

## English 611: Composition GTF Seminar I

Winter 2015, CRN 22134

MCK 214, 1730-2020

### Syllabus

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**Course Description:** The Composition GTF Seminar provides a theoretical framework for teaching courses in the Composition Program. It is one of the three courses in the 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 an 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 objectives of this course are one step in your preparation for teaching first-year composition classes at the University of Oregon. 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*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. John T. Gage. (desk copies provided by the Department of English, and on reserve)
- *Reading, Writing, and Reasoning*. James Crosswhite, 2015.
- *Policies and Procedures: Teaching Written Reasoning at the University of Oregon, 2014-15*, 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 in the "Teacher Training and Evaluation" section of *Policies and Procedures*, pages 32-25. 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) - 25%**

A Reading and Theory Note is due on Blackboard for most of the chapters we read *Shape of Reason* and accompanying critical essays according to the schedule of assignments. 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. 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*.

### **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.

### **Argumentative Essay - 25%**

You will write a 1000-word argumentative essay that responds to a question at issue developed out of our discussion of the Rose, Graff, and Wallace pieces. This essay may also draw upon any of the readings on the schedule of assignments for this course, but it may not include outside sources. The essay's reasoning must be generated from and expressed by an enthymeme.

### **Analysis of Student Writing - 25%**

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.

### **Teaching Plans (TP) – 25%**

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 chapters 1-8. 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?

## Course Policies

**Attendance:** You must attend and participate in all class meetings to pass this course unless you give sufficient notice and reason for being unable to attend. Please do not come to class if you are ill. Missing a class meeting without advance notice will result in your course grade being lowered by 1/3. Missing more than one class meeting may 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, I will not accept late work.

**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](mailto: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.

## 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. Identify two exits and the assembly check-in location for this and every building you frequent on campus.

**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.

### Tentative Schedule of Assignments

*Subject to change at the discretion of the instructor with notice.*

Week/ Date	Topic	Reading Due	Informal Written Assignment Due	Formal Writing Due
1 1/7	Welcomes and Introductions			
2 1/14	Inquiry and Reasoning Discourse Communities Listening and Responding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meiland (1989) “Argument as Inquiry”</li> <li>• <i>SOR</i> “A Note to Students” (xi-xii); Chapters 1 and 4</li> <li>• Policy and Procedures, “Overview of Courses (3-6)”</li> <li>• <i>IM</i> pp 4-9</li> </ul>	Bring suggestions for ways to create a classroom that encourages all students to engage in inquiry and ethical argumentation.	RTN #1 1700 1/14/15 on Blackboard
3 1/21	Critical Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>SOR</i> Chapter 2 &amp; 3</li> <li>• Policies and Procedures, “Professional Responsibility” (7-11)</li> <li>• Rose: “Lives on the Boundary”</li> <li>• Graff: “Hidden Intellectualism”</li> <li>• Wallace: “Kenyon Commencement Speech”</li> <li>• <i>IM</i> 11-17</li> </ul>	Bring 3 questions about the Graff, Rose, and Wallace readings that could begin a classroom discussion.	
4 1/28	Asking Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>SOR</i> Chapter 5</li> <li>• Crosswhite (1996) “Argument and Ideology”</li> <li>• Stasis video</li> <li>• <i>IM</i> 17-25</li> </ul>	Bring 3 questions at issue that develop from our discussion of Graff, Rose, and Wallace.	RTN #2 1700 1/28/14 on Blackboard
5 2/4	Rhetoric and Informal Reasoning; the Enthymeme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>SOR</i> Chapter 6</li> <li>• Gage (1996) “The Reasoned Thesis: the E-word and Argumentative Writing as a Process of Inquiry”</li> <li>• <i>IM</i> 33-38</li> </ul>	Bring two revised questions at issue and enthymemes	RTN #3 1700 2/4/15 on Blackboard
6 2/11	GTF Symposium Responding to Student Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sommers (2006) “Across the Drafts”</li> <li>• White (2007) “Issues in Grading Writing and Using Scoring Guides”</li> <li>• <i>IM</i> 29-31</li> </ul>		
7 2/18	Structure and Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emmel (1996) “Evidence as a Creative Act”</li> <li>• <i>SOR</i> Chapter 7</li> <li>• <i>IM</i> 25-29</li> </ul>		RTN #4 1700 2/18/15 on Blackboard

8 2/25	Revision, Errors, Grammar, Style, and Sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hartwell (1985) “Grammar, Grammars, and the Teaching of Grammar</li> <li>• Ferris (2004) “Responding to Student Errors: Issues and Strategies”</li> <li>• Recommended: Lanham (2006, 2010) “The Substance/Style Matrix”</li> <li>• <i>SOR</i> Chapter 8</li> <li>• <i>IM</i> 25-28</li> </ul>		Analysis of Student Writing
9 3/4	Student Symposium			Argumentative Essay
10 3/11	Equity and Inclusion in the Composition Classroom			
10 3/14	Saturday: Teaching Plans due on Blackboard by 10:00 a.m.			TP for <i>SOR</i> Chapters