

ENGL314: Theories of Composition and Rhetoric
Fall 2010

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Hours: M, W, F - 10:30-11:30 a.m.
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Course description and objectives

English 314: Theories of Composition and Rhetoric involves the study of contemporary theories of composition, of rhetoric in an academic setting, and of the pedagogy of writing. This course should be useful for English majors who are seeking secondary education certification or for students considering graduate school in rhetoric and composition. Its objective will be to make students aware and competent in their articulation of how theories of rhetoric, composition, and pedagogy inform contemporary practices in writing classrooms. Students completing this course successfully should be able to:

- Understand and describe the leading theories of composition over the last 30 or so years
- Understand and define key terms associated with composition and rhetoric
- Understand and describe the context of composition teaching in the U.S. today and something of its history
- Understand and take a position with respect to key articles in the professional conversation about composition, rhetoric, and pedagogy
- Articulate and reflect on their own theoretical positions with respect to composition and rhetoric in the classroom
- Present, both orally and in writing, an analysis/critique of the *praxis* of a section of WRIT100 at Moravian College **OR** of a topic of concern within the field of composition and rhetoric.
- Design a theorized writing course with at least one writing assignment.

Books:

Heilker, Paul, and Peter Vandenberg, eds. *Keywords in Composition Studies*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1996.

Tate, Gary, Amy Rupiper, and Kurt Schick. *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*. New York: Oxford UP, 2001.

Villanueva, Victor, ed. *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory*, 2nd ed. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 2003.

(Handouts will supplement these texts; see the list on p. 5)

Assignments and grades:

- **2 unit tests and a final exam.** The tests will be short-answer and/or essay; one will be done according to an *individualist* model and one will be done according to a *collaborative* model. Each unit test will be worth **15%** of your course grade; the final exam will be worth **20%**
- **Class participation** will be worth **20%** of your course grade. This includes attendance, oral contribution to whole-class discussion, any group work done in class, and any impromptu writing done in class (not that I mean to grade each of these components separately). This will be distinct from other occasions in which individual students and groups are to present.
- **A presentation and paper** that analyzes and critiques the *praxis* of a section of WR100 at Moravian or of a topic of concern within the field of composition and rhetoric. The presentation will include handouts and perhaps visuals, and the paper will be a formal one including citations and appendices. This assignment will be worth **30%** of your course grade (1/3 for the presentation, 2/3 for the paper).

Academic honesty and plagiarism:

The Moravian College policy on academic honesty, as represented in the *Student Handbook, 2008-00*, p. 10, will apply in ENGL 314. At the same time, in this particular course, *plagiarism* might usefully be studied as “a topic of concern within the field of composition and rhetoric” (either for an individual research project or as a matter for class discussion).

Learning Services Office and Writing Center:

If you have a learning disability and believe you may require accommodation to succeed in this course, you should contact the Learning Services Office at 1307 Main Street. Its phone number is 861-1510. Do this as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Any student who wishes to disclose a disability and request accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for this course first **MUST** meet with either Mrs. Laurie Roth in the Office of Learning Services (for learning disabilities and/or ADD/ADHD) or Dr. Ronald Kline in the Counseling Center (for all other disabilities). The Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you need the services of the Writing Center, please call 610-861-1392.

Assignment schedule:

Week I

M 8/30 - F 9/3

T- Course introduction.

Th – **Initial inventory of attitudes, ideas, and experiences.**

handout readings by Herzberg and Berlin (“Rhetoric, Poetic, and Culture”); *Cross-Talk* essay by Rose, pp. 547-69 (please read pp. 505-07 as well); *Keywords* Introduction and entries on “composing/writing,” “composition studies,” “freshman English”

Week II

T 9/7 – F 9/10

T – handout reading from *A Primer for Writing Teachers*, 2nd ed., Chapter 1,

Th – handout readings by Scholes and Fulkerson; *Cross-Talk* essays by

Kinneavy, pp. 129-39, and Berlin, pp. 255-70. (please read pp. 127-28 too); *Keywords* entries on “academic discourse,” “discourse community,” “epistemology,” “ideology”

Week III

M 9/13 - F 9/17

T – handout reading from *Primer*, Chapter 2, pp. 44-59

Cross-Talk essays by Murray and Emig, pp. 3-15 (please read pp. 1-2 also)

Th – handout reading from *Primer*, Chapter 2, pp. 59-78

Cross-Talk essay by Bruffee, pp. 415-36. (please read pp. 413-14 as well);

Week IV

M 9/20 - F 9/26

T – <http://wpacouncil.org/positions/outcomes.html>; review/prepare for **test**;

declare choice of semester project

Th – (no class meeting: all-College colloquium)

Week V

M 9/27 – F 10/1

T – **Test**

Th - *Guide*, Chapter 1 (“Process Pedagogy”); *Keywords* entries on “pedagogy,” “students,” and “teacher”

Week VI

M 10/4 - F 10/8
(midterm)

T - *Guide*, Chapter 2 (“Expressive Pedagogy ...”); *Keywords* entry on “expressive writing”

Th - *Guide*, Chapter 3 (“Rhetorical Pedagogy”); *Keywords* entry on “rhetoric”

Fall break

M - T, 10/11-12

Week VII W 10/13 - F 10/15	Th - <i>Guide</i> , Chapter 4 (“Collaborative Pedagogy”); <i>Keywords</i> entry on “collaboration”
Week VIII M 10/18 - F 10/22	T – <i>Guide</i> , Chapter 12 (“Technology and the Teaching of Writing”); <i>Keywords</i> entry on “literacy” Th – handout readings by <u>Daley</u> and by <u>Takayoshi and Selfe</u>
Week IX M 10/25 - F 10/29	T - <i>Guide</i> , Chapter 5 (“Cultural Studies and Composition”) <i>Cross-Talk</i> , essay by <u>Berlin</u> , pp. 717-37. Th – <i>Guide</i> , Chapter 6 (“Critical Pedagogy ...”); <i>Keywords</i> entries on “critical thinking,” “cultural studies”
Week X M 11/1 - F 11/5	T – <i>Guide</i> , Chapter 7 (“Feminist Pedagogy”); <i>Keywords</i> entry on “feminism” Th – handout readings by <u>Miller</u> and <u>Flynn</u>
Week XI M 11/8 - F 11/12	Test
Week XII M 11/15 - F 11/19	T – handout reading from <i>A Primer for Writing Teachers</i> , Chapter 5, pp. 166-80. Th – handout reading from <i>Primer</i> , Chapter 5, pp. 180-90. <i>Cross-Talk</i> , essays by <u>Hartwell</u> , pp. 205-33, and <u>Rose</u> , pp. 547-69. (please read pp. 505-07 as well); <i>Keywords</i> entry on “grammar”
Week XIII M 11/22 – T 11/23 (Thanksgiving break)	T - handout readings by <u>Connors</u> and <u>David et al.</u> ; review/planning for presentations
Week XIV M 11/29 - F 12/3	T - Presentations Th - Presentations
Week XV M 12/6 - W 12/8	T - Presentations Th – Presentations ; course evaluations
Week XVI F 12/10 – F 12/17	Th – Final exam

List of handout readings

From Foster, *A Primer for Writing Teachers*, 2nd ed.:
Chapters 1, 2, & 6

From Bullock and Trimbur, eds., *The Politics of Writing Instruction: Post-Secondary*:
Berlin, “Rhetoric, Poetic, and Culture: Contested Boundaries in English Studies”
Miller, “The Feminization of Composition”
Connors, “Rhetoric in the Modern University: The Creation of an Underclass”

From Scholes, *Textual Power*:
From Chapter 1, The English Apparatus, pp. 4-11

From *College Composition and Communication*:
David, Gordon, and Pollard, “Seeking Common Ground: Guiding Assumptions for Writing Courses”
Fulkerson, “Four Philosophies of Composition”

From *Educause Review*:
Daley, “Expanding the Concept of Literacy”

From Selfe, ed., *Multimodal Composition: Resources for Teachers*:
Takayoshi and Selfe, Chapter 1, “Thinking about Multimodality”

Semester project

As per the course syllabus, you are to prepare

A **presentation and paper** that analyzes and critiques the *praxis* of a section of WRIT100 at Moravian or a topic of concern within the field of composition and rhetoric. The presentation will include handouts and perhaps visuals, and the paper will be a formal one including citations and appendices. This assignment will be worth **30%** of your course grade (1/3 for the presentation, 2/3 for the paper).

To elaborate, if you choose to study a section of WRIT100, you must

- Describe the approach and the pedagogy in terms of the theories we have been (or will be) studying.
- Describe the approach and the pedagogy in terms of ideology (as per Berlin, “Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class,” an article we will read later on).
 “approach and pedagogy” would include:
 - Statements of course objectives
 - Choice of textbook(s) and their use in the course
 - Classroom activities and teacher’s role
 - Writing assignments – their nature, their sequence, how the teacher evaluates them.
- Provide appendices containing a copy of the course syllabus, assignment handouts, other important teaching documents, perhaps a copy of a student paper evaluated by the instructor.
- Give a copy of your paper to the Writing 100 instructor and consider inviting her/him to our class for your presentation.
- Especially for your presentation, handouts or overheads of the appendices to your paper will be helpful.

In order to do these things, it will be necessary to

- Interview the section teacher at least once
- Visit his/her class at least once
- Review his/her syllabus, writing assignments (informal and formal), and other relevant, revelatory handouts
- Consider books s/he has assigned for the class, particularly handbook and “rhetoric” and consider the teacher’s use of assigned books
- Perhaps look at the teacher’s comments and evaluation of sample student papers
- Consider the theory and pedagogy of the WRIT100 section in terms of reading you’ve done (or will have done) for ENGL314.

Follow this link for a list of this semester’s WRIT100 sections, with titles, instructors’ names, brief descriptions and meeting times: <http://home.moravian.edu/public/regis/noncatdescrfa10.htm>

Instructors have been informed of the possibility that a student in ENGL314 will be studying their class, but anyone whose WRIT100 section you may want to study must give their consent to participating in the project. I can help secure that consent, as needed, and I can tell you a little bit about individual

instructors whom you may not know. Also, to avoid possible conflicts of interest, do not choose my section to study and do not choose a section taught by someone from whom you are now taking a class or someone with whom you work in an extra-curricular activity. In any case, by **Tuesday 21 September**, please decide if you want to follow this option or the one below and declare your intention to me.

If you choose to study a topic of concern within the field of composition studies, you must

- Define or designate such a topic. This should emerge from your reading and journal-writing or class discussion.
- Submit a research proposal (by **Wednesday, 12 Oct.**) that
 - summarizes what you already know about the topic
 - describes briefly why this topic is of concern to the field or why it warrants investigation
 - articulates the questions you will want to investigate
 - attempts to define the scope of your investigation
 - lists relevant potential sources (textual and/or human) that you will consult
- Conduct research
- For your presentation, have a handout or overhead listing the main points of your findings and provide handouts of a bibliography of sources on this topic.

So, by **Tuesday, 21 September** (sooner if you can and if it's convenient), I would like to hear from each of you as to the following:

- which of the options you wish to work with.
- if you wish to study a section of WRIT100, your preferences as to which section (please list 3 in order).
- if you wish to investigate a topic of concern to comp. studies, a list of potential topics (try to limit this to 3).