Dr. Cristina Kirklighter

Composition Theory and
Pedagogy English 5372.202
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Office Hours: MW 2:00 – 3:00; W 12:30-2:00; Tues. 11:00-12:30
Class: Monday 7:00-8:30

**Course Description:**
A study and navigation through the recent historical developments and controversies in rhetoric/composition, with special emphasis in applying what we read, think, and write to our lives (or future lives) as scholars, teachers, writers, and students.

**Learning Outcomes**
Students in English 5372 will:

1. Apply contemporary theories of rhetoric and composition to pedagogical practices and activities in this classroom and beyond.

2. Compare and contrast through close readings and collaborative interactions the various movements in rhetoric and composition.

3. Research, analyze, and evaluate the scholarship of pivotal rhetoricians and compositionists so as to assess their contributions to R&C conversations.

4. Apply Blended Learning research and experiences to pedagogical practices in rhetoric and composition

**Course Goals**
As part of accomplishing these outcomes, students will meet the following goals:
• To examine and analyze the historical academic development of contemporary rhetoric/composition from the sixties to the present.

• To engage in close readings within this academic field.

• To develop theoretically and pedagogically informed collaborative critical reading, synthesizing, thinking, and writing.

• To analyze connections and differences between the multiple movements in rhetoric/composition.

• To examine critically and reflectively the ways that theory and practice shape and are shaped by one another.

• To study and reflect how rhetoric/composition theories and pedagogies positively and negatively affect scholars, teachers, and students' lives.

• To publicly participate in revising a CCC article for wiki comp in a blended learning community.

• To research and participate in the conversations that constitute the field through discussions and interviews with scholars in rhetoric/composition.

**Grading Policies**

Rhetoric and Composition Theory Circle Postings and Activities = 30%

Wiki comp participation in revising CCC article – 20%

Peer Evaluations = 10%

Blackboard On-line Discussions (unrelated to Circle Postings) = 10%

Research Interview Paper = 30%

**Course Requirements and Assignment Descriptions**

We will do several activities during the semester to better enable us to fulfill the goals of the Masters Program. These will include the following:

1. **In class discussion** – You should be prepared to verbally discuss the readings, present your research, and actively participate in for that week in class. For certain classes, you will share your larger projects with others for
verbal feedback and peer editing. Occasionally, we will have in class postings or activities created by the professor.

2. **Blended Learning Rhetoric and Composition Theory Online Blog Postings and Class Activities Developed by Students (Online requirement)** – On the first day of class, we will look at various ways blended online classes and traditional classes are conducted in a classroom and have guest speakers from previous classes discuss their online experiences. We will also review how other classes participated in Wiki-Comp that will be part of our online blended experience starting in mid-February. We will continue this discussion online after class. By the second class, we will work together to refine ideas on how we will use blogs and online blog postings that pertain to the readings and for the class activities developed by students. This will provide student input in the creation of the class structure, which works for the liberatory learning environment that I wish to create in this classroom. We may work to improve these guidelines as we gain practice and insights in our circles. Student groups will alternate each week in online blogs that directly pertain to the readings to online participation of creating a teaching activity that pertains to the readings. This will mean that you will participate in a group and alternate with them between these two roles described above. The group who is assigned to plan a teaching/discussion activity for that week should be reading the blogs in the other group and take into consideration their conversations as these activities are planned for the upcoming class period. The online discussion group for the readings that week will have members who will assume specific roles in the group to help others better understand the reading. Students will negotiate with each other between their roles and groups each week, so they can have a variety of roles and insights. **All students are expected to read the articles for that week, but the group assigned to online discussion readings should be doing most of the postings on the readings and should begin no later than Friday afternoon for the upcoming class. The teaching/discussion group should begin no later than Sunday afternoon and should be reading the online blog postings of the other students. The posts should relate to the readings and meet with netiquette rules we will review at the beginning of the semester and discuss which ones are important to post for this class.** When examining the posts, I look for the breadth of knowledge gained from the reading, the ability to apply the knowledge experientially, and responses to others that demonstrate a well thought out addition to the conversation. Each student will fill out peer evaluations on their group members’ performance every two weeks and will assess the each group member’s performance for those two weeks. I will take these evaluations into consideration when I assess each student’s performance. I will eventually share these evaluations with students after the assessment.
Other evaluation considerations will come from the on-line discussions and my class observations of the group. All class members are free to offer input to the group that they are not a part of in the online exchange and can receive up to five extra overall points at the end of the semester for these additional inputs. **We will not do these online activities/teaching activities when we participate in Wiki Comp.**

3. **Blended Learning Wiki Comp (Online requirement)** – In mid-February, we will take approximately three weeks to publicly participate in revising a CCC article for Wiki Comp. We will be one of only a few classes to participate in a nationwide project to re-vise/re-see a CCC article. We will be asked to actively go into the essay and rewrite the text for this moment, bringing in the broader range of issues which the field has taken up. Our revisions will be read by students across the country, creating a conversation about this article. This will also be a blended learning experience.

Here are some activities we might think about when revising the article:

a) Actively revise the essay as individuals or as a group. Students might take an essay and actively decide to write it from the position of a part-time instructor, marginalized identity group, different methodological framework.

b) Research and argue for additional C's essays to be included, offering bibliographic evidence that it is important to the field. Here students are making an argument about what the "canon" of the field might be.

c) Consider ways multi-media revisions using images, sounds, etc. might be added to the site if the site has these capabilities.

4. **Letters to presenters** – Periodically, we will invite guest speakers either online or face-to-face to offer their insights concerning the particular composition movement that we will study for that week. Each student must turn in the following week a letter to that guest speaker. The letter writer should expand on something the speaker said or probe a connection to a particular reading from this class or another. The letter will be graded on the writer’s ability to understand the guest speaker’s statements and connect these to discussions of the applicable movements in our readings. **The letter will be due the week after the guest speaker visits our class.**

5. **Scholarly Review of Rhetoric or Composition Specific Area and Interview Paper** – Each student will research a particular area in rhetoric
or composition that they have an interest in exploring. They will then write a scholarly review of the leading scholars in this particular area. Each student will then be required to conduct an interview (telephone, live or e-mail) with a particular scholar of his/her choosing in Rhetoric or Composition that specializes in this area. Students should have a list of at least three scholars in mind as a backup plan if one or two fall through. Students will develop questions that pertain to what entering scholars and teachers in composition would want to know. The purpose of this assignment entails providing the group with accessible insights at the Master’s level from these scholars concerning their works. We will collaborate together on the interview questions to establish some consistency in themes between the interviews. A detailed handout on this assignment will be distributed in the middle of the semester. **Due on the final exam date or earlier.**

**Online statements (note: some of the online statements are described above in the online assignment descriptions)**

Technical Support/Information Link: For technical support, please contact 825-2825 or e-mail at iol.support@tamucc.edu. Hours of operation are 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM every day.

Technical Requirements for Course: Intermittently, students must have access to a computer and reliable internet access. In this course, there will not be a time where everyone will need to access the course online at the same time unless they choose to do so in groups via chat for communicative purposes.

Delivery of Instructor Feedback: The instructor will return e-mail messages within 24 hours. Please send e-mails via Blackboard. If Blackboard is malfunctioning, then you can send it to my TAMUCC e-mail.

Student Login Expectations: (see Blended online description of assignments)

Login Instructions: To Login to Blackboard 9.1, please go to https://bb9.tamucc.edu/webapps/login/. You will need your student password to login.

Availability to Support Students: I will be able to support students via e-mail and during my office hours.

Types of Required Interaction: (see Blended online description of assignments)
Goals of the Program (2007)

- Proficiency in the critical reading of texts in context.
- Proficiency in writing and critical thinking at the graduate level.
- Proficiency in scholarly methods of research and inquiry.
- Familiarity with core knowledge, vocabulary, issues and developments in Rhetoric/Composition, Linguistics, Literary Studies, and Borderland Studies.
- Knowledge of creative and thoughtful teaching pedagogies and classroom practices; and
- Knowledge of and appreciation for cultural diversity both within and beyond South Texas that will prepare them to be responsible participants in the global community.

Graduate Studies Standards
The instructor assumes that seminar members are good-faith graduate students. Bona fide graduate school behavior is distinguished in at least four ways.

1. Students read weekly assignments on time and come to the seminar with serious responses and a willingness to discuss.

2. Students do not assume that an assignment is legitimate only if it will be “tested.” The work is done for its own learning value.

3. Students expect that they will attend 100% of the time and not assume there are a certain number of allowable absences. I come to class because I want to share a learning experience with students and help them achieve the goals of the program. I also want to learn from each student. If we have 100% attendance, we stand to learn more from our multiple and valuable insights. Also, given that each student has a specific role to assume for each class, we cannot afford to have multiple absences. In fairness to everyone, students who unavoidably must miss a class are required to inform the professor and collaborators well in advance of our scheduled meeting. Absences will make it more difficult for me to discern your learning experience and contributions when I write down the weekly activities and ultimately the final grade.

4. Students assume that open and equitable discussion and critique is the soul of a graduate seminar. Everyone participates. Everyone is respectful of others’ thoughts whether they agree or disagree. Students should not put the burden on the teacher or on other students to originate or maintain
discussion. They take on the responsibility to keep some seminar members from dominating others, and they do it by offering their share of talk. Since all were admitted to this program, we can assume that everyone has something insightful and valuable to contribute to discussions. A wise English professor once told me that he believes everyone in his classes has just about the same amount of intelligence. This belief also applies to him as the instructor. If we commit ourselves to this perspective, we can stand to reason that we will become better listeners and conversers.

**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](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**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom, or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance.
**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.

**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.

**Graduate Student Academic Integrity Statement**

English graduate students are expected to "conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty" (Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Graduate Catalog). The Student Code of Conduct defines Academic Misconduct as cheating, plagiarism, multiple submissions, complicity, fabrication, falsification, and misrepresentation; in addition to “any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course
syllabus or class discussion” (Student Code of Conduct, Article III, 1. Academic Misconduct). Academic misconduct is a serious offense that will result in the professor assigning a serious penalty, possibly including failure for an assignment, failure in a course, or recommendation for dismissal from a program (TAMUCC Graduate Catalog, Academic Honesty). For each Academic Misconduct case, the faculty member must file a record, including a description of the disciplinary action taken, along with any materials involved, with his or her college dean, who will forward a copy to the Office of Student Affairs. Further information regarding the judicial process is available on the website of the Office for Student Affairs

**Required Texts and Materials**

Kirklighter, Cristina, Diana Cardenas and Susan Wolff Murphy (eds.). *Teaching Writing with Latino/a Students: Lessons Learned at Hispanic-Serving Institutions*. SUNY 2007.


**Tentative Course Outline**

Week 1: Read Proper Introductions, syllabus and Liberatory Learning link. Read Blackboard information. Resources for Group online blog postings: Online discussion questions and Blended Online Resources. Read Introduction and pages 3-16 ("Where do English Departments Come From") in *The Norton Book of Composition Studies*. Student log on to Blackboard. Discussion of readings in *The Norton Book of Composition Studies*.

Week 2: Collaborative Learning readings in Norton and Blended Learning online readings. Discussion of readings. Blackboard in-class writing activity. Formation of groups and plans for group structure and goals. Online blog postings and teaching activity begins this week.

Week 4: Readings on Personal and Expressive Theory and Pedagogy. Online blog postings. In-class discussion of postings and readings. In-class group teaching activity.

Week 5: Readings from HSI writing teachers in South Texas. All the readings come from Teaching Writing with Latino/a Students. In-class discussion of postings and readings. In-class group teaching activity. Group evaluations due.

Week 6: Reading for Wiki Comp article and related articles. Review past Wiki Comp articles and revisions. Feedback from past Wiki Comp student participants. Discussion and plan for Wiki Comp revisions to article. Begin revising Wiki Comp article.

Week 7: Student input for suggested readings from Norton and elsewhere to help with revising Wiki Comp article. Wiki Comp online revisions to article by class members. Discussion of revisions in class.

Week 8: Student input for suggested readings from Norton and elsewhere. Wiki Comp online revisions to article by class members. Discussion of revisions in class.

Week 9: **Final revisions to Wiki Comp article before class meeting.** Readings on Literacy Theory and Pedagogy. Prepare Scholarly Source Review. Online blog postings of readings.

Week 10: Spring Break. Work on Scholarly Source Review.

Week 11: Peer Editing Scholarly Source Review in class and online. Rhetoric Readings online and in class. Review Interview Guidelines. Student input on readings for next week in a particular area of Rhetoric and Composition. 

**Due: Scholarly Source Review**

Week 12: Select three scholars in your scholarly source review area and e-mail these names. Online blog postings. In-class discussion of postings and readings. In-class group teaching activity. Student input on readings for next week in a particular area of Rhetoric and Composition. Contact by the end of the week at least two potential interviewees to schedule an interview.
Week 13: Online blog postings. In-class discussion of postings and readings. In-class group teaching activity. Group evaluations due. Student input on readings for next week in a particular area of Rhetoric and Composition.

Week 14: Post preliminary questions for interview for peer and professor feedback. Class online blog postings of the readings only given students need to work on interviews. Conduct interviewees this week.

Week 15: Read *Tactics of Hope* and review *Reflections* journal website. Online discussion postings of readings. Writing workshop on Interview essay. Provide online peer editing feedback on draft.

**Interview Essay due by during the final exam date (to be announced)**