TEACHING COLLEGE WRITING

Dr. Kevin L. Ferguson
Office: Klapper 711
kferguson@qc.cuny.edu

ENGL 793-01: Fall 2013
Thursdays, 10:05-11:55, Klapper 708
Office Hours: Thursdays, 12:00-1:00

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A study of composition theories, writing pedagogy, and literacy studies in the context of the college writing classroom. Required for all graduate students teaching in the English department at Queens College.

Most students in the process of earning an advanced degree in English are strong writers. But even the most skilled writer might be puzzled about how to teach others to write. Throughout the semester, we will investigate the practice of teaching college writing. How does one accomplish such a task? What are the challenges? What are the strategies? Using the Queens College “Goals for Student Writing” as a guide, students will be expected to examine the curricular, pedagogical, and theoretical contexts that shape teaching and learning as a way to begin developing their own composition pedagogies. The course focuses on concrete teaching practices (such as course and assignment design, conferences and peer workshopping, feedback and evaluation) as well as theoretical issues (like the circulation of literacy, formulaic writing, learning goals, creative writing, language standards, and technology). The course is designed as a seminar with a substantial weekly reading load, class blog, and formal writing assignments.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES for students include:

• to demonstrate familiarity with general theories of teaching writing, reading, and composition.
• to apply those theories to aspects of their own teaching practice.
• to have acquired a range of practical tools for the teaching of college writing, such as how to craft assignments, mark written assignments, and give students feedback.
• to understand how to use digital technologies as pedagogical tools.

REQUIRED COURSE READINGS:
All readings are pdfs on our class blog: http://practicumf13.qwriting.org/ [password: practicumf13]. You should bring a printed copy of the readings to class.

ASSIGNMENTS:

a) Three Reading Responses posted on our class blog. These should be substantial (400-500 word) responses to ideas from the week’s assigned readings. You don’t need to discuss every reading, and you should not summarize the readings. Instead, do things like: identify a conflict between two authors, present a question that builds on an author’s argument, or connect the readings to a real-world situation. These will follow a schedule to be made the first week of class, and are due Tuesday at midnight. Everyone in the class will then read these posts and leave a substantial comment (~100 words) on at least two of them by Wednesday at midnight. On Thursday, one of the posters will present to the class a brief (<five minute) synthesis of the posts and comments, offering two or three discussion questions.
To summarize: three times a semester you will write long posts, each week you will comment on two of your peers’ posts, and once during the semester you will present to the class.

b) Reflection Report of colleague’s class visit (~4 pages). Visit a colleague’s class and write about the experience. Don’t think of this as a formal observation, but rather more like an account of your own experience, focusing on successful techniques and relationships to our course readings. You might use Kerry Walk’s “Peer Review Draft Response” as a model. You will provide a copy to your colleague.

c) Statement of Teaching Philosophy (~4 double-spaced pages). Details will be distributed later, but here’s some initial advice: <http://chronicle.com/article/How-to-Write-a-Statement-of/45133/>. There is no one-size-fits-all format, so we will revise this throughout the semester.

d) Conference Proposal. Submit a proposal for a conference on composition studies (CFP to come). Your proposal should 1) state your question/problem and your argument, 2) summarize the scholarly framework for your argument, 3) note your method and 3-4 points of your talk’s development and, 4) describe how your presentation would contribute to the topic.

PARTICIPATION: Since participation is crucial to your success, you should not miss more than one class. I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. If you come unprepared to class, you are not present; “coming unprepared” includes such things as not doing the reading, not bringing the text to class, sleeping during class, not making an effort to participate, arriving late or leaving early. If you know you cannot attend, contact me before to ask about submitting homework; I do not accept late assignments.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION: If you have a learning, sensory, or physical reason for special accommodation, please inform me and the Office of Special Services at 718-997-5895.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:
<http://web.cuny.edu/academics/info-central/policies/academic-integrity.pdf>
Violations of academic integrity include: cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, plagiarism, and denying others access to information or material. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of what constitutes academic dishonesty; students who are unsure of whether their work meets criteria for academic integrity should consult with their instructor. Students should look at the full policy, which provides further examples and possible consequences for incidences of academic dishonesty.

I have a zero-tolerance policy towards plagiarism and academic dishonesty. The minimum punishment for plagiarism is an F as a final grade and being reported to the campus officer.

GRADING:
• Three Reading Responses (blog posts): 30 points
• Weekly responses to blog posts: 20 points
• Reflection Report: 15 points
• Statement of Teaching Philosophy: 20 points
• Conference Proposal: 15 points
# COURSE CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/29</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/5</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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### 9/12 Writing at Queens College
- College Writing Handbook.
- Kerry Walk, *Teaching with Writing*.

### 9/19 Teach Composition and Save the World?

### 9/26 Debates on the Teaching of Writing
- **Due:** Draft Statement of Teaching Philosophy

### 10/3 Crafting Writing Assignments
- John C. Bean, “Ch. 5: Formal Writing Assignments” and “Ch. 6: Informal, Exploratory Writing Activities” from *Engaging Ideas* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001).

### 10/10 Developing Arguments

### 10/17 Revision
10/24 Peer Response, Conferences, and Collaborative Learning
- Reading to come
- Due: Observation Report

10/31 Grading, Responding to Student Writing, and Minimal Marking

11/7 Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

11/14 Grammar and Error

11/21 Second Language Learning and World Englishes
- Due: Conference Proposal

11/28 NO CLASS

12/5 Teaching with Technology

12/12 Last Day of Class
- Due: Revised Statement of Teaching Philosophy

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