**English 3009: Writing for Teachers**

C.S.U. Stanislaus, Spring 2004  
Classroom Bldg. Rm. 208  
T/Th. 9:40-11:07

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You don’t teach writing. You teach WRITERS. And believe me, there IS a world of difference between the two.  
---Marjorie Frank (1995)

**Prerequisites:**

- Completion of the WPST with a passing score; English 1001, or 1002 and 2000, or equivalents. Open to all Liberal Studies and English Majors.

**Primary Texts:**

- A course packet available in the English Dept. in the Library bldg.  
- *Educating Esme: Diary of a Teacher’s First Year*, Esme Raji Codell.

**Suggested Texts:**

- A writer’s handbook.  

**Additional Reading:**

- Read one book by a writer on writing. I can provide a list of suggested texts upon request.

**Course Overview:**

The aim of this course is to guide and assist you in shaping your own theory-grounded and experientially-informed philosophy of teaching writing. You will become familiar with current theories and methods for teaching writing effectively. If it is true that to “teach writing is to teach a version of reality” than it will be useful for you to have, at the very least, a broad understanding of the politics involved in teaching writing. You will read Jerome Bruner’s “The Complexity of Educational Aims” to better understand the antinomic conflicts in education. We will both discuss and practice: teaching writing as a process (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing), the rhetorical nature of writing (discussions about purpose, voice and audience), and the merits of inquiry-based writing.
I have argued that learning to write really means more than just learning specific content, organizational or grammatical rules, rhetorical concepts, or writing processes—it means coming to attach to the self a set of writers’ roles, negotiating an understanding of the self as someone who uses writing for personally and socially important purposes.

---Robert E. Brooke, *Writing and Sense of Self*

**ONGOING ASSIGNMENTS:**

*a.* *Writers on Writing.* Choose a book by a writer on writing. Five-page minimum requirement. In terms of the genre of the book review (consult a model) and include: an original title, textual support to ground your particular reading, and MLA style citations. Consider our class as your intended audience. Also, you will prepare a five-minute in-class presentation. Assessed by how well you address the following criteria:

- Offer a few “key” quotations to share with the class.
- Come up with a visual (or) interactive way to present an aspect of the material.
- Adhere to the five-minute time limitation.
- Field questions about your book from your classmates.

*b.* *Annotated Journal Review:* Choose from *Primary Voices K-6; Voices From the Middle; English Journal; Classroom Notes Plus; Talking Points; Language Arts; or School Talk.* Choose a subject of interest (critical literacy, popular culture in the writing class, gender issues, multi-genre writing, student resistance, second language learners, visual literacy, writing workshops, conferences, reflective learning communities, grammar, editing, standards, teaching poetry, fiction, or nonfiction etc.) and *find two articles on a similar subject to compare and contrast.* Offer a comparison/contrast review by describing the strengths, limitations and usefulness of the articles for future teachers.

This assignment is to designed to do four things:

1. Familiarize you with existing professional journals.
2. Give you experience researching, summarizing, synthesizing information and analyzing articles on a subject of interest related to the population of students you hope to teach.
4. Give you an opportunity to go “public” and to share the information gleaned from your reviews with your peers.

c.) *Writer’s Notebook:* If you don’t already, begin a notebook/journal and write everyday. Ralph Fletcher writes, “*Keeping a notebook is the single best way I know to survive as a writer. It encourages you to pay attention to the world, inside and out.*** Every class will begin with either a “poem of the day” or 6-minute freewriting prompt on a selected topic or quotation.

d.) *Reading Responses:* Each week we’ll read a series of articles related to an aspect of writing pedagogy. You will be assigned a single-spaced 1 to 1 1/2 page response to selected readings. Please keep all responses with instructor comments. Be sure to include: your name/date/course title, the author & title of the piece you’re responding to/
and an original title for your response. (I will give you a handout describing the habits of mind of look for when I read an R.R.).

Though acts of summary are at times useful, what is often wanted in college-level prose is something more: writing that demonstrates not merely a stalwart comprehension of texts surrounding an issue, but that reaches with its analyses and arguments to make new uses of prior texts and positions.

---Van Hillard and Joseph Harris

Assessment of Reading Responses

(√+) Reading Response: Has an original title that signals that you have a clear focus. You begin with an indented epigraph (a key quotations from the reading); you offer both a personal & critical reading of the significance of the quotation you’ve selected in light of the key themes and issues of this course. Your writing has been “crafted,” that is, carefully constructed with clear, grammatically correct prose, and no distracting typos.

(√-) Reading Response: May have many of the markers of the √+ response but the explanation for why you selected certain quotations is less developed. There is evidence of analytical thinking. There may be distracting typos/grammatical errors that hamper a reader from grasping the message you hoped to convey.

(√-) Reading Response: You fail to mention the author and title of the piece you are responding to. The R.R. lacks focus, no title, a number of writing errors (spelling, typos, & grammatical errors), no direct reference to our reading, and there is not enough reflection/questioning/evidence to be considered a substantive response.

I used to think that pedagogy was only about teaching: how I taught; what I taught; and why I taught. I thought pedagogy was a vehicle by which I drove ideas into the heads of students.

---Joan Wink, Critical Pedagogy: Notes From the Real World.

ASSSESSMENT: Your grade for the course will be based on the quality of your attendance & participation, your book review, and the portfolio you turn in at the end of the semester.

- Attendance & Participation: 20%;
- Book Review/Presentation: 20%;
- Journal Review: 20%
- Final Portfolio: 40 % (Divided into 4 parts valued at 10% each).

THE PORTFOLIO: We will design a rubric for assessing the portfolio together. I will provide a handout that elaborates on the details for this “final” project. Briefly, it is a collection of finished writing divided into four distinct sections:

- A cover letter: I will ask you to generate a “Top 10” list of useful ideas you’ve acquired over the course of the semester (drawing from our readings, in-class exercises, your own first-hand experiences with writing, the wisdom of your peers, etc.).
• A “finished” piece of writing, including drafts and revisions, self- and peer responses to drafts, and my responses as well.
• Five photocopied (or typed) entries from your journal/notebook representing the different kinds of journal entries you made including a reflective statement about how/why you selected these pieces & your reaction to the process of keeping a daily journal.
• (10) one-page Reading Responses with instructor comments.

Attendance Policy: If you do not come to class, you will not pass. *I will circulate a sign-in sheet. If you miss more than three absences, your grade will drop a full letter with each consecutive absence. Obviously there are times when extenuating circumstances make it difficult to attend class; in these instances, it is your responsibility to discuss your situation with me so that I can work with you to create a plan to address missed work.

Academic Integrity: As in any University course, the work you submit must be your own. I will follow the definitions and procedures concerning cheating and plagiarism that are present in the CSU Stanislaus 2003-2005 Catalogue. If you have any question as to whether the work you are submitting could be plagiarized, please come talk to me BEFORE you turn it in.

Cell Phones: It is an unwelcome distraction to have a phone ring during class. Therefore, you must turn your phone off and keep it out of sight. If you have an impending emergency and you inform me ahead of time, you may keep your phone on vibrate mode and quietly leave the room to answer it. Failure to comply will result in you being dropped from the class.

Disabilities: If you have a disability that may prevent you from fully demonstrating your abilities, please contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations to allow for your full participation and to facilitate your educational opportunity.

THIS IS THE GENERAL PLAN FOR THE SEMESTER (I reserve the right to alter the direction of the class to meet your needs & fulfill the course objectives & to exchange readings when it is appropriate). *Please bring our course packet to every class.

**WEEK 1: INTRODUCTIONS: A WRITING LIFE.**

Feb. 17, T.

• Introductions to the course and to each other.

• The Writer’s Notebook, entry #1.
  Read: “The Note-Taking Habit” and “Getting Your Journal Going” and Educating Esme.

*The aim here is to offer a full picture of education in a teacher’s first year, before we begin to talk about the constitutive parts of teaching writing. Codell discusses “the basics” of teaching and offers her reflections on “school literacy” pointing to a wide range of factors that lead to students’ success and failure.

Feb. 19, Th. *Please come with your signed course contract acknowledging that you have carefully read and agree to the terms of the syllabus.

• DUE: Educating Esme (Codell) R.R. #1
**Week 2: The Complexity of Educational Aims**

Feb. 24, T.
- DUE: “The Results of Schooled Literacy,” (Powell), p.21

Feb. 26, Th.

**R.R. #2**

**Week 3: Theory and Practice=Pedagogy**

Mar. 2, T.
- DUE: “Learning the Uses of Chaos,” (Berthoff), 48. **R.R. #3**

Mar. 4, Th.

* Letter to the Editor Activity: Small group presentations of the major arguments from: Powell/Bruner/Berthoff/ & Strickland.

*March 1-12 DROP/WITHDRAW period. March 12 is the last day to drop & qualify for a refund.

**Week 4: Style/Voice/Audience & Discourse.**

Mar. 9, T.
- DUE: “The Poison Fish,” (Macrorie); “Does Coming to College Mean Becoming Someone New?” (Davis); “Trilingualism,” (Baker), “Style: The Hidden Agenda in Composition Classes or One Reader’s Confession” (Ronald). **R.R. #4**

Mar. 11, Th.
- DUE: “What is Literacy?” (Gee). **R.R. #5**

* Recommended: *Cultural Identity and Education*, Freire

**Week 5: Literacy Histories/ Literacy Lessons**

Come then. What is it to be literate? We have to draw our own maps, trace our own histories, acknowledge our own debts and consider ways not taken. Our literacy autobiographies reveal riches and gaps, but these narratives are not tales of solitary journeys. We are always in dialogue with others---those who taught us to read, those for whom we wrote, who lent us books, shapes our preferences, encouraged us, forbade us even. They were dead poets, living authors, cynical critics. We remember them as friends who made our world more hospitable, who helped us as we read and wrote, to discover who we were and who we could become.
---Margaret Meek, On Being Literate

Mar. 16, T.

Mar. 18, Th.
WRITING WORKSHOP #1

• DUE: Essay #1---Your own literacy narrative---your history as a writer/reader.

Writers-on-Writing Book Presentations: #1______________________________
______________________________.

WEEK 6: LISTENING/ RESPONDING TO STUDENT WRITING

Human relationships are at the heart of schooling. Indeed, it has been the passion and the personal interactions that have put the power in pedagogy for me…the potential of pedagogy is all about people. I thought my life in schools would be about me, teaching. I now think that Paulo Freire was right: Education is radically about love.

---Joan Wink, Notes from the Real World

Mar. 23, T.

• DUE: “The Bat-Poet” (Jarrell); “Responding---Really Responding---to Other Students’ Writing” (Straub), 163. R.R. #7

* Recommended: From Talking to Learners to Talking to Them and With Them; From Listening to Learners to Being Heard by Them (Freire).

Mar. 25, Th. CLASS CANCELLED. *I will be in San Antonio, Texas for the 4 C’s, the Conference on College Composition and Communication.

WEEK 7: WHAT IS GOOD WRITING? AND WHO DETERMINES THIS?

Mar. 30, T.

* Come to class with a photocopied example of a published book review or journal review. We will discuss the identifiable conventions of this genre.

Writers-on-Writing Book Presentations #2______________________________;
______________________________ and _______________________________

Apr. 1, Th.

DUE: “The Crucial Role of Conferencing” (Romano).
*Sign-up sheet for writing conferences

Writers-on-Writing Book Presentations #3: ______________________________;
____________________________; ______________________________.
**Week 8: Using Reading in the Writing Classroom**

Apr. 6, T.

- **DUE:** “Using Reading in the Writing Classroom” (Qualley).
  “Critical Disobedience: Nine Ways of Looking at a Poem” (Baker).
  R.R. #8

* Recommended: *Reading the World/Reading the Word* (Freire).

Apr. 8, Th.

**DUE: Revised Draft of your Journal Review Essay.**

Writers-on-Writing Book Presentation: #4 __________________________;
__________________________; ________________________________.

**Week 9: Spring Break**

**Week 10: The 9 Ways of Looking Assignment**

Apr. 20, T.

- **Handout from *California English*. Rationale: for the 9 Ways of looking assignment. R.R. #9**

Apr. 22, Th.

**WRITING WORKSHOP #2**

**DUE:** Draft #1, ESSAY #2

Writers-on-Writing Book Presentation: #5 __________________________;
__________________________.

**Week 11: Radical Revision**

Revision—the process of seeing what you’ve said to discover what you have to say—is the motivating force within most writers. They are compelled to write to see what their words tell them. Revision can also be the motivating force within students—if they are given the opportunity to experience the adventure of rewriting. Unfortunately, most language arts and English teachers do not appreciate the importance of the excitement of revision. They teach rewriting—if they teach it at all—as punishment, the price you pay if you don’t get it right the first time.

--- Don Murray, *Learning By Teaching*

Apr. 27, T.

- **DUE:** “Rewrite to Develop” (Murray); Hint Sheet H: Revising Out---Expanding and Amplifying a Draft (Before Revising In); Hint Sheet F: A Discussion of Drafting Levels (Bishop);

Apr. 29, Th.

- **DUE:** “What You Can Assess You Can Revise: Linking Assessment to Instruction” (Spandell); “Strategies for Revision” (Fulwiler).
WEEK 12: GRAMMAR IN THE CONTEXT OF WRITING

May 4, T.
  • DUE: “Why Revitalize Grammar” (Dunn and Lindblom). R.R. #10

May 6, Th.
  • DUE: “Grammar---Comma---a New Beginning” (Ehrenworth).

* Recommended: Don’t Let the Fear of What is Difficult Paralyze You (Freire).

WEEK 13: GRADING AS A TEACHER STRATEGY

May 11, T.
  • DUE: “Grading as a Teacher Strategy” (Soles).

May 13, Th.  Revising Writing Workshop

WEEK 14: EDITING WORKSHOPS

May 18, T.  Editing Workshop

  Writers-on-Writing Book Presentations: #9 __________________________

  __________________________  __________________________.

May 20, Th.
  DUE: FINAL PORTFOLIOS 40% of your final grade.*
  Course Evaluations. Class books?