

**University of Puerto Rico
Mayaguez Campus
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Department of English**

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Office Hours: Monday 4-6, T-TH 1:00- 2:30 PM
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Course blog <http://prattcourses.wordpress.com>

INGL 6030: Theory and Practice of Composition

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Practice in the techniques of writing
Study of its research and theory.

The 6030 course is theory and practice based. For theory, we will review the major composition theories and examine how cultural factors such as education, history, politics, ideology, race, and gender affect the theorizing about composition and how we practice it. For practice, the course is based on the premise that good teachers of writing write themselves. Therefore you will have ample opportunity to write and practice many of the theoretical based writing strategies that will be made available in the class and then you may decide how you might use them in your own teaching of writing. I would like each one of you to designate your own areas of interest and pursue them so that the class may be personally satisfying to you.

The GOALS for this course are for you to:

1. become familiar with the theory, research, and practice of writing instruction with native speakers and ESL writers that will guide your pedagogical decisions about texts, writing assignments, assessment and your classroom teaching.
2. use your theoretical knowledge and practical experience to make knowledgeable decisions about what is best for your students as writers as well as to offer you ideas about possible research and thesis topics you might wish to explore.
3. develop as a writer and as a critical and reflective teacher of writing.

TEXTBOOKS:

I am giving you all a CD with an assortment of readings that we will use in the class. Some of them will also be available on the blog or on WEBCT. The selected readings come primarily from the following books that I will have available on reserve if you want to read more of them. A complete bibliography of the readings used for this course accompanies this syllabus.

Bishop, Wendy and James Strickland. *The Subject is Writing*. Boynton/Cook. Heinemann 2006.
Gardner, Traci. *Designing Writing Assignments*. National Council of Teachers of English, 2008.
Hyland, Ken. *Second language Writing*. Cambridge University Press 2003.
Johns, Anne. *Genre in the Classroom: Multiple perspectives*. Lawrence Earlbaum 2002.
Ruggles Gere, Anne. *Writing Groups: History, Theory and Implications*. Southern Illinois Univ. press 1987.

MAJOR TOPICS OF THE COURSE

1. Composition theory L1 and L2 including: traditional paradigm, writing as process, post process theories, expressivist theory, cognitive theory, socio-constructionist theory, genre theory, ideology and critical theory, and others

2. Strategies for your writing classroom and their theoretical basis: response to writing, peer response, teacher conferences, techniques for pre-writing, writing, and revision, technology in the classroom among others.

EXPECTATIONS TASKS, AND PRODUCTS

- 1 **Create and keep an active personal blog on the course (20).** After creating your blog, I expect you to keep your own journal of reflections based on each course meeting. You will also post your short assignments and papers on the blog as well as any other writings that you would like to share with others in the class or outside the class. I expect you to access at least three other students blogs during the week and to respond to them. Please send me an e-mail with your blog address so I can add it as a link to our class blog or just respond to one of the entries on the blog with your address.
- 2 **Scribe for the class (10)** on at least one occasion. The scribe is like the ethnographer for the day. This person will observe and take notes of all the goings-on in the class for one evening and write up a full account of it using whatever creative force that might be working with you. That is, you might write it as a newspaper article, as a poem, as a technical report, as a dialogue or a quiz show among others. The goal, however, is to maintain a clear record and interpretation of that record for the class. Each scribe report will be placed on the blog and students will be expected to respond to it. The scribe's work must be turned in to me electronically no later than the following Wednesday in order to have it available for the other students.
- 3 **A presentation of an article from a journal on writing (10).** This work includes a synthesis of the reading, a group led discussion with the class as well as an individually written paper turned in for a grade. This is not supposed to be an individual talk. After reading the article, chapter, please prepare a list of questions to use to begin a discussion with the class. You may choose to prepare a short writing activity to motivate the group or to keep them interested. Do NOT go in front of the class and read something you have written. Keep it collaborative! You are involving us in a learning situation based on what you read.
- 4 **Complete four to six short writing assignments (30)** assigned by professor or negotiated by students. They will include personal writing pieces, position papers, how to papers, and other pieces that we will negotiate as the class progresses. The last paper is in the form of a short essay test as a final exam of sorts.
- 5 **Prepare an informal multi-genre research paper on a topic of interest in the theory and/or teaching of writing (30).** You should have at least ten references, but may have more. You may decide to collaborate with someone else on the project. You may decide to publish your work on-line or in some other format that is not the traditional hard copy word-processed paper. You are welcome to present it as a website or as a blog. Whatever you do, the research will be presented to the class and discussed the last two class periods.

GRADING

The most important part of your grade for this class is participation and written work. If you think you will not be able to attend all classes I suggest you drop the course because your learning about writing involves active participation and class work. Your final grade depends on your class participation and your work on the tasks and products listed above. I expect that you will keep a running personal account of your own participation and learning in the class and can document for me, and others, your progress in order to negotiate your grade. If your blog contains your revised work and your assignments it can serve as the record of your work. I use the traditional grading scale 100-90 A, 80-89 B, 70-79 C, and below doesn't even matter for you as a grad student so we won't mention it here.

A WORD ON PLAGIARISM

The University and the Department of English have regulations on plagiarism. If you are found to have plagiarized the work of someone else you may be asked to drop the course and take an F, or be asked to leave the university. Plagiarism is serious and becomes more serious as we move up in our studies. You are doing graduate work so please do not consider this option!

Course Schedule

August 11 My Name

KWL chart on writing
Introduction to course and course syllabus
(Blanca)

Read: Chapter 1 from *The Subject is Writing* (on blog)
Chapters 1 and 2 from Hyland (on blog)
Emig “Writing as a Mode of Thinking” (will be on blog!)

August 18 Scribe and Chat **Blanca** (Nora and Robert are ethnographers today)

The Perfect Writing Teacher
L1 and L2 writers
The Writing Process

Read: Hairston, Maxine. “The Winds of Change”
Berlin, James. “Contemporary Composition: The Major Pedagogical Theories”
Johns, Ann. Chapter 1 of *Text Role and Context*

August 25 Scribe and chat **Nora and Robert** (Lindsay is ethnographer)

The major theories
Traditional paradigm, cognitive, expressive and so on
Presentation_____

Read: Murray, Doanld. “Teach Writing as Process not Product”
Flower, Linda. “Writer Based Prose...”
Elbow, Peter “Closing my eyes as I speak: Argument of Ignoring audience”
Kastman Breuch, Lee-Ann “Post process pedagogy: A philosophical Exercise”

September 5 (Friday night!)

Scribe and Chat **Lindsay** (Yolanda is ethnographer)

Process vs. post process theory

Presentation_____

Presentation_____

Authors chair

Read: Hyland, Ken. “Genre Based pedagogies: A social response to Process”

From *Genre in the Classroom*

Paltridge, Brian “Genre, Text Type, And English for Academic Purposed”

Coe, Richard. “The New Rhetoric of Writing Political Briefs”

Sept 8 Scribe and Chat **Yolanda** (Jessica is ethnographer)

Genre theory and classroom applications

Presentation_____

Presentation_____

Read:

Bartholomae “Inventing the University”

Harris, Richard "The Idea of Community in the Study of Writing"
Canagarajah, Suresh. "Understanding Critical Writing"
Cushman, Ellen. "Location and (Dis)placement in Composition Pedagogy"

Sept 15 Scribe and chat **Jessica** (Francheska is ethnographer)

Critical Writing and Writing at the university

Presentation_____

Presentation_____

Read: Sommers, Nancy. "Responding to Student Writing"

Sommers, Nancy " Re-visions, Rethinking Nancy Sommers "

Chapter 7 from Hyland. "Responding to Student Writing"

Sept 22 Scribe and chat **Francheska** (Yalitza is ethnographer)

Responding to Student Writing

Presentation **Jennifer Matos Kubota article**

Presentation_____

Read: Gere from *Writing Groups* 3 chapters

DiPardo "Peer Response Groups in Writing Classrooms"

Wei Zhu "Interaction and Feedback in Mixed Peer Response Groups"

Sept 29 Scribe and chat **Yalitza** (Gerardo is ethnographer)

Peer response groups and conferencing

Presentation_____

Presentation_____

Read: Pre-writing techniques from Lindemann

Chapter 5 Hyland Writing Tasks

Oct 6 Scribe and chat **Gerardo** (Jennifer is ethnographer)

Tasks in writing classes- prewriting, shaping discourse

Presentation_____ Presentation_____

Read: Gardner, Traci. Designing Writing Assignments chapters 1, 3 and 4

Oct 13 No class

Oct 20 Scribe and chat **Jennifer** (Sandra and Jeniffer are ethnographers)

How to Design Writing assignments

Presentation_____

Presentation_____

Read: Godwin-Jones article: "Emerging Technologies..."

Selfe, Cynthia, "New Media texts..." in folder on technology and writing

Go to Blog links on Computers and Composition and Kairos read at least two articles

Oct 27 Scribe and chat **Sandra and Jeniffer** (Wilmarie is ethnographer)

Technology and writing, and visual rhetoric

Presentation_____

Presentation_____

Read: Hyland Chapter 8
Bloom why I (used to) Hate Grades
Truscott” The effect of error correction on learners’ ability to write correctly”

Nov 3 no class Elections

Nov 10 Scribe and chat **Wilmarie** (Yazmin is ethnographer)

Assessing writing and practice assessment

Presentation_____

Presentation_____

Read: Matsuda “Changing Currents in Second Language Writing Research”

Schultz, Katherine “Qualitative Research on Writing”

Nov 17 Scribe and chat **Yazmin** (Marien is ethnographer)

Research in Writing

Presentation_____

Presentation_____

Nov 24 Scribe and chat **Marien**

Research presentations

Dec 1 Final evaluation and presentations