TEXTS:

- The 5001 Course Packet available in the English department.

Composition-rhetoric is neither a stagnant survival nor any of a hundred proposed revolutions. It exists, as it always has, as an ever-shifting balance between the old and comforting and the new and exciting, the ways of lore and the ways of theory, the push of societal pressure and the inertia of academic traditions.


COURSE OVERVIEW:

The aim of this course is to introduce you to a few of the theories and historical perspectives that inform our understanding of composition studies today. I have structured our weekly seminars thematically to offer snapshots of key theories and practices that have been important in shaping the field of composition and rhetoric. Cross-Talk in Composition is a valuable archive of historical composition texts. In addition to required readings, you will have the opportunity to extensively research an area of particular interest to you.

Although on the one hand composition-rhetoric can trace its lineage back through rhetoric for 2,500 years, on another more pragmatic level we are barely a century old, one of the newest college subjects.

**Assignments:**

- **Bibliographic Essay** including 6-10 published articles in your area of interest in composition studies. Consider the participants of this seminar as your audience for this writing. At the end of the semester, we will create a collection of these bibliographic essays to be used as a resource on current research in the field. I will offer a map of potential subjects to consider. I will collect a polished draft of this essay and you will have an opportunity to revise it before publication.

- **Presentation/Discussion Leader:**
  One week you will be asked to find an innovative way to initiate our seminar discussion.

- **Reading Responses**
  These one-page reading responses are perhaps the most important writing you will do in this class because they will help you to think through the readings and they will form the basis for your contributions to our seminar discussion. Include:

  - A title (titles will signal to your readers that you have a clear focus).
  - A clear reference to the title and author of the piece you’re referring to.
  - An epigraph, or a brief block quotation from the assigned reading (to demonstrate close reading and to bring readers into the text at hand).
  - A question, or a series of questions raised in the course of reading.
  - Single-spaced with MLA-style parenthetical citations.

* Please keep all responses with my instructor comments (or peer-feedback) in a manila file folder used only for this class.

  *(√+) Reading Response:* Has an original title that signals that you have a clear focus. You begin with an epigraph (a key quotations from the reading); you offer both a personal & critical reading of the significance of the quotation you’ve selected. 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 may be a few typos/grammatical errors.

  *(√-) Reading Response:* Lacks focus, no title, a number of writing errors (spelling, typos, & grammatical errors), no direct reference to our reading, not enough reflection/questioning/evidence to be considered a substantive response.
**Assessment:**

Your grade for the course will be based on a heavy emphasis of both the quality of your attendance & participation, and your reading responses, as well as your final research project—the bibliographic essay.

- Attendance & participation 25%
- Reading Responses 25%
- Bibliographic Essay 50%


**Attendance Policy:** As graduate students you are asked to arrive on time and fully prepared. If you are repetitively late (arriving late or turning in work late) these actions will bring down your final grade considerably. If you miss more than two classes, your grade will drop a full letter with each consecutive absence. **If you do not come to class, you will not pass.**

**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.

**Tentative Schedule:**

**Wk. 1: The “Givens” in Composition 9/9**


**Wk. 2: Growth, Voice and Process.**
9/14

- **DUE: R.R. #2:** A Teaching Subject, Joseph Harris (Read “Growth”; “Voice”; “Process”).


**Wk. 3: The Complexity of Our Aims: The Politics of Teaching Writing**
9/23

- **DUE: R.R. #3:** “The Political Carnival of Composition” (Miller); “In the Turbulence of Theory; The Changing Political Landscape of Comp Studies” (Faigley); “The Complexity of Educational Aims” in (Bruner).


**Wk. # 4: “Learning by Teaching”**
9/30

- **DUE: R.R. #4:** Don Murray, Learning by Teaching; Excerpt from Writing Without Teachers, Peter Elbow.

**Wk. #5: Teaching Many Discourse(s)**
10/7

- **DUE R.R. #5:** Literacy as a Moral Imperative: Facing the Challenges of a Pluralistic Society, Rebecca Powell (1999); Inventing the University, David Bartholomae, p.623; “The Basic Aims of Discourse,” Kinneavy.

Wk. #6: Linguistically Diverse Students and College Writing  
10/14

- **DUE: R.R. #6:** Ch. 1: “Linguistically Diverse Students and College Writing: What is Equitable and Appropriate?” Linda Harklau et. al.; Ch. 7: Classroom Instruction and Language Minority Students: On Teaching to ‘Smarter’ Readers and Writers,” Linda Lonon Blanton; “Narrowing the Mind and the Page: remedial Writers and Cognitive Reductionism” (Rose); “Speak For Yourself? Power & Hybridity in the Cross-Cultural Classroom” (Williams); “Being an Ally” (Fox)


Wk. #7: Teaching Grammar in Context  
10/21


Wk. #8: Service Learning in Composition  
10/28

- **DUE: R.R. #8:** “The Public Intellectual, Service Learning, and Activist Research,” Ellen Cushman in *Cross-Talk*, p. 819.

Wk. #9: “Invention is a Social Act” (Karen Burke Lefevre)  
11/4

- **DUE: R.R. #9:** “Community” in *A Teaching Subject*, Joseph Harris; “Mikhail Bakhtin as Rhetorical Theorist” (Schuster) in *Cross-Talk*; “Collaborative Learning & the Conversation of Mankind” (Bruffee) in *Cross-Talk*; “Reality, Consensus and Reform” (Myers) in *Cross-Talk*.

Wk. #10: Qualitative Research Methods  
11/11

- **DUE: R.R. #10:** Foreword (Mortensen); “Turning in Upon Ourselves: Positionality, Subjectivity & Reflexivity in Case Study & Ethnographic Research” (Chiseri-Strater); “Culture on the Page” (Sunstein).
“Constructing Voices in Writing Research: Developing Participant Approaches to Situated Inquiry,” Blakeslee (packet).

**Wk. #11: A Qualitative Study of Student Texts**  
11/18

- **DUE: R.R. #11:** *The Performance of Self in Student Writing*, Thomas Newkirk.

**N.C.T.E. Nov. 20–25 San Francisco**

**Wk. #12: Teacher-Research and Classroom-Based Research**  
11/25


**Wk. #13: “A Rhetoric of Pleasure” (T.R. Johnson)**  
12/2


**Wk. #14: Research Presentations**  
12/9

- **DUE:** Bibliographic Essays; course evaluations. Part 2 of research presentations (the last eight presenters)