



DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

PAR 108 • Austin, Texas 78712-1164 • (512) 471-4991

**LOWER DIVISION ENGLISH POLICY COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA**

February

JANUARY 13, 1990

- I. Call to order, attendance
- II. Course Proposals that have been revised and re-submitted:
 - A. Downs-Gamble, Margaret: The Construction of Gender
 - B. Grossenbacher, Laura: Writing about Failure & Success in Modern Literature
 - C. Webb, Chris: Writing and Thinking on Issues in Education
- III. D. C. Heath Anthology of Literature
- IV. New Business
- V. Adjournment

cc James Duban
Elizabeth Fernea
Susan Heinzelman
Sara Kimball
John Ruskiewicz
John Slatin
Shelli Fowler
Sarah Hinman

To Lower Division English Committee:

This is my revised proposal for E309K Writing about Failure and Success in Modern Literature. In a nutshell, here are the things I've changed:

- I've decided to teach Eugene O'Neill's The Iceman Cometh instead of the Williams play.
- I am still looking to add another essay, perhaps by a popular figure in today's society. By that, I mean someone the students will be familiar with, like Pete Rose, Lee Iacocca, etc., or maybe an excerpt from a biography on someone like Marilyn Monroe.
- I will be asking the students to find a short story or essay dealing with this topic in some way; they will contribute this to their workshop groups for circulation and discussion, and their term papers will come out of the work they have done on their own selection and perhaps one or two of the other selections presented in their group.

In addition, I've decided to require three or four shorter essays (500-800 words each) and a longer essay (1200-1500 words). I haven't really decided yet which modes of writing I will be assigning, but I will probably ask for expressive, persuasive, and analytic papers which will address the reading material in some way.

I realize a lot of this still sounds vague, but I promise it will be crystal clear by next fall!

Thank you for your
consideration,

Laura Grossenbacher

ENGLISH 309 K, L, M (circle one)

NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

semester: Fall 1990

NAME: Laura Grossenbacher

OFFICE: Parlin 408

PHONE: 471-8739

PROPOSED TITLE OF COURSE:

Writing about Failure and Success in Modern Literature

PROPOSED TEXTS:

Packet from Alphasgraphics containing:
John Ciardi's "Is Everybody Happy?" also containing perhaps one
Erich Fromm's "Our Way of Life Makes Us Miserable" more essay on the topic by
Bridget Brophy's "Women: Invisible Cages" a popular figure
Ralph Ellison's Epilogue to Invisible Man in today's society.
Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" In Addition: Eugene O'Neill's
The Iceman Cometh

BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE:

Through writing, we will explore the expectations and restrictions that society places on the individual, examining the idea that failure to succeed by society's standards can still lead to personal fulfillment. Within this exploration we will approach different definitions of success, especially distinctions between society's definition and the individual's definition.

Plus--a short story^{or essay} contributed by each student to his/her workshop for discussion--to be of the student's own choosing.

Students will write three to four 500-800 word essays dealing with this topic and related to the reading selections; exact modes such as informative/persuasive/analytic are as yet undetermined. Students will then write a longer 1200-1500 word term paper dealing with one or more of the student selections which will be circulated in the individual workshop groups.

EXPLANATION OF HOW WRITING IS TO BE TAUGHT IN COURSE:

Writing will be taught as a process of individual exploration of alternatives. Students will produce drafts which will be critiqued in peer workshops, and these drafts will also be critiqued by the instructor, before any final draft of the essay will be due. We will be examining through critique the ways in which each student's individual vision may be revised in order to make it self-cohesive. A strong emphasis will be placed on each writing assignment as a unique effort of the individual to communicate his/her viewpoint.

Als only: Append a summary of your qualifications to teach the course. Also, append the College of Liberal Arts Substantial Writing Component Form (Available in PAR 129).

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
 UNDERGRADUATE COURSES WITH
 A SUBSTANTIAL WRITING COMPONENT

The minimum requirements for undergraduate courses with a substantial writing component are as follows:

Each course certified as having a substantial writing component must include at least three writing activities per semester, exclusive of in-class quizzes and examinations. These three or more writing activities must total approximately 16 typewritten, double-spaced pages (about 4000 words). A major rewriting of a paper (requiring additional original writing, not merely editing) can be considered a separate writing activity.

During the course, each student must receive a timely and detailed critique throughout each writing activity concerning the quality of the student's written expression and ways in which the paper can be improved.

The quality of the student's written expression must be an important component in determining the student's course grade.

Course Number: 309K

Cross listed with:

Course Title: Writing about Failure and Success in Modern Literature

Instructor: Laura Grossenbacher

Number and description of writing assignments:

Students will write three to four 500-800 word essays dealing with the topic of failure and success in modern society as approached in the reading selections. Exact modes of writing, such as informative, persuasive, or analytic, are as yet undetermined. Students will then write a longer 1200-1500 word paper stemming from student-selected short stories

Provisions for critique of student writing: on this topic.

Students will produce drafts which will be critiqued in peer workshops, and these drafts will also be critiqued by the instructor before the due date of the final draft.

Percent of course grade determined by writing assignment:

15% for each short essay (including drafts and critiques)

30% for the long essay (including draft and critiques)

Additional comments: and 10% pop quizzes and attendance

I would like to clarify what I will be doing with the student-selected stories: I am asking each student to find a short story or essay that is related to the topic of the class; he/she will then contribute this work to the workshop group for circulation and discussion. The term paper will come out of a study of one or more of the pieces circulated in the workshop group.

Margaret Downs-Gamble
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Fall 1990

E309K Proposal: The Construction of Gender

Texts:

Berger, Ways of Seeing.(E)

Bronte, Jane Eyre

Packet: Essays (E), Short Stories (SS)

Fitzgerald, "Diamond-Dick and The First Law of Woman," The Price Was High.(SS)

Hong-Kingston, "No-name Woman," Woman Warrior.(SS)

Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?," Women Culture & Society.(E)

Peavy, "A Common Language," Bristlecone Winter 89.(SS)

Singer, "Two," Old Love.(SS)

Description & Rationale:

Student writing will consist of three short (500-1000 wd.) analyses and one longer (1500 wd.) analysis which will evolve through the reading and discussion of the assigned texts. Drafts will be required on all papers and these will be workshopped in class and commented on by the instructor. Students will be required to keep reading notes. These notes will be turned in at the end of class each day, but used during class to generate discussion. These reading notes will also be used as tools to help students focus on concerns and problems in the texts to assist them in writing their essays.

The course will concentrate on gender as constructed in fiction and as a fiction constructed by society. In each of the fictional texts we will concentrate on how the characters are constructed within the society of the text, and by extension, how they make specific demands on the reader to accept certain doxic notions so that heterodox behaviors are then perceived as supplying a solution to dysfunctional models. John Berger will be used (and at times abused) as a central text. I want students to feel free to question Berger's notions of gender construction as readily as they would, for instance, question the construction of characters like Rochester and St. John in Jane Eyre.

Writing:

This semester will take students from Type One writing (in which the reading notes provide a constant source of information, description, evaluation, if not formal "Informative" writing), through Demonstrative writing (proof of thesis and evaluation), to "Exploratory" or Type Two writing. The course will be divided into four sections; all sections of the course, except the first, will involve a progression of writing from reading notes, through thesis-driven

essays, to drafting formal exploratory essays.

The course will use literary analysis, taught through process writing, to enable students to write formal exploratory essays on the theme of gender construction. To teach them how to manage close readings, I will ask that they write daily, informal mini-essays (answers to specific questions about particular passages in the reading assignments). These will be used to focus class discussion. From these informal writings, they will write a thematic analysis of the text in an in-class, evaluative essay. This will introduce them to thematic and character analyses.

For example, the assigned reading for the first section will be Jane Eyre. The daily reading notes will answer specific questions about passages in which Jane is positioned in nature. The evaluative essay will have them link these passages in a thematic reading of Jane as female = nature. In this first section of the course, the out-of-class essay will be another evaluative essay in which they are allowed to choose passages in the text to write a character analysis. These drafts will be workshopped to have students examine their own ideas about how gender is constructed in the text.

Because students find the exploratory essay the most difficult, I will use the second section of the course to set them in this direction. Jane Eyre will continue to be used in this section, but the first sections of Berger and the Ortner essay will be the focus for the daily mini-essays. The in-class evaluative essays in section two will use their final character analyses from section one as a traditional, literary construction of gender. The exploratory essays in this section will have students examine gender construction from the body of knowledge (however small it may be) they have acquired. These drafts will be workshopped so that students begin to examine the way they construct themselves in their essays.

The short stories by Fitzgerald, Hong Kingston and Singer will offer students a wider-range of gender constructions from which they can further explore the notion of socially constructed gender. Fitzgerald's story initially presents a sentimentalized version of traditional American constructions, flips the traditional constructions to empower the woman and weaken the man, but eventually leaves the modern reader wondering why the woman would have wanted the man as he is presented in the story. Hong-Kingston uses a specific cultural construction of woman to present explicitly the international norm. Singer's story socially constructs a female out of a male, which only becomes tragic when the community reconstructs the biological male out of the socially constructed female. The third drafting process will require that students evaluate modern gender construction through one of these fictional narratives. I want their conclusions to trace from text (short story) to text (how they see themselves constructed).

The final section will use the Peavy short story as its focus. It is a very short (two page) story, set in an art gallery, narrated by a female who is watching her male lover evaluate an artist's rendition of a vagina. It is clear that the man does not recognize the subject of the artist, but his evaluation of the artist's use of materials and his desire for a piece of art (ifrice) that remains immutable over time presents a traditional masculine examination of female value (object for male use). Their responses to this story (with the help of Berger) will generate discussion of how constructions of gender necessarily create expectations on the part of both sexes. The theme of expectations that arise out of social constructions of gender will be the subject of their final essays. The in-class essay will ask the students to evaluate the notions of gender expectations brought up in "A Common Language." The exploratory essay will ask them to evaluate masculine and feminine as

socially constructed texts.

Qualifications:

Teaching: T.A. E 316 Am. Lit. F 87, Brit. Lit. S 88, F 88, S 89.
T.A. Writing Lab: Sum 89
A.I. E 306 Rhet. and Comp. (Writing on issues)

ENGLISH 309 K, L, M (circle one)

NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

semester: Fall 1990

NAME: Webb, Chris

OFFICE: FAC 3

PHONE: 1-8804

PROPOSED TITLE OF COURSE: E 309 M

PROPOSED TEXTS: "Writing and Thinking on Issues in Education"

Noel, James. Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Education Issues. Guilford, Conn.: Duskin Pub. Group, 1987.

BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE:

Citizens need to make informed choices on the major education issues Noel presents. In this class we will identify the major values, assumptions, reasoning, etc. evident in opposing positions on these issues. Then we will write and evaluate our own positions in order to make better choices as concerned citizens. Students will write six position papers and a research paper.

EXPLANATION OF HOW WRITING IS TO BE TAUGHT IN COURSE:

Writing will be taught as a process that generally involves planning, drafting, and revising. Planning will be supported by reading the position papers in the Noel book and by Interchange, the computer based discussion program available in the English Dept. Computer Research Lab. We will discuss logical and emotional appeals by these writers and identify other rhetorical techniques, such as the use of rhetorical questions to focus audience attention. Drafting ^{and revising} will be supported by peer review through Contact, a mail program available in the lab, as well as through the Word Processors programs that the CRT provides. Further revision ^{will be required} when students research an issue in order to achieve a stronger referential aim in a longer paper (the research paper).

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During the course, each student must receive a timely and detailed critique throughout each writing activity concerning the quality of the student's written expression and ways in which the paper can be improved.

The quality of the student's written expression must be an important component in determining the student's course grade.

Course Number: E 309 M

Cross listed with:

Course Title: *Writing and Thinking on Issues in Education*

Instructor: *Chris Webb*

Number and description of writing assignments:

Six position papers will be written. One of these will become the basis of a term research paper.

Provisions for critique of student writing:

The English Dept. Computer Research Lab provides several programs for peer and instructor critiques. Context, a mail program, allows efficient critiquing of texts by peers. Descant guides evaluation of texts. Exchange allows computer-based discussion of student texts.

Percent of course grade determined by writing assignment:

100%

Additional comments:

Typing (and word processing) will be required.

1/3/57

Qualifications :

I have been teaching composition at both college and secondary levels for ten years.

Currently I am working on a dissertation for a Ph. D. in English education.

One of the graduate courses I took used the Noll book.

Chris Webber