English 3301.201
Introduction to Writing Studies
Fall Semester 2017
TR 12:30-1:45 CCH 207

English 3303.201
Introduction to Writing Studies

Catalog Description
This course will review current scholarship on writing studies, including threshold concepts, activity theory, and genre studies. It will consider various perspectives on the uses of writing to provide students with an intellectual and practical understanding of writing. This course provides a starting point for the more specific studies of writing that occur in other writing studies courses.

Course Description
How do people write? How do people use writing? What thinking is required to communicate? How do they learn to use writing? How can they learn to write in different situations? In what ways are people allowed or constrained from literacy? This course provides an introduction to the study of writing as an academic discipline. We will begin with current discussions of activity theory, discourse communities, genre awareness, and transfer of learning, and then trace elements of the discipline back through various theories of writing and literacy to early studies of the actual activities of writers. Students will conduct their own studies of writing and connect those studies to their own writing practices and goals.

Student Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to

• Demonstrate an historical and theoretical knowledge of writing studies scholarship and research, including the key concepts of writing studies (see appendices: "threshold concepts," "kinds of knowledge about writing," and "habits of mind").

• Apply the use of information literacy practices (see appendix: ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education) within
the writing projects of the course.

- Select and use strategic writing processes (invention, planning, drafting, revising, editing, repurposing) for specific rhetorical situations.
- Demonstrate linguistic, rhetorical, genre, and editorial awareness and competence with language choices.
- Apply a theoretical framework to a research question.

**Major Course Requirements (How you will earn your grade)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Course Grade%</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Activities</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio 1: How Writing Works Within Systems and Communities</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Week 9 (midterm)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Activity system analysis</em></td>
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<td><em>Genre analysis</em></td>
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<td><em>Transfer analysis</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Synthetic/reflective essay</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Portfolio 2: Historical Perspectives</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Final exam period</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Auto Ethnography</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Historical analysis of written language</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Synthetic/reflective final essay</em></td>
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**Daily Activities**

Daily activities will include reflections, homework, draft workshops, peer review, and other writing process and research activities.

**Portfolios**

The work in the course will involve reading, writing, reflecting, conducting studies, sharing and discussing ideas, and considering how various studies and research align or contradict students' experiences with writing. While assignments will be graded individually, they will be resubmitted within a portfolio that will include a review process. The process of gathering work and reflecting upon it will encourage students to build their knowledge base of the field to prepare for later courses within the track. The portfolios will have two basic elements:

- It will contain an argument in the form of a cover letter/introduction that presents your understanding, and
- Evidence from your drafts, activities, and other sources.

**Unit 1: Activity Theory, Writing, and Transfer August 28-September 15**

Students will begin with an activity system analysis to investigate how language functions within a community and to particular ends/purposes.

- Introduction to key concepts, including (rhetorical situation, audience, purpose, context, genre)
- Russell
- Beaufort
- Activity System analysis
Unit 2: Genre and Social Construction  September 18-October 6
Students will find sample genres from an intended career or discipline, interview a writer, and investigate the uses and how those genres meet the needs of the discourse community/activity system within which they are used.

- Bruffee
- Bawarshi
- Dewitt
- Genre analysis

Unit 3: Learning to Write and Transfer of Learning  October 9-27.
Students write a "transfer analysis" in which they will reflect on their own progression through writing experiences and learning in order to map the various writing skills and practices they have used in school and various environments.

- Downs & Wardle
- Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak
- WPA "Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing"
- NCTE Position Statements
- Transfer analysis

Unit 4: Cognition and Expressivism  October 30-November 17
Students will write an auto ethnography or conduct a version of a study on writing practice and write a report on it. Students might do a speak aloud, observation, discourse analysis, etc.

- Impact of Vietnam, diversity on colleges
- Shaughnessy
- Rose
- Sondra Perl
- Linda Flowers
- Peter Elbow
- Donald Murray
- Auto Ethnography

Unit 5: A Brief History of Writing, Literacy, and Education in the United States  November 20-December 8
Students will perform an analysis of written language in use, looking at racism, prejudice, and/or gender bias in historical events and uses of language.

- Excerpts from a history of literacy education/composition studies
- Harvard letter?
- Brandt
- Smitherman
- Anzaldua
- SRTOL
- Jim Crow voting restrictions "literacy tests," restrictions on speech on campuses.
- A historical essay about the literacy of a member of family, exploration of literacy allowed to different groups of people

Texts and Materials
• Harris, James. *Rewriting: How to Do Things With Texts*

• An activated Office365 account (free via the University)

• As a class we will use several articles and resources available online.

**Student Success**
I encourage you to contact me immediately if anything is interfering with your ability to succeed in my class, so we can discuss options and strategies. In-class activities and daily work outside of class are vital to success in this course, so it is imperative that you commit your time & energy to it, and that you attend class and come prepared.

**Late Work Penalty**
I will not accept minor assignments late, unless there is a serious crisis (see "Extensions"). Major assignments (such as Projects, the Writer's Notebook, and the Portfolio) may be turned in late for a penalty of 1/2 grade reduction per day, including weekends.

**Extensions**
If there is a crisis that prevents you from meeting a deadline or attending class, you can request an extension to turn the work in late. The approval of an extension is entirely at my discretion and will depend on your current grade, record of completion of work, and attendance. All extensions must be confirmed by email.

**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. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**DISABILITY SERVICES**
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, Room #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 at (361) 825-5816.
GRADE APPEALS PROCESS
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, 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 Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one's own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a failing grade on the assignment and a report being filed with the Office for Judicial Affairs.

Plagiarism includes
• using the work of another as your own,
• downloading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as your own,
• using resource materials without correct documentation,
• using the organization or language of a source without using quote marks and proper citation.
• turning in a researched paper without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.
Be aware that there are other ways to use sources incorrectly, or to plagiarize. When in doubt, visit with me or the Writing Center to get help on the correct use of sources, how to paraphrase, and how to document correctly. Information on MLA documentation rules and APA documentation rules is available online (for free) at Purdue University's OWL: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/
**Statement of Academic Continuity**

Recommended text or compose your own] In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

**Course Calendar.**

For specific homework assignments & in-class activities, go to the wiki page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Introduction, Begin Unit 1: Activity Theory, Writing, and Transfer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Unit 1, reading responses, brainstorming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Unit 1, drafting, Project 1 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Unit 2: Genre and Social Construction, reading responses, brainstorming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeks</td>
<td>Unit 2: find artifacts, drafting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Unit 2: drafting, Project 2 due; Portfolio 1 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Unit 3: Learning to Write and Transfer of Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeks</td>
<td>Unit 3: research of transfer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Unit 3:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Unit 4: Cognition and Expressivism, readings, brainstorming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Research, conduct auto-ethnography</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Drafting, revision, report writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Unit 5: A Brief History of Writing, Literacy, and Education in the United States; readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Research, drafting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Drafting, revision, publication of projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 16</td>
<td>Portfolio 2 due! Final Exam.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Syllabus Appendices**

*Threshold Concepts of Writing: (Wardle & Downs, 2014, adapted, and including some language from Adler-Kassner and Wardle, 2015, revised Fa/2015)*

The Writing Studies emphasis will integrate "threshold concepts of writing" in all its courses. These are concepts that writers must understand in order to develop and progress as writers.

- All writers have more to learn about (how to use) writing; reflection is critical to writers' ongoing development and their ability to transfer what they learn to new/different situations;
  - Learning (to use writing) is informed by prior experiences
- Writing makes things happen, gets things done;
- Writing is a malleable tool that we use in specific activity systems, which are goal-directed, historically situated, and cooperative human interactions.
• Effective ("good") writing is context-specific, its value depends on
  o the extent to which writers understand the constraints and affordances of
    the activity system and rhetorical situation, the available choices they
    have to best achieve their purpose with their audience;
  o the extent to which writers choose and use an appropriate genre and appropriate
    content;
  o the extent to which writers know about and know how to use appropriate
    strategies for planning, drafting, and revising.

_Kinds of Knowledge about Writing (Beaufort, 2007, adopted)_

The Writing Studies emphasis will require writers to develop the kinds of knowledge they need to understand how to use writing effectively. Writers compose within and for specific groups (discourse communities), whose expectations, values, and activities determine writers' choices about appropriate content/subject matter and genres. Writers also need to know how to apply knowledge of rhetoric (considering the relationships among the writer, the readers, and the purpose of writing) as they compose. As they consider these kinds of knowledge, writers make choices about the most appropriate process to use in order to compose effective texts.

_Habits of Mind_

This course will continue to help you develop the eight habits of mind that are essential to students' success in college writing and beyond (The Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing):

• Curiosity - the desire to know more about the world.
• Openness - the willingness to consider new ways of being and thinking in the world.
• Engagement - a sense of investment and involvement in learning.
• Creativity - the ability to use novel approaches for generating, investigating, and representing ideas.
• Persistence - the ability to sustain interest in and attention to short- and long-term projects.
• Responsibility - the ability to take ownership of one's actions and understand the consequences of those actions for oneself and others.
• Flexibility - the ability to adapt to situations, expectations, or demands.
• Metacognition - the ability to reflect on one's own thinking as well as on the individual and cultural processes used to structure knowledge.