

College Writing 300-Fall 2012
Section 1: Mondays 4:00-6:00 in 122 Latimer
CCN#16637

Section 2: Tuesdays 4:00-6:00 in 140 Barrows
CCN#16640

Gail Offen-Brown
Office hours: after class; Tu & Th 12:30-1:30; or by appointment
Office: 117 Wheeler
email: gob@berkeley.edu; phone: 643-4591

CW300: INTRODUCTION TO THEORIES AND PRACTICES OF TEACHING COLLEGE COMPOSITION

This seminar introduces students to composition theory and practice and encourages students to test and critique those theories and practices against their own experience as students, as writers, and as teachers. We will consider issues such as teaching philosophies, course designs, instructional methods, and assessment. Participants will read seminal articles, will hear guest speakers, will exchange their own ideas and materials, and will reflect on the role of writing in the university.

The attached Educational/Mentoring Philosophy Statement provides a more detailed discussion of the course methods and goals.

CW300 is a 2-unit, S/U class.

- It fulfills the campus requirement that all GSIs complete a graduate, pedagogy seminar as well as the specific requirement for those teaching Reading and Composition courses.
- It qualifies for the GSI Teaching and Resource Center's Certificate of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

TEXTS:

- *Engaging Ideas, The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom, second edition* by John C. Bean
- The Course Reader is in process. I'll let you know when it can be purchased at Replica Copy Center (2140 Oxford between Center & Allston).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADE BREAKDOWN:

- **Participation (20%):** Attendance is mandatory. Given that we meet only once a week, it's expected that students will miss no more than one class. If you must miss class, please do me the courtesy to let me know in advance, and if your schedule permits, please attend the other section that week. If you're not able to

attend the other section, please submit an informal response paper (3-4 pgs) discussing the scheduled reading / topic.

- **Weekly Work (40%):** Each week there are selected readings. Over the course of the semester there are 4 brief written assignments designed to pertain directly to your own current or future teaching. Each (reading / writing goals statement; reading assignment; writing assignment; collaborative assignment) is worth 10%.
- **ospace:** in progress. There is a campus R&C website that has much useful information: <http://teaching.berkeley.edu/R&C/index.html>
- **Final Project (40%):** Below is a list of options for your final project. Just like an essay in a writing class, these final projects will go through a process of draft, response, and revision.
NB: In order to receive course credit, you must complete a final project.

SUGGESTED OPTIONS FOR YOUR FINAL PROJECT:

1. Create a syllabus for a writing or writing-intensive course you hope to teach. Along with your syllabus, include a 2-3 page rationale which explains the *whys*. Why have you structured the course in this way? What are your course goals and philosophies? How does the reading and writing you've chosen fit into a larger conceptual framework?
2. Create a detailed lesson plan for one text you'd like to teach in a writing or writing-intensive class. How would you approach the reading? The writing? Along with the lesson plan, include a 2-3 page rationale which explains the *whys*. How would this unit fit into the larger scheme of the course? Your course goals and philosophy?
3. Compose a teaching philosophy statement for the teaching portfolio that you will need for the job search. (This project does not require an accompanying rationale since a philosophy statement is, essentially, a rationale.) This project is best suited for those about to embark on the job search.
4. Case Study (for those currently teaching): Follow the progress of one of your students, keeping copies of all the student's papers as well as notes on your interactions with the student. Write up your observations. Which of the course readings (if any) are helpful in understanding this student's work in the class and how so? What have you learned?
5. Create a course website that includes a new syllabus. Just as for the projects above, a 2-3 page rationale should be submitted along with the final project.
6. Create your own project. Examples of past final projects: Grading Rubric to pass out to students and use to assess writing; Writing Guides or Tips for writing in your discipline to clarify expectations for students; research project on use of the wiki in a class; research project on responding to writing in recorded oral rather than written

form. All projects should include a 2-3 page rationale section. I'm delighted if you choose to devise your own project, but please check it with me first.

Final Project Due Dates

- **Project Proposal (paragraph): 10/29-30**
- **Preliminary draft with copies for response groups (need not include rationale): 11/5-6**
- **You receive my response via email.**
- **Final Draft including rationale: 12/3-4 (last class-RRR week)**

COURSE SCHEDULE

Like all writing, this Course Schedule will be revised as needed, especially to accommodate guest speakers. Readings listed as "Bean" are in *Engaging Ideas* by John Bean; other readings are in the Course Reader. "DO" in bold caps indicates a brief written assignment in addition to the week's reading.

Week 1 8/27-28	Introduction: How did we learn to write for college? UCB's Reading & Composition requirement "In-Class Writing," Bean (131-133) Quickwrite & Discussion: How did you learn to write for college?
Week 2 9/3-4	LABOR DAY—UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY
Week 3 9/10-11	Theories of First Year Composition; Writing as a Process and more "Inventing the University," Bartholomae "Reflections on Academic Discourse: How It Relates to Freshmen & Colleagues," Elbow Bean, Chapter 2, "How Writing is Related to Critical Thinking" (17-38) Bean, Chapter 1 (essentially an introduction) is optional. "Shitty First Drafts," Lamott Discussion: Writing process; first thoughts on purposes
Week 4 9/17-18	Assignment Design "The Novice as Expert: Writing the Freshman Year," Sommers & Saltz "Designing Effective Writing Assignments," Davis Bean, Chapter 4, "Using a Range of Genres" (52-65) Bean, Chapter 6 "Formal Writing Assignments" (89-119) DO: Compose a writing assignment for a text you are teaching or plan to teach-bring 5 copies for group work.

- Week 5**
9/24-25
Response & Revision (formative response)
"Issues in Responding to Student Writing," Straub & Lunsford
"Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers," Sommers
Bean, Chapter 15, "Coaching the Writing Process & Handling the Paper Load" (290-316)
Bean, Chapter 16, "Writing Comments on Student Papers" (317-336)
Discussion: Respond to sample student papers & compare responses.
DO: Write 2-3 page *informal* paper on reading/writing goals for the class you're teaching or plan to teach.
Guest speaker: Carolyn Swalina, Student Learning Center tutoring program
- Week 6**
10/1-2
Close and Critical Reading
"Role of the Reader's Schema in Comprehension, Learning, and Memory," Anderson
Bean, Chapter 9, "Helping Students Read Difficult Texts" (161-182)
Bean, Chapter 7, "Informal, Exploratory Writing Activities (120-145)"
"Introduction: Ways of Reading," Bartholomae & Petrosky
"Writing One's Way into Reading," Zamel
"Making Observations," Ponsot and Deen (optional)
DO: Create a reading assignment for the course you're teaching or planning to teach-please bring 5 copies for group work.
- Week 7**
10/8-9
Response and Revision, take 2
Writer-Based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing," Flower
"Errors: Windows into the Mind," Raimes
Bean, Chapter 5, "Dealing with Issues of Grammar & Correctness" (66-86)
"On Not Being a Composition Slave," Hairston
Discussion: Respond to sample student papers & compare responses.
- Week 8**
10/15-16
Collaborative Learning and Peer Response Groups
Bean, Chapter 10, "Using Small Groups to Coach Thinking..." (183-201)
"Responding—Really Responding—to Other Students' Writing," Straub
A look ahead: discuss final projects & review samples
DO: Create collaborative class activity-bring 5 copies for group work
- Week 9**
10/22-23
Multilingual & Multicultural Perspectives
Teachers' FAQs About Multilingual Students
"Non-Native Speakers of English," Edlund
"The Classroom and the Wider Culture," Fan Shen
Guest speaker section 1: Michelle Baptiste, College Writing Programs
Guest speaker section 2: Margi Wald, College Writing Programs

- Week 10**
10/29-30
- Syllabus Design and Class Planning**
 “Designing or Revising a Course,” Davis
 “The Comprehensive Course Syllabus,” Davis
 “On Syllabi,” Villanueva
 “A Structure for a Successful Class Session,” Joliffe
 Discussion: Examine sample syllabi; class planning
DO: Final project proposal due--paragraph
- Week 11**
11/5-6
- Work Day- Preliminary draft of final project.**
 Work on drafts in response groups
DO: Preliminary draft of final project (without rationale) due—bring 5 copies for response groups.
- Week 12**
11/12-13
- UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY**
- Week 13**
11/19-20
- Teaching Research; Promoting Academic Honesty**
 Bean, Chapter 13, “Designing & Sequencing Assignments to Teach Undergraduate Research” (224-263)
 “Beyond ‘Gotcha!’: Situating Plagiarism in Policy & Pedagogy,” Price
 “Defining & Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices”
 Review UCB Center for Student Conduct & Community Standards website
 Receive GOB’s response to final project
- Week 14**
11/26-27
- Assessment/Grading**
 “What is a Grade?” Belanoff
 Bean, Chapter 14, “Using Rubrics to Develop & Apply Grading Criteria” (267-289)
 Discussion: Examine sample grading rubrics and portfolios.
- Week 15**
12/3-4
- The Teaching Portfolio, Evaluations (RRR Week)**
 “Thinking About Your Teaching Portfolio,” Burch
 “How to Produce a Teaching Portfolio,” Seldin
 “What to Do on the Last Day of Class,” a compilation from Teach-net
 Class celebration/pot luck
DO: Final draft of final project due, including rationale

Educational/Mentoring Philosophy

4/16/04; revised 8/18/06

Being a teacher and being a student are constant dual roles: The best teachers are always students, constantly questioning, constantly learning. And the best students serve as our teachers, pushing us to new approaches and insights. It is this dual role that I take on and promote in the classroom, whether I'm working with freshmen or graduate students, whether I'm teaching writing or teaching teachers of writing. In teaching College Writing 300, Introduction to Theories and Practices of Teaching College Composition, I can embrace both roles openly and enthusiastically, moving back and forth between conveying pedagogy and examining it.

The 300 classroom as model and as teaching laboratory

Instead of serving as the only authority on teaching in the room, I encourage GSIs to think of themselves as authorities on education since they have a wealth of experience to draw upon, as student-teachers and as teacher-students. From the first moments of the first day, every element of the class is up for examination under our microscope. How does the arrangement of the chairs affect the class atmosphere? Why is it important to learn everyone's name as soon as possible and how can it be done? What happens when we devote the first ten minutes of class to a quickwrite? How does the quickwrite help us as writers? How does it jumpstart discussion? What happens when a discussion flops? The 300 class serves as a testing ground for ideas and strategies. GSIs can then make their own decisions about which strategies they will incorporate in their own classes as they develop their own teaching styles. They have not only studied and talked about them; they have seen them in action in our own group.

Dialogue and inquiry

Each week GSIs read selected articles drawn from the fields of composition and pedagogy presenting significant research, theory, or practice. Some readings are paired to be in dialogue with each other; all readings spark the group's critical inquiry. Class discussion becomes a mutual intellectual investigation in which we evaluate the ideas of one article in relation to another, and test them against our varied experiences as writers, as students, and as teachers. Dialogue and inquiry are the keys. I don't want GSIs to be wedded to a single approach or theory, nor to dismiss approaches without examining them. Good teachers are always changing and learning.

Reflection

Frequent opportunities for reflection on teaching and learning—within the classes GSIs are teaching as well as within 300—are woven into the course. Early on, GSIs are asked to reflect on and articulate in writing their *purposes* as teachers of reading and

composition. This piece is revisited, and may be revised, at select points in the semester.

Quickwrites at the beginning of class provide informal opportunities for reflection and spark discussion, as does online discussion on bspace. The final project (see below) includes a rationale section so that GSIs consider *why*, for example, they select the readings they do for a certain course; *why* assignments are presented in a specific sequence; *how* a rubric might be used not only to clarify grades but also to convey lessons and attitudes about writing. Reflection helps GSIs move beyond the anxiety of novices worried about filling their class time to a more productive stance. With reflection, every course document, every class discussion, every failure and every success is transformed into a rich source of learning. These reflections may be the beginnings of a teaching portfolio that can be used for the job search and developed throughout a teaching career. The frequent opportunities for reflection in 300 are intended to foster reflection as a habit of mind and pen beyond the semester.

Teaching by doing; learning by doing

We don't simply read about, discuss, and reflect on teaching strategies in 300; we practice and enact them so as to plunge ourselves into the roles of teachers and students.

In working on assignment design, for example, GSIs create their own assignments on a text they are teaching or planning to teach, and bring copies for the rest of the class to examine. We practice responding to student writing by responding together to papers that GSIs bring from their classes, and then compare and critique our responses. After reading about the virtues and drawbacks of collaborative learning, we work together in small groups (and then reflect on the experience) to experience collaborative learning as students.

Teaching as a process; writing as a process

To gain a deep sense of what it means both to teach writing as a process and to experience writing as a process, GSIs for their final project experience a process parallel to that in a writing class: They select a project from a range of choices; submit a proposal defining and explaining their choice; bring copies of a rough draft to class for response groups; receive response from peer response groups; receive response from the instructor; revise and polish the draft; publish a collection of final projects. Such an experience simultaneously pulls GSIs into the world of the student—composing drafts, dealing with peer and instructor response—and pushes them into the role of teacher—deciding how such a sequence or process might be adapted to their own discipline and classroom.

The not-so-secret secret is that I take great joy in the 300 class. That is yet another aspect of the course that I think is vital. It's not just the teachers as students as teachers and the various experiences we have in the class. I hope that I convey the joy that I experience as a teacher.

Gail Offen-Brown
College Writing Programs, U.C. Berkeley

