English 680:
WAC Theory & Administration
Spring 2019

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Description

This seminar on writing center administration will focus on the history, theory, practice, and politics of programming around writing beyond the first-year experience, out in disciplines, or across the curriculum. We'll think about how WAC programs have emerged, what theories of writing and learning guide their practices, and the role WAC programs play (and contest) in larger disciplinary and institutional struggles around literacy, identity and access to education. Each of these areas of focus has implications for the everyday administration of writing programs (first-year writing), writing centers, and co-curricular programs addressing the needs of multilingual writers (like PLaCE), particularly in the context of assessment and broader inquiry-based research.

We'll also think about how the issues that arise in the historical, theoretical, and research threads are complicated in our own local context because this university doesn't have an articulated vision for writing across the curriculum or in the disciplines at the undergraduate or graduate level. At best, it's an ad hoc operation. We might explore what it would mean to deepen that historical narrative. We might also seek to understand what role a well-regarded sequence for writing in the disciplines (English 420-422) has in our institutional context (who drives that curriculum, who teaches and assess it, how do its learning outcomes address needs in the disciplines?). We have a well-respected writing lab that supports writers across the disciplines/curriculum (what does that work look like? How do we evaluate whether it's effective or not? What might sustainable WAC/WID-informed collaboration look like?). We have a long tradition of graduate students engaging in what colleagues name as "colonial WAC," where they collaborates with a department or program on disciplinary writing needs (what are the labor issues associated with such moves? How do we honor expertise, apprenticeship, and resume building? How do we ensure sustainability? What's the role of the student's home department? Advisers? What are the consequences for the disciplinary units and colleagues?). We have attempted to advance writing fellows programs [peer mentoring partnerships with faculty in the disciplines] with little success (what might be the variables that contribute to or inhibit success at our institution? What lessons might we draw from other peer institutions? What does the literature on WAC/WID teach us about how successful programming might develop? What might a writing center/lab teach or learn from these questions?).

Throughout the semester, students will develop research projects that survey existing literature on questions that intrigue them, create relevant responses based on the scholarship, and imagine authentic outlets that complement or address needs in individual professional portfolios.

Materials

Required:
- Adler-Kassner, Linda & Elizabeth Wardle. 2016. *Naming What We Know*. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.
- Cox Michelle & Terry Zawacki. *WAC and Second-Language Writers: Research Towards Linguistically and Culturally Inclusive Programs and Practices*. Anderson, SC: Parlor Press (available for free from WAC Clearinghouse)
- Guerra, Juan. 2015. *Language, Culture, Identity, and Citizenship in College Classrooms and Communities*. Urbana/Champaign, IL: NCTE Press/Routledge.
- Inoue, Asao & Mya Poe. 2012. *Race and Writing Assessment*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Melzer, Dan. 2014. *Assignments Across the Curriculum*. Boulder, University Press of Colorado.
- Nowacek, Rebecca. 2011. *Agents of Integration*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

- Thaiss, Chris & Terry Zawacki. *Engaged Writers and Dynamic Disciplines*. Boston: Boyton/Cook.
- Zawacki, Terry & Paul Rogers. 2011. *Writing Across the Curriculum: A Critical Sourcebook*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Optional:
- Cox, Michelle, Jeffrey Galin, & Dan Melzer. 2018. *Sustainable WAC: A Whole Systems Approach to the Launching and Developing Writing Across the Curriculum Programs*. Urbana/Champaign, IL: NCTE Press.
- Russell, David. 2002. *Writing in the Disciplines*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Press.

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify key concepts, historical moments, and critical research currents in writing across the curriculum/writing in the disciplines, writing across communities programming and leadership.
2. Develop and articulate personal, professional/disciplinary, and institutional positions on writing to learn/learning to write across the curriculum, disciplines, and communities.
3. Synthesize a collection of literature around a question of inquiry compelling to you, your intellectual interests, and community.
4. Perform a thought experiment on authentic WAC/WID programming, and imagine the possibilities and critical limitations of that programming in relation to the politics, history, and ethics of this sort of interdisciplinary faculty education/programming around writing.
5. Engage in a sustained project that complements your research and engagement pipeline.

Projects

1. *Journaling response on Blackboard*
   (due weekly by 7:00 p.m., Tuesdays, when we're meeting the following day)
   As you read, share your thoughts about the individual articles and the books as we progress through the term. Use this space to turn your reading from passive consumption to active engagement. Consider what key terms and central issues are arising. These are important voices in the larger conversation, so imagine what they're saying entering into your own professional life as a teacher or tutor, and how you might speak into them based on what you're learning. Throughout, consider what it might mean to join this discourse community of writing center professionals. What ideologies, assumptions, practices, tensions do these pieces share? Unlike usual discussion treads, this journal will be private and only read by me, but I'd like to use what you're saying as fodder for class discussion each week.

2. *Literature Review (due January 30)*
   Take up a WAC-WID question that bouncing around in your head, negotiate it with Harry, and then dig into the relevant literature or research on the topic. Develop an annotated bibliography with a eye toward presenting it to your classmates so that they might help you develop an argument for it that you'll then write up. You'll want to think about authentic outlets and appropriate genres that might drive the **draft** of a review essay. Note: Think about teaching and learning publication and conference outlets in the disciplinary community. Look at the WAC Clearinghouse, which possess an extensive cataloging of these outlets.
   - January 16, propose topic/inquiry question
   - January 23, develop bibliography and annotation
   - January 30, class presentation/workshop

3. *WAC-WID Institutional or Disciplinary Study (due March 6)*
   Take up one of the questions listed above, or propose another project that begs for you to consider the historical, political, theoretical, and practical consequences of programming around writing across communities, disciplines or the curriculum. Imagine you're writing a white paper or proposal to the relevant stakeholders, offering them advice on how to proceed with your proposal. For example, what if the faculty director of a campus "Great Books" program invited you to propose WAC/WID outreach to their program. What shape might it take? What would inform how you work with the program? What would it look like? How would you specifically implement it? What are examples of success and failure? How would you cost it out?
   - February 6, propose topic/inquiry question
   - February 13, unpack question, enter conversation
   - February 20, proposal workshop
   - February 27, action and implementation workshop
   - March 6, 10-minute presentations

4. *Conference Presentation or Article for Publication (due May 1)*
   Develop an authentic project that will have legs sufficient to lead to a conference presentation or publishable article. Any direction your cast your eyes for this course, there are promising projects. Anywhere you're teaching or working on campus has compelling prospects. All I'm asking is that you develop a research project that skeptical and invested. Even if you develop a "colonial WAC" project, ask yourself, "How does this project continue when I move on? What are the ethnical, collegial, and programmatic implications for what I'm doing? What would WAC scholarship have to say about your project?"
   - March 20, propose topic/inquiry question, cluster or team up
   - April 3, bibliography presentation
   - April 10, outlet/genre discussion
   - April 17, draft workshop
   - April 24, final presentation (10 minutes)
   - May 1, upload submission draft

Grading & Grades

Generally speaking, my graduate course grades run on an A-to-C continuum. A-level work generally represents sophistication and facility with course material and its presentation, while C-level work signifies seriously problematic intellectual labor. Such grades across courses can be extremely problematic. For this semester, each element of this course will receive a grade based on this sophistication-to-flawed

model. Mediocre or unengaged contributions for the online and discussion portions of the course will receive, at best, B-level grades.

Breakdown
- Journaling – 30 points (ten/month)
- Literature Review Sourcing & Planning – 30 points
- Institutional Study – 30 points
- Sustained Project for Presentation or Publication – 50 points

Policies

1. *Attendance, Participation & Conduct*
   As a graduate seminar, consistent attendance and promptness along with willingness to contribute to the class are obviously critical to the success of this course. No one person ought to dominate conversation, and everyone must be willing to engage in a thoughtful, courteous, and critical discussion. From time to time, people will make comments that strike you wrong on a whole host of fronts. Our obligation as teachers and academics is to respond to these moments with collegiality and professionalism. If you take objection to anything anyone says or does, it's your obligation to create a space and opportunity for learning to happen; likewise, you ought to couch thoughts in ways that foster conversation instead of inhibiting it. While many of us may mark our identities and beliefs through our talk and bodies, assumptions should never be made, and membership in this discourse community should be respectful of all diversity, regardless of the form it takes. Given the tight meeting times for this course, one absence will be allowed, though missing class does not absolve you of responsibility for any work that is due.

2. *Academic Honesty*
   All students must follow university guidelines with respect to issues of academic integrity, honesty and plagiarism. Failure to present work that is consistent with these policies can result in failure (of an assignment or the course) or ultimately, expulsion.

3. *Disabilities*
   If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact the appropriate university office for assistance. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

4. *Incompletes*
   My general policy is not to grant incompletes unless the student produces a letter in which they impose their own production deadline and expectations. Bear in mind that university policy converts incomplete grades, usually by the second week of the subsequent semester to an "F" grade.

5. *Disasters, inclement weather, or when stars collide*
   We are all adults, we are experienced teachers, and we are long-time students. We recognize that life happens – sometimes it's going to be a blizzard or bad weather, sometimes we're going to get run down (by the yuck that circulates in HEAV), and sometimes the world's just going to be crazy. Let's give ourselves permission to be sick, stay home, and support one another. Did you miss you anything last night? Of course, you did. Come talk to me or a classmate. Is it a little too scary to drive to campus or back home on a bad night? Yep – you make the call, and always practice self-care.

Schedule

Date	Reading/Activity	Assignment
January 9	• Intro to course, overview of assignments • Looking at Writing Lab data from out in the disciplines • Selections from Meaningful Writing Project	• Bb response
January 16	• Part one ("Charting the WAC Movement") from Bedford's WAC Critical Sourcebook • Workshop proposals	• Bb response • Lit review topic proposal
January 23	• Adler-Kassner & Wardle, *Naming what we know* • Bib workshop	• Bb response • Lit review annotated bib
January 30	• Kassner & Wardle continued • Lit presentation	• Bb response • Lit review due
February 6	• Melzer, *Assignments across the curriculum* • Workshop disciplinary study proposals	• Bb response • Disciplinary study topic proposal
February 13	• Nowacek, *Agents of integration* • Workshop disciplinary study conversations/literature	• Bb response • Disciplinary study literature
February 20	• Nawacek continued • Disciplinary study proposal workshop	• Bb response • Disciplinary study proposal
February 27	• Thaiss & Zawacki, *Engaged writers and dynamic disciplines* • Disciplinary study action plan proposal	• Bb response • Disciplinary study action plan
March 6	• Thaiss & Zawacki continued • 10-minute disciplinary study plan presentations	• Bb response • Disciplinary study presi
March 13 – No Class/Spring Break		
March 20	• Guerra, *Language, Culture, Identity, and Citizenship in College Classrooms and Communities* • Workshop presentations	• Bb response • Sustainable project topic presentation
March 27	• Guerra continued	• Bb response
April 3	• Cox, *WAC and Second Language Writers* • Workshop bibliographies	• Bb response • Bibliography
April 10	• Cox continued • Workshop insights on outlets, their genres	• Bb response • Share intel on outlet, how do people write for it
April 17	• Inoue & Poe, *Race and Writing Assessment* • Workshop drafts	• Bb response

		• Draft of sustainable project
April 24	• Inoue & Poe continued • Final presentation	• Bb response • Final project
May 1	All remaining projects due, 6:00 p.m.	