

OBERLIN COLLEGE
RHETORIC and COMPOSITION 481/ENGLISH 399

Teaching and Tutoring Writing Across the Disciplines

Spring 2003 Mr. Podis, King 139, x8612; email: len.podis@oberlin.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 2:00–3:00 p.m. or by appointment

Course Objectives:

- to train you to be a helpful and effective writing tutor
- to give you practice in responding to student writing
- to introduce you to the fields of composition studies and writing pedagogy
- to encourage you to reflect on your own writing habits and processes

Requirements:

1. regular **attendance**—no more than 2 absences without just cause, please; I insist on this not because I want to cultivate orderly or submissive behavior, but because the participatory-style inquiry methods of the course require that everyone be present to participate—in other words, the course aims to promote the type of interactive learning that many of the readings on the syllabus advocate, and it is important that we are present to interact.
2. assigned **readings** on pedagogy and writing theory and practice—see schedule below
3. a reading **journal** (2-3pp) due in class every Tuesday
4. in-class **discussion** of tutoring issues and experiences and (as appropriate) of assigned readings and sample student essays
5. **tutoring**: at the drop-in writing center in Mudd, or for a writing intensive course, or both
6. an **essay** (7–10 pages) to be drafted and revised over the first half of the semester (assignment suggestions will be given later); final draft due in class on Tuesday, March 18
7. an **essay** (10–12 pages) on any subject related to the course, to be drafted and revised during the second half of the semester; final draft due in King 139 on Thursday, May 15
8. a workshop-style **presentation** to the class, focusing on the draft-in-progress of your 10–12 pp. essay—presentations should be about 35 min. (I'll circulate a sign-up sheet after break)

Texts (all are available at the Oberlin Bookstore):

Working with Student Writers: Essays on Tutoring and Teaching, ed. Podis/Podis

Cross-Talk in Comp Theory: A Reader, ed. Victor Villanueva

Lives on the Boundary: A Moving Account of the Struggles and Achievements of America's Educational Underclass, by Mike Rose

Also: selected handouts. These are articles from professional journals and various tutors' essays received too late for inclusion in *Working with Student Writers* (see schedule below)

Online sources for writers and teachers: An excellent collection of links to online resources for writers is available at

<http://www.oberlin.edu/rhetoric/insidepages/forstudents/onlineresources.html>

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS AND READINGS

Week 1: Tuesday, February 4:

For the first class period, we will spend some time introducing ourselves, reviewing the syllabus, and discussing tutoring assignments, which are being arranged with the help of Professor Anne Trubek in RHET 483. We will also look at some sample journal entries from past years and, as time allows, do some writing in response to a questionnaire I will hand out. *For Thursday*, please complete the questionnaire and bring it to class.

Week 1: Thursday, February 6:

Bring the completed questionnaire to class. We will discuss our answers in detail. We will try to organize the practice tutoring sessions scheduled for next week (see below).

Assignment for next week: Please read the selections listed under “Week 2” and write your first journal entry for class on Tuesday, February 11. In general, I would ask you to try to do the coming week’s reading over the weekend so that you will be ready to write your journal entry to bring to class each Tuesday. I will often ask you to read excerpts aloud from your journals as a way of initiating class discussion, and I will usually collect your journals at the end of class on Tuesdays so that I can respond to them and return them to you on Thursdays. *Ideally, your journal entries will play a crucial role in shaping class discussion and in suggesting any changes we should make in the course as the semester progresses.*

Note: We need to discuss how we want to set up the practice tutoring sessions for next week

Week 2: February 11 & 13

ADVICE ON PEER TUTORING & WRITING AS A PROCESS

Readings (to be read for this week, preferably by Tuesday’s class)

In *Working with Student Writers* (hereafter *WSW*):

1. “Introduction” (pp. 1–7)
2. Section I. “Tutoring Writing: Practical Advice” (pp. 9–14)
3. “Working at the Drop-In Center,” by Katie Gilmartin (pp. 15–21)
4. “On Working with a Class,” by Tisha Turk (pp.23–32)
5. “Speaking the Written Voice,” by Alicia Koundakjian (pp. 33–37)

In *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory* (hereafter *CT*):

6. “Teach Writing as a Process Not Product,” by Donald M. Murray (pp. 3–6)

Handout:

7. “Processing Writing,” by Polly Dondy-Kaplan

Note: The first journal entry is due in class on Tuesday, February 11.

Also: This week we will attempt to do some practice tutoring in class.

Week 3: February 18 & 20

PERSPECTIVES ON PEER TUTORING & REVISION STRATEGIES

Readings

In WSW:

1. Section II. "Perspectives on Peer Tutoring" (pp. 39–44)
2. "Training Peer Tutors for the Writing Lab," by Leonard A. Podis (pp. 45–51)
3. "Peer Tutors and Institutional Authority," by Jeremiah Dyehouse (pp. 53–57)
4. "Peer Tutors: What the Teacher Can Learn," by Leonard A. Podis (pp. 59–65)

In CT:

5. "Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers," by Nancy Sommers (pp. 43–54)

Handouts:

6. "Tutoring Writing: Healing or What?" by Diane Stelzer Morrow
7. "Joe says, 'Communication, what kind of communication?'" by Charlotte Byrd
8. "Spreading the Word: A Proposal," by Michael Kish

Note: The 7–10 pp. paper will be assigned this week; it will be due Tuesday, March 18.

Week 4: February 25 & 27

FACILITATING AND RESPONDING TO STUDENT WRITING & WORKING WITH ESL AND BILINGUAL STUDENTS

Readings

In WSW:

1. Section III. "Facilitating and Responding to Student Writing" (pp. 67–72)
2. "Like, it was, you know what I mean?": Conversational vs. Presentational Speech in Student Academic Discourse," by Emily Fawcett (pp. 73–83)
3. "Improving Our Responses to Student Writing: A Process-Oriented Approach," by JoAnne M. Podis and Leonard A. Podis (85–94)
4. "The Dilemmas of Grading," by Noelle Howey (pp. 95–100)

Handouts:

5. "The Comments They Made: A Personal Exploration of Helpful and Unhelpful Commentary," by Naomi Strand
6. "Evaluating the System: Why Letter Grades Are Appropriate but Insufficient," by an anonymous peer tutor
7. "Strangers in Academia: The Experiences of Faculty and ESL Students Across the Curriculum," by Vivian Zamel
8. "Writing Beyond the Words: How Native Language Can Influence Orientation and Purpose of Academic Writing," by Maria E. Barajas

Note: This week we will tutor each other in class to brainstorm ideas for the 7–10pp.

Week 5: March 4 & 6

WRITING IN THE CLASSROOM & FORM AND GRAMMAR

Readings

In WSW:

1. Section IV. "Writing in the Classroom: Approaches and Methods" (pp. 101–106)
2. "Perspectives on the Writing Classroom," by Leonard A. Podis (pp. 107–116)
3. "No Answers: Interrogating 'Truth' in Writing," by Noelle Howey (pp. 117–121)
4. "Identifying and Teaching Rhetorical Plans for Arrangement," by JoAnne M. Podis and Leonard A. Podis (pp. 123–137)

In CT:

5. "Grammar, Grammars, and the Teaching of Grammar," by Patrick Hartwell (pp. 183–211)

Handouts:

6. "Teaching Arrangement: Defining a More Practical Approach," by Leonard A. Podis
7. "Glazed Looks and Panic Attacks: The Challenge of Teaching Grammar to Basic Education Students," by Kate Daloz

Note: Continue tutoring each other in class on the 7–10pp. essay this week.

Week 6: March 11 & 13

WRITER'S BLOCK/ AUTHORITY ISSUES & WRITING IN ONLINE SETTINGS

Readings

In WSW:

1. Section V. "Writer's Block and Authority" (pp.139–142)
2. "Learning from Writer's Block," by Jenny Love (pp. 143–150)
3. "Consciousness, Frustration, and Power: The Making of Contextual Writer's Block," by Miriam Axel-Lute (pp. 151–168)
4. "Authority Issues in Online Instruction," by JoAnne M. Podis (pp.169–178)

Handouts:

5. "From Silence to Words: Writing as Struggle," by Min-Zhan Lu
6. "'I Hate Writing Papers So Much I Want to Die!' and Other Problems with Academic Writing," by Bridget Heersink
7. "Reviewing Authority," by Nick Junkerman
8. "Writing in the Information Age: The Language of E-Mail and Instant Messaging," by Elizabeth Weinstein

Note: Continue tutoring each other in class on the 7–10pp. essay this week.

Week 7: Tuesday, March 18

- **No Class on Thursday, March 20!** (I will be giving a paper at CCCC in New York)

WRITING, TEACHING, LEARNING AND “DISCOURSE COMMUNITIES”—PART I

- *Note: No journal entry is due this week because the 7-10pp essay is due*

Readings

In WSW:

1. Section VI. “Discourse Communities: Issues and Problems” (pp. 179–184)
2. “Scientific Writing: What’s So Difficult About It Anyway?” by Anita Stone (pp. 185–192)

In CT:

3. “Inventing the University,” by David Bartholomae (pp. 589–619)

Handouts:

4. “Reflections on Academic Discourse,” by Peter Elbow
5. “A Pedagogy of Charity,” by Kevin J. Porter

Note: 7–10 pp. essay is due in class today, Tuesday, March 18.

Before you submit the paper, I will ask you to talk in class about what you wrote, what you learned, what the process was like, etc. Also please choose an excerpt from your paper to read aloud to the class.

Week 8: March 25 & 27

*******Spring Break*******

Note: In your journal for next week, please include a midterm evaluation of the course, including reflections on your own work so far. Next week in class we will talk about your views of the course and consider any suggestions for change that you would like to make.

Week 9: April 1 & 3

WRITING, TEACHING, LEARNING AND “DISCOURSE COMMUNITIES”—PART II

Readings

In WSW:

1. “Defining a Persona Within the Boundaries of Academic Discourse, or God, I Sound Like a Pretentious Ass,” by Elizabeth Schambelan (pp. 193–198)
2. “Traveling the Middle Ground: Bridging the Dichotomies Between Academic and Personal Discourse,” by Holly Thompson (pp. 199–206)

In CT:

3. “Writing with Teachers,” by David Bartholomae (479–488)
4. “Being a Writer vs. Being an Academic: A Conflict in Goals,” Peter Elbow (489-500)
5. “Interchanges: Responses to Bartholomae and Elbow” (501–509)

Handouts:

6. “For Whom Do I Write? A Discussion on the Discourse of Academia,” by Erin Savage

In *Lives on the Boundary*, by Mike Rose:

7. Chapter 1
8. Chapter 6 (If you have time, read chapters 2–5, also. Next week we’ll read Ch. 7 & 8)

Note: 10-12 pp. essay will be assigned this week (final draft due Thursday, May 15)

Week 10: April 8 & 10

EMPOWERING MARGINALIZED LEARNERS

Readings

In WSW:

1. Section VII. "Empowering Marginalized Learners" (pp. 207–212)
2. "My Hidden Class Consciousness," by Monica Bielski (pp. 213–220)
3. "Writing in Academia: The Politics of Style," by Virginia Pryor (pp. 221–227)
4. "Writing Tutors and Dyslexic Tutees: Is There Something Special We Should Know?" by Jennifer Wewers (pp. 229–237)

In CT:

5. "Diving In: An Introduction to Basic Writing," by Mina Shaughnessy (pp. 289–295).

Handout:

6. "Demystifying the Discourse," by Melissa Hoskins

In *Lives on the Boundary*, by Mike Rose:

7. Chapter 7
8. Chapter 8

Note: Tutor each other in class to brainstorm on the 10–12pp. essay. Presentations will begin this week or next week (depending on sign-up schedule).

Week 11: April 15 & 17

CHALLENGING TRADITIONAL APPROACHES IN TEACHING, TUTORING, AND PAPER-WRITING

Readings

In WSW:

1. Section VIII. "Politics of Literacy: Challenging Traditional Approaches" (pp. 239–242)
2. "How Much to Tell? The Role of the Teacher in the Politicized Classroom," by Jennifer Breen (pp. 243–250)
3. "On the Use of 'I' in Academic Writing," by Samantha Sansevere (pp. 251–260)
4. "My Paper," by Alice Peterson (pp. 261–266)

Handouts:

5. "Between the Drafts," by Nancy Sommers
6. Untitled expository writing paper (dated 3/15/99) by Dinah Shepherd
7. "The Hero with a Thousand Voices: The Relationship Between the Narrative and Academic Styles," by Aaron Rester

Note: Tutor each other in class on the 10–12pp. essay, this week. Presentations ongoing.

Week 12: April 22 & 24

IDENTITY, IDEOLOGY, AND COMPOSITION & ETHICS OF SCHOLARLY CRITIQUE

Readings

In WSW:

1. Section IX. "Identity Issues in the Teaching of Writing" (pp. 267–270)
2. "Caught Between Skin Color and Dialect: A Non-Essentialist View of the Use of Black English," by Monica Anthony (pp. 271–283)

In CT:

3. "The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People's Children," by Lisa D. Delpit (pp. 565–588)
4. "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class," by James Berlin (pp. 679–699)
5. "Diversity, Ideology, and Teaching Writing," by Maxine Hairston (pp. 659–675)

Handouts:

6. "Revealing Silence: Rethinking Personal Writing," by Anne Ruggles Gere
7. "The Rhetoric of Reproof," by Leonard A. Podis and JoAnne M. Podis

Week 13: April 29 & May 1

MORE IDENTITY ISSUES & "CONTACT ZONES" IN THE TEACHING OF WRITING

Readings

In WSW:

1. "'The Me Experience': Composing as a Man," by Donovan Hohn (pp. 285–299)
2. "Writing Inside Out: Issues of Sexual Identity in the Writing Classroom," by Rebecca Phares and David Schwam (pp. 301–314)

In CT:

3. "Composing as a Woman," by Elizabeth A. Flynn (pp. 549–563)

Handouts:

5. "Standard English? I Speak English But That Ain't My Standard," by An Anonymous Peer Tutor
6. "Ghosts: Liberal Education and Negotiated Authority," by Gwen Gorzelsky
7. "Fault Lines in the Contact Zone," by Richard E. Miller
8. "Strangers in the Classroom: A Personal Analysis of Class Participation," by Sarah Hull

Note: Tutor each other in class on the 10–12pp. essay, as appropriate.

Week 14: May 6 & 8**CONTACT ZONES IN ENGLISH STUDIES AND ACADEMIA****Readings****In WSW:**

1. Section X. "Problems and Issues in English and Composition Studies" (pp. 315–318)
2. "No Voice, No Vote: The Politics of Basic Writing," by Lauren Podis (pp. 319–324)
3. "Stuck *in* Composition: Two Anecdotes from the 112th MLA Convention," by Leonard A. Podis (pp. 325–327)
4. "Contextualizing the Debates: A Historical View of Expository Writing," by Grace Chang (pp. 329–336)

Handouts:

5. "Writer's Block and Religion Papers: Seeking God and Defining Self at a Secular Institution," by Andrea Eshelman
6. "The Nervous System," by Richard E. Miller
7. "Beyond Fear and (Self-)Loathing in the Composition-Literature Wars," by JoAnne M. Podis and Leonard A. Podis

The last class will be held on Thursday, May 8. The final draft of the 10–12pp essay is due Thursday, May 15 in King 139.