

**ENGLISH 309: APPROACHES TO TEACHING COMPOSITION – Spring 2013**  
**Section 01, TR 1:00 – 2:15, ARM-D 119**

**English 309 is required for English Education Students.**

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Nathalie Singh-Corcoran  
OFFICE: G 02 Colson Hall  
HOURS: W 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm; other times by appt.  
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TEXTS

Course readings on E-Campus

ONE of the following (TBD in groups):

Early, Jessica Singer and Meredith DeCosta. *Real World Writing for Secondary Students*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2012. ISBN: 978-0807753866

Brooke, Robert, *Rural Voices: Place-Conscious Education and the Teaching of Writing*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2003. (See Nathalie to borrow copies of this book)

DeVoss, Danielle, Troy Hicks, and Eylse Eidman-Aadhal. *Because Digital Writing Matters*. New York: Jossey-Bass, 2010. ISBN: 978-0-470-89223-7

Lamott, Anne. *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing Life*. New York: Anchor Books, 1995. ISBN: 978-0385480017

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

English 309, Approaches to Teaching Composition introduces future middle and secondary school English teachers to literacy pedagogy in and beyond the language arts classroom. You are invited to further develop your knowledge about writing and teaching and are encouraged to become teacher-scholars (educators who envision themselves as researchers, writers, and reflective practitioners). The classroom will be a collaborative reading and writing community where we all read, write, and make knowledge together. The philosophy informing this community is that reading, writing, and learning are social acts that gain meaning through conversation with others.

Your efforts will culminate in a portfolio project. Portfolios will largely be comprised of both formal and informal assignments that represent your engagement with and learning in the course.

COURSE GOALS

Through the reading and writing assignments, and classroom discussions and activities, you will:

- study theories of composition pedagogy in a variety of contexts

- design writing assignments and sequences for middle or high school language arts classrooms;
- reflect on reading, writing, learning, and assessment practices
- engage in teacher research;
- participate in collaborative learning, and design ways to incorporate collaborative learning in language arts classrooms;
- write in a range of genres for a variety of purposes, including formal and informal writing assignments;
- account for media and technology options, diverse learning styles, and cultural diversity when discussing and planning teaching approaches.

### COURSE ASSESSMENT

Your success in this class will depend upon the following:

- your ability to meet the general requirements as outlined in the syllabus;
- the quality of your written and oral work (please keep in mind that English 309 is both a methods course and a writing course requiring 20+ polished pages of writing);
- Your willingness to try on new ideas and perspectives, to revise, rethink, and take risks;
- your ability to approach all of the above as a pre-service teacher.

### INVITATIONS TO CRITIQUE, WRITE, AND CREATE

You will be asked to complete several projects this semester that will culminate in a portfolio to be handed in at the end of the semester.

The minor and major projects (in order of semester sequence) include:

#### INFORMAL WRITING (Part 1 and Part 2)

Part 1: Each of you will be responsible for coming up with an Invitation to Write. We'll begin each class with a 7-10 minute writing prompt of your devising. The prompt should consist of quotes, ideas, themes, or questions raised from our day's assigned reading.

Part 2: Please keep all Invitations to Write in one place (eg: a journal, notebook, Word file) because **you will need to include at least six responses in your portfolio**. In your response, my expectation is that you'll use some combination of your experiences and your interpretations of the readings.

#### INTERVIEW ESSAY

During the second week of class, you will be conducting an interview of a peer and then writing an essay based on your peer's responses to your questions about her/his experiences with writing and what motivated her/him to choose teaching as a career (or alternatively, what interests her/him about becoming a teacher). **Required for Portfolio**

## LITERATURE CIRCLES, BOOK FAIR, AND WRITTEN CRITIQUE

You and your literature circle groups will choose a book on the syllabus to read (copies for most books are available at the bookstore). You will meet with your groups to discuss the book and plan for your presentation. As a group, you will present your reactions to the book and discuss its relevancy and usefulness to teachers, administrators, and parents.

You will also each write a 750-1000 word written critique. Your written critique should be an extension of your presentation (more guidelines to follow). **Required for Portfolio**

## MINI-ETHNOGRAPHY

Drawing on ethnographic approaches, you will observe a classroom in action (or observe an alternative act of teaching and learning like a tutoring session at the Writing Center) and write-up your observations. Your observations need a critical bent. You'll need a lens through which to focus your observations – like “teaching writing in the classroom” or “students attitudes about writing” or “teacher’s philosophy of teaching writing.” **The mini-ethnography is a required entry in your portfolio.**

## PEDAGOGY PROJECT AND TEACHING DEMONSTRATION

Drawing on the reading we’ve done inside and outside the class as well as the invitations to write and critique, you will choose a topic related to the Teaching of Composition, put together a packet of materials for your fellow classmates, and perform a 15 min teaching demonstration. Your packet will include:

- 1) a two page (single-spaced) description of your topic, your collective interest in it, and its usefulness in the classroom.
- 2) an annotated bibliography of 5-7 sources relevant to your topic
- 3) a description of the lesson to be demonstrated on the day you present and any relevant handouts so that anyone could adapt the lesson to their own classroom contexts
- 4) a list of learning outcomes and/or relevant CSOs

Teaching Demonstration: You will also put together and perform a 20 min. interactive presentation in which you will describe your topic and the contents of your packet and perform your lesson. This is a graded assignment, but you can choose to include it in your portfolio.

## THE PORTFOLIO AND REFLECTIVE LETTER

The portfolio is the culminating project. Portfolios are traditionally collections that showcase your best work. Artists, architects, web designers, and teachers create professional portfolios that highlight their work philosophies, strengths, and innovations. You are invited to collect material over the course of the semester that brings to light your learning in this class and your best work. Your

portfolio will begin with a reflective letter that indicates what you've gained from the class.

### GRADE BREAKDOWN

Participation and Preparedness	200 pts or 20%
Book Fair and Critique	REQUIRED
Pedagogy Project/Teaching Demonstration	200 pts or 20%
Informal Writing	REQUIRED
Interview Essay	REQUIRED
Mini-Ethnography	REQUIRED
Portfolio	600 pts or 60%

### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ABSENCES will compromise your grade. If you have two absences before midterm, I recommend you drop the class. Four or more absences may result in a failing grade. Tardiness will also negatively impact your grade. If you must miss class, you are responsible for obtaining any handouts or assignments for the class from your peers. Tardiness will also compromise your grade.

LATE WORK will not be accepted. If you have an issue with a deadline, talk to me in advance. Deadlines are not negotiable once you have missed them, so talk to me early.

Because of the value placed on INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY in the university community, you must be able to identify and avoid plagiarism. Consult the WVU Undergraduate Catalogue and its section on Academic Integrity to refresh your understanding of the appropriate use of materials. There is significant penalty for representing someone else's words or ideas as your own; at WVU the penalty is an unforgivable F in this course.

This course supports WVU's commitment to SOCIAL JUSTICE. Please consult the Undergraduate catalogue for further information on university policy.

### ACCOMODATIONS

If you require special accommodations due to physical limitations or a learning disability, please let me know so that I can better serve you as an instructor.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The WVU Writing Center, located at G02 Colson Hall and offers free writing assistance to all students. Call 293-5788 for more information.

## English 309, Daily Schedule

- Subject to change as needed
- Keep up with the schedule in the event of class cancellation or delay due to bad weather

### January 2013

#### Tuesday

15

Class Activities:

**Invitation to Write: Nathalie**

Writing to Learn and Learning to Write, Introductions to course assignments

Homework: Yancy "Writing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" and "NCTE Beliefs about Teaching Writing"

22

Class Activities:

**Invitation to Write:**

Interview #1 and Audience Discussion

Homework: Lindeman's "What does Process Involve" and Bybel's "Steps of Ing"

29

Class Activities:

**Invitation to Write**

Interview #3 and Discuss Readings on Real World Writing

Homework: Draft of Interview and Gardner's "Designing Writing Assignments" Chapters 1 and 2  
<http://wac.colostate.edu/books/gardner/>

#### Thursday

17

Class Activities:

**Invitation to Write:**

History of Composition

Homework: Fulwiler's "Writing for Readers" and Turner's "Digitaltalk as Community"

24

Class Activities:

**Invitation to Write**

Interview #2, Process Discussion, and Activity

Homework: Wells' "They Can Get there From Here" and Dayton-Woods Et. Al "Bridging Gaps and Preserving Memories"

31

Class Activities:

**Invitation to Write**

Workshop Interview Essays and Discuss Assignment Design

Due Today: Draft of Interview

Homework: Gardner, Chapter 3  
<http://wac.colostate.edu/books/gardner/>

## February

<p>5 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p><b>Invitation to Write</b></p> <p>Read around of Interviews, Designing Writing Assignments, and Introduce Mini-Ethnography</p> <p><u>Homework:</u> “The Harvard WP Bulletin”</p>	<p>7 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p><b>Invitation to Write</b></p> <p>Assessing Writing, Introduce Literature Circle and Written Critique Assignment</p> <p><u>Homework:</u> Bauer, “When I stopped Writing on Their Papers” and Tharp “Wiki, Wiki, Wiki, What?”</p>
<p>12 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p><b>Invitation to Write</b></p> <p>Rubrics, Scoring Guides, and Alternatives.</p> <p><u>Homework:</u> Have your Lit Circle text in hand for next class</p>	<p>14 <u>Class Activities:</u> Designing Protocols and Literature Circles</p>
<p>19 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p>Literature Circles</p>	<p>21 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p>Literature Circles</p> <p><u>Homework:</u> Written Critique and Book Talk</p>
<p>26 <u>Class Activities:</u> Book Talks, Introduce Pedagogy Project</p> <p><u>Due Today:</u> Written Critique</p> <p><u>Homework:</u> Canton’s “Building Fantasy Worlds Through Collaborative Learning” and Dale’s “Collaborative Writing Interactions”</p>	<p>28 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p><b>Invitation to Write</b></p> <p>Discussions on Collaborative Writing and Learning</p> <p><u>Homework:</u> WPA Statement on Plagiarism, and NCTE Research Brief on “Using Evidence in Writing”</p>

## March

5

Class Activities:

Invitation to Write

Research and Academic Integrity.

Homework: Dean's Genre

7

Class Activities:

Invitation to Write

The Importance of Genre

Homework: Mini-Ethnography due via email on March 14 at 5:00 pm,

Sweeny's "Writing for the IM and TM Generation"

<http://www.mylearningspaces.com/docs/WritingIM.pdf>

and

Common Sense Media "Children, Teens, and Entertainment Media"

<http://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/research/view-from-the-classroom-final-report.pdf>

12

Continue working on Mini-Ethnography

14

Mini-Ethnography due via email at 5:00 pm

Read for March 26: Sweeny's "Writing for the IM and TM Generation" and Common Sense Media "Children, Teens, and Entertainment Media"

<http://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/research/view-from-the-classroom-final-report.pdf>

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Spring Break

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Spring Break

<p>26 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p><b>Invitation to Write</b></p> <p>Digital Writing and the Plugged in Student, and discuss Final Portfolio</p> <p>Homework: Oshaughessy's "Writing a Bicycle" <a href="http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/1978">http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/1978</a></p>	<p>28 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p><b>Invitation to Write</b></p> <p>The Teacher-Researcher</p> <p><u>Homework:</u> Pedagogy Project</p>
<p><b>April</b></p>	
<p>2</p> <p>Regular Class Cancelled for Individual Conferences with Nathalie to discuss Pedagogy Project and any other writing assignments.</p>	<p>4 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p>Pedagogy Project Presentations</p>
<p>9 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p>Pedagogy Project Presentations</p>	<p>11 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p>Pedagogy Project Presentations</p>
<p>16 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p>Pedagogy Project Presentations</p>	<p>18 <u>Class Activities:</u></p> <p>Pedagogy Project Presentations</p> <p><u>Homework:</u> Gee's "Literacy, Discourse, and Linguistics"</p>



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**Invitation to Write**

Class Activities: Discuss

Homework: Draft of Reflective Letter

25

Class Activities:

Workshop Reflections (bring copy of reflective piece to class), Portfolio troubleshooting

30

Class Activities:

Portfolio Troubleshooting

Homework: Continue working on Portfolios

**May 2**

Class Activities:

Portfolios due, End-of-Semester Celebration!