

# English 309

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Kate Ryan, ENGL 309, Spring 2002, Approaches to Teaching Composition

Professor Kate Ryan

English 309

TR 10-11:15

117 Armstrong

## **Approaches to Teaching Composition**

This course focuses on how to teach writing to secondary school students by introducing future English teachers to the theories and practices of using writing in language arts classrooms. The overall course goal is for participants to develop their own philosophy of teaching writing based on a range of course readings, researched topics, and reflections about writing, reading, and learning. Since teachers of writing need to write themselves, we will organize a reading/writing community where we will write together and respond to each other's drafts as we discuss theories and strategies for teaching writing. The philosophy behind forming this community is that reading, writing, and learning are social acts that gain meaning through conversation with others.

### **Course Goals**

Through the readings, assignments, and class activities, students will

1. Understand the relationships between the theories of writing and teaching writing in a variety of contexts;
2. Explore concepts of literacy as part of a coherent program of instruction;
3. Reflect in writing on their reading, writing, and learning practices, their potential students, and their realizations about education and writing instruction across the course;
4. Learn and practice the stages of process writing;
5. Learn and practice strategies for small group work and collaboration;

6. Write in a range of genres for a variety of purposes, including informal and formal writing assignments;
7. Experience and learn about various forms of teacher response and assessment;
8. Learn and engage in various forms of teacher research;
9. Design reading and writing activities for high school English classrooms
10. Account for media and technology options, student learning styles, and cultural diversity when discussing and planning teaching methods.

### **Course Evaluation**

Your success in this class will depend on the following: meeting the requirements; the quality of your written and oral work; your willingness to try new perspectives, to revise and rethink, to take risks. You will have the opportunity to revise your literacy essay and observation/case study at the end of the semester.

Your grade will be determined based on the following percentages.

Literacy Essay 15%

Observation/case study 25%

Collaborative writing unit 20%

Journals, attendance, and participation 25%

Philosophy of teaching 15%

### **Course Texts**

Elbow, Peter and Pat Belanoff. Sharing and Responding. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2000.

Kutz, Eleanor and Hephzibah Roskelly. An Unquiet Pedagogy: Transforming Practice in the English Classroom. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1991.

A handbook for grammar, punctuation, and documentation.

Novel for reading assignment. To be chosen from pre-selected list.

Reserve readings

### **Office Hours**

My office hours are TWR 1-3. You may drop in during these times or make an appointment with me to talk about your work in the course. You may also email me at [me@wvu.edu](mailto:me@wvu.edu). **To reach me by phone during office hours call 272-3107 x427.**

### **Absences and Lateness**

Absences will compromise your grade. If you have two absences before midterm, I recommend you drop the class. Four or more absences will result in a failing grade. If you must miss class, you are responsible for obtaining any handouts or assignments for the class from your peers. Lateness to class will also compromise your grade. Late work will not be accepted. If you have a problem with a deadline, talk with me in advance. Deadlines are not negotiable after you've missed them.

### **Intellectual Property**

Because of the value placed on intellectual property in the university community, recognizing and avoiding plagiarism is critical. There is a significant penalty for representing some one else's words or ideas as your own; at WVU that penalty is an unforgivable F in the course.

### **Social Justice**

This English 309 course supports WVU's commitment to social justice.

### **Spring 2002 Class Schedule for English 309**

\*subject to revision as needed; please keep up with syllabus in event of school cancellation because of inclement weather.

#### Week 1

Tues, Jan 15 Introduction to Course and Members

Thurs, Jan 17 What is literacy?

Journal on why write and why teach writing

## Week 2

Tues, Jan 22 Writing Process — Focus on Invention (start literacy moment)

Thurs, Jan 24 Sharing and Responding, Belanoff and Elbow 1-11; bring first draft of literacy moment

## Week 3

Tues, Jan 29 Chapter 6 Unquiet Pedagogy "Writing as Composing" and

NCTE position statement on teaching composition

Journal on your composing process

Thurs, Jan 31 Writing Workshop — Turn in final copy of literacy moment

Reflection on what we believe about literacy (write in class)

## Week 4

Tues, Feb 5 Reading and Writing — Chapter 7 Unquiet Pedagogy "Reading and Meaning"

Thurs, Feb 7 First half of book

Journal on your process of reading

## Week 5

Tues, Feb 12 Writing responses to reading; assignment design (use handout)

Design an informal writing assignment for your book (in class)

Thurs, Feb 14 Second half of book

Bring in a formal writing assignment on book; plan to present to class and turn in

## Week 6

Tues, Feb 19 Introduction and Chapter 1, "The Culture of the Classroom," Unquiet Pedagogy

Introduction to observation or case study assignment (identify sites in advance; pairs visits, but write individual papers)

Thurs, Feb 21 Discuss ethnographic handouts (Heath and Purcell-Gates)

### Week 7

Tues, Feb 26 Chapter 2 Unquiet Pedagogy "Thought and Language"

Journal on concept(s) of chapter

Thurs, Feb 28 Research Workshop: Bring in at least three pages of field or case study notes from at least one visit to your site or one interaction with your case study person and an artifact.

### Week 8

Tues, Mar 5 Chapter 9 Unquiet Pedagogy "Creating the Classroom Community"

Representations of Teachers/School in Film/TV (start video showing)

(Midterm D/F grades due)

Thurs, Mar 7 Complete video showing

Journal on representations of teachers/students in media

### Week 9

Tues, Mar 12 Chapter 3 Unquiet Pedagogy "Language in Context: Home and School"

Journal on school and home language issues

Thurs, Mar 14 Writing workshop: rough draft exchange.

### Week 10

Tues, Mar 19 Online Research on Teaching Writing (Stansbury Lab; online research to supplement to observation/case study)

Thurs, Mar 21 No Class; I'm at the CCCCs conference. Observation/case study due to my box by Friday, March 22 at noon.

Week 11

Spring Break: Mar 24-20

Week 12

Tues, Apr 2 Chapter 8 Unquiet Pedagogy "Imagination in the English Classroom"

Thurs, Apr 4 Creative writing

Week 13

Tues, Apr 9 Chapter 5 Unquiet Pedagogy "Language and Literacy"

Journal response on your own experiences with learning grammar (to peer)

Thurs, Apr 11 Introduce philosophy of teaching assignment

Week 14

Tues, Apr 16 Discuss handouts on evaluation (Elbow and Strater)

Journal on your own experiences with having your writing evaluated (to peer)

Thurs, Apr 18 Grading student writing; Bruffee handout and collaborative project (3-4 students)

Week 15

Tues, Apr 23 collaboration

Thurs, Apr 25 collaboration (do course evaluations)

Week 16

Tues, Apr 30 mini presentations on writing unit

Thurs, May 2 mini presentations on writing unit

Final Exam Tuesday, May 7, 11-1. Philosophy of teaching due during this time.