ENC 5720 Problems in Contemporary Composition

Spring 2015

MW 4:15-5:30

Building 2, room 2222

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**Course Description:**

ENC 5720, Problems in Contemporary Composition, is one of the courses in the Composition and Rhetoric concentration within the M.A. In English. This course introduces students to scenarios they will likely face as beginning teachers of composition, including designing effective writing courses and assignments. This course will also introduce students to current debates within the field of composition, including assessment, developmental writing, and issues regarding contingent faculty. Students completing this course will be better prepared to solve both practical and theoretical problems involved in the study and teaching of writing.

**Required Texts:**

*What is an Apparatus? Giorgio Agamben*

*Race and Writing Assessment*, Inoue and Poe, eds.

*Tenured Bosses and Disposable Teachers,* Bousquet and Scott, eds.

*First-Year Composition: From Theory to Practice,* Coxwell-Teague and Lunsford, eds.

Additional Readings on Blackboard

**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

**Attendance and Participation 30%**

This is not a lecture course, therefore attendance and participation is required. This course is organized around working groups in theory, research, and pedagogy. As the assignments are based on the knowledge produced by these working groups, your participation in these working groups is vital for the success of all students in this course. I usually allow one absence without penalty, although some exceptions may be granted.

\*Note on reading works in composition and rhetoric. Our readings in this course are not fictional works of art (or non-fictional works of art, for that matter). Therefore, we are not reading for “the overall meaning of the text,” what “the author really means,” how the text may or may not “deconstruct,” or how “successful or unsuccessful” the author is as a writer. The texts chosen and their placement within the course schedule is designed to encourage particular conversations and for you to see moments of connection and/or contradiction within the larger history of rhetoric and composition studies.

**Midterm Project 20%: Journals and Problems in Contemporary Composition Timeline**

This project requires that each of the working groups focus their attention on a specific journal to trace trends in composition studies. The first step in this project is to collect the table of content pages for each journal. The second step is to code those articles titles into categories. The third step in this project is then to identify trends in composition problems, based on these journals. This project should include a brief history of the journal, how the journal itself has changed since its inception, and the implications of those changes for the field of composition studies.

* *JAC*
* *Enculturation*
* *Comp Studies*
* *CCC*
* *WPA Journal*
* *RTE*
* Journal of Teaching Writing

**Working Group Presentations on Assessment: Annotated Bibliography (20%)**

This project requires that each of the working groups expand their examination of journals in composition studies to focus in on issues of assessment. Each working group should identify the most significant articles on assessment theory, assessment, and assessment and pedagogy. These findings will be presented near the end of the semester.

**Final Project: *Composition Studies* Course Design (30%)**

This final project attempts to synthesize issues of theory, research, pedagogy, and assessment into one document, the “Course Design” feature of *Composition Studies*. The first section of the CS Course Design describes the “Local Situation,” followed by the “Critical Statement,” and then a “Critical Reflection,” and “Bibliography.” The creation of this document could serve as an eventual Comp Studies submission and/or for future job talks or scholarly job interviews.

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| Wednesday, January 7 | **Exergue**  Maureen Goggin, “Composing a Discipline” BB |
| Monday, January 12 | **Preamble**  Crowley, “Freshman Composition: A Personal Essay” BB |
| Wednesday, January 14 | Fort, “Form, Authority, and the Critical Essay” BB |
| Wednesday, January 21 | Sirc, “Godless Comp, Tortured Writing” BB |
| Monday, January 26 | **Forward**  Isocrates, “Against the Sophists” BB |
| Wednesday, January 28 | Agamben, “What is an Apparatus?” |
| Monday, February 2 | Agamben, “What Does it Mean to be Contemporary?” |
| Wednesday, February 4 | Burke, “Dramatism” |
| Monday, February 9 | Heather Ricker, “Violent Video Games” |
| Wednesday, February 11 | “Being There”BB |
| Monday, February 16 | **Working Group Presentations** |
| Wednesday, February 18 | **Thesis**  Hesse, “Occasions, Sources, and Strategies” *First-Year Composition* |
| Monday, February 23 | Villanueva, “Love of Language” *First-Year Composition* |
| Wednesday, February 25 | Reid, “Affinity and Affect” *First-Year Composition* |
| Monday, March 2 | Inoue “Grade-Less Writing Class” *First-Year Composition* |
| Wednesday, March 4 | Coxwell-Teague and Lunsford, “Cornucopia” First-Year Composition |
| Monday, March 9 | Rice, “Networked Assessment” on BB. |
| Wednesday, March 11 | Anson, “Black Holes” *Race and Writing Assessment* |
| Monday, March 23 | Balester, “How Writing Rubrics Fail” *Race and Writing Assessment* |
| Wednesday, March 25 | Behm and Miller, “Fourth Wave Assessment” *Race and Writing Assessment* |
| Monday, March 30 | Ferry, “Knowledge Work” *Tenured Bosses and Disposable Teachers* |
| Wednesday, April 1 | Carter, “Bureaucratic Essentialism” *Tenured Bosses and Disposable Teachers* |
| Monday, April 6 | Watkins, “Future of English Departments” *Tenured Bosses and Disposable Teachers* |
| Wednesday, April 8 | Scott, “Democracy” Blackboard |
| Monday, April 13 | Working Group Presentation on Assessment: Theory |
| Wednesday, April 15 | Working Group Presentation on Assessment: Research |
| Monday, April 20 | Working Group Presentations on Assessment: Pedagogy |
| Wednesday, April 22 | **Postscript**  Final Review |