography and Proposal Due via e-mail**

Week Ten (November 3-5)

Approaches: Addressing Style

T 11/3 Hartwell, "Grammar, Grammars, and the Teaching of Grammar" (Handout); "Teaching Style" (St. Martin's); *TS/IS*, Chapter 8.

R 11/5 Ronald, "Style: The Hidden Agenda in the Composition Classroom" (Handout); Bacon, "Style in Academic Writing" (Handout). *TS/IS*, Chapters 9-10.

Week Eleven (November 10-12)

Approaches: Reading student writing: portfolios and revisions

T 11/10 Read: Sommers, "Responding to Student Writing" (St. Martin's); Elbow, "Ranking, Evaluating, and Liking"; (Handout) St. Martin's, Chapter 5.

R 11/12 Approaches: Sommers, "Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers" (Handout) and Lunsford and Lunsford, "Mistakes are a Fact of Life: A National Comparative Study (St. Martin's); *TS/IS*, Chapter 11.

Week Twelve (November 17-19)

Approaches: Reading student writing, cont.

T 11/17 Reading student writing: We will read and evaluate a selection of student papers.

R 11/19 Reading student writing. Read: Student papers. Assignment sheet on Teaching Philosophies.

Week Thirteen (November 24-26)

No class this week. Thanksgiving Holiday.

Week Fourteen (December 1-3)

Approaches: The Writing Center and *Take 20*

T 12/1 Writing Center with Maria Soriano. Read: Learner, "Writing Center" (GCP) and Harris, "Talking in the Middle: Why Writers Need Writing Tutors" (St. Martin's).

Teaching Observation and Writing Center Reflection Pieces Due

R 12/3 We will watch a short documentary on teaching writing called *Take 20*.

Week Fifteen (December 8-10)

T 12/8 Peer Review for final essay.

R 12/10 Catch up, final words.

Week Sixteen (December 16)

M 12/14 **Final Paper Due**

T 12/15 Final class: 6-7:50. Teaching Philosophies Due. Course Evaluations.

Friday, December 18. End-of-Semester Dinner at Tom's house.