

Spring 1-15-2009

## ENG 5502-001: Mentored Teaching

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### Recommended Citation

Wixson, Christopher, "ENG 5502-001: Mentored Teaching" (2009). *Spring 2009*. 145.  
[http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english\\_syllabi\\_spring2009/145](http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2009/145)

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## English 5502: Mentored Teaching

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“Understood conservatively, teaching is the transmission of information. Understood antifoundationally, teaching is the formation of culture.”  
 (Downing, Harkin, and Sosnoski, Changing Classroom Practices).

Required Textbooks: *Four Plays*, Eugene Ionesco  
*Oleanna*, David Mamet  
*A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*, eds. Tate, Rupper, Schick  
*Teaching Assistant's Handbook*, Stephen Wilhoit  
*The Blair Handbook*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition,  
*The World is a Text*, Silverman/Rader

Handouts: “Teaching as an Act of Unknowing”, Charles I. Schuster  
 “Minimal Marking”, Richard H. Haswell  
 “The Genre of the End Comment”, Summer Smith  
 “13 Ways of Looking at and Responding to Student Writing”, Doug Hesse  
 Sample Student Papers  
 “Down the Rabbitt Hole”, Diane Krumrey

### Course Description

As “essay” is both a noun and a verb (from the Latin compound “to do or to act out”), this course will be heavily performance-based. While nothing can take the place of actual classroom experience, we will work on developing skills essential to the classroom and think about teaching as a performing art. In addition to attention to form, we will explore in detail the theories of teaching writing at the college level. Overall, this course seeks to provide a useful foundation for the effective teaching of freshman composition. Each participant should be prepared to engage vigorously in discussion, reflection, and performance.

What we teach our students in the composition classroom is, among other things, reflective practice; we strive to create writers who are self-aware of their process. This course will take the same approach with teaching, asking you to become “meta” about the philosophy and practice of your own teaching.

### Objectives

- \*Develop a working knowledge of composition theory and put it into practice
- \*Continue to develop your own theory of teaching composition and teaching philosophy
- \*Practice the matter of teaching
- \*Apply your (and perhaps other) composition theory(ies) in a classroom
- \*Prepare your own syllabus and rationale for teaching composition that builds on the elements and strategies addressed in class and the readings

## Attendance

Mandatory.

If you become suddenly ill (think Bubonic plague) or the victim of emergency circumstances, please email me or a member of the seminar as soon as possible and stay in touch. Excused absences are accompanied by appropriate legal or medical documentation. Any unexcused absence will seriously undermine your success in this course.

## Class Participation

Mandatory.

Think of our meetings as potluck conversations; everyone simply must contribute, respond, assist. Participation in a course of this size means careful preparation of the reading, frequent contributions to discussions, liberal offering of constructive feedback, and engaged critical thought.

You should come to each session armed with observations, evaluations, opinions, questions, and insights, ready to take an active part in the ongoing dialogue about the materials, your mentored experience, and our various projects. Besides preparation, class participation also means responding constructively, respectfully, and energetically to what others share, that you work actively to stretch yourself intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. In short, you are expected to contribute to the class's overall movement and to strive to promote dialogue between yourself and other participants. Individually and collectively, this course carries with it a responsibility to drive the inquiry and conversation. In addition, class participation includes conscientious participation in the mentored teaching component of the course. **I TAKE THIS GRADE VERY SERIOUSLY.**

**By the way:** Remaining in your comfort zone and not talking in class and justifying the silence by saying you are 'just the type of person who likes to sit back and listen to what everyone else has to say.' Certainly, listening is a premium in this class and is a crucial human skill. But real listening only happens in an exchange. Letting everyone else do the talking means that you're not really listening because you are busy keeping yourself safe. Of course, this 'safety' is an illusion, and this silence will prove detrimental in your classrooms. This course is about taking risks valuable to your pedagogical development.

## Other Sundry Matters

\*\*If you have a *documented* disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

### Late Assignments

These are no fun for me to keep track of and only put you further behind. For each day beyond the scheduled due date, late written assignments will be penalized a third of a letter grade. **After a week, I will no longer accept the paper, and it becomes a "0."** Again, if you become ill or the victim of emergency circumstances, please email me as soon as possible and stay in touch. Except in extreme circumstances or with a documented, excused absence, class presentations cannot be made up.

### Plagiarism

Any paper with your name on it signifies that you are the author--that the wording and major ideas are yours, with exceptions indicated by either quotation marks and/or citations. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use (appropriation and/or imitation) of others' materials (words and ideas). Evidence of plagiarism will result in one or more of the following: a failing grade for the assignment, an F in the course, and a report filed with the Judicial Affairs Office.

### Email

You should get into the habit of checking your email daily. There will be a class list on which I will post changes in assignments (if they arise), course-related announcements, and ideas that expand upon what happens in class or provides some direction for next week's session. This list is also a great way for all of us to interact outside of class; that is to say, if you have a question or query, the miracle of technology offers us a way to discuss and address it.

### Conferences

I am regularly available to meet with you during my scheduled office hours or by appointment and expect members of the course to drop by periodically to touch base with me on assignments for the course and discuss their mentored experience. To make an appointment, speak to me after class or contact me via email.

### Grading

Statement/Narrative/Reflection	10%	Lesson Presentation (20m)	10%
Grammar Lecture (10m)	10%	Pedagogy Presentation (10m)	10%
Discussion (20m)	10%	Ten Weekly Observation Reports	10%
Final Portfolio	20%	5502 / Program Participation	20%

### Weekly Participation Reports

One-page, single spaced reports of the week in your mentor's classroom are **due via email to me by Friday at 5:00**. Spend a few paragraphs summarizing what was done (material covered) and how it was done (methodology). Include your own personal evaluations and reflection. These will demonstrate your engagement with the "experience" of the course and should document the way in which you are growing as an instructor through it. You must turn in at least **ten** of these, one per week for ten of our sixteen weeks.

## Assignments

- \*Teaching Statement and Reflection / Literacy Narrative
- \*Final Project
- \*Active, Engaged Participation in Discussion --- defined as TALKING productively and completing in-class activities
- \*Four presentations
- \*Active, Responsible, and Engaged Participation in the Mentored Teaching program
- \*Weekly Observation Reports

## Schedule of Assignments

THIS SCHEDULE MAY CHANGE AT ANY TIME ACCORDING TO THE NEEDS AND DEMANDS OF THE CLASS. MAKE SURE YOU ALWAYS BRING IT WITH YOU FOR MODIFICATION.

- |          |    |  |
|----------|----|--|
| January  | 15 | Course Introduction – In-class DVDs<br>Self-awareness – what do they see?<br>“A teacher in the classroom is basically an expanded version of himself in private life.”<br>William Spiegelman, English, Southern Methodist University |
|          | 22 | <b>Statement of Purpose / Literacy Narrative Due (A)</b><br>Schuster’s “Teaching as an Act of Unknowing”<br>Wilhoit pp. 1-6, 18-23, Chapters 4 and 7   |
|          | 29 | Composition Pedagogy Presentations / Discussion  |
| February | 5  | Responding to Student Essays<br>“Across the Drafts” video<br>Wilhoit Chapters 5 and 6<br>Essays by Smith, Hesse, and Haswell<br>Please Evaluate the Sample Student Essays  |
|          | 12 | Grammar Lectures (C)<br>Wilhoit pp. 35-48 and Chapter 11   |
|          | 19 | Workshop Development of Teaching Application Materials<br>Ionesco’s <u>The Lesson</u>  |
|          | 26 | In-class Discussions (D)   |

March	5	In-class Discussions (D) Wilhoit Chapter 9
	12	In-class Discussions (D) <b>Revision of Teaching Statement and Application Materials due</b>

HAPPY SPRING BREAK!!!!!!

	26	In-Class Lessons (E)
April	2	In-Class Lessons (E)
	9	“Crisis Teaching” Wilhoit Chapter 12
	16	Mamet’s <u>Oleanna</u> – Response Paper Due
	23	Project Workshop
	30	<b>Final Project Due</b>

## Assignments

A) Your two-page, singled-spaced statement of purpose should express why you are here in this classroom (in preparation to be in your own classroom), what you believe the purpose of teaching is, and what uniquely you bring to the conversation and practice of teaching. Be specific and organized, engaging in style and content, and vivid in style. Ask the tough questions sincerely and honestly. Please avoid the following lines of thought that will make blood shoot out of your reader's eyes:

- “I had an inspiring English teacher once.”
- “I have always loved reading.”
- “I have always loved writing.”
- “I always did well in English classes.”
- “I enjoy working with students.”
- “I want to help people.”
- “I have seen a lot of bad essays at the Writing Center.”
- “I want to change the world.”
- “I believe the children are our future.”

Your two-page, single-spaced literacy narrative should reflect on the origin, importance, and continual presence of literacy in your life. Its ideas should be (at this point) different from what you express in your statement of purpose and rigorously avoid clichés as well as the “usual suspects” among responses.

B) You will be assigned one of the chapters in the Tate/Rupiper/Schick (see below), detailing a pedagogical approach to the teaching of writing. Your task is to “teach” the rest of the class this approach in a succinct ten-minute presentation, using a handout to explain your key points and examples. In addition, on the day of presentation, you will need to distribute hard copies of one larger writing assignment and two short writing in-class/journal prompts informed by your critical school of thought. That way, each seminarian's “toolbox” will include a précis of each approach as well as concrete examples of assignments that take that approach.

Process Pedagogy	Mary Lieske
Expressive Pedagogy	Serena Heath
Rhetorical Pedagogy	Tameka Cobbs
Collaborative Pedagogy	Ashok Bhusal
Cultural Studies	Devin Black
Critical Pedagogy	Glen Davis
Technology and the Teaching of Writing	Kristi Kohlenberg
Feminist Pedagogy	Donica Miller
Basic Writing	Jennifer Reichart
Community Service Pedagogy	Anthony Shoot
Writing Across the Curriculum	Nia Klein

C) Consulting The Blair Handbook, choose a specific grammar issue (e.g. the comma splice, the semi-colon, the run-on sentence etc.) and develop an effective, engaging lecture that lasts more or less ten minutes. Gear it towards a first-year writing course audience and include an in-class activity.

D) Choose an essay from The World is a Text and craft a twenty-minute discussion. Be engaging and effective. Gear it towards a first-year writing course audience and employ an assessment tool. .

E) Choose some part of the writing process (e.g. revision, editing, proofreading, brainstorming, thesis construction, opening paragraphs, body paragraphs, integrating sources etc.) and craft a twenty-minute lesson about it. Be engaging and effective. Gear it towards a first-year writing course audience and include an in-class activity. You should also provide us with a full assignment context (an assignment sheet and any other handouts used in the process).

F) Final Portfolio will include:

Original and Revised Teaching Statement of Purpose

Full, Detailed English 1001 Syllabus (using The Blair Handbook as well as The World is a Text)

Writing Pedagogy Theory/Rationale Statement (2-3 pages) – Three outside source essays

Two longer writing assignment sheets

Reflection on Mentored Experience (2-3 pages)

The final project should be a full, detailed syllabus (schedule and policies) accompanied by an introduction to your composition theory (integrating three useful article sources culled from A Guide to Composition Pedagogies' bibliography), two longer writing assignment sheets, and your rationale for the specific choices you made.

Key Questions that your final portfolio must make clear about you as an educator:

What kinds of thinking, reading, and writing do you find students need to work on in a first-year course? How will you facilitate this work?

What would you like your students to be able to do by the time they leave your course?

What's the relationship among reading, thinking, and writing in the courses you design and teach?

What's the relationship between "theory" and "practice" in teaching? Can there be a "unified" and consistent theory in practice?

How do you view your role as a teacher?

\*\*See reverse side



A) In "The Teacher's Authority: Negotiating Difference in the Classroom," Patricia Bizzell claims that the purpose of education is

--- to teach appreciation and toleration of difference

---to model a participatory democracy

---to ask students to try on the inherited values but persuade one another that these values are in need of modification

She says "the values-avowing teacher is saved from being a propagandist by the extent to which she or she must draw on values shared with the students in order to be persuasive. . . . The class becomes an ongoing exercise in collectively formulating and revising consensus on values. . . . These values should be those that are cherished in the society whose culture the educator is paid to reproduce."

\*\*How do your teaching aims and the role she conceives for herself compare to yours?

\*\*What, if anything, troubles you or do you find missing from her model?

B) In "Composing a Post-sexist Rhetoric: Introductory Writing Instruction as Cultural Production", Alan France claims

---that learning the conventions of academic discourse can be compatible with inquiry into the cultural formation of gender

---to teach development of critical abilities by which knowledge is constructed socially

---to teach the conflicts between egalitarian ideals and actual social practices

---to teach students "to recognize the self in a dominant or subordinate subjectivity"

---that composing must grow out of inquiry and that research should be fieldwork not just "textual competence" with readers and secondary sources

---students should make new texts out of cultural pretexts, "consciously constructing interpretations to explain the meaning of social life to themselves and others"

He says "the introductory composition course is the ideal laboratory to examine the social practices that manifest themselves ultimately in linguistic differences of worth, power, and freedom."

\*\*How do your teaching aims and the way in which he envisions the writing classroom compare to yours?

\*\*What, if anything, troubles you or do you find missing from his model?