

Teaching Composition, Language, and Culture to Adolescents

Instructor

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Add/Delete Date: May 10, 2012
50% Withdrawal Date: May 14, 2012
Withdrawal Date: May 18, 2012

Course description & purpose

This course poses the general problem: “what is writing?” One of your tasks as student teachers in this course is to propose generative sub-question(s) of that main question in the context of your own major/minor area of study. I thought I’d start with the big picture, to explain why I am teaching this course at all and why the answer to this question is important to me and my doctoral work. One formative question of my own is “how do students learn what they are asked to write?” which allows me to focus on the teaching and learning of writing assignments. I hope that by deciding to take this course, you can find something of value in this general inquiry into teaching writing and the role of writing (or performing) in your major/minor area of teaching. Writing studies research has considered the role of writing in contexts beyond English studies in other academic disciplines, as well as the workplace, scientific and interdisciplinary research, healthcare, technology, and graduate education.

In this course, we will focus on you as a student teacher and teaching writing in your major area of specialty: art, career & tech (CTS), dance, drama, English, language arts, science, social studies, special education, and physical education. You may work on one or both aspects of your major/minor and focus on the role of writing in that area (what I call disciplinarity). When we look at what kinds of writing assignments constitute your academic discipline, we should reach for evidence of disciplinarity not just in academic articles but also in textbooks written for students in these disciplines, advice provided on websites or professional networks, relationships formed in local communities, and the social practices that students in these disciplines engage in as part of their education. In summary, we’ll take (what in writing studies is called) a *genre approach* to teaching writing in these disciplines. We will understand the writing/performance tasks we assign in the context of the social activities that produce, shape, and are shaped by them.

Learning objectives

- Apply current research on writing (assignments) specific to your major/minor area of study
- Consider a variety of approaches to student writing (multimodal texts, performances)
- Develop a rationale for the approaches you adopt in your writing assignments
- Identify criteria you regard as important in student writing and apply to your scoring guides
- Identify features of your major/minor area of discourse and consider how these features come together as a rhetoric of your discipline (a typical pattern of writing or performing)

Learning outcomes

What we study and find in our reading and writing this term should benefit you in several ways. **First**, your understanding of your own discipline should increase greatly, if only by comparison to others. **Second**, you should also better understand the role of writing in schooling—and the inter- and multi-disciplinary nature of education. **Third**, you should be able to activate this knowledge or connect it to your own major/minor specialty as a student teacher. This course is designed to specifically allow you to create assignments that respond to the demands of the students in your courses in what are perhaps the most challenging areas in Canadian education: junior and senior high school.

Course evaluation

Assignment	Value	Due (TBD)
Contribution to class project—what is writing in my discipline? Multimodal bibliography of disciplinary resources	20	
Leading discussion of self-selected reading (May 10-18)	20	
Conferences with instructor	15	
Portfolio of writing assignments	45	
<i>To be discussed on first day:</i> Presentation of one writing assignment/task/activity (week 2) Formal presentation (research-framed, rationale, context) Peer feedback/oral discussion Revision of portfolio writing assignment(s) (week 3)		

Policy for due date and late assignments

Assignments will be due at the beginning of class on the determined due date. Assignments handed in after the class is finished will be classified as late. Late assignments will be penalized one full letter grade (that is a B will be recorded as a C). To apply for an extension, email me with your request. If I grant an extension, it will be by email so that both you and I have a record of our agreement. No assignments will be accepted after 1:00pm on the third day after the due date, unless otherwise specified by the instructor.

Final Grade: Final grades in EDSE 430 will be determined using the absolute measure system. Normally the course median for a 400 level course is a B+ with a mean of 3.11.

Texts

Bean, J. C. (2011). *Engaging ideas: The professor's guide to integrating writing, critical thinking, and active learning in the classroom* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. [available as electronic resource in library]

Optional:

Lindemann, E. (2001). *A rhetoric for writing teachers*. (4th Ed.) New York: Oxford University Press.

Walvoord, B. E., & Anderson, V. J. (2010). *Effective grading: A tool for learning and assessment in college* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. [available as electronic resource in library]

Course schedule

May 7	<p>Introduction to the course: essential understandings, questions, activities “What is writing?” “What is genre?” and “How do you teach that?”</p> <p>Discussion: Process and post-process writing instruction Next Reading: Bean Chapters 2-5, pp. 17-88 Optional Reading: Lindemann, Chapter 3</p>
May 8	<p>Writing instruction: beyond grammar and correctness</p> <p>Discussion: Take 20: Teaching Writing Debrief: Assessment criteria for your assignments Student Conferences: 12:30-13:00</p> <p>Readings: from this point in the term will reflect the interests of students in the course. To learn more about rhetorical theory of writing, read Erika Lindemann.</p> <p>Susan’s example: (will post on Moodle) Bruce, D. L. (2008). Writing with visual images: Examining the video composition processes of high school students. <i>Research in the Teaching of English</i>, 43, 426-450.</p>
May 9	<p>Designing writing assignments in your major/minor area of study: Formal writing assignments</p> <p>Reading for discussion: Bean Chapter 6: Formal Writing Assignments Discussion: TBD Student Conferences: 12:30-13:00</p>
May 10	<p>Student-selected readings (designing formal writing assignments) Your sub-questions?</p>
May 11: Due	<p>Formal Writing Assignment Due (1 of 3 assignments for portfolio) Debrief: Workshopping: Discussion: TBD (e.g., guest speaker, course project)</p>
May 14	<p>Designing writing assignments in your major/minor area of study: Informal writing assignments</p>
May 15	<p>Student-selected readings (designing informal writing assignments) Your sub-questions?</p>
May 16: Due	<p>Informal Writing Assignment Due (2 of 3 assignments for portfolio) Debrief: Workshopping: Discussion:</p>
May 17	<p>Designing writing assignments in your major/minor area of study: Reading Guides [or] Scoring Guides</p> <p>Reading for discussion: Bean Chapter 9 (Reading Guides) Reading: Bean Chapters 13-14 (Scoring Guides) Optional for scoring guides: Walvoord, Chapter 4, Appendix A</p>
May 18	<p>Student-selected readings (designing reading or scoring guides) Your sub-questions?</p>
May 21	<p>HOLIDAY – NO CLASS -</p>
May 22: Due	<p>Reading Guide [or] Scoring Guide Assignment Due (3 of 3 assignments for portfolio) Turn in all 3 assignments together as a complete portfolio: Formal, Informal, and Guide Debrief: sub-questions Workshopping: Discussion:</p>
May 23	<p>Student selected reading: teaching writing Class project</p>
May 24	<p>Class project</p>
May 25: Due	<p>Multimodal bibliography of disciplinary resources</p>

Absence, attendance and missed grade components

Regular daily attendance is essential for optimal performance in this course. If you are absent for more than three class meetings, your grade in the course will be penalized a full letter grade (a B will be recorded as a C). In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify me by e-mail within two days or arrange to meet with me to discuss those circumstances. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections 23.4.2 and 23.4.3 of the University Calendar. Unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result. Be aware that students are no longer required to present medical documentation to support absence due to illness. Students may present a Medical Declaration Form for Students
http://www.foa.ualberta.ca/en/Undergraduate_Programs/Student_Services/Forms/%20Cabinet.aspx

Recording classes

Audio or video recording of classes is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor as a part of an approved plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for the purposes of personal study, and is not to be used for any other purpose without prior written consent from the instructor and class participants.

Equity statement & inclusive language policy

The Faculty of Education is committed to providing an environment of equality and respect for all people within the university community, and to educating students in developing teaching and learning contexts that are welcoming to all. To achieve a climate of respect and dignity, all course participants must use inclusive language to create a classroom in which an individual’s background, experience and views are treated with equal respect and value in relation to his/her gender, racial background, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, and ethnic background.

Code of student behaviour

“Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University calendar.” (GFC 29 SEP 2003). “The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.” (GFC 29 SEP 2003)

Plagiarism and cheating

All students should consult the “Truth-In-Education” handbook or web site regarding the definitions of plagiarism and its consequences when detected: <http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/>

Personal or academic difficulty

Students experiencing academic or personal difficulties may contact Undergraduate Student Services (ED North 1-107). 780-492-3659 or educ.info@ualberta.ca

Knowledge, Skills, and Attributes (for Interim Teacher Certification in Alberta)

Students in EDSE 430 A2 Spring Term 2012 will be able to participate in learning experiences that will assist them to understand:

- writing assignments germane to the specialization and subject disciplines he or she is prepared to teach;
- documents to inform and direct their planning, instruction, and assessment of student progress;
- instructional strategies appropriate to help different students achieve different learning outcomes;
- disciplinary knowledge, concepts, methodologies and assumptions in one or more areas of specialization or subject disciplines taught in Alberta schools; and
- purpose of teaching to communicate their vision for teaching writing assignments, including how his or her vision has changed as a result of new knowledge, understanding, and experience.