WORKSHOP FOR NEW TEACHING ASSISTANTS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The fall workshop for new TAs provides structure and guidance in planning your 101 course. The course will systematically address each unit you will be teaching, mirroring, in many ways, the summer workshop model: you will workshop teaching materials, participate in mentor-led lessons, review readings tied directly to writing and teaching, and generate ideas and materials you can use in your classroom. In addition to these activities, you will have opportunities in this course to investigate, contemplate, and revise your teaching practices—and the beliefs and commitments that inform them. You will be encouraged to adopt a reflective and investigative stance toward your teaching.

REQUIRED MATERIALS


COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Weekly Writing: Each week, you will have homework assignments that will prepare you to teach the next unit of your 101 course. Often, this work will be workshoped by or shared with your peers.

Teaching Portfolio: At the end of the semester, you will hand in a collection of assignments designed to help you analyze, contextualize, innovate, and reflect on your teaching practices. They include:

*Reading Responses:* You will write three 1-2 page response papers to select pieces of composition scholarship and use this writing as a point of departure for reading group discussions. You should use your responses to clarify, question, and/or extend points made by the author and to draw connections between the reading and your teaching.
**R & R Analysis:** You will collect a small sample of your students’ personal narrative drafts and revisions, the feedback they received from yourself and their peers, the final versions of their essays, and your assessment of their work. You will then comment on the response/revision/grading process reflected in these documents.

**Observation Exchange:** You will visit the classrooms of two of your peers and provide concrete feedback on their teaching performance. You will compose a short response on the observation experience, discussing how observing and being observed helped you think about your teaching.

**Textbook Analysis:** You will review a composition textbook of your choice, analyzing the philosophy on learning to write and organizational scheme guiding the textbook. You will assess the texts’ strengths and weaknesses and discuss its suitability for English 101.

**Professional Development:** You will complete a project that supports your ongoing development as a teacher. More information on this assignment will be provided in the latter half of the semester.

**Final Reflection:** You will compose a 2-3 page end-of-semester narrative that details the semester’s teaching challenges and successes and outlines your goals and plans for spring semester.

**Grade Breakdown**

- Weekly Writing: 50%
- Reflective Teaching Portfolio: 50%
  - Reading responses (3)
  - Response and revision analysis
  - Peer observation exchange
  - Textbook analysis
  - Professional development assignment
  - Final reflection

**Classroom Policies**

Attendance is expected. Any necessary absences should be discussed with the Composition Director in advance. You have one freebie absence; after that, your final grade will be lowered by three percentage points per absence. Likewise, arrival to class on time is required. Tardiness is disruptive to the entire class and should be avoided. Two tardies equal an absence.
Turning work in late will result in a grade penalty of a one step grade drop on the assignment (A to A-, A- to B+) per day.

**Disability Services**

MSU provides students with disability reasonable accommodation to participate in educational programs, activities or services. Students with disabilities requiring accommodation to participate in class activities or meet course requirements should first register with the Office of Disability Services, located in 0132 Memorial Library, telephone 389-2825, TDD 711 and then contact me as soon as possible.

**Teaching Support**

I want to be accessible and helpful to you! I am invested in your success in the classroom and am interested in what is going on in your teaching. Please keep the communication lines open so I can better support your teaching.

**Unit 1 Schedule**

**August**

26  Focus: Introduction to rhetorical analysis  
    Refresher: Leading class discussion  
    Reading: Chapter 8, *How to Write Anything*  
          “Reading and Writing about Visual Texts,” *A Brief Guide to Writing from Readings* by Stephen Wilhoit D2L (Optional)  
    Due: Draft of organization section for rhetorical analysis assignment sheet

**September**

2  Focus: Rhetorical appeals  
   Refresher: Responding to student writing: global feedback  
   Reading: “Rhetorical Analysis,” *A Brief Guide to Writing from Readings* by Stephen Wilhoit, D2L  
   Due: Active reading assignment

9  Focus: Teaching & assessing rhetorical analysis  
   Refresher: Grading student writing
Reading: “Rhetorical Analysis,” *Teaching with How to Write Anything*
Due: Draft of rhetorical analysis assignment sheet and grading criteria
One lesson plan (post to D2L)

16 Focus: Rhetorical analysis wrap up
Refresher: Responding to student writing: grammar

Reading: “Minimal Marking,” Richard Haswell (Access via the Internet)
Composition scholarship: _________________________________
Due: Tentative schedule for rhetorical analysis unit
Final assignment sheet and grading criteria
**Reading Response #1**

23 Focus: Introduction to synthesis essay
Refresher: Conferencing

Reading: Chapter 2, *How to Write Anything*
Due: **Revision Analysis**