

ENG 790 / CPLT 735: Composition Theory

Instructor:	David Fisher
Meeting Time and Place	Wednesday 10 am – 1 pm Woodruff Library, Room 214
Office Hours	Callaway N207 Wednesday 2 pm – 4 pm
Contact	d.d.fisher@emory.edu 501-650-3767
Course Website	http://theory.captive-mantis.net

Course Description

This course offers a sustained introduction to composition theory and current scholarship in writing studies. It is required of all graduate students in English and Comparative Literature in the spring term of their first year. This requirement reflects the widespread recognition that composition and rhetoric has since the mid 1960s emerged as a large interdisciplinary body of scholarship within and beyond English studies, intersecting communications, computer science, creative writing, education, psychology, linguistics, literary studies, and media studies. The course introduces you to writing studies via the field's history, theories, research methodologies, pedagogies, and technologies.

Learning Outcomes

By the time you finish this course, you should be able to

- Highlight areas of debate, articulate theoretical issues, and identify pointed areas of contention among competing theories of composition.
- As a Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI)-certified researcher, develop a line of inquiry and protocol for a classroom- or curriculum-based study involving human subjects.
- Apply selected theories to your own teaching practice as evidenced by a syllabus you develop for CPLT 110 or ENG 101, a statement of your teaching philosophy, and a simple ePortfolio.
- Work with several digital composing tools that can contribute to your ability to develop, assess, and assist your students with multimodal composing.

Attendance

Attendance is essential. You may miss **one** class without incident. For every class you miss after the first, I'll lower your grade by ten points. See me if you feel your situation warrants an exception to this rule.

Late Work

I expect you to submit your assignments on time. As you move into classrooms of your own, you'll soon discover how the collect-assess-return cycle works and how carefully you'll plan your schedule around incoming assignments. It's optimal if I can comment on all the drafts of a particular assignment at once. That said, I'm willing to work with you should you find yourself in a bind.

Disability Statement

I strive to create an inclusive learning environment for all. I am invested in your success in this class and at Emory, so please let me know if anything is standing in the way of your doing your best work. This can include your own learning strengths, any classroom dynamics that you find uncomfortable, ESL issues, disability or chronic illness, and/or personal issues that impact your work. I will hold such conversations in strict confidence.

Students with medical/health conditions that might impact academic success should visit Access, Disability Services and Resources (ADSR formerly the Office of Disability Services, ODS) to determine eligibility for appropriate accommodations. Students who receive accommodations must present the Accommodation Letter from ADSR to your professor at the beginning of the semester, or when the letter is received. [ASDR website](#).

Academic Integrity

We will follow the [Emory College Honor Code](#).

As graduate students, you are well aware of the importance of publication and citation to our community. I take plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty very seriously. Should you engage in academic dishonesty in this course, I will refer the case to Emory's Honor Council.

Domain of One's Own

This course is part of the [Domain of One's Own](#) Program. You will create and maintain a web domain which will enable you to

- Develop and publish your work for this course.
- Afford the opportunity for further development of your [personal cyberinfrastructure](#). Many of you will continue adding to this infrastructure in Eng 791 and in the Pro-Seminar in the Teaching of Literature.

Required Texts

Beaufort, Anne. *College Writing and Beyond: A New Framework for University Writing Instruction*. 1 edition. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 2007. Print.

Nickoson, Lee, and Mary P. Sheridan, eds. *Writing Studies Research in Practice: Methods and Methodologies*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2012. Print.

Tate, Gary et al., eds. *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*. 2 edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. Print.

I will provide links to other readings.

Required Publishing Tools

One-year subscription for a domain and server space at [Reclaim Hosting](#) (\$12). If you already have a domain to which you can add a subdomain and WordPress site for the course, you don't need to purchase this subscription.

Assignments, Weights, and Grades

Each of you has chosen to professionalize yourself (i.e., move beyond the role enthusiastic amateur) by pursuing a PhD. I assume as much when it comes to assigning grades in this class. I expect that you'll do your level best on each assignment, and in return, you can expect to receive full credit for each piece you submit. If a submission doesn't meet what I believe to be a professional standard for the genre assigned, I will make suggestions about how you can revise the piece and expect that you'll resubmit the work. The surest way to earn less than an A in this course, then, is to choose not to submit or revise work when asked or to miss more than one class without a reasonable excuse.

Representation 35 %

Online portfolio (35 points, total)

You'll build an online portfolio as part of the [Domain of One's Own](#) program. Portfolio construction serves as a practical, activity-based way of demonstrating competency in multimodality and digital publication and a way of preparing you to teach to the [Council of Writing Program Administrators Learning Outcomes for First-Year Composition](#). The learning outcomes stress the importance of including multimodal assignments and digital publication in first-year courses. Developing this portfolio is also an important step in building your identity as scholar-teacher and, perhaps, public intellectual. For more information ideas see [this piece](#) in *The Chronicle*. The portfolio will contain at least the following artifacts:

- Syllabus for CPLT 110 or ENG 101 (10 points)
- Teaching philosophy (10 points)
- Blog posts (10 points)
- Usability and general presentation of (scholarly identity) (5 points)

Participation 25%

Reading Live Tweets (10 points)

Each week, select one article/chapter to be your "Live Tweet Reading of the Week." As you read this article or chapter you should compose at least three tweets. These tweets might include your reactions, important quotes, or connections you make with other readings. Be pithy or even snarky, if that suits you. The hashtag for these tweets is #TheoryLT. During class, we'll parse this Twitter stream (perhaps using [Storify](#)) as a way of identifying key elements from each text as we work to synthesize the ideas we encounter. You may think of other ways to use this Twitter stream when it's time for you to lead our discussion. (See "Discussion Leadership" below.)

Discussion Leadership (15 points)

We'll have a discussion leader for each reading. You will be responsible for

- Providing a general summary of the reading
- Providing supplemental information you think is important for understanding the reading
- Forwarding one research or pedagogical application you see for the reading
- Developing two or three questions designed to get us talking about the article or chapter
- Directing our conversation in class via the questions

The texts (e.g., discussion questions) associated with your leadership need to be made available to the class electronically. You might place them on your blog or share them via a Google doc linked to your blog.

Inquiry 40%

The activities in this section are designed to help you explore writing studies in greater depth. Ideally, you'll develop the artifacts listed below along a line of inquiry you pick during the first three weeks of the course.

Contribution to Video Lexicon (10 points)

You will develop a short (1-5 minutes in length) video that dramatizes a theoretical concept for first-year writing students.

CITI Human Subjects Certification (10 points)

You will pass the certification quizzes for the "Human Subjects Research Track (RCR)" and "Group 2. Social/Behavioral Focus." <http://www.irb.emory.edu/training/index.html>

(Shared) Annotated Bibliography (10 points)

You will contribute two annotated entries to our class's annotated bibliography that help develop a research question you have about writing. See the "Resources" page on the course website for a list of prominent comp/rhet journals. Add your annotation in the entry's "Notes" area and add your last name in the entry's "Tags" area.

https://www.zotero.org/groups/compostion_theory_spring_2015

Research Proposal/Sketch (10 points)

You will develop a brief proposal in which you apply one of the methodologies we read about to a question you have about writing.

Grading Scale

Points	Letter Grade
93.00-100	A
90.00-92.99	A-
86.00-89.99	B+
83.00-85.99	B
80.00-82.99	B-
76.00-79.99	C+
73.00-75.99	C
70.00-72.99	C-
66.00-69.99	D+
60.00-65.99	D
0-59.99	F

Schedule

Please note that this schedule may change as the semester progresses and we grow interested in particular themes within the readings or in certain activities. **Please refer to the "[Weekly](#)" link on the course website for the most up-to-date schedule.**

LT = Live Tweet, Blog = Blog Post, AB=Annotated Bibliography Entry, DL = Discussion Lead

Date	Topic	Writing Due
Jan 14	History – Overview	
Jan 21	History – Situation and Process	LT; DL; WordPress site established
Jan 28	History – Social Turn and Post Process	LT; DL
Feb 4	Pedagogies	LT; DL; CITI Certification
Feb 11	Pedagogies	LT; DL; Blog: Course description
Feb 18	Pedagogies	LT; DL; Blog: Proposed area of inquiry
Feb 25	Syllabus Construction – Technologies / Multiliteracies	LT; DL; Blog: Video proposal/plan
Mar 4	Syllabus Construction – Designing Writing Assignments	LT; DL; Blog: Video shot list
Mar 11	Spring Break	Spring Break
Mar 18	Methods	LT; DL; Syllabus
Mar 25	Methods	AB; DL; Assignment sheet
Apr 1	Methods	LT; DL; Teaching philosophy
Apr 8	WAC	AB; DL
Apr 15	WAC	LT; DL; Study proposal
Apr 22	Epilogue	LT; DL; Video final draft
Last		
Apr 29	Revised Portfolio	

Tentative Reading List

Especially on weeks for which there are an unwieldy number of readings listed, I'll decide which are required and place them on the [weekly schedule](#). My goal is to make the reading load manageable for you, given the composing you'll be doing for the course. In most cases, the links provided below require you to be logged in on the [Emory library site](#).

January 14 – History

- Nystrand, Martin, et al. "Where Did Composition Studies Come From: An Intellectual History." <http://wcx.sagepub.com/content/10/3/267.full.pdf+html>
- "A Brief History of Rhetoric and Composition." <http://www.macmillanhighered.com/Catalog/static/bsm/bb/history.html>

January 21 – Situation and Process

- Bitzer, Lloyd. "The Rhetorical Situation." <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40237697>.
- Emig, Janet. "Writing as a Mode of Learning" <http://www.jstor.org/stable/356095>
- Faigley, Lester. "Competing Theories of Process: A Critique and a Proposal." <http://www.jstor.org/stable/376707>
- Flower, Linda and John R. Hayes. "A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing." <http://www.jstor.org/stable/356600>
- Sommers, Nancy. "Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers." <http://www.jstor.org/stable/356588>
- Vatz, Richard. "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation." <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40236848>.

January 28 – Social Turn and Post-Process

- Bartholomae, David. "Inventing the University." <http://wac.colostate.edu/jbw/v5n1/bartholomae.pdf>
- Berlin, James. "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class." <http://www.jstor.org/stable/377477>
- Bizzell, Patricia. "Cognition, Convention, and Certainty: What We Need to Know about Writing." (reserves link)
- Bruffee, Kenneth A. "Collaborative Learning and the 'Conversation of Mankind'" <http://www.jstor.org/stable/376924>
- Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Chapter 2. (reserves link)
- Kastman Breuch, Lee-Ann M. "Post-Process 'Pedagogy': A Philosophical Exercise" <http://www.jaonlinejournal.com/archives/vol22.1/breuch-postprocess.pdf>

February 4 – Pedagogies (Cheryl Ball visit: February 5 and 6)

A Guide to Composition Pedagogies, pp. 1-110

February 11 – Pedagogies

A Guide to Composition Pedagogies, pp. 111-211

February 18 – Pedagogies

A Guide to Composition Pedagogies, pp. 212-316

Feb 25 – Syllabus Construction – Multimodal Composition

- Adsanatham, Chanon. "Integrating Assessment and Instruction: Using Student-Generated Grading Criteria to Evaluate Multimodal Digital Projects."
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461512000230>
- Anderson, Daniel. "The Low Bridge to High Benefits: Entry-Level Multimedia, Literacies, and Motivation." http://ac.els-cdn.com/S8755461507000977/1-s2.0-S8755461507000977-main.pdf?_tid=809a18c4-af5a-11e3-bdb1-00000aab0f6b&acdnat=1395229079_8a3ee40f02861bcea0503195148839dd
- Ball, Cheryl E. "Assessing Scholarly Multimedia: A Rhetorical Genre Studies Approach."
<https://login.proxy.library.emory.edu/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ufh&AN=69699764&site=ehost-live>
- Kress, Gunther. "Multimodality." (reserves link)

March 4 – Syllabus Construction – Designing Writing Assignments

- Bizzup, Joseph. "BEAM: A Rhetorical Vocabulary for Teaching Research-Based Writing."
<https://login.proxy.library.emory.edu/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=tfh&AN=31561117&site=ehost-live>
- Bean, John C. "Designing and Sequencing Assignments to Teach Undergraduate Research."
Engaging Ideas. (reserves link)
- Gardner, Traci. *Designing Writing Assignments* <http://wac.colostate.edu/books/gardner/>
 - Chapter 3: Designing Writing Assignments
 - Chapter 4: Defining New Tasks for Standard Writing Activities

March 11 – Spring Break**March 18 – Methods**

Writing Studies Research in Practice, pp. 1-97

March 25 – Methods

Writing Studies Research in Practice, pp. 101-182

April 1 – Methods

Writing Studies Research in Practice, pp. 185-268

April 8 – Writing Across the Curriculum

College Writing and Beyond, pp. 5-105

April 15 – Writing Across the Curriculum

College Writing and Beyond, pp. 106-206

April 22 – TBD**April 29 – Revised Portfolio Due**