

English 611: Composition GTF Seminar I

Winter 2014, CRN 23437

ED 176, 1730-2020

Syllabus

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Office Hours: U 1300-1430, F 11:00-12:30, and by appointment

Course Description: The Composition GTF Seminar is the theoretical framing of the three course pedagogy sequence designed to prepare graduate students to teach the Composition Program's writing courses. Successful completion of this course is a necessary prerequisite for appointment as a GTF to teach composition courses in English.

Course Objectives: Writing is a practical art. The judgment involved in inventing, testing, composing, and revising is multi-layered; improving upon those aspects of writing requires active engagement and guidance through the process. Teaching is also very much a practical art. The judgment involved in inventing, testing, and revising one's classroom practice is similarly multilayered, benefitting from active engagement and guidance through the process. Both arts are learned by doing and reflecting upon having done. This course provides a framework for that process in the Composition Program. The objective of this course is to prepare each of you to be ready to teach freshman composition classes at the University of Oregon, and upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Be conversant in the key concepts in *The Shape of Reason* (question at issue, reasoned thesis, inquiry, discourse community, etc.)
- Draw from theory and analysis to develop your own approach to the Composition Program pedagogy
- Demonstrate understanding of the essay cycle as taught in WR 121, WR 122, and WR 123
- Analyze and assess argumentation in college-level student writing
- Understand the professional responsibilities of teaching at the University of Oregon

Texts

- *The Shape of Reason: Argumentative Writing in College*, 4th edition. John T. Gage. (desk copies provided by the publisher, and on reserve)
- *Componere: Teaching Written Reasoning at the University of Oregon, 2013-14*, provided
- *Instructor Manual*, on Blackboard (IM)
- *The Little Seagull Handbook, with contributions by the University of Oregon Composition Program*, provided
- Additional assigned reading will be available on the Blackboard site for this class

Assignments and Grading

All assignments must be completed in order to pass this course.

Policies about grades for this course and their relation to teaching appointments can be found on pages 23 to 26 in *Componere*. Please note that eligibility for GTF appointments in the Composition Program is based upon a graduate student's time in the home degree program, not the number of years of teaching in Composition. Please consult the GDRS for English on the Graduate School's website for complete information.

Reading and Theory Notes (RTN) - 30%

A Reading and Theory Note is due in class for most of the chapters we read *Shape of Reason* and accompanying critical essays. These are to be one full page, single-spaced, using one-inch margins, with your name and the date at the top left-hand corner. Reusing paper already printed on one side is encouraged. In the first paragraph, write a summary of key points of the chapter(s) from *The Shape of Reason* that could be the basis for a short presentation you might make to students. Do not quote from the text, but focus rather on putting the key concepts into your own words. When two chapters are assigned, summarize both in this first half of the paper. In a second half of the paper, describe a way that the theoretical/critical reading(s) inform or contextualize the concepts from *The Shape of Reason*.

Teaching Plans (TP) – 30%

This collection of writing about *The Shape of Reason* will serve as a resource for your teaching in the fall. After reading the texts, writing Reading and Theory Notes, and having discussions with your colleagues, you will write a teaching plan for each chapter. These notes will serve both as a document you can use in the fall as well as an assignment for this course. Thus, they do not need the level of formality and theoretical contextualization for a broader academic audience. Please do use complete sentences rather than fragmented short-hand and proofread.

1. Set-up for students before they read (3-5 sentences)

How do you want to guide their attention? What is most important for them to see and take note of in preparation for what you will be doing in class?

2. Your presentation (substantive paragraph)

Draw upon your Reading and Theory Notes, class discussions, and further reflection to draft a presentation on the key concepts in the chapter. What will you do and say to help them connect the ideas they've read about to actions in their own writing process?

3. Possible class activities (3-5 sentences)

Sketch out some ways you could ask students to implement these ideas in the classroom that would let them experiment with these concepts. You could rely on our discussions and activities, your apprenticeship, the resources on Composition Hub, your own inventive powers, and conversations with experienced teachers in the program for ideas about how students could implement the concepts covered in the chapter.

4. Make the connection to writing and reading for the students (3-5 sentences)

What connections can you make for students explicitly between the concepts in this chapter and students' own reading and writing?

Argumentative Essay - 25%

You will write a 1000-word argumentative essay that responds to a question at issue developed out of reading and discussion of the essay cycle. Details about this assignment will be distributed in class.

Conference - ungraded, but required

Schedule and complete a conference with me or one of the assistant directors to discuss the enthymeme you are planning to use in your essay.

Analysis of Student Writing - 15%

We will read and discuss several student essays in the context of the theoretical and pedagogical issues covered in the course. For one of these, you will turn in a one-page, single-spaced analysis of the essay. First, write a description of the paper in a single paragraph without evaluative language that accounts for both what the paper claims and how it goes about earning its conclusion. Then, describe the most important aspect of the essay for the author to focus on for revision.

Course Policies

Attendance: You must attend and participate in all class meetings to pass this course. Illness that could be transmissible to others in the class is the only reason to miss class. Notify me in advance by email or phone if you are ill and unable to attend class. Missing a class meeting without advance notice will result in your course grade being lowered by 1/3. Missing more than one class meeting will also result in your course grade being lowered by 1/3. Being absent from class does not automatically excuse you from handing in work on time. Arrangements for handing in work on an alternate schedule are considered made when I have confirmed your request. If circumstances interfere with your ability to attend or participate in class, see me right away.

Late assignments: Unless arrangements are made in advance, late work will not be accepted.

Educational Environment: I expect every member of this class to treat everyone here with respect and dignity according to the university policies below. Please see me if this is ever not the case. You may also seek assistance from the Bias Response Team (<http://bias.uoregon.edu/>) and the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity (<http://aaeo.uoregon.edu/>).

Distractions and the Educational Environment: You may use electronics that support the educational environment of this class, which means they must contribute to your active attention to what is going on in class and offer no distractions to your colleagues. If you use a laptop or tablet in class, send me a copy of the class notes you take at the end of each class session. Do not work on outside projects such as reading or grading during class. This or other behavior that detracts from the educational environment may result in your course grade being lowered.

Access: The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me in the first week of classes if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Registration: This course is offered for variable credit to accommodate students whose degree requirements prevent them from registering for the full three credits without incurring additional

tuition costs. The course is the same for everyone taking the course, no matter the number of credits. Students should register for three credits unless they will incur additional tuition cost.

Academic honesty: All work submitted for this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. In cases where academic dishonesty has been clearly established, an F for the final course grade is the standard practice of this department. The student conduct code may be found on the Student Conduct and Community Standards website:

<http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/69/Default.aspx>

Important Information

Inclement weather: If weather conditions necessitate cancelling a class meeting, I will notify you by email through the course Blackboard site.

In case of emergency: Call 911. For non-emergency assistance, call the UO Police Department (541) 346-2919.

Mandatory Reporting: All employees of UO are mandatory reporters with respect to child abuse, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and discrimination.

University of Oregon Affirmation of Community Standards

The University of Oregon community is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and the development of integrity. In order to thrive and excel, this community must preserve the freedom of thought and expression of all its members. The University Of Oregon has a long and illustrious history in the area of academic freedom and freedom of speech. A culture of respect that honors the rights, safety, dignity, and worth of every individual is essential to preserve such freedom. We affirm our respect for the rights and well-being of all members.

University of Oregon Policy Statement on Equal Opportunity

The University of Oregon affirms and actively promotes the right of all individuals to equal opportunity in education and employment at this institution without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, age, religion, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation or any other extraneous consideration not directly and substantively related to effective performance. This policy implements all applicable federal, state; and local laws, regulations; and executive orders. Direct related inquiries to the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity, 474 Oregon Hall, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403; telephone (541) 346-3123; TDD (541) 346-0852.