

Course syllabus and schedule are tentative and subject to change

Syllabus
English 523: Teaching College English
Department of English
University of Indianapolis
Winter/Spring 2022: 1/18/22 - 5/6/22

English 523-ONL

CRN: 26967

Credits: 3.000

Format: Online Asynchronous

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Office Hour TBD

office hours held via Zoom

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About the course

English 523 is a course framed around the questions that all teachers of writing must confront: What does it mean to teach writing? What do we expect of our students as they learn? Whom should we serve when we teach writing and why?

This course will emphasize a *praxis* framework for the teaching of writing—in which established theory informs practice; and practice, in turn, contributes to the knowledge of the field. We will situate our understanding of college composition in what research has found to be true about the development of writing ability.

As a class, we will explore:

- *praxis*, and the dynamic relationship between pedagogical theory and practice
- the history and movements of Composition/Writing Studies as an academic discipline, with a focus on the turn toward critical language pedagogy
- how to teach writing as a process
- how to assess and respond to student writing
- how to respond to difference and diversity in college composition
- the complexities of plagiarism and use of sources in academic writing

Official course description

(Please note that this section of Engl 523 will focus primarily on the teaching of first-year college composition, with some discussion about application to the teaching of literature)

This course will introduce you to theory and practice in the teaching of college English. In it, you will read scholarship on postsecondary English teaching with particular attention to the first-year composition (FYC) and introduction to literature courses. This scholarship discusses problems and possibilities associated with the design and implementation of these courses and the assessment of student work in them. You will consider the issues its authors raise as you analyze textual artifacts from first-year college English classes: syllabi, assignments, lesson plans, and class activities. By reading these theoretical and practical texts in relationship to one another you will develop a sense of ideas, debates, commitments, and concerns that motivate college English teachers and the negotiations between disciplinary theories and practical circumstances that shape the work that takes place in their courses. In the process, you will begin to position yourself to perform this work. You will articulate the orientation you adopt toward teaching college English in a statement of teaching philosophy, syllabi you develop for a first-year college composition course and an introduction to literature course, and lessons you design for use in these courses.

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Required course texts

Coxwell-Teague, D. & Lunsford, R.F. (Eds.). (2014). *First-year composition: From theory to practice*. Parlor Press.

Harris, J. (2014). *Rewriting: How to do things with texts* (2nd ed.). Utah State UP.

All other course readings will be provided as PDFs.

What I hope you'll learn

This class is designed in alignment with (1) the English department's goals to give students practice with writing and reading effectively in a variety of genres, and (2) the discipline of Rhetoric and Composition's history of examining the similarities and differences of language systems and social discourses.

In addition to these aims, I've designed this course to help new teachers of college-level writing toward a few developmental goals:

- To develop a personal practice of reflecting on your identity as a teacher and the interactions you observe between yourself and your students
- To develop an awareness of the central debates that surround first-year writing as a class: both on the scale of the institutional position of the course, and on the scale of daily teaching practice
- To develop a professional interest in the teaching of writing and in ongoing classroom-based inquiry
- To develop a personal philosophy of literacy education that is consistent with and supportive of your ethical worldview

How to access this class

I hope this class will provide an accessible, fair, and affirming learning environment for you all. As you will see, this course is deeply concerned with matters of equity and respect for difference. In terms of the work we'll do together this means a few things:

- All course materials and assignments must be equally usable by every student. If you encounter any difficulties taking part in class or making use of course materials, please contact me immediately.
- All class discussions, whether in person or in writing, must be respectful of our shared humanity, which includes personal *differences* in terms of race, gender, sexuality, culture, upbringing, etc.
- All personal writing you do in this class is within your own authority to disclose.
- All writing you produce for this class remains your property unless you wish to donate it to the course once the semester is over.

Projects and assessment

My philosophy of assessment is based on my valuation of growth and development in the learning process. I believe that all students should have access to the full range of grades in a course of this nature—regardless of their educational, linguistic, cultural, and teaching backgrounds—so long as they demonstrate motivated and consistent engagement with the course content/assignments.

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I've designed this class on a modified grading contract system (please note that the specifics of this model may change leading up to the start of the class). Completing all the work to the minimum requirements earns you an A-. Each project has the potential to either maintain the contract grade (submitted complete and on time), or to earn penalties if incomplete or submitted not on time. The final project can be extended in a number of ways to earn bonus points, either to erase penalties or boost your grade to an A.

Course Blog: This is a space where you will keep track of your ongoing reflections about what we are reading and discussing in the class. Please keep in mind that, while the visibility of your blog will be set to this class only, other members of the course will be asked to read and respond to what you have written. I'll ask you to complete a blog post each week. You may skip two blog posts throughout the semester without penalty. Beyond that, you begin accruing penalty points. Each post skipped is worth 0.5 penalty points. Each whole point lowers your possible grade for the class by 1/3rd.

Reflective Annotated Bibliography: At three points during the semester, I will ask you to hunt down, read, summarize, and respond to teaching-related articles from a list of Writing Studies scholarship that I will share with you. You'll post your entries to our course site. Each entry earns a potential value of 2 points, so 6 points total.

Statement of Teaching Philosophy: I am asking you to compose a written description of your values, goals, and beliefs regarding the teaching of writing. You'll compose a draft (3 points) of this statement around Week 8 of the course, and I will give you feedback. An updated and revised version (3 points) will be due at the end of the semester.

English 101 Assignment Sequence: Your culminating project in this class is to design a sequence of assignments for a college composition course, in a way similar to the examples we'll read and discuss in *First-year composition: From theory to practice*. Your sequence will include a statement of the major goals and objectives of the sequence, the major assignment/s and the associated process work involved, an explanation of how you would assess and provide feedback on student work, and a reflective statement that explains how and why you decided to put the sequence together in the way that you did. You'll compose both a draft (3 points) and a revision (4 points plus the possibility of extra points to boost your final grade).

Final Grades

Here is a **very basic** table that explains how your final grade will be determined for this class.

Grade	Points
A	20
A-	19
B+	18
B	17
B-	16
C+	15
C	14
C-	13

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D+	12
D	11
F	10 or lower

Course Policies

Synchronous Meeting Option

Each week, I will host an optional synchronous meeting on Zoom for those who would like to have engagement and discussion around the course content. I'll plan to record the meetings and will send them out for anyone unable to attend. As a class, we'll negotiate a regular day/time for the weekly meeting option during Week 1.

Late Work

Your assignments are due by the day/time specified and in the manner I request. It is important that you complete your assignments and submit them on time. The flow of this class is purposefully organized to give you a particular learning experience, and the assignments should proceed in a way that should keep the workload manageable. Late work is subject to point penalties.

Email

You are expected to check Brightspace and your UIndy email at least once a day M-F and I will do the same. You are responsible for making sure that you read all messages and emails from me; if you don't read them, any misunderstandings or missed due dates are your responsibility. I will do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours of receiving them M-F. I generally do not check my email after 4pm on Friday, and I do not check my email over the weekend, because #boundaries are important! If you send me an email after 4p on Fridays, I likely will not read it until the following Monday.

Academic Honesty

All writing and assignments you submit for this course should be your original work that you compose for this course alone (though we'll talk about how this gets tricky when you're composing teaching-related documents!). When you're representing language or ideas borrowed from others in your work, you are asked to clearly attribute that information to the original source. If I suspect you have engaged in academic dishonesty, I will contact you to set up a meeting. Your work will not receive a grade until we meet to discuss what I noticed and to discuss possible outcomes.

Disability Accommodations

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please inform me immediately so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. Students with a disability must register with the Services for Students with Disabilities office (SSD) in Schwitzer Center 206 (ph: 317-788-615 / www.uindy.edu/ssd) for disability verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations. You are responsible for initiating arrangements for accommodations for tests and other assignments in collaboration with the SSD and the faculty.

Statement on Inclusion, Diversity, and Classroom Civility

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Every student in this class -- regardless of educational background, sex, gender, race, ethnicity, class, political affiliation, language background, religion, physical or mental ability, or any identity category – is a valued and equal member of this group. We all bring different experiences to this class, and no one experience has more or less value than another. I believe that difference in the classroom is an asset to learning – not a barrier – and I ask that you all approach this course with a similar spirit. We can learn a lot from each other.

I encourage everyone to share their own experiences and perspectives as they are relevant to the course. I will not tolerate remarks that dehumanize an individual or a group of people based on their identities. Please be respectful of others.

If there are aspects of the instruction of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion, please contact me.

Instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus/schedule as necessary

***Tentative* Schedule of Readings/Assignments**

Week 1: Then....

Theory: Murray (1972), “Teach writing as a process not product”
Perl (1979), “The composing strategies of student writers”
Practice: Harris, *Rewriting*, “Introduction” pp. 1-13
Assignments: Blog Entry 1

Week 2: ...and Now

Theory: Horner et al. (2011), “Language difference in composition: Toward a translingual approach”
Inoue (2019), selections from *Labor-based grading contracts*
Practice: Harris, *Rewriting*, “Coming to terms” pp. 14-34
Assignments: Blog Entry 2

Week 3: How did we get here? The discourse turn in composition

Theory: Flower and Hayes (1981), “A cognitive process theory of writing development”
Bizzell (1980), “Cognition, convention, and certainty: What we need to know about writing”
Practice: Anson, “Writing, language, and literacy” (in *FYC: From theory to practice*, pp. 3-26)
Assignments: Blog Entry 3

Week 4: Bad Ideas About FYC

Theory: Selections from *Bad ideas about writing* (2016):
Brayson, “First-Year Composition prepares students for academic writing”;
Wardle, “You can learn to write in general”
Practice: Harris, *Rewriting*, “Forwarding” pp. 35-54
Assignments: Blog Entry 4

Reflective Annotated Bibliography Entry 1

Week 5: A Troubled Political History...

- Theory: Crowley (1998), "The politics of composition"
Dolmage (2018), "Steep steps" lecture
- Practice: Canagarajah, "ESL composition as a literate art of the contact zone" (In *FYC: From theory to practice*, pp. 27-48)
- Assignments: Blog Entry 5

Week 6: The Bartholomae/Elbow Debate (1995)

- Theory: Bartholomae, "Writing with teachers: A conversation with Peter Elbow";
Elbow, "Being a writer vs. being an academic: A conflict of goals";
"Interchanges: Responses to Bartholomae and Elbow"
- Practice: Harris, *Rewriting*, Chapter 3: "Countering" pp. 55-73
- Assignments: Blog Entry 6
Reflective Annotated Bibliography Entry 2

Week 7: Teaching Reading in FYC

- Theory: Selections from *Bad ideas about writing* (2016):
Carillo, "Reading and writing are not connected"
Barger, "Reading is not essential to writing instruction"
- Practice: Bean, "Helping students read difficult texts"
- Assignments: Blog Entry 7; Statement of Teaching Philosophy (Draft);

Week 8: Spring Break (no class)

Week 9: Problem-Posing Education

- Theory: Freire (1970), "The banking model of education" (Ch 2 from *Pedagogy of the oppressed*)
- Practice: Hesse, "Occasions, sources, and strategies" (In *FYC: From theory to practice*, pp. 49-70)
- Assignments: Blog Entry 8;
One-on-one conference to discuss Statement of Teaching Philosophy

Week 10: "Basic" Writers

- Theory: Shaughnessy (1976), "Diving in: An introduction to Basic Writing";
Bartholomae (1993), "The Tidy House: Basic Writing in the American curriculum"
- Practice: Harris, *Rewriting*, "Taking an approach" pp. 74-98
- Assignments: Blog Entry 9

Week 11: The Grammar "Problem"

- Theory: Hartwell (1985), "Grammar, grammars, and the teaching of grammar";
Micciche (2004), "Making a case for rhetorical grammar"
- Practice: Mathieu, "A guiding question, some primary research, and a dash of rhetorical awareness" (In *FYC: From theory to practice*, pp. 111-145)

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Assignments: Blog Entry 10

Week 12: The Plagiarism “Problem”

Theory: Howard (1995), “Plagiarisms, authorships, and the academic death penalty”

Practice: Harris, *Rewriting*, Chapter 5: “Revising” pp. 99-124

Assignments: Blog Entry 11

Reflective Annotated Bibliography Entry 3

Week 13:

Theory: TBA

Practice: Yancey, “Attempting the impossible: Designing a first-year composition course” (In *FYC: From theory to practice*, pp. 321-347)

Assignments: Blog Entry 12

Composition Assignment Sequence (Full Draft)

Week 14:

Theory: TBA

Practice: Harris, *Rewriting*, “Remixing” pp. 125-144; “Afterword: Teaching rewriting” pp. 145-155

Assignments: Blog Entry 13

Week 15:

TBA

Week 16:

Revised Composition Assignment Sequence/Statement of Teaching Philosophy due.