

*WRD 395/WRD 582
Writing Center Theory and Pedagogy
Winter 2010 - W 6:00-9:15*

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COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE OBJECTIVES: This course is designed to familiarize you with current theories and practices of modern writing centers as well as give you training in working with writers one-on-one. During the quarter, we will work to come to terms with what it means to teach writing and examine the roles writing centers play in helping students negotiate the terrain of college literacy.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will require a great deal of reading and discussion. Formal papers and projects, therefore, will be kept to a minimum. Although I will introduce topics for class consideration, much of the substance of the course will depend upon your own goals, initiative, and experiences working with writers in the Centers. You will be expected to come to class prepared to discuss what you have read and to share with the class your emerging ideas and theories about tutoring and the teaching of writing.

Practicum: The course requires that you work **five hours** a week during the quarter in the University Writing Centers. The Director of the Writing Centers is Lauri Dietz, and you'll need to coordinate your hours with the WC.

Guest Speakers: Over the course of the quarter, we may be discussing several topics with guest speakers who have expertise in writing or writing center issues.

TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

REQUIRED (Note that we will not read every page of every book; some things you read may not be discussed in class unless you raise issues about the material. That said, you should find these books to be valuable resources for your work with students in the centers and beyond.)

- ❖ Barnett, Robert W & Jacob S. Blumner, Eds. *The Longman Guide to Writing Center Theory and Practice*.
- ❖ Gillespie, Paula & Neal Lerner. *The Longman Guide to Peer Tutoring*, 2nd ed.
- ❖ Trimble, John. *Writing with Style*.
- ❖ Lunsford, Andrea. *St. Martins Handbook*, 5th ed. (**No need to buy this**; it's costly, and there are copies in both writing centers)
- ❖ Other readings are posted in .pdf files on the class Blackboard site. When assigned, these should be printed out, read, annotated and brought to class.

Blackboard Discussion Board

We'll be using the Discussion Board feature on the class Blackboard site to encourage and nurture out-of-class conversations about issues arising from reading and tutoring experiences—questions, comments, ideas. Here's how it works: When want to post (and you should post four times during the quarter), post that week's reading response to (see below) with *your questions* to the site by 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays (the day before class). Then respond to one (or more) of the questions already posted. Posts should be clear, thoughtful, and respectful and provide some context. Response lengths should be no more than 250 words.

PAPERS AND PROJECTS:

E-Portfolio

- + Reading and tutoring responses
- + Portfolio reflective essay
- + Shadowing journal
- + One Peer Observation Reflection

One of the major projects for this course is the keeping that will record your thoughts and responses in three areas: reading, tutoring, shadowing. We will spend some time in class on formats for the e-portfolio. For the time being, collect and keep your work (somewhere safe!).

Reading responses should include:

- a) Date of entry
- b) Title, author, and date of article
- c) Short (1-2 sentence) summary. This section should state the author's main argument ("Author *claims*" "Author *argues*").
- d) A short (two to three paragraph) response.

Responses can be personal or critical, but you should attempt to make observations and connections to your reading and your work. You can synthesize claims of the reading, compare and contrast the author's ideas with the ideas of others or your own, reflect on how the reading affirms or challenges your ideas or the ideas of others. *Ask two open-ended questions for each reading response that you intend to raise during class discussion.* Post this to the Blackboard Discussion Board before 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday night before class.

Respond to ONE READING (an article, essay, or chapter) per week--though I will expect you to have read all assigned reading. Our discussions will depend upon this.

Tutoring entries should include the following:

- a) Date of entry
- b) Tutorial time and date
- c) First name of student only (or pseudonym)
- d) What you and the student worked on (provide some context)
- e) What problems/successes you had
- f) Connections between your work and what we have discussed/read for class

Respond to ONE TUTORING SESSION per week.

Shadowing Responses

The Writing Center requires that you shadow an experience tutor as she tutors **twice** before you begin to tutor. These will be set up by Lauri Dietz. You are also required to be shadowed once. Shadowing responses should also go into your reading and tutoring journal

Shadowing entries should include the following:

- a) Date/Time: The date of the tutorial session and the time the tutorial began and ended.
- b) Tutor: The name of the tutor you are observing (or that observes you).
- c) Type of Session: Describe on what stage of the writing process the tutorial is focused and on what type of assignment the writer is working.

- d) Description/Comments/Questions: This is box for you to note what stood out to you the most. What questions do you want to follow up on? They can be procedural, theoretical, or pedagogical.

(See information sheet on Blackboard Site (Under Course Documents) for more information on Shadowing)

Peer Observation Reflection (2 pages, double-spaced) You will observe a tutorial conducted by another tutor and then write a reflection about that observation. Again, include the date, time, and location of the tutorial as well as the name of the person you are observing. You should avoid writing an evaluation of the tutorial; instead, you should focus on the larger theoretical questions that were raised in the practices of the tutorial and relate them to your own tutoring theories and practices. Here are some questions to consider when composing your reflection:

- a) How does the tutorial you observed engage with the larger scholarly debates on writing center theory and practice?
- b) What did you see as the goal of the tutorial? How was that goal reached?
- c) What wouldn't you have thought of that the tutor did?
- d) How would you have approached the tutorial differently?
- e) How did the writer seem to respond throughout the tutorial? What insights about the tutoring process did you gain by observing the writer's body language and responses?
- f) How does this observation affect your overall tutoring philosophy and practices?

Journal entries must be typed (so I can read them). They need **not** come to definitive judgments nor be stylistically magnificent. They do **not** need formal introductions or neat conclusions. They **should be** thoughtful and reflective—albeit rough—chronicles of your reading, tutoring, and thinking.

Journals will be collected every class period; I'll record their completion and return them the next class period. They will not receive letter grades, but rather a (✓) for adequate work, a (✓-) for substandard work, and a (✓+) for superior work, plus a brief comment. If you receive a (✓-) and don't know why, you should see me immediately. At midterm and at the end of the term, I'll collect all responses, compiled into a "portfolio." **For the portfolio submission:** review your responses **and write a focused reflection** that illustrates a particular insight about the work we've been doing this quarter. Your reflection should explore an aspect or aspects of your work as a tutor and your evolving understandings of the theoretical and practical aspects of teaching writing.

Note that we'll have EIGHT weeks that require weekly response writing. Of these eight weeks, you need only select SIX weeks worth, making your own choices about when not to write. At the end of the term, you should have 3 (2 + 1) shadowing responses, 6 reading responses and 6 tutoring responses (and 6-12 questions posted on the Discussion Board, plus even more responses to others' questions). No portfolio entries can be recorded late with the exception of tutoring responses (if you have had no one to tutor that week). One letter grade will be deducted from your final term grade if you fail to submit at least six weeks' worth of responses. No extra credit will be rewarded for writing more than the required entries. The choice to abstain from writing a response during a given week does NOT give you a pass on the reading.

FINAL PROJECTS

Each student, undergraduate and graduate, will be expected to participate in the production of a final project in which you produce **a scholarly manuscript for submission to a writing conference or publication**. The focus should be on some part of *the work you've done in the writing centers*, contextualized by the readings and discussions from class. The manuscript you write will be contingent, of course, on the venue to which you intend to submit it; however, this sort of work will require independent reading to determine a thesis to argue and should be written in academic prose (with source citations). For this project, you must schedule a minimum of one formal tutorial session with a WC tutor, and produce a prospectus in week four and a draft in week eight for my review. Approximate length: 8-10 pages.

The last week of class will be dedicated to the presentation of projects. Because these projects will take different shapes, the mode of presentation may vary but please use some kind of visual aid (PowerPoint, handout, website,

etc.). This presentation should serve your audience (tutors in writing centers).

GRADING:

The grading will be based on the following (percentages are approximate):

1. Writing Center Response Portfolio (40%)
2. Final Presentation and Paper (40%)
3. Class participation (includes Discussion Board) (20%)

The workload in this class does take under consideration the 3 hours of work per week that everyone does in the Centers. I've tried to put the most reading in the beginning of the class when tutoring duties are usually the lightest.

ATTENDANCE:

Mandatory. Missing more than one class will reduce your final grade. Missing part of one class will result in a grade deduction unless it is your only absence. Assumption: class time is a critical part of this class.

LATE PAPERS:

Submission of work after the due date will reduce your final grade.

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COURSE OUTLINE

This outline is tentative and subject to change. Please keep informed about the required reading and assignments for each week. Additional readings will be distributed later in the quarter as necessary. If you have any questions about assignment or can't find required reading, let me know a.s.a.p.

Weds., 1/6 INTRODUCTION TO COURSE AND SYLLABUS
Introduction to composition theory and the composing process.
IN CLASS: The composing process.
Guest Speakers: Lauri Dietz, Liz Coughlin (director and associate director of UCWbL, respectively)
Read: Harris .pdf, 3-25 (Under Course Documents—Readings—on Blackboard)

Fri., 1/8 **WRITING CENTER – All Staff Meeting- 10:00 am – 4:00 pm**

Weds., 1/13 COMPOSING AND TUTORING IN A WRITING CENTER
Read: Harris, Ch. 3 .pdf; Ch.1-3 (PT); North, North, Lunsford, Hobson (WCTP)
DUE: Reading/tutoring journals

Weds., 1/20 DYNAMICS OF THE WRITING CONFERENCE
Read: Bruffee, Brooks, Shamon & Burns (WCTP); Matsuda & Cox (ESL on .pdf)

- Weds., 1/27** INVENTION, ARRANGEMENT AND REVISION
Read: Connors & Glenn, Ch. 7-8 (.pdf); Trimble, Ch. 2-5
Special Guests: First-Year Writing Faculty
Due: Formal prospectus for your project or paper
- Weds., 2/3** ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
Read: Williams/Severino, Severino, Thonus, Phillips, Harris/Silva (all on .pdf files in “ESL Readings”); <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/esl/eslgrammarcheck.html>
Guest speaker: Dr. Christine Tardy

International Writing Centers Week (February 10-16)

- Weds., 2/10** INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND THE WRITING CONFERENCE
Speaker: Dr. Fátima Encinas, Benemérita Universidad Autónoma, “The Investigation of Writing Literacy in Mexican Higher Education” – Location TBA
Read: Hayward (.pdf); Cooper, DiPardo, Neff, Kilbourn (*WCTP*)
Due: Reading/tutoring/shadowing journal
- Weds., 2/17** DEALING WITH GRAMMAR AND STYLE
Guest Speaker: Stacey Grieff (School for New Learning)
Read: Harris, Ch. 5, Trimble, Ch. 12-15, Hartwell; Linville (.pdf);
Due: Annotated bibliography for final project/paper
- Weds., 2/24** COMPUTERS AND COMPOSITION (CATs)
Guest Speaker: Michael Moore, Zac Brenner
Read: Carlson, Apperson-Williams; Pemberton; Cooper et al (*Sourcebook*), A&B, Ch. 12; Yergeau, Wozniak, and Vandenberg (<http://endora.wide.msu.edu/13.1/index.html>)
 Rafoth (.pdf).
Due: Bring elements of e-portfolio to class (electronic versions)
Due: One hard copy of peer observation reflection
- Weds., 3/3** WORKING WITH READERS AND READING
Read: Ch. 8 (PT), Concepcion (pdf);
Due: Presentations (4)
Rough drafts of formal papers due (electronic version) to class
- Weds., 3/10** FINAL PROJECTS/PRESENTATIONS (10)
Due: e-portfolios

Final Projects are due Monday, March 15 during the final exam period. Note that this is before our scheduled examination period. I will be out of town at the College Composition and Communication Conference in Louisville and will return on March 22. If you need extra time on your project, please let me know in advance.

RESOURCES

International Writing Centers Association - <http://writingcenters.org/>

You are strongly encouraged to subscribe to the writing centers listserv. To subscribe, send a message to: listproc@listserv.ttu.edu. Leave the subject line blank, and in the body type: subscribe wcenter your name.

Back and current issues of the following WC journals are available in the Writing Center and in DePaul library: *Writing Lab Newsletter*, *Writing Center Journal* and *Praxis*.

The following composition journals (current and back issues) are available at the DePaul Library. These are some of the major composition journals and often contain articles relevant to writing center work: *College English*, *College Composition and Communication*, *Composition Studies*, *English Journal*.

ESL Readings (located on Blackboard)

Harris M. & T. Silva (1993). "Tutoring ESL Students: Issues and Options." *CCC* 44 (4), 525-537.

Williams, J. & C. Severino (2004). "The Writing Center and Second Language Writers." *Journal of Second Language Writing* 13. 165-172.

Phillips, T. (2009). Multilingual graduate students in the writing center: Beyond undergraduates as normative, towards more inclusive theories of our work. Paper presented at Conference on College Composition and Communication, San Francisco, CA.

Thonus, T. (2003). Serving generation 1.5 learners in the university writing center. *TESOL Journal*, 12 (1), 17-24.

Severino, C. (2004). Avoiding appropriation. In S. Bruce & B. Rafoth (Eds.), *ESL writers: A guide for writing center tutors* (pp. 48-59). Portsmouth, NJ: Boynton/Cook.

"Just check my grammar": <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/esl/eslgrammarcheck.html>