

Syllabus

IDND 30517: Teaching with Writing

Spring 2010

Instructor: Dr. Lorraine Higgins, WPI
Contact Information: (508) 410-1063 or LDH@wpi.edu
Office hours: T, 5-5:30; W, 2-3; or by appointment. Project Center, 2nd Floor, WPI
Class location: Salisbury Labs 124 (Humanities Conference Room), WPI
Schedule: T, TH 3-5pm, June 1-July 22

Course Description

This course is designed for faculty and graduate students in all subject areas who wish to integrate writing into their teaching and to obtain a deeper awareness of how writing is used within their own disciplines. We begin by examining the philosophy and best practices of the "writing across the curriculum" movement, considering how writing in all its forms can be used to promote learning in the content areas. Through reading, case study, and in-class demonstrations, we then examine the features of effective writing assignments and a variety of productive classroom activities and teaching tools that can be used to guide students through the process of planning, drafting, and revising. Finally, we work with a range of student papers to consider the most effective ways to respond to and evaluate writing at various stages of composition.

Course Objectives

Participants will:

- understand the goals and philosophy of the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) movement
- design a sequence of writing assignments to promote the objectives of a specific course
- develop classroom-based activities that can guide students through the writing process
- demonstrate efficient and effective strategies for responding to and evaluating writing

Course Activities and Assignments

Class is run in a seminar/workshop format. Participants will be assigned weekly readings from the course packet and should be prepared to discuss them in class. Class time will also be devoted to interactive workshops on various aspects of writing pedagogy. These workshops will be used to introduce new material and to demonstrate how you can work with writing in a classroom setting. Major assignments include:

- A written journal or set of blog entries in which you respond to the readings.
- A *Teaching with Writing* portfolio, including: a description of and rationale for a sequence of writing assignments tailored to a course you have taught or plan to teach; a grading rubric for at least two of these assignments; a class plan, including an in-class activity that either guides students toward a draft of an assignment OR that uses writing as a means of learning course content; a reflection on the in-

class writing activity that you demonstrate in our class; a set of written comments on two sample student assignments, accompanied by a 1-2 page analysis of how this type of response may or may not be useful for the assignments you have designed.

- Two short writing assignments: 1) an introduction to writing in your field, written for your students (roughly 4 pp.); b) an annotated bibliography/review of 3-4 articles on writing issues relevant to your field, written for colleagues in your area (roughly 5 pp.).

Course Materials

Please bring a *syllabus and schedule* for a course that you have taught or that you plan to teach, OR bring an outline of a course you are developing, specifying learning objectives and the type of assignments and materials you intend to use. Some assignments in TWW will ask you to design writing assignments and activities that you can integrate into your course.

Also purchase *Engaging Ideas*, by John C. Bean (available in the WPI bookstore). I will provide supplemental materials and put additional reading materials on reserve, as needed.

I recommend Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference*, if you do not own a writing handbook, and Joseph Williams' *Style* if you need a general style manual. Purdue University's Writing Center also has a wonderful online writing lab (OWL) accessible to the public. It contains many free writing resources. I would also recommend a documentation style book relevant to your discipline (e.g., *the MLA Style Guide*, *APA Publication Manual*, *Chicago Manual of Style*, etc.).

Grading and Policies

Attendance is required. Missing class may jeopardize your grade; passing the course requires missing no more than two of the seven meetings. 10% of the final grade will be based on the quality of your *participation* in class. Your *journal* will account for 20% of the final grade. The two *short writing assignments* are worth 10% each. The *portfolio* is worth 50% of the final grade.

All work submitted in this course must be original; if you use specific ideas or materials of any kind from other sources, please cite those sources appropriately. Work improperly cited will not receive credit. Please consult WPI's policy on academic honesty and plagiarism: <http://www.wpi.edu/Pubs/Policies>

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you need course accommodations because of a disability or health issue, please let me know as soon as possible. As necessary, we will work with WPI's Disability Services Office in Daniels Hall to arrange this. Their number is (508) 831-5235 if you wish to speak directly to a staff member.