Dr. Cristina Kirklighter
Current Approaches to Composition and Literature
English 3360.203 Spring 2012
Office Phone: (361) 825-2263
Office: FC 285
E-mail: Cristina.kirklighter@tamucc.edu
Office Hours: MW 11:30-1:30 Tuesday 1:30-2:30
Monday/Wednesday 3:30-4:45
Room: CCH 209

**Course Description**

English 3360 is an amalgam of writing workshop, teaching practicum, and composition theory course. The course instructor will focus on contemporary approaches to written discourse in English, including the study of composition and literature. Its purpose is to introduce you to the current research in literacy, writing, and the teaching of writing to the end of helping to prepare you to be a more effective, reflective, and informed language arts teacher in either an elementary, middle, or secondary public school. To this end, we will complicate and question our ideas of literacy and language:

What is literacy?

- In the U.S. today, what does it mean to be literate?
- How can we encourage and develop our students various stages and forms of literacy?
- As teachers, what are our beliefs about literacy and language, and how do they impact our roles/strategies in the classroom?
- How can we respect the various forms of literacy that students bring to our classrooms, at the same time that we are preparing them for the various cultural, professional, technological, social, and civic discourses that they will need to participate in to be fulfilled members of our society?

We will also build knowledge, materials, tools, and strategies to help you become an informed, confident, reflective teacher of literacy in your future/current position/degree.
Student Learning Outcomes

Students in English 3360 will:

1. Apply contemporary theories of writing and literature pedagogy to design and evaluate classroom materials in accordance with the TEKS.

2. Evaluate K-12 student writing using a variety of response and assessment methods

3. Write in multiple academic and personal genres to improve their own writing skills.

Course Goals

As part of accomplishing these outcomes, students will meet the following goals:

1. Identify the complex relations among literacy, learning, and language use.

2. Identify the theoretical principles behind local, state, and national standards, and apply them, along with a wide range of professional resources, to curriculum development.

3. Explain the ways that contexts for teaching and/or learning are influenced by global and local factors such as: divergent notions of literacy; matters of race, gender, class, economics, technology; cultural and environmental elements; and socio-cognitive development.

4. Apply process pedagogy and the workshop model of writing instruction to curriculum development.

5. Develop a critical vocabulary for teaching writing and literature at an age-appropriate level.

6. Design strategies for teaching writing and literature in a high stakes testing environment.

7. Generate and apply appropriate criteria for responding to and assessing student writing.

8. Develop effective strategies for integrating technology into the English language arts classroom.
9. articulate the theoretical principles behind the methods that inform one's pedagogy

10. apply creative writing techniques to write creative works.

**Prerequisite: one reading course**

**Grade Breakdown for High Stakes Writing**

100%-90% = A

90%-80% = B

80%-70% = C

70%-60% = D

60% and below = F

**Grade Distribution**

**High-Stakes Writing Work (Total: 70%)** High stakes writing will be graded on quality of product, demonstration of knowledge, professionalism. Expectations for quality and correctness are very high. Except for the exams, this involves extensive revision from earlier work.

1. **Interview Report (15%):** interview a currently practicing teacher about how writing is taught at that grade level and write a three-page report on what you learned (TEKS all levels: Writing/Writing Process, Interviewing techniques, Writing/Expository & Procedural texts)

2. **Writing developed from notebook (15%):** Creative writing piece developed from low stakes notebook. Each student will choose a writing from his/her notebook to develop into a finished product for an audience and published in our online anthology. You may also decide to go public and include your writing in the National Gallery of Writing at http://galleryofwriting.org/galleries/gallery_of_ncte. Multiple drafts are required for this writing. (TEKS all levels: Writing/Writing Process; Writing/Literary texts)

3. **Research essay (20%):** Research essay is based on a topic developed from our low stakes writing about various assigned NCTE discussion
4. First exam (10%): essay questions, based on course content.

5. Take Home Final Exam based on Workshop In-service Outline (10%): In addition to practicing the writing process through your notebook and finished product for an audience, you will have an opportunity to develop an in-service workshop for teachers based on what you learned through this writing process. With that in mind, you will be required to prepare a **three page detailed outline** of a two hour in-service workshop that you might facilitate for a group of teachers based on some of the concepts you learned through your class readings as well as experiences with the writer's notebook and finished product. The workshop should be practical; it should show how your ideas developed through what you've learned in this class and experiential knowledge through your writing process can benefit teachers as writers. Further information will be provided in class.

**Low-Stakes Writing** (Total: 30%). Work graded mostly on completeness (exceptions will be noted on individual assignments). Offers students the opportunity to explore ideas, practice techniques, and develop writing skills in a safe, relatively judgment-free context. Although the work in the low-stakes category does not have to be very polished, students are expected to produce a large quantity of writing. Some (although not all) will be written in class. Topics for high-stakes writing assignments will develop out of low-stakes writings.

1. In-class work: (15%) Includes individual, group activities, response to NCTE discussion groups and readings; required participation on workshop days; peer editing (TEKS all levels: Writing/Writing Process; Collaboration in writing/responding)

2. Writer's Notebook: (5%) In class and out-of-class writings that will lead to the high stakes writing developed from notebook. (TEKS all levels: Writing/Writing Process; Writing/Literary texts)
3. Responding to Student Writing: (10%) Students will practice responding to children and young adult sample essays using principles learned in class. Each student will write a reflective paper explaining his/her theory of response and how it was put into practice. (TEKS all levels: Writing/Writing Process, Writing/Expository & Procedural texts)

Submitting assignments: Some final drafts of the major assignments must be submitted through Blackboard. I will inform you of this in advance.

About the TExES Exam

Do not rush into the professional development segment of your career by attempting to take your TExES certification exams too soon. The College of Education can give you advice on when to take your professional development exams and will be your main source of information about the TExES if you are working toward EC-4 certification. For those of you who will be taking the English Language Arts & Reading (ELAR) 4-8 or 8-12, please do the following:

- finish at least 80% of the course work in the major before attempting the ELAR TExES exam.
- Make an appointment to see the English department TExES coordinator if you have not done so. Contact Dr. Jan Haswell (FC 281, x5961). She controls registration for the exam and the mandatory review sessions.
- Review the study guide carefully. Click here to obtain TExES Study Guides.
- Attend at least one TExES review session, preferably two. Try to attend one about a year before you plan to take the exam, then again right before your exam. Review sessions usually take place the Saturday one week before the exam. Dates and times will be announced in class.

Reminder to English Majors:

As part of the English undergraduate capstone course (ENGL 4351), all English majors are required to submit a portfolio of writings in different discourse genres that they have completed for their college classes. To help
you prepare for this assignment, you should keep a copy of all essays, research papers, literary analyses, creative and report writing, etc., so that you will have an ample selection from which to choose when the portfolio comes due.

**Course Policies:**

**Attendance/Participation**

**Absences**

As an active participant, teacher, and professional you are expected to attend every class on time. Attendance is a crucial part of a class grounded in liberatory learning and teaching that necessitates an active engagement in classroom discussions, group activities, and peer editing of papers as well as other writing activities. You are a valuable contributor in this classroom, and a responsible contributor and teacher must be in consistent attendance.

The work we will do during class is crucial to your understanding of the material and your success in the course. When a student is frequently absent, this requires the teacher to frequently explain the assignments and missed activities to the student and can hinder the effectiveness of group activities that require peer feedback. Consequently, the student who is frequently absent creates an unnecessary burden for both the teacher and their peers. Frequent absences will not fare well for your grade in that you will miss assignment explanations, handouts, in class activities, group work, and course grade penalties as listed below. **Most of all, frequent absences hurt your future K-12 students when you will miss valuable information and peer interactions that you will need for becoming the best writing teacher you can be for them.** If you plan on being absent from my class, just as in the workplace, you will need to inform me and your group members (if you are working on an assignment for that day together) via e-mail or phone once you know that you will not be able to attend class. This is what a teacher is expected to do when he/she is absent. If you do not do this, you will not be able to make up any in-class assignments for that day or turn in anything that is due on that day thereby receiving a late penalty for your work. To be considered present, you must be on time (unless there are extenuating circumstances that meet with my approval), participate in all class activities, and remain in class for the entire period. Leaving early, coming in significantly late, or not fully participating (for example frequent texting and facebooking, studying for other classes, nonrelated class computer use, etc.) in in-class work will result in an absence and zero credit for any in-class work that day. Five absences will
constitute a failure of the course. Attendance is taken in my class so as to document the absences.

**Deadlines**

As a teacher, you must meet the required deadlines. Late submissions will not be accepted unless there are extenuating circumstances that meet with my approval and are in writing. Please write the reasons for your late submission in an e-mail no later than the due date of the assignment. Such requirements will better prepare you for the deadline responsibilities that you will have in your classroom and to various co-workers and school administrators.

I treat this class as if it is a professional educational workplace, and I expect you to be a professional. What is expected of you at your place of employment as a future teacher is what I expect of you in class.

**Discussions**

You must play an active role in classroom discussions and group activities. Dialogue (whether written or verbal) is a vital part of the learning process for this class.

**In Class Conduct**

Please refrain from using your computers for unrelated 3360 work during class. I will periodically ask everyone to turn off their monitors during some non-related computer or lectures, so we can avoid temptations to check our e-mails, facebook, etc. Also, please put away your cell phones during class.

**In Class Writing Time Conduct and Accomodations**

Some students are easily distracted, so please do not talk during our private designated times of writing. Likewise, if you write better with some background noise, you can bring music headphones for our class writing times. We should only be concentrating on our writing during these times.
**University Policies**

**Grade Appeal Process:** As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

**Notice to Students with Disabilities:** Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in Corpus Christi Hall (CCH) 116, at 825-5816 or Text at 850-3180. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

My note: The new assistive technology lab is located in Corpus Christi Hall 119.

**Academic Advising:** The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.
Reminder to English Majors: As part of the English undergraduate capstone course (ENGL 4351), all English majors are required to submit a portfolio of writings in different discourse genres that they have completed for their college classes. To help you prepare for this assignment, you should keep a copy of all essays, research papers, literary analyses, creative and report writing, etc., so that you will have an ample selection from which to choose when the portfolio comes due.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism: The University will not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of intellectual/academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is a serious violation of departmental and University policies, but it is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Often, students commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. Regardless, work that is turned in for the course that is plagiarized will be failed. If you are unsure about your use of sources, please consult with me or visit the writing center (in the TLC, in the Glasscock building) for advice on source documentation BEFORE the item is due. For this course, you must use either MLA or APA citation style. Any grammar handbook and many web sites have directions on correct citation.

Acceptance of Diversity: We are the most diverse campus, in terms of racial identity, in the Texas A&M system. This means that we are all meeting and working with people who are different from ourselves in terms of their identities: whether that is defined by their race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, and/or religion. Respecting and accepting difference is vital to your success in this class, on this campus, as a future teacher in your own classroom, and in the global community.

Texts and Materials


A portable storage medium (e.g. flash drive) to save and transport files to and from class.
3360.203 Tentative Schedule

Outline

Week One – Introduction to the course and completion of the writer’s questionnaire in class. Review Blackboard 9.1 in class. Introduction to NCTE Discussion Group site.

Week Two – Read ix to 41 in Inside Out. Review NCTE standards and Teacher Burn-out article. Discussion posting on Teacher Burn-out article and New Teachers NCTE Discussion Group. Review Interview Assignment and Writer’s Notebook and Writing Developed from Notebook Assignment.


Week Four – Read the 2009-10 ELA [http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter110/index.html|TEKS]] for your preferred grade level. Pay close attention to those that deal with writing. Elementary level: Note that you must scroll down to subchapter 110.10 to find the 2009-10 version. Review discussions in NCTE Teaching Writing Group Discussions. Read 1-27 in The Writing Workshop and 61-75 in Inside Out. Conduct interviews this week. Writer’s Notebook entry. In-class work based on readings.

Week Five – Read your assigned chapter from Lucy Calkins, The Art of Teaching Writing. Review the ELA TEKS for the grade level(s) represented in your assigned chapters. Interview writing workshop. Writer’s Notebook entry. Read 231-249 in The Writing Workshop. Review NCTE Adolescent
Literacy and Middle Level Teaching Community Discussion Groups. Writer’s Notebook Entry. In-class work based on readings.


Week Seven – **Final draft of interview report due.** Read 102-113 in Inside Out and responding to student writing handouts. Read 148-192 in Inside Out. Review NCTE Read-Write-Think Creative Writing lesson plans and Read-Write-Think Discussion Group. Review Calkins videos on conferencing with students. In-class work based on readings.

Week Eight – Read 142-146 in On Writing Well and 193-214 in Inside Out and 155-171 in The Writing Workshop. Read peer editing handouts. Responding to Student Writing simulation workshop. Review for exam number one. Writing Developed from Notebook topic paragraph due and notebook entry based on topic paragraph. In-class work based on readings.

Week Nine – Peer Editing of Responding to Student Assignment. **First exam due.** Read handouts on Read 141-154 and 211-230 in The Writing Workshop. **Responding to Student Writing assignment due.** Writing workshop on Writing Developed from Notebook Assignment. In-class work based on readings. Review MS Word tracking for online peer editing.

Week Ten – Spring Break

Week Eleven – Conferences in my office for Writing Developed from Notebook (bring draft to conference). Online peer editing of drafts.


Week Thirteen – **Final Draft of Writing Developed from Notebook due.** Read 241-255 in Inside Out. Review handouts on Digital Literacy and Media Literacy. Review NCTE Discussion Groups on Developing Digital Literacies

Week Fourteen – Submit topic paragraph for Research Essay. Read pages 256-274 in Inside Out and locate resources on NCTE website. Librarian visit to help us locate research sources on our topic. In-class work based on readings

Week Fifteen – Read pages 6-45 in On Writing Well. Conferences on Research Essay. In-class work based on readings

Week Sixteen – Read pages 49-91 in On Writing Well. Peer editing workshop. In-class work on readings

Week Seventeen – Research Essay due. Review of Final take-home exam

Final Exam due date to be announced