

Teaching Philosophy

As a writing educator, it is my responsibility to equip students with the best writing skills possible in order to progress into their academic and professional careers. Writing is a process that is continuously evolving, making the teaching of writing a continuously evolving process as well. In the Age of Technology, the role of writing takes on a greater meaning as audiences are continuously expanding and the potential for writing is continuously increasing. I believe that all students should be taught how to write effectively in an environment that fosters creativity, adaptability, and application. As a writing educator I feel that it is my responsibility to teach students to be effective writers in both the traditional academic realm as well as in the digital realm. This dual approach to teaching writing enables students to develop an effective writing process that prepares them for their academic and professional pursuits.

As a writing educator, my two central goals are: 1) to give students a knowledge of writing principles, rhetorical devices, and multi-modality; and 2) to educate students on adaptability and application in regards to writing spaces as well as the importance of content, structure, and format. These goals highlight the knowledge necessary for students to become adept at writing and communication both academically and technologically. In order to attain these goals, the students will be required to complete readings, participate in class-based writing activities, and complete several projects focused on writing, rhetoric, and design. This threefold focus ensures that students develop a knowledge base for how to write, how to apply writing to modern contexts, and how to write with intention in regards to content, structure, and format. For the purposes of the Writing 121 course, students will be asked to complete several projects that aim to integrate this approach. The main projects for this course will include a proposal, a research paper, a presentation of research, and a reflective portfolio. Writing is a process and it should be taught as such. Therefore, the projects will build on one another in order to guide students through the research process. As outlined by Donald Murray in “Teach Writing as a Process Not a Product”, all writing is an experimental process that is necessary for writing to develop and evolve. In utilizing projects that build upon one another, students can learn the ways in which their writing grows and transforms in different genres. The applications for writing are endless, and it is essential that students understand how to write and apply their writing.

One of my primary goals as an educator is to inform students on the proper usage of content, structure, and format. This intentional use of content, structure, and format is particularly important in regards to both traditional academic writing as well as technological communication. With essentially no limits to what one can write and who can read it, it becomes exceedingly important to create with intention and accuracy. Therefore, the goal of my teaching in all courses will be to teach students both how to write and how to write with intention in both the academic and digital realms. By incorporating multimodality into course curriculum, students acquire the skill set to write effectively through multiple mediums. Based on the “21st-Century Literacies” by the National Council of Teachers of English, effective instruction requires the integration of technology. This approach to writing will enable students to become effective communicators in academia and in the global community.

Writers are part of a unique global community that is continuously evolving and expanding. Due to the fact that writing is a very communal activity in the engagement between author and audience, so too the classroom will be treated as a community environment. I believe in discussion as a means of learning and applying knowledge. As a community, it is important to share ideas and help each other become better writers. Therefore, the classroom experience will rely on presentation of information, writing activities, and meaningful discussions. I believe that the approach to writing as a discussion and as a learning experience is essential to building a community. By discussing questions, thoughts, and ideas, we foster a successful learning environment in which students are able to grow as writers and community members.

In order to achieve the goals outlined in the preceding paragraphs, I have designed course content and grading criteria that emphasize my intentions as an educator. The course content includes a focus on developing a writing process, applying research inquiry to writing, learning to create multi-modal pieces, and making intentional choices in regards to content, structure, and format. In order to incorporate these ideals, each project asks students to make their own choices regarding things such as topic, approach, and format. Based on this intention, students will be expected to create both standard essay writing submissions as well as digitally-based submissions. Grading will focus on the standard writing principles including purpose, content, organization, style, grammar, and formatting. As students begin to create pieces in digital spaces, grading will also focus on rhetorical choices and design. Assignments will be assessed based on how well they meet requirements, the standard of the content, the utilization of structure and style, and the intentional use of format. By focusing on these various aspects in the different projects, students will be able to develop as writers both academically and technologically.

The goals and expectations outlined in this document highlight the concentration of my approach to Writing 121 as a writing educator. This approach includes a focus on learning to write and, more specifically, developing a writing process focused on making meaningful choices. The object of this course is to provide students with a knowledge of writing, rhetoric, research, and design that enables them to participate in the global community of writers and creators. The process of research inquiry is incorporated through class projects and activities that enable students to become familiar with the process. The writing abilities of students are further developed through the classroom community and the application of writing to various formats and platforms. The multi-modal focus for this course will teach students to make intelligent choices regarding content, structure, and format. By highlighting these aspects of writing and design, I intend to educate students on basic writing and rhetoric principles as well as the application for this knowledge in the modern world. As explained by Richard Selfe and Cynthia Selfe in their article “‘Convince Me!’ Valuing Multimodal Literacies and Composing Public Service Announcements”, one of the central purposes of incorporating a multimodal approach is to prepare students for a world in which literacies and literacy demands are continuously evolving. As an educator, it is my responsibility to equip my students with the best skill set possible in order to meet the demands of an ever-changing world. Writing is a process that continues to evolve over time, therefore the best ability that I can teach my students is the ability to make effective choices about their writing academically and digitally as they develop their writing process.