

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE FRASER VALLEY

COURSE INFORMATION

DISCIPLINE/DEPARTMENT: <u>English</u>	IMPLEMENTATION DATE: <u>Feb. 1994</u>	
	Revised: <u>March 1998</u>	
<u>English 371</u>	Advanced Composition: Theory and Practice	<u>4</u>
SUBJECT/NUMBER OF COURSE	DESCRIPTIVE TITLE	UCFV CREDITS

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: This course allows you to examine theories of rhetoric and composition, and to test those theories through your own writing and through observing and helping other students in their composing process.

RATIONALE:

COURSE PREREQUISITES: Any two second-year level English courses.

COURSE COREQUISITES:

HOURS PER TERM FOR EACH STUDENT	Lecture Laboratory Seminar Field Experience	30 30	hrs hrs hrs hrs	Student Directed Learning Other - specify: <hr style="width: 100%;"/> TOTAL	hrs hrs 60 HRS
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MAXIMUM ENROLMENT: 25

Is transfer credit requested? **:** Yes **9** No

AUTHORIZATION SIGNATURES:

Course Designer(s): <u>Rhonda Schuller/Virginia Cooke</u>	Chairperson: <u>J.D. Tunstall</u> Curriculum Committee
Department Head: <u>Allan McNeill</u>	Dean: <u>J.D. Tunstall</u>
PAC: Approval in Principle _____ <div style="text-align: center;">(Date)</div>	PAC: Final Approval: <u>March 25, 1998</u> <div style="text-align: center;">(Date)</div>

English 371

NAME & NUMBER OF COURSE

SYNONYMOUS COURSES:

(a) replaces _____
(course #)

(b) cannot take _____ for further credit
(course #)

SUPPLIES/MATERIALS:

TEXTBOOKS, REFERENCES, MATERIALS (List reading resources elsewhere)

Aristotle. Rhetoric
Plato. The Gorgias.

A collection of journal articles to be sold in bookstore.
(The collection comes from College English, College Composition and Communications, The Writing Instructors, and Journal of Advanced Composition.)

OBJECTIVES:

English 371 will show students how theory both reflects and informs practices in writing. Through readings, discussions, writing and tutoring, students will come to better understand what they and others do as they write. A heightened awareness of writing process will also enable students to intervene or change any parts of their process they feel is not leading to effective work.

METHODS:

Classroom discussion, student oral presentation, writing centre observation and tutoring. The course is organized around a series of questions about the theory and practice of composition/rhetoric, questions which we believe to be pressing ones for students involved in writing at all levels, and questions which lie at the heart of rhetorical theory regardless of the historical period. In each week of the course, one of these questions will be posed, and the readings assigned will address these questions in some way. In addition, students may wish to pose their own questions which come either out of the readings or their own practice as writers or as readers of others' writing. The class will be largely discussion, with some lecture/explanation. Students will be expected to come to class having read the assigned material, and having thought about the questions or issues at hand.

By Week 3, students will begin observing conferences in the Writing Centre, and by Week 5, they will be directly involved as tutor/readers for other students. These conference sessions will be supervised by course instructors or Writing Centre staff. The experience gained will be skills in tutoring, direct observation of the writing process at work, and some testing of the theories of the relationship between the writer and the reader/s of his or her work. The experience in the Writing Centre will be brought back in to the classroom.

STUDENT EVALUATION PROCEDURE:

Student writing will be marked on use of detail, organization, development of thesis, sentence structure and mechanics. All writing centre work will be supervised by centre staff and/or 371 instructors.

Assignments for the course:

- 1 short paper/interview of faculty in different disciplines
- 3 process reports/Writing Centre experience
- 2 summaries of readings for classroom discussion
- 1 long paper addressing a key question from the course outline, and bringing together theory and practice.
- 1 panel discussion for class

COURSE CONTENT

Week 1: Where does meaning reside in writing? With the writer? the reader/s? Somewhere in between?

Introduction to course: brief historical overview of definitions of rhetoric/writing.
Introduction to writer-text-reality-reader model.
Introduction to some theories of "invention."

Readings: I.A. Richards, "The Meaning of Meaning"
Nancy Sommers, "I Stand Here Writing"

Assignment 1: Interview of faculty in different departments regarding writing in their disciplines/classes; explanatory paper.

Week 2: How does writing change across academic disciplines?

Discussion of text as -- measure of knowledge/learning
-- reader's construct/audience expectation
-- measure of academic conventions
Discussion of "rhetorical situations": How is writing defined and circumscribed by rhetorical situations?

Readings: Essays on writing in the sciences and social sciences.

Assignment 1: draft due for exchange and discussion

Week 3: What dynamics of power are inherent in different rhetorical situations? What implications are there for working as a "tutor" for other writers?

Discussion of extended communication model to accommodate multiple audiences: reader and instructor.

Readings: *Working in the Writing Centre: A Handbook*; Patricia Bates, "The Public Relations Circle" in *Tutoring Writing*, ed. Muriel Harris

First observation/orientation to Writing Centre

COURSE CONTENT (contd.)

Weeks 4 & 5: Continuation of the initial question: How is textual meaning negotiated?

Introduction to basic terms: ethos, speaker, voice, invention, style, arrangement, audience, purpose, persuasion, knowledge, language, truth

Why study "rhetoric" in order to write?

Readings: Aristotle, from Rhetoric;
Jacques Derrida, "Signature Event Context"
Kenneth Burke, "Terministic Screens" from Language as Symbolic Action

Assignment: summary of a reading

Observation in the Writing Centre; first process report

First conference session in the Writing Centre

Week 6: What is the relationship between language, truth and persuasion?

Readings: Plato, The Gorgias;
Walker Gibson, "In Praise of the Sophists"

Pragmatics and a "social constructivist" view of composition

Panel discussion of the main question.

Week 7: What is the relationship between reason and emotion in writing? Can the reader be "objective?" Can the text be "objective?"

Consideration of Aristotle's formal/informal logic

Process report of Writing Centre conference due: discussion of the experience with students & texts in the Centre

Readings: from Aristotle's Rhetoric; from Plato's Phaedrus
Bruce McPherson and Nancy Fowler, "Making Connections: Writing and Emotion"

Week 8: What is good writing?

Panel discussion of the question.

Readings assigned for evaluation.

Continuing exploration of rhetorical context.

Readings: Peter Elbow, "Ranking, Evaluating and Liking: Sorting Out Three Forms of Judgement"

Week 9: How do cultural biases affect composition?

Discussion: What constitutes cultural bias, gender bias? Do men and women write differently? Read differently?

Readings: Burke, "Terministic screens";
Deborah Tannen, from You Just Don't Understand: Men and Women in Conversation

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COURSE CONTENT (contd.)

Week 10: **What are ethics of writing?**

- a. **Is the purpose of writing truth? Persuasion? Are there "good and bad" purposes?**
- b. **Who "owns" the text (or the meaning of the text)?**
- c. **What are the ethics of collaboration (for readers/tutors, for "group" writers, etc.?)**

Panel Discussion of questions

Readings: review Plato's The Gorgias;

Andrea Lunsford, "Collaboration, Control, and the Idea of a Writing Centre"

Week 11: **How is "voice" created and conveyed in writing?**

Does "academic" writing affect or suppress "voice?" How do readers recognize and respond to voice in writing? Is personal "style" the same as voice?

Readings: James Williams, "The Tyranny of the Thesis Statement";

Hugh Blair, Lecture on Eloquence

Brief selections from a variety of writing "voices"

Week 12: **What is revision? Where does it fit in the writing process?**

How much can a text change? Who/what instigates change? How does audience affect revision? How much does the reader revise the text while reading?

Examine the paradigm shift from "product" to "process" in composition theory.

Readings: Donald Murray, "The Maker's Eye"

Nancy Sommers, "Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult

Writers
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Sample professional essay with the revisions.

Week 13: **What is the relationship between the theory of composition and the practice of writing?**

Drafts of students' final essays due for exchange and discussion of *revision*.

Students' responses from their practical experience as readers and writers.

Readings: Stephen North, "The Idea of a Writing Centre;"

Louise Phelps, "Images of Student Writing:"

Guests: Writing Centre full-time staff

Week 14: **What are some new directions in Composition Theory?**

Discussion: revisiting questions from the course.

Readings: James Zebrowski, et al., "Symposium: After Dartmouth: Growth and Conflict"

Week 15: **No Final Exam; Major Papers Due**