WR 512
CURRENT
COMPOSITION
THEORY
CURRENT COMPOSITION THEORY

Course Description
Current rhetoric and composition theory and its applications for teachers and writers.

Overview: This course is designed to introduce you to the current theories, practices, and principles of Composition as a field of academic inquiry. Our explorations over the term will be guided by a sequence of core questions:

- **How** did Composition—as a discipline—get to this point?
- **Why** should we teach Composition?
- **How** should we teach Composition?
- **What** should students write?
- **Who** should students write to?
- **Who** should teach Composition?

We will read a variety of theorists, analyzing their arguments to determine how they are answering—explicitly and implicitly—these core questions. You will answer these questions, too, through a variety of writing assignments and in-class discussions, at all times being pushed to draw connections between composition theory and the classroom experience.

DR. JENNA GOLDSMITH

WR 512

Office Hours: TBD

Location: TBD

JENNA.GOLDSMITH @ OSUCASCADES.EDU

Course Credits: 4

Class Meets: Summer term 2018, dates and times TBD

Prerequisites: Graduate Standing
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

A SUCCESSFUL CURRENT COMPOSITION THEORY COURSE IS ONE IN WHICH:

Students are able to identify and summarize core questions and key debates within contemporary composition theory.

Students are able to reference and critique significant theoretical trends and turning points in the development of Composition as an academic discipline.

Students demonstrate advanced critical analysis of scholarly arguments—as well as pedagogical principles, institutional policies, social practices relevant to the theorization and praxis of composition.

Students are able to articulate the ways in which the discipline of Composition and Rhetoric intersects with and influences their personal interests, pursuits, and talents.

Students investigate topics of composition theory that are relevant and meaningful within the field, as well as relevant and meaningful to the student.

Students display intellectual vigor and curiosity in making connections across texts, synthesizing arguments using strong analysis, and in creating their own compositions and reflections.
All of the assignments for this course have been designed with the learning objectives squarely in mind. I encourage you to challenge yourself with each project, and deliberately invest your energies into making every one a genuine opportunity to become a more agile thinker, a more exacting writer, and generally speaking, a person more sensitive to the forces of rhetoric and composition in everyday life.

If you have questions about the assignments that can’t be answered with the prompt or a question in class, please don’t hesitate to drop into office hours or schedule an appointment.
Since this is a graduate seminar course, a high level of engagement is expected. Specifically, this means coming to class having read and reflected on the material, listening to classmates with care and respect, speaking thoughtfully, and participating in an authentic and committed manner. The best engagement comes when one makes a personal connection with the course and lays out specific, individual goals early on. When the questions we’re pursuing becomes relevant to who you are and what you do, engagement is effortless.

**Course Assignments**

**Critical Essay I | 25%**

Instead of one long research paper, this course asks you to compose two shorter critical essays in the genre of academic argumentation. Specifically, for Critical Essay I, your task is as follows: Choose a “core question” from between Week 1 and Week 5; synthesize a minimum of three readings aligned with that question, analyzing and articulating how scholars have attempted to answer that question; of those three, two should come from the required reading list and one from the recommended reading list. Any additional articles may come from either list or your own research. In addition, you’re asked to take a position and defend it with sound evidence and reasoning, integrating your voice alongside those who you’re analyzing. Essays should range between 5–8 pages long. These are to be submitted to Canvas by midnight, January 29.

**Reading Responses | 25%**

To reward you for regular engagement with course readings, you’re asked to complete a total of 10 reading responses across the course. For these responses, you will choose and article, summarize the argument, then move to analyze some critical aspect of the text (its claims, evidence, or reasoning), and conclude with reflections it may have provoked for you. 6 of 10 articles are to be chosen from our required reading; the other 4 are to be chosen either from the recommended reading list or discovered through your own research, provided you clear the choice with me first. To receive credit for the required reading responses, please publish them as TinyLetters by midnight before the class in which we’ll be discussing the article. Responses may be turned in any time during the week, but no later than midnight Friday of the corresponding week. Responses should range between 300-450 words, though can exceed that minimum. Each response is worth 25 points and will be graded on a check plus/check/check minus system, where “check” indicates you’ve fulfilled the basic requirements.

**iBook Project | 50%**

Your main project for this course will be crafting an iBook with multiple components, yet all designed to prompt engagement with the course’s core questions. The iBook is assemblage, comprised of a minimum of 4 parts: 1) a revised version of your Critical Essay I; 2) Critical Essay II; 3) a Textbook Analysis; and 4) Open Explorations, wherein you address other core questions of the course, but in a less formal, more creative style that suits your talents and personal interests. You will receive a detailed explanation of this project in Week 3.

**Engagement**

Since this is a graduate seminar course, a high level of engagement is expected. Specifically, this means coming to class having read and reflected on the material, listening to classmates with care and respect, speaking thoughtfully, and participating in an authentic and committed manner. The best engagement comes when one makes a personal connection with the course and lays out specific, individual goals early on. When the questions we’re pursuing becomes relevant to who you are and what you do, engagement is effortless.
# WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Readings are listed with the day they will be discussed in class. You are expected to come to class with access to each of the required readings, whether printed or digitally available. Please also note that this schedule is subject to change. You will be notified of all reading additions or changes both in-class and via Canvas.

## W1: HOW DID WE GET HERE?
- ON HISTORIES & THEORIES -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>Syllabus &amp; Course Overview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1/7  | Reynolds, “A Brief History of Rhetoric & Composition”  
Ede, “What are We Talking about When We Talk about Composition?” |  |

## RECOMMENDED:
- Fulkerson, “Composition at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century”  
- Miller, “Introduction to Norton Book of Composition Studies ”  
- Crowley, “Let Me Get This Straight”  
- Graff and Leff, “Revisionist Historiographies and Rhetorical Tradition(s)”  
- Connors, from Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theory, and Pedagogy

## W2: WHY SHOULD WE TEACH COMPOSITION?
- ON EXIGENCIES, AIMS, AND ABOLITION -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1/12 | Fish, “What Should Colleges Teach?” (Parts I, II, & III)  
Crowley, “A Personal Essay on Freshman English”  
Booth, “The Rhetorical Stance”  
Taylor, “What Are the Aims of Your Writing Courses?” from the film, Take 20 |  |
| 1/14 | Harker, “What Should Colleges Teach?: A Proposal for a Compulsory Curriculum in First-Year Literacy Studies”  
❖ Special Guest: TBD |  |

## RECOMMENDED:
- Bartholomae, “Inventing the University”  
- Berlin, “Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class”  
- Bizzell, “Composition Studies Saves the World!”  
- Sirc, “Never Mind the Tagmemics, Where’s the Sex Pistols?”  
- Shaughnessy, Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing  
- Berthoff, “Is Teaching Still Possible? Writing, Meaning, and Higher Order of Reasoning”  
- Bizzell, “Cognition, Convention, and Certainty: What We Need to Know about Writing”  
- Bizzell, “Marxist Ideas in Composition Studies”  
- Clifford, “The Subject in Discourse”  
- Hairston, “Diversity, Ideology, and Teaching Writing”
### W3: How Should We Teach Composition? – On Process and Praxis –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1/19 | MacRorie, from *Uptau Daght*  
|      | Elbow, from *Writing Without Teachers*  
|      | Burnham & Powell, “Expressive Pedagogy: Practice/Theory, Theory/Practice” |
| 1/21 | Anson, “Process Pedagogy and Its Legacy”  

**DUE BY MIDNIGHT: VOTE FOR WEEK 7 TOPIC**

### RECOMMENDED:
- Emig, “Writing as a Mode of Learning”
- Faigley, “Competing Theories of Process: A Critique and a Proposal”
- Flower & Hayes, “A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing”
- McComiskey, “Three Levels of Composing”
- Shipka, from *Toward a Composition Made Whole*
- Lindemann, “What Does the Process Involve?”
- Crowley, “Around 1971: The Emergence of Process Pedagogy”
- Bizzell, “Foundationalism and Anti-Foundationalism in Composition Studies”
- Sirc, “The Still-Unbuilt Hacienda”
- Kinneavy, “The Basic Aims of Discourse”
- Mills, “Writing as Process”

### W4: How Should We Teach Composition? (Continued) – Beyond Process & the Page –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>Kent, Introduction to <em>Post-Process Theory: Beyond the Writing-Process Paradigm</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RECOMMENDED:**
- Dobrin, from *PostComposition*
- McComiskey, “The Post-Process Movements in Composition Studies”
- Trimbur, “Taking the Social Turn: Teaching Writing Post-Process”
- Breuch, “Post-Process ‘Pedagogy’: A Philosophical Exercise”
- Allison, Bryant, and Hourigan (eds.), from *Grading in the Post-Process Classroom: From Theory to Practice*

**DUE BY MIDNIGHT: CRITICAL ESSAY I**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>Devitt, “Genre Pedagogies”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bawarshi &amp; Reiff, from <em>Genre: an Introduction to History, Theory, Research, and Pedagogy</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Wardle, “Mutt Genres’ and the Goal of FYC: Can We Help Students Write the Genres of the University”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
W6: OR, WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS COMPOSE?
- ON THE ISSUE OF MULTIPLE MODALITIES -

RECOMMENDED:
- McComiskey, “Three Levels of Composing”
- Shipka, from *Toward a Composition Made Whole*
- Lindemann, “What Does the Process Involve?”
- Crowley, “Around 1971: The Emergence of Process Pedagogy”
- Bizzell, “Foundationalism and Anti-Foundationalism in Composition Studies”
- Kinneavy, “The Basic Aims of Discourse”
- Mills, “Writing as Process”
- Selfe, “Technology and Literacy: A Story About the Perils of Not Paying Attention”
- Wysocki, Johnson-Eilola, Selfe, and Sirc, from *Writing New Media*

W7: STUDENT-CHOSEN TOPIC

2/16
- Texts to be determined by topic

2/18
- Texts to be determined by topic

W8: WHO SHOULD STUDENTS WRITE TO?
- ON AUDIENCE—IDEAL, ACTUAL, & OTHERWISE -

RECOMMENDED:
- Elbow, “Closing my Eyes as I Speak: An Argument for Ignoring Audience.”
- DeWitt, selections on *The Optimistic Turn: Authentic Contexts for Peer Review in Composition Instruction*
- Special Guest: TBD

2/25
- DUE BY MIDNIGHT: PROPOSAL FOR CRITICAL ESSAY II & iBOOK PROJECT

RECOMMENDED:
- Kirsch, “Writing Up and Down the Social Ladder: A Study of Experienced Writers Composing for Contrasting Audiences”
- Ballif, “What Is It That the Audience Wants? Or, Notes Toward a Listening with a Transgendered Ear for (Mis)understanding”
- Clark, “Audience”
- Iser, “Do I Write for an Audience?”
- Ong, “The Writer’s Audience is Always a Fiction”
# W9: Who Should Teach Composition?

- **On the issue of labor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3/1  | - Bousquet, from *Tenured Bosses and Disposable Teachers: Writing Instruction in the Managed University*  
   - Watch *Con Job: Stories of Adjunct & Contingent Labor*  
   - Explore “The Adjunct Project,” adjunct.chronicle.com  
   - Schell, “Toward a New Labor Movement in Higher Education: Contingent Labor and Organizing for Change” |
| 3/3  | - Concluding discussion  
   - iBook workshop |

## Recommended:

- Connors, “Rhetoric in the Modern University: The Creation of an Underclass.”
- Harris, “Meet the New Boss, Same as the Old Boss: Class Consciousness in Composition”
- Schell & Stock (eds.), from *Moving a Mountain: Transforming the Role of Contingent Faculty in Composition Studies and Higher Education*
- Bloom, “Freshman Composition as a Middle-Class Enterprise”
- Parascondola, “Cheap Labor in a World of Precious Words: What Do Writing Classes Produce?”
- Faber & Johnson-Eilola, “Corporate University”
- Donoghue, from *The Last Professors*
- Kiefson, “The Politics and Economics of the Super-Exploitation of Adjuncts”

# W10: What Did You Learn? What Do You Think?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/8</td>
<td>- Concluding discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/10</td>
<td>- iBook workshop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Final IBook Project Due by Midnight, 3/15

**Expectations for Student Conduct**

Student conduct is governed by the university’s policies, as explained in the Student Conduct Code. For more information visit the page on offenses identified the university.

Link to Statement of Expectations for Student Conduct, i.e., cheating policies: http://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/sites/studentlife.oregonstate.edu/files/code_of_student_conduct.pdf

**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to comply with all regulations pertaining to academic honesty. For further information, visit Student Conduct and Community Standards, or contact the office of Student Conduct and Mediation at 541-737-3656.

OAR 576-015-0020 (2) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty:

a) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty is defined as an act of deception in which a Student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work or research, either through the Student’s own efforts or the efforts of another.
b) It includes:

(i) CHEATING - use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids, or an act of deceit by which a Student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment, using prohibited materials and texts, any misuse of an electronic device, or using any deceptive means to gain academic credit.

(ii) FABRICATION - falsification or invention of any information including but not limited to falsifying research, inventing or exaggerating data, or listing incorrect or fictitious references.

(iii) ASSISTING - helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes but is not limited to paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else by any means, including misuse of an electronic device. It is a violation of Oregon state law to create and offer to sell part or all of an educational assignment to another person (ORS 165.114).

(iv) TAMPERING - altering or interfering with evaluation instruments or documents.

(v) PLAGIARISM - representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own, or using one's own previously submitted work. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to copying another person's work (including unpublished material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own.

c) Academic Dishonesty cases are handled initially by the academic units, following the process outlined in the University's Academic Dishonesty Report Form, and will also be referred to SCCS for action under these rules.

---

Tutoring and Support
http://osucascades.edu/studentsuccesscenter/learning-lab
Please visit the link for access to free tutoring and writing support.
Oregon State University Online Writing Lab
The Writing Center understands that traveling to campus for an in-person writing consultation is not always possible. For those who need alternatives to the on-campus appointment, we offer feedback through our Online Writing Lab (OWL). You can seek OWL feedback electronically, from home, by scheduling to receive your feedback via an email (asynchronous) consultation or via a Skype (synchronous) consultation.
In every case, you'll work with and receive feedback from the same highly-trained Writing Center staff in the OWL that you would on the Corvallis campus. The goal of an OWL conference session is to provide you with feedback on your writing projects at any stage of your writing process.
To receive feedback from a writing assistant via Skype or over email, submit your writing project to the Online Writing Lab http://writingcenter.oregonstate.edu/online-writing-lab
University Policy Concerning Weapons

The carrying and use of weapons on the OSU campus is strictly prohibited. This includes permitted concealed weapons. This policy applies to all OSU controlled properties and facilities, including classroom buildings, administrative buildings, and parking areas (including College Way). The complete OSU weapons policy can be found at http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/rules/OARS_500/OAR_576/576_065.html