ENGL 471: Teaching Writing
An online studio
Autumn 2020
TTH 12:30-2:20

Professor Frances McCue
Contact through Canvas INBOX, not by email unless you have an emergency.
Office hours held by appointment

Texts:

Teaching to Transgress, by bell hooks, Routledge, 1994. The University Bookstore is carrying it for us. They are offering a 10% discount on the front of their website.

Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire. Available as a PDF online.

Other texts will be provided within the course assignments.

Course Background:

"Although the teaching of writing *as a practice* has existed in various manifestations for hundreds of years, it has primarily existed *as a subject of study* since the 1960s and the emergence of the 'process movement.' Prior to the 1960s, writing instruction consisted mainly of teaching and evaluating product-oriented skills such as organization, paragraphing, sentence construction, grammar, spelling, and so forth. These 'technical' skills were meant to help students prepare and present their texts—their written products—to teachers who then corrected them (often with the infamous red pens). By the 1960s, however, writing teachers, influenced by work in creativity research and cognitive psychology as well as by political exigencies, became interested not just in the finished product of writing but in the processes of its production, hence a shift in focus from a product- to a process-driven writing instruction that we now call the process movement. While today the product approach is far from extinct, the process movement has nonetheless played a large role in making the field of composition studies—and this course, for that matter—possible by giving writing teachers and scholars something to *study* in addition to something to teach, namely the conditions—socio-political, material, linguistic, psychological, and cognitive—that shape writers' composing processes. As a result, the past sixty years have witnessed a wealth of research studies, theories, and practices that examine and encourage students' writing development."[1]

With this background, you can see how the teaching of writing is now a complex, dynamic process that pays attention to *how* students approach writing, *what* forms and genres they are using, and *how* they learn to generate, sustain, revise and present their work. The whole enterprise asks that you, the writing

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[1] Provided by Professor Anis Bawarshi, our UW English Department Chair and a Rhetoric and Composition specialist

teacher, act as a facilitator to meet learners where they are and help them grow both their processes and skills.

We live in a complex, globalized and multilingual reality. All around us, new media and new textures of language are emerging. Add to this the pandemic and the fact that instruction is all online right now, and you have an intersection of needs and challenges. Children are struggling to learn and schools are in disarray.

Unfortunately, after attempts to reach out to dozens of schools, teachers and UW placement organizations, I haven't been able to find a situation in which you can observe or tutor K-12 students.

Instead, I will create case studies or learning scenarios for you and your classmates to consider. I'll give you specific deliverables to create in teams. For example, I might offer the scenario that you are walking into a seventh grade classroom that uses the Common Core standards with the goal to show students how to write a poem. I might ask you to further imagine the situation (how many students, where, and how they might treat a substitute) and create a curriculum strategy. These case studies will happen in Weeks 3-7.

Goals of the Course:

Along the way, we will think critically about the values and assumptions that guide the teaching and learning that we observe and aspire to and we'll consider whose interests these practices serve so that we all can become more self-reflective readers, writers, and teachers. Most of all, I would like this course to give us a chance to think about what it means to teach writing, to develop and share our own goals for teaching writing, and to generate and articulate practices that will help us achieve these goals in the contexts of the schools, communities, and state-mandated requirements in which we may teach.

As such, the course goals are as follows:

- To familiarize you with some theories and approaches that inform education and writing instruction.
- To create learning moments from challenges.
- To help you develop the critical ability to examine the values and assumptions behind the various approaches (whose interests they serve, what they enable and what they prevent).
- To provide an opportunity for you to conduct writing-related research by reading and understanding a district curriculum and then observing a classroom over a number of weeks.
- To support you in using a theoretical vocabulary that will allow you to articulate best practices and your goals as a writing teacher.
- To develop a range of teaching materials that will help you achieve your goals in whatever contexts you choose: grade-level, state and national standards, community settings or higher education.
- To imagine how to help struggling learners during difficult times.

Course Requirements and Practices:

1. *Reading and Discussing* theories of teaching and learning as well as actual curriculum materials. We'll read <u>Teaching to Transgress</u> and <u>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</u> to get a sense of what

education is, what it can be and how we see our own emerging roles as future teachers of writing. We'll read the Teaching for Learning curriculum at Federal Way and other materials to contextualize theory and praxis. You'll keep **online or analog notebooks** to record notes of your engagement with the required reading. Prompts will be provided. You will also post in **discussion groups** and form "breakout" discussions with your colleagues.

2. *Developing a Teaching Manifesto or Philosophy.* Based on your reading and experience, you'll create a one-page document that addresses why and how you want to teach.

3. *Observing, taking notes and discussing* the "case studies" I offer you. Prompts for **online or analog notebooks** will be included in our assignments and you will discuss your experiences in small groups and on **discussion posts**.

   We will be spending the middle of our course, weeks 3 – 7, engaged in creating "deliverables" for the teaching scenarios. One set of deliverables will be created per group.

4. *Developing a set of "best practices" that you observe and imagine.* This will be a three page list that includes a theoretical statement, justification and example.

5. *Creating a Teaching Writing Philosophy.* This will be one page.

6. *Creating and Participating in short teaching presentations* and offering peer-assistance to your colleagues.

7. *Delivering a Final Portfolio* that includes your notebook (if analog, please scan to PDF)

Course Deliverables and Assessment:

Along with class participation, the four main course projects are designed to help achieve the above course goals. They involve keeping a response/application journal, participating in observing and responding to student work, preparing a bibliography and curriculum design presentation, and compiling a final teaching portfolio. Assignments must be turned in on the day they are due; unexcused late projects and papers will be penalized a .3 per day.

1. ***Response Notebook/ Journal (20%):***

Throughout the quarter, you will be required to keep a journal (4 pages handwritten or 2 single spaced typed per week) in which you respond to and apply the course readings and make observations about your work in the case studies. You should customize the readings for your own needs and circumstances. As such, the journal will be evaluated on the quality with which you engage the readings: how you **respond** to readings and the classroom observations (how and why they add to, complicate, or disagree with your own goals for teaching writing), **place them in relation** to other readings and situations, and **apply** them into practices you might employ as a teacher of writing. Importantly, the journal will help scaffold the final portfolio, so the more you can be thinking about how the various readings can be applied (in the form of activities, assignments, lesson plans, etc.) to classes you might teach one day, the better prepared you will be to complete the final teaching portfolio.

At the end of the course, you will include your notebook in the final portfolio.

2. ***Case studies (20%):***

This component of the course will include one case study/teaching scenario per week for four weeks. You will work in groups of 5 to create a list of assumptions to flesh out your imagining of the case study and your approach to it. Then, you will create a brief outline for a "mini-lesson" that you might employ in this situation. Much of this work will happen in discussions with your classmates in ZOOM breakout rooms during our class sessions.

3. *Presentation and Bibliography (20%):*

In groups of 5-7, you will select and research a particular writing-related teaching practice (for example, you can examine best practices in assignment design, the six traits, the use of portfolios, assessment, group work, the use of new media, grammar, revision, diversity, working with English Language Learners, etc.). The resulting project asks you to compile a brief bibliography and to present what you have learned about your subject to the class in as creative, multimodal, and engaging a way as possible. Your job will be to teach the class. Each group will receive one group grade.

4. *Teaching Portfolio (25%):*

For the final project, you will create an electronic teaching portfolio (using the Canvas portfolio tool under Profile) of teaching materials that showcases your work this term and **applies** the approaches we have discussed in class. You'll be asked to create curricular strategies to address the relevant state or national standards for the context in which you might one day teach.

You will also include your Response Journal, Teaching Philosophy, Teaching Writing Philosophy and best practices.

To complete the portfolio, you will have to do the following: 1) **select** a state or national standard appropriate to the context in which you plan to teach (for example: Common Core State Standards, Frameworks for Success in Post-secondary Writing, or the WPA Outcomes Statement for First-year college composition). 2) **develop** three teaching artifacts (for example: a writing assignment or series of assignments that build on one another, a syllabus for a writing class, a lesson plan, or worksheets meant to help students with writing, etc.) that support the standards for the grade level you are interested in teaching as well as that apply the range of approaches we have read and discussed. 3) write approximately a 300 word **reflection** for **each** artifact (approximately 900 words in all) that describes and explains how each of your artifacts reflects the different approaches *and* how it supports the standards you selected. Lastly, 4) **revise and include** your Teaching Manifesto/philosophy statement, Best Practices for Teaching list and Teaching Writing Philosophy Statement. These are all one-page, double-spaced documents.

5. *Participation (15%):*

This includes not only your class attendance but also your engagement in the work of the class, including participation in class discussions and workshops, working productively with your group, and being active during group presentations.

Grading Summary: Points total 100: Response Journal 20; Case Studies 20; Presentation and Bibliography 20; Teaching portfolio 25; Participation 15.

Grades

A	100 %	to 94.0%
A-	< 94.0 %	to 90.0%
B+	< 90.0 %	to 87.0%
B	< 87.0 %	to 84.0%
B-	< 84.0 %	to 80.0%
C+	< 80.0 %	to 77.0%
C	< 77.0 %	to 74.0%
C-	< 74.0 %	to 70.0%
D+	< 70.0 %	to 67.0%
D	< 67.0 %	to 64.0%
D-	< 64.0 %	to 61.0%
F	< 61.0 %	to 0.0%

If you require accommodation owing to a disability immediately contact the Disabilities Resources for Students Office (DRS) in Schmitz Hall 448 (206-548-8924; uwdss@u.washington.edu) or the Disabilities Services Office (DSO) at dso@u.washington.edu. *It is your responsibility to notify me in writing and in advance of any accommodations to be arranged by either the DSO or DRS office and—should forms be involved—to deliver those to me in person during office hours, with time enough to allow for us to arrive at a mutual understanding of the means by which those accommodations are best met.*

Do not plagiarize. Plagiarism includes lifting material from the web, collusion, and the use of sources without citation. If you have any questions regarding what constitutes plagiarism, consult me. All sources must be documented, and papers are to be the result of your own labor.

This syllabus is subject to change. You are responsible for keeping up with any modifications to schedule or assignments.

Required Technology

You will need to make use of the following technology:

- Reliable Internet access.
- Computer specifications adequate for using the Canvas LMS hosting your course. This Canvas page can help you with this and other general questions: https://guides.instructure.com/m/67952
- Audio speakers or headphones for listening to course videos and other files with audio.
- A webcam or video camera for submitting at least one video assignment.
- A word-processing program, such as Microsoft Word.

Recommended

I suggest you use your UW Google Drive for compiling a Portfolio of academic work, and add to it the major assignments from this course. See [Google Drive / IT Connect](#) site for instructions on how to set up a Drive folder. This will allow you to have back up copies and offer you a portfolio that will collect professional materials you may want to use later. Then, you can import what you need for the course's Teaching Portfolio on Canvas.

General Discussion Forum

The [General Discussion Forum](#) is for use by students throughout the quarter to post their questions or comments about the course, including questions about course materials, assignments, learning objectives, or other course content. Feel free to respond to the comments of your fellow students. (To communicate privately with me, your instructor, place use the Canvas INBOX.)

Always keep your posts respectful and constructive. For guidelines about effective posting, see this Netiquette page: https://uwodashboard.pce.uw.edu/sr/netiquette.asp

Academic Dishonesty and Student Conduct

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty means, among other things, plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting someone else's work as your own; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

You are expected to contribute in this online course in the same responsible, respectful way as you would in a classroom-based course. See the Student Conduct Code for further information: http://www.washington.edu/cssc/student-conduct-overview/student-code-of-conduct/