Spring 2019

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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 developing 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.
- Apply knowledge of current views of "writing" in your own uses of writing and in analyses of texts ("writing") you read / engage. (Focus on 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.

Texts and Materials
- Numerous readings online and in our Blackboard "Library" (which you may read in digital form or download and print)
- Access to University Network, Email, etc.
- Google account

Major Course Requirements (How you will earn your grade)
- See Assignment Overview

What you can expect of me
You deserve to know that I am passionate about what I do, about teaching and learning. You deserve to know this because I sometimes forget that others have different passions and life goals. I sometimes forget that you all have lives to live, identities to construct, passions to discover. I sometimes forget that many are not as fortunate as I have been, fortunate to know for so many years that I wanted to teach and to be able to do it, in spite of detours, obstacles, and dead-ends. Remind me of this if you
sence that I have forgotten my promise to respect you as a learner and as a mature adult who is part of this class as a co-learner, with classmates and me.

You deserve to know that I am especially passionate about tolerance, social justice, and individual and civic responsibility. I believe that we must lead purposeful lives, responsibly, ethically, and generously. Remind me of this if you are ever unsure about my actions or our purposes.

My passion is tempered by my willingness to reflect critically, carefully, and generously, to question, to look again at what I am doing and being and becoming. I struggle to re-see, to re-think, to re-know. I value my willingness to change, to grow, to learn. Remind me of this if I seem unwilling to consider alternative perspectives.

I believe we are all co-learners: learners and teachers. In this class, we will be a community of learners / teachers who are writers and readers. To establish and promote this kind of classroom environment requires that we all participate in the business of this class, in a variety of ways.

In this course, I am inviting all of you to be responsible, independent, active learners / teachers. I intend to treat each of you as a mature adult who is here by choice and who expects to have a meaningful learning experience in this class. The assignments and activities invite you to make responsible, independent choices; to engage actively and seriously the reading, writing, and discussions with intellectual curiosity, creativity, and integrity; to make this class meaningful for you, as a student and as a future citizen.

Rights, Responsibility, Respect, and Civil Discourse
During this semester, we may be exploring sensitive topics and examining ideas from diverse perspectives--in our class discussions, in our readings, and in our writings. One of the goals of college (of all education) is to challenge us all to think again about all that we know (and all that we don’t know). This ongoing enterprise--we will call it "learning"--demands that we all share responsibility for creating and maintaining an enabling environment in our classrooms and in the larger college community.

One way we do this is by respecting one another, in all that we do, say, and think. We are all members of a classroom community and of the larger college community-- teachers and students--and we will all be responsible for maintaining an environment that encourages civil interaction. In part, this means that we will be sensitive to what we say and do, how we act, how our words and actions have consequences, how our words and actions affect others.

As a teacher, I pledge that I will treat each of you with respect. I expect that you, too, will treat all members of this class with respect. If at any time any one of us thinks that we are not fulfilling our goal of maintaining a respectful and civil environment, she or he has the right and the responsibility to share her or his concerns with the teacher or with the class. If any of you have questions about this, please talk with me.

If you feel it is necessary or helpful, we will create class guidelines for discussions and for appropriate class behaviors. Let me know.

I trust that we will have no problems this semester. I believe we are all here for the same reasons:
learning.

Class Discussions, Workshops, and Sharing and Responding to Work in Progress

Class Environment:
"Interaction" and "Community" will be key concepts for us this semester. Through our various interactions we will be participating in and creating a learning community.

This course relies on interactions of various kinds. We will engage in regular class discussions, online, one-to-one, in small groups and perhaps as a whole class. Much of the work in this class challenges you to work individually and with classmates to achieve objectives we establish together.

Much of the work you do--formally and informally--will be done in small groups. Many of you may have had negative experiences with "group work," but I can assure you your experiences in this class will be different. You will learn to work effectively in small groups, and you may be part of several different small groups, formed for different purposes. I've been using groups for a number of years, now, and I consider them to be an integral part of every course I teach. Participating in group activities will not be optional. Learning to work productively as a community member is one of your goals for this semester. I'm convinced that you will find the group environment to be one of the most useful and meaningful features of this course.

Although I understand that effective group work requires that group members become comfortable with one another, and that a certain amount of sociability is required to maintain positive group dynamics, I also assume that when you work in groups, you are responsible for fulfilling the goals of that particular activity and that behavior in small group settings will be as respectful and professional as it is in our whole class settings.

Sharing and Responding to Work in Progress:
Because writing and reading are both cognitive process and social practice (processes and actions), because all writing and reading is purposeful, because all writing (and reading!) has an audience, we will share most of our work--in progress in this course--with groupmates, with other classmates, and when appropriate, with public audiences. Often during the semester, we will use student work in progress as a model for a whole class discussion.

Sharing work in progress is most useful when we all participate in the exchange and response process seriously and fully. I expect that we will provide full, useful, honest commentary to one another when we exchange work. I am evaluating your participation in and contributions to this ongoing process. I understand that many of you have had experience with this, and some have had negative experiences. I can assure you that we will learn how to share and respond in ways that are effective and positive.

Sharing Responsibility:
In our class, we are attempting to create and support an active learning, student-centered environment, one in which students share with the teacher the substantial responsibility for initiating and maintaining the kinds of activities and discussions that are most meaningful for achieving our [learning objectives].
Though I will emphasize this notion of shared responsibility throughout the semester, please understand that I am not abdicating my responsibility or authority. I am, after all, the person responsible for managing this course and for submitting accurate, valid assessments of your performance. I have made decisions already about what will constitute the intellectual work of this course: the readings, the writings, the overall environment and structure of the course. But within those larger frames, I am offering you an active role in the decision-making.

As the course develops, I will expect you to accept my open invitation to help me consider how to make this course more useful for us all.

**Important Note:**

Students often struggle with the difficult transition from a "teacher-centered" classroom environment to a "learner-centered" environment. They want me to tell them "what to do," "how to do it 'my way','" "what I want"; they often struggle with the flexibility, independence (and responsibility), wanting me to set firm deadlines and to be more authoritarian (as opposed to more authoritative).

Please recognize that I understand how difficult it is for many / most of you to be comfortable in this kind of learning environment, at least at first. Most of you have never been in a class such as this, and you can't expect to adjust overnight (especially not after 15+ years of "teacher-centered" instruction). Please discuss your discomfort or struggles with me and with your classmates, as often as necessary.

**Managing Documents & Submitting Assignments**

You will create a class folder in Google Drive that will be shared with me and the class. In that primary folder, you will organize and maintain folders for all your coursework. We will create these folders and work on proper sharing arrangements during our first few classes. Ideally, most of your work will be done using word-processing, presentation, or other software for creating digital content. If you do handwrite or draw some of your work, you can take a picture of that and upload it to your course folder(s), too. Unless directed otherwise, please do not send coursework to me via email.

**Course Policies: Responsibilities**

*Respect*

In all settings and interactions, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

More specifically, in this course, I want our community of learning to be a “Safe Zone”: Professional etiquette and civility are expected. Respect the diversity of the classroom. Personal attacks or hate speech are unacceptable on any grounds, including (but not limited to) race, gender, class, sexual/affectional orientation, religion, age, or disability.
"Presence" (Attendance) and Participation: Engaging with the Course
You’ll notice that I have no separate portion of your grade that is assigned to “participation” (which usually includes attendance and other stuff). Instead, your “presence” and “participation”—what I call your “engagement” with the course—contribute to your grades for in various ways as we work through assignments and activities. Through the use of portfolio assessment, you will be responsible for providing evidence of your engagement throughout.

In each portfolio you will submit multiple kinds of writing and evidence of “process work” (that is evidence of your planning, reading, research, drafting, revising, responding, editing, proofreading, etc.). The writing you submit will earn a % of your portfolio grade, and your process work will earn a %. I think you can see that consistent and serious “presence” and “participation”—engagement—are an expected and necessary part of the course if you intend to earn the grade you want.

Due Dates and Flexibility: Being a Responsible Learner
I understand that all of you have different learning and working styles (and different demands on your time and energy), and all that translates into different processes and paces for completing assignments and activities.

The course schedule is an "ideal" rendering of how this course will proceed, especially the schedule for working on the assignments—planning, research, drafting, sharing and responding, and revising. However, I recognize that my concept of "ideal" will not necessarily fit anyone else's concept of "ideal."

If you are unable to meet the due dates on our course schedule, if you do not think you can produce the quality of work you want to produce within that schedule, send me an email message and propose a different due date. When I receive your proposal, I'll accept it or propose a different date. For our purposes, "end of day" means before sunrise on the day following. So end of day Friday means before sunrise on Saturday.

Proposing a different due date will not affect your grade. However, if you do miss a due date without notifying me in advance and arranging for a new date, you will affect your grade. [Please note: If my "flexibility" with due dates has a negative effect on the kind of participatory learning environment that we all deserve, I reserve the right to modify this "policy."]

Writing Center
The CASA Writing Center at TAMUCC, located in Room 112 of the Glasscock Student Success Center, provides free help for students at any stage of their writing process. Writing Consultants are trained to support writers in planning, outlining, drafting, organizing, and/or revising their writing and are also knowledgeable in citing sources in various documentation styles used in academic writing. It offers both face-to-face and online appointments for both undergraduate and graduate students. The Writing Center works closely with faculty across the TAMUCC campus to understand writing in different disciplines and to help students meet these expectations. The Writing Center encourages students to make a 30-minute appointment; however, if Writing Consultants are available, they do accept walk-in appointments. Visit casa.tamucc.edu/wc.php to create an account using your @islander.tamucc.edu email address. Once you have an account, you can log-on to make an appointment.
Academic Honesty/Plagiarism
The University will not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of intellectual or academic dishonesty. Violations of academic honesty will be processed under the Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases. See http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/academicmisconduct.html and the Student Code of Conduct http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/assets/2013-2014StudentHandbook.pdf.

All cases of academic misconduct are recorded in the student’s file. Consequences are determined by the faculty member and/or the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel.

Plagiarism Definition:
In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. This definition applies to texts published in print or on-line, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers. Most current discussions of plagiarism fail to distinguish between:

1. Submitting someone else’s text as one’s own or attempting to blur the line between one’s own ideas or words and those borrowed from another source, and
2. Carelessly or inadequately citing ideas and words borrowed from another source.

Such discussions conflate plagiarism with the misuse of sources. Ethical writers make every effort to acknowledge sources fully and appropriately in accordance with the contexts and genres of their writing. (Quoted from “Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices”)

It is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Students sometimes commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. 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, or
- turning in a researched paper without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

Be aware that there are many ways to plagiarize. English 1301 and 1302 courses and the Writing Center at CASA will review rules of academic citation. Information academic citation is available at the Purdue University’s OWL, https://owl.purdue.edu/ and/or from our local Writing Center at CASA.

Academic Advising
The College of Science and Engineering 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 CI 366, and can be reached at 825-3721.

Dropping a Class
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the
Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. See the TAMU-CC Academic Calendar for the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Grade Appeal Process
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, 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 Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

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.

Support for Basic Needs
Insufficient basic needs--food, a safe living space--can affect your performance in classes and make your university experience more challenging. If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food, or you lack a safe and stable place to live, you might consider several resources on campus.

- Contact the Division of Student Engagement and Success for support. Specifically, the office of Student Assistance provides consultations, resource management, and institutional support for “extenuating circumstances.” Their website is here:
  - http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/StudentAssistance.html
  - The Student Assistance Coordinator is Kristeen Gonzalez. UC318, M-F 8AM-5PM. 361-825-2612
● If you do not have access to or cannot afford sufficient food, be aware that “Izzy’s Food Pantry” provides on-campus access to food. Find more information here:
  o  http://seas.tamucc.edu/FoodPantry/
● If you feel comfortable doing so, please talk with me and / or your other professors. We may be able to assist.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**

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.

**Questions?**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this syllabus, please speak with me as soon as possible. You are responsible for understanding and adhering to the policies of this course and the University.

**Tentative Schedule**

Week:

1: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
2: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
3: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
4: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
5: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
6: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
7: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
8: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop & Mid Term Portfolio Due
9: Spring Break
10: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
11: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
12: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
13: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
14: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
15: Reading / Writing / Class Workshop
16: Final Portfolio Due