Teaching Philosophy and Sample Syllabus
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**Teaching Philosophy**

I've been teaching writing for eleven years. I started as a high school teacher but for the past six years I've taught college composition in its various forms and levels from freshmen to doctoral students. Through these experiences I've developed some core principles. My teaching philosophy is threefold: I want to find ways for my students (1) to care about their writing, (2) to feel like their writing is important, and (3) to be able to articulate their thoughts about writing.

Before I describe how I accomplish the three goals, I'd like to first offer some examples of feedback I've received on my student evaluations:

· Dr. Garcia de Mueller is an excellent professor. She is always willing to work with you, and assist you with your writing. She is understanding and very helpful. Thank you for a great semester!

· I love that this professor always came to class with a good attitude, had patience, and always helped out if we had questions. She is very down to earth, yet held high expectations.

· She was an amazing professor. I really got a lot out of her class. Every article was interesting and offered real information. I would definitely take her again.

What I find most helpful from these evaluations is that students want an instructor who is willing to help, has patience and understanding, but still maintains high expectations. Students also want a course that feels relevant. When constructing a course I align my goals with these self-reported needs from students.

Students are more willing to engage in the classroom if they feel a sense of agency. They will care about their writing if they are active agents in determining what the aim of the writing is and what that writing will look like. To this end, I have incorporated Asao Inoue's collaborative rubric building and community based assessment practices. First, students read articles modeling the kind of writing we will be doing. Second, they read articles articulating the purpose, aim, and overall genre features of that kind of writing. Lastly, through class discussion informed by this reading students create the rubric and assessment methods for their writing. Each student has a say in the kind of writing they will do and how they will be assessed. I facilitate this conversation and offer my suggestions pointing out ways to make the rubric fit the conventions of a given genre while also incorporating student opinions. It's a negotiation that works.

Along with community based assessment I also employ community based research in each course. For students to feel like their writing is important they have to see their writing as a way to engage in activities they find essential to their lives. One way I do this is to have students conduct research in their communities. The first phase of a project like this is the personal narrative and the discourse community analysis. I have students describe and analyze one discourse community they belong to pointing to specific ways the community talks about important issues that affect them. The second phase is to have students interview members of their community asking questions about these issues and collaborating on possible solutions. Finally, students do academic research on these issues and triangulate the data showing connections or conflicts between their personal,

community, and academic based interpretations of these issues. Sometimes this project ends with proposing solutions to their City Council or writing letters to Congress. Assessment in my courses always begins with student self- reflection. I want students to be able to articulate their thoughts about other people's writing and their own. Student self-reflection is based on the collaborative rubric and assessment models determined by the students with my guidance. Students reflect on the creation of the rubric and assessment models and then on their writing. They use key terms and concepts covered in the class to talk about improvements and difficulties they have with their writing.

If by the end of my course students care about their writing, have improved strategies to talk about writing, and feel like their writing is important then I feel like I've accomplished my task for the semester.

**Sample Syllabi**

Undergraduate Fake News and Applied Discourse Analysis Course

       The upper division discourse analysis course is divided into three units: Defining Fake News, Analysing Fake News, and Responding to Fake News. Each section centered on ways to use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a mechanism for theorizing fake news with the goal of analyzing the processes of meaning making in networks of language. Fake news media served as our main network and our artifact for analysis.

       During the first unit, students create definitions of key terms and concepts that explain newsworthiness, news strategies, and news values with the aim of looking for patterns in how news creators construct and spread effective fake news. The second unit is devoted to analysing fake news in a CDA model using the rubric below adapted from James Paul Gee.

|  | **Questions to Ask During Analysis** | | | | |
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| **Reliability** | What is the underlying ideology/warrant of the news article? How does it affect/effect my personal belief? | Can I separate fact from opinion easily? Does it have more fact or more opinion? | What happens when I read it with a different type of perspective/different set of eyes? | What information is missing? | Does it tell me what I want to hear without facts? |
| **Appeals and Evidence** | How does it appeal to my bias? | How does it not appeal to my bias? | Does it use mostly logic or mostly emotion? | Are there unnecessary negative personal attacks? Can the personal attacks be | How do they cite other articles? Just links? Or quotes? Both? |

|  |  |  |  | justified? |  |
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| **Perspectives and Audience** | Who is their target audience? | How many viewpoints are included? | What is the tone (and body language if its visual) of the speaker/writer? | Does it express concern for the opposing side? | Does it criminalize or demonize another viewpoint without justification? Is it justified? |
| **Language Choices** | What parts of the other articles are they not citing? | Does it give different opinions and connections without citations? | What emotional words does the author use and why? | Does it present consequences of believing the article? | Is the language vague? |

FDA-ANA Questions for Analysis

Unit Three centers on ways to process, react to, and respond to fake news. First, the class tracks fake news articles on social media and then using Gee's (2016) concept of Framework Discourse Analysis (FDA) that focuses on understanding the frameworks of meaning making of persons that oppose your viewpoints, students determined that there are five effective strategies to combat the impact of fake news: 1. Explain the difference between a fact and an opinion. 2. Make the bias of the writer clear. 3. Clearly state what the consequences are of believing an argument. 4. Compare and contrast consequences. 5. Focus on impact not intent. Students determined that responding to fake news required all five steps and that during a response you often had to repeat steps several times. Keep in mind that although the process might begin at explaining the difference between fact and opinion and end with focusing on impact rather than intent, most often students would go to any step when needed.

In class and in online spaces, students practice the FDA-ANA process of identifying, analyzing, and then responding to fake news. Gee calls for FDA to be used to create "a better understanding of [our] own framework, learn better ways to argue for it and explicate what it means, face new questions, and discover what parts of [someone else's] framework might not be working well for their own purposes, values, and their own good and the good of others" (365). Gee's focus on goodwill and collaboration while maintaining truth and self conviction allowed for a framework that at once condemned fake news but also considered differences of opinion and opportunities for epistemological intersections.

You can view the reading list here:
https://engl4341.tumblr.com/post/155773278027/applied-discourse-analysis-syllabus

Graduate Class on Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Research Methodologies

In this class, we  read, talk, write, and learn about different research methodologies and theoretical frameworks of historical and contemporary significance within the Humanities including Cultural Rhetorics, Critical Race Theory, Gender Studies, ethnography, surveying, discourse analysis, and other qualitative frameworks. We will also work to develop the techne of research – the how-to knowledge of conducting contextual research according to certain methodologies. In addition, we will examine, question, and theorize the motivations and biases that informed each methodology we cover particularly how those biases are embedded in race, ethnicity, nationalism, neoliberalism, citizenship, and misogyny. Collectively, this class is about the praxis of research. The course is designed to introduce you to some major research trends, while also preparing you to find and invent other approaches. Writing projects will include meta-analyzing methods, contextualizing methods, and working towards writing a thesis/dissertation proposal, a thesis/dissertation, or an article for publication.
This class will not be about all of the available approaches to research. Instead, the course is designed to introduce you to some major research trends within the discipline, while also preparing you to find and invent other approaches.The course assignments are designed to facilitate these objectives, but since you are all at different points in our graduate careers, there will be many ways that these assignments will manifest.

You can find the syllabus here:
https://english6321.wordpress.com/