

COLLEGES OF WORCESTER CONSORTIUM, INC.
Certificate in College Teaching

Syllabus
CT917: Teaching with Writing
Summer 2011

- Instructor:** Dr. Lorraine Higgins, Ph.D. Rhetoric
Director, Communication Across the Curriculum, WPI
- Contact Info:** Email: LDH@wpi.edu (I respond within 24 hours.); Phone (508) 831-5503 (W, Th, 9-4 only);
Skype me: rainygal11
- Office Hours:** Virtual office hours are Mondays, 1:30-3pm. You may email me or Skype me to get immediate response at this time. You may also contact me to arrange a face-to-face appointment in my WPI Office, Project Center, 2nd Floor. I will be available in my office on Wednesdays, 1-3pm and 6-7pm, and by appointment on Thursdays.
- Schedule:** Friday, May 13 (course opens on Blackboard) – Wednesday, June 15 (final portfolio due by email, 3pm).
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Course Description

Teaching with Writing 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" and "writing in the disciplines" movements, considering how writing in all its forms can be used to promote learning and to teach disciplinary ways of thinking. Through reading, examples, and hand-on assignments, 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

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- articulate the goals and philosophy of the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and Writing in the Disciplines (WID) movements
- identify types of writing that can be used to promote specific learning objectives in a course they are teaching
- identify specific genres of writing that majors in their field will need to master, specifying the structure, purposes and rhetorical moves of a specific genre
- develop classroom-based activities that can guide students through the writing process
- demonstrate efficient and effective strategies for responding to and evaluating writing

Course Scheduling and Online Logistics

This is a hybrid course, meaning that some of the course work will be done online, but four, face-to-face (F2F) meetings on the WPI campus will also be required; these are scheduled for May 18, 25 and June 1, 8, from 4 to

6pm. An optional one-on-one conference is also available to those students who wish to meet with me in the last week of the course. I encourage you to email and telephone or Skype each other as you work on your portfolios.

For the online part of the course, you should visit our blackboard course site each Thursday after 1 pm. There, you will find the next week's materials, assignments, and due dates. I will provide a brief overview of the week in an audiofile. Most of the online work is asynchronous, meaning that you can visit the site and do the work at your own pace, so long as you submit the assigned postings and materials by the specified deadlines. As this is a compressed course, you will probably need to check in and do some work at least a couple times a week to keep up. In addition to our F2F meetings, you should expect to spend roughly 3 hours a week on coursework. Typically, it will be a good idea to do the reading by Monday, as postings and responses will often be due on Mondays or Tuesdays. Major assignments and blog entries will be due on Wednesdays.

Course Materials

Some assignments in TWW will ask you to design writing assignments and activities that you can integrate specifically into a course you have taught or plan to teach. As soon as possible, you should identify the course you want to work with; have the current course materials on hand by the first week of class.

Purchase *Engaging Ideas*, by John C. Bean (available in the WPI bookstore, or you may be able to get a used copy quickly through Amazon). I will provide all other materials through Blackboard links.

I recommend Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference* if you do not own a writing handbook and Joseph Williams' *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace* if you need a general style manual. Purdue University's Writing Center also has a wonderful online writing lab (OWL) with free writing resources that are accessible to the public; I provide a link in our course site's resources folder. 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.).

Assignments

1) A set of *journal entries* (a minimum of four) in which you somehow respond to, apply, question, or otherwise engage with the readings. The journal is relatively open-ended, and you should use it for your own purposes. In the past, students have used journals to develop lists of best practices relevant to their discipline, to forge arguments for starting WAC and WID programs, to set up mock conversations with the authors they read, to brainstorm examples they can use in class, etc. I will browse the blogs and respond to yours at least once during the term.

2) A structured *posting* or *response*, as prompted each week. This will allow for more direct application of the ideas you read and discuss, and it will allow you to interact with other students in the course and to give each other feedback. Postings should be substantive, addressing the prompt and referencing ideas in the readings or in others' postings when possible. Responses should acknowledge specific ideas of others and should comment substantively on them as well, raising questions, making further connections, posing examples and counter-examples, etc.

3) *Two short writing assignments*: a) An introduction to reading/writing in your field, written for your students (roughly 1000 words, either in a scripted podcast, in writing, or in a scripted PowerPoint presentation); b) an annotated bibliography of at least 5 sources on writing issues relevant to your field, written for yourself or for colleagues teaching in your area.

4) Teaching with Writing *portfolio*, including:

- A one- page overview of your course (content, format, learning objectives) as well as an overview of the role that writing will play in the course and the resources that you will need to make it work.
- A descriptive handout on and a rationale for at least three writing assignments for your course.
- A grading rubric for at least one of your writing assignments.
- A class plan, including an in-class activity that either guides students toward a draft, OR that uses writing as a means of learning course content, OR that teaches students some aspect of writing.
- A set of written or audio comments you have made on two sample student papers, accompanied by a reflection on how this type of response may or may not be useful for the assignments you have designed.

Grading and Policies

There are 100 points in the course; grades will be determined with these cut-off points: A (94-100), A- (90-93), B+ (87-89), B (84-86), B-(80-83), C+(77-79), C (74-76), C- (70-73), U (below 70, unsatisfactory work, no credit awarded), W (withdrawn), and I (incomplete).

Active participation: 20 pts. You should log in each week on Thursday after 1pm or by Friday at the latest and make the required blog entries and postings by the deadlines specified. This will ensure that others have time to read and respond your work in a timely fashion. You should attend and contribute to all required, F2F meetings.

- *Four weekly journal entries: 8 pts.* These are due each Wednesday by noon. I will respond to your blog at least once during the course of the term.
- *Weekly postings/responses: 8 pts.* These are due on Tuesdays or Wednesdays.
- *Two short writing assignments: 24 pts.* I will respond to each within a week.
- *Portfolio: 40 pts.* I will provide substantive feedback via email within two weeks after the end of the course.

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 WSU's policy on academic honesty and plagiarism.

Online postings will constitute most of your interaction with others in the course. Please be courteous; don't use profanity and discriminatory language of any sort, and be careful not to let spirited debate slide into personal attack. Also post in a timely fashion so that others can benefit from your responses and build on them.

If you need course accommodations because of a disability or health issue, please let me know as soon as possible so that I can make arrangements.