Literacy Learning and the Composing Processes
(Teaching Writing in the 3-12 Classroom)
EN 411: (3 Credits)
Fall 2015
Tuesdays, 7:15 - 9:15

There Is A Voice Inside Of You That Whispers All Day Long,
"I Feel That This Is Right For Me, I Know That This Is Wrong."
No Teacher, Preacher, Parent, Friend Or Wise Man Can Decide,
What’s Right For You - Just Listen To - The Voice That Speaks Inside.
~ Shel Silverstein

I write entirely to find out what I’m thinking, what I’m looking at,
what I see and what it means. What I want and what I fear.
~ Joan Didion

So okay—there you are in your room with the shade
down and the door shut and the plug pulled out of the base of the
telephone. You’ve blown up your TV and committed yourself to a
thousand words a day, come hell or high water. Now comes the big
question: What are you going to write about? And the equally big answer: Anything you damn well
want.

~ Stephen King

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 5:00 – 7:00 or by appointment

Course Description:

EN 411 is designed to provide elementary, middle, and secondary school educators an overview of literacy
theories and practices that relate to writing instruction and assessment. Students participate as writers and
teachers of writers through an exploration of writing activities and processes. They study reading and writing
for learning, reading as a model for writing, and writing as a model for reading. They also investigate genres
to imagine wider audiences for students and to think critically about stages of composing processes,
assessment, grammar (in the context of writing), student publications, and writing for high-stakes testing.
Students are required to establish a personal philosophy for teaching writing through the creation of a mini-
writing portfolio (digital or hard copy) that demonstrates learning from the course and application of best
practices for teaching writing. Reflecting the Jesuit mission of Fairfield University and its fundamental
intellectual and ethical commitments, the GSEAP graduate course integrates four theoretical approaches: the
scholar/practitioner model, the human development model, the reflective practitioner model, and an
advocacy model. Each aligns with state and national standards with a commitment to diversity, global
understanding, and the appropriate use of technology.
*This course is approved in the category Strategies for Modifying English Content Area Instruction for the bilingual education cross-endorsement and in the category English Syntax and Composition for the TESOL cross-endorsement.

(1) Required Texts:


(2) One additional text:

Each student in EN 411 is responsible for reading one additional text during this course that will (a) lead towards their final project for the semester, (b) highlight a specific genre (or group of genres) the graduate student wishes to explore, and (c) be presented to classmates in a “Midterm Mini-Conference” (see below). Students may choose from the following list or suggest another text (note: The Connecticut Writing Project-Fairfield library and course instructor have many texts that can be borrowed for this purpose).

**Examples for choice reading (OR CHOOSE YOUR OWN):**

MD: Brookes Publishing

**Course Goals, Objectives, and Expected Competencies:**
The following are specific goals set by GSEAP at Fairfield University for EN 411. Students will be able to:
- Describe the history of reading and writing pedagogy with particular emphasis on socio-cultural and socio-cognitive theories.
- Discuss a variety of writing forms and genres.
- Explain the relationship between reading and writing.
- Describe the purposes of traditional academic writing, practical/applied writing, and informal writing as tools for learning.
- Design reading/writing assignments with procedural knowledge and authentic scaffolding of student learning.
- Compare and contrast different approaches to writing assessment with consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches.
- Assess student work samples and explain the complexities of assessing written work.
- Design ways to share student work with authentic audiences.
- Compare and contrast formulaic models of writing with more holistic approaches.
- Develop curriculum to prepare students for writing on-demand (e.g., high-stakes testing).
- Demonstrate knowledge of formative and summative assessment in the writing classroom.

In addition to course goals and objectives, the following competencies align to the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (goals soon to be adapted to Common Core State Standards):
- Students will understand how students learn and develop writing by becoming knowledgeable about the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to the normal progression and variations in students’ learning about composition.
- Students will name strategies in composition theory for dealing with student exceptionalities in learning including socio-emotional differences, special mental or physical challenges, and gifted and talented exceptionalities.
- Students will understand how student learning is influenced by language, culture, heritage, family and community values and will design writing assignments and instruction to honor these attributes.
- Students will work in pairs, as well as small and large groups, to learn strategies for building understanding, acceptance and a positive sense of community in the writing classroom.
- Students will address the issues of second language development and dialect use and employ strategies to support the learning of students whose primary language does not conform to edited English.
- Students will understand that the specific content taught is part of and connected to a large universe of knowledge represented in a K-12 curriculum.
• Students will recognize the importance of focusing and sequencing curricular objectives to connect with students’ previous and future learning and to prepare students to master state and local achievement goals, e.g. standards, CMT and CAPT.
• Students will learn when and how to expand beyond articulated curriculum to meet student needs and to teach students strategies for writing across the curriculum.
• Students will learn to vary instructional methods by honoring individual differences in approaches to learning and in encouraging those differences in students’ writing.
• Students will vary their roles (instructor, facilitator, coach, and audience) in relation to student writing. Students will design instruction and assessment to achieve learning goals that are specific and measurable.
• Students will sequence learning tasks in coherent units of instruction derived from the curriculum and incorporating hands-on, real world experiences such as publication from which students can build an understanding of abstract concepts and knowledge.
• Students, as teachers, will learn strategies to help students consider the many elements which influence writing – among them the writer’s purpose and audience, models in genre, and conventions of standard written English – and work through the steps which are part of a complex composing process.

Ways to Earn the Grade You Desire:

**Textual Lineage/Writer’s Notebooks (week two) (10 pts):** On the first night of class we will look at establishing a textual lineage—a point from which your own writing/reading journey of the next few weeks will begin. In the first week students are to personalize their very own writer’s notebooks (provided). These two items, together, earn an automatic 10 points if completed on time. The writer’s notebook will be used as a garden space (like Dumbledore’s pensieve) for thinking, doodling, writing, creating, listing, and planning throughout the course. The notebooks are for your seeds.

**Reaction/Reflection Papers (8 pts):** Students are responsible for reflecting through course readings, school experiences, class activities, or personal exploration a minimum of eight times during the semester - a think piece, of sorts. The purpose of the Reaction/Reflection Paper is to help graduate students in GSEAP grow comfortable with writing without specific parameters assigned. There are no specific assignments for the think pieces, but they are a location to process your thinking through written language. The think pieces might consider the theoretical perspectives of the readings, the approaches discussed, the assessments provided, and/or personal connections (see Reaction/Reflection Papers at end of syllabus). Entries should demonstrate original thinking, insight, and intellectual pondering. If it helps, there are several questions posed on the syllabus that will be used to frame each week’s class that can be used as jumping points. You will utilize your Reaction/Reflection Papers as sources or rough draft “pieces” to help write your final exam/project.

**Raising and Closing the Curtain (5 pts):** Each student is responsible for “raising” or “closing” the curtain of a Tuesday night class. This is an opening or ending event that invites other members (including the instructor) to participate in a writing/thinking exercise. The student shares an activity that will add to discussions about teaching writing and/or development of a writing assignment. Students should plan on leading the class in a 20 to 30 minute exercise (feel free to conference with me before your assigned date). The leadership event is intended to establish a writing community (rather than dictatorship), and to offer beginning teachers an opportunity to host a conversation with others. It is not meant to be illustrative of a “perfect lesson” (is there such a thing?)

**Midterm Mini-Conference on Teaching Writing: (20 pts) Students are to choose one book to read independently (see above); (note: it is recommended that students read a book that is relevant to personal goals they have for themselves in the course and that will support a final project). The midterm occurs in two parts:**

  **Part One:** create a poster/brochure/presentation that showcases the title of the text, key points made by the text (top ten lists always work), quotes, graphics, and a “visual paraphrasing” of what the text presents. (These can be done in Powerpoint, Prezi, Digital Story form, or Glogster, too). Challenge yourself for how to best showcase the book you read for others and know this is the nature of a teaching career - presenting for students, parents, administrators, and colleagues.
Part Two: present the book to other students during a mini-writing conference on October 20th. Presentations should be interactive and conducted to get others writing and thinking about writing instruction. A conference is a celebration of ideas; your task is to think of ways to engage the audience.

Demonstration of Responding To Student Work: (2 pts) The most authentic way to grow as a teacher of writing is to practice responding to student work. Looking at student work to inform practice is central to growing as a writing teacher. Students will analyze, compare, and discuss pieces of student work in various stages of drafting and revision throughout the semester, and connect analysis with course texts and writing theory. In addition, students will be required to ‘practice’ assessing completed work, to provide a theory-based rationale for grading, and to provide teacher feedback that fosters on-going revision. This will be an in-class activity.

New Writing: (15 points) This course incorporates a writing workshop model to polish, present, think, and share new writing. Following a National Writing Project framework, the course emphasizes that to be a teacher of writing one needs to also write. Although new writing is not a primary focus of this course, it is a requirement. Students will draft/sketch/doodle three new pieces (or seeds of pieces) in this course that might one day be used as a model to teach writing processes to students. The philosophy behind this is research-based: to teach writing, one must be a writer!

Final Exam: Mini-Writing Portfolio: (30 pts) Students are to compile a mini-writing portfolio (final project) that showcases learning from the semester. The writing portfolio has three parts:

Part One is a reflective piece (four to five pages, double spaced) that explains the graduate student’s philosophy for teaching writing and his or her hopes for being a teacher who teaches writing. Reflective pieces should reference course readings a minimum of 5 times (MLA format) and have a Works Cited. Reflective pieces should also present additional materials that are included in the portfolio (e.g., personal writing, mini-lessons (see part two), additional resources, etc.).

Part Two overviews specific goals for instructing a particular writing outcome in a classroom and must include two lessons designed to help students to focus on a specific writing skill (an area the student wants to work on with their teaching). A calendar of events (outline/framework) should also be provided to meet the goals set out by teacher, materials needed, and assessments to be used. The two lessons should demonstrate partial ways the teacher plans to reach the desired skills.

Part Three must include three models of the genre taught that will be used to help students think about the written outcomes they’re assigned. (Note: it is encouraged that teachers share a piece of his/her own writing as one model so they can discuss their own writing processes). Models should be chosen deliberately to help students meet the written outcome desired.

Throughout all parts, students should consider stages in composing processes (e.g., brainstorming, developing thoughts, designing workshops, providing models, naming skills to be assessed and taught, and stating the specific instruction designed to meet such skills).

Classroom Participation (10 pts.) Attendance = Participation. Attendance is required of all sessions. Missing one class (or part of class) will contribute negatively (see end note). Participation includes taking part in class activities, reading assigned work, and being able to contribute. Students are expected to come prepared and to be ready to participate. Typically, every missed classed takes a point away.

Grading:
A = 93-100%
B = 83-86%
A- = 90-92%
B+ = 87-89%
B- = 80-82%
C+ = 77-79%
C = 73-76%
C- = 70-72%

There will be intervention if you drop below this percentage.
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<th>Semester's Work</th>
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<td>New Writing (Personal/Creative/Transitive)</td>
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<td>Responding to Student Work</td>
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<td>Final Project - Portfolio</td>
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<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
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*15-Week Road Map*¹

¹ subject to change; *please note also that there will be the occasional article handed out, to be read for the next class—Edmodo will be especially helpful for this.*
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<th>WEEK</th>
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| 1    | Tue   | **Essential Questions:** What is EN411 and why am I taking this course? What is a Writer’s Notebook? What is a "textual lineage 'moment'" and why does it matter? What is Edmodo?

**In Class:**
1. Roneson’s Writer’s Notebook and its Rationale
2. Sign up for Edmodo
3. Planting seeds for writing a textual lineage "moment"

**To Read for Next Week:**
1. Gallagher Chapters 1 & 2 ("Moving Writing to the Front Burner," "Express and Reflect")
2. Newkirk (Murray’s essays) Chapters 1 & 3 ("Teach Writing as a Process Not Product," "Write Before Writing")
3. Heard pages 1-24

(cont’d)

**To Write/Do (for next week):**
1. Write your textual lineage moment: My Relationship to Reading or My Relationship to Writing (to be shared next week)
2. Decorate Writer’s Notebook

*Note: Julie is on deck for presenting the above readings next week.*

| 2    | Tue   | **Essential Questions:** *Julie*

**In Class:**
1. **Raising the Curtain:** Julie models a 15-20 Minute Presentation
2. Discuss readings (Gallagher, Murray, Heard)
3. Read Textual Lineage Moment
4. Discuss student participation: what form should it take in a writing class (or for that matter, in an English class?)
5. Show and Tell—Writer’s Notebooks
6. Bryan’s Books!
7. Questions about the Syllabus?
8. Establishing Essential Questions

**To Read (for next week):**
1. Gallagher Chapter 3 ("Inform and Explain")
2. Newkirk Chapter 13 ("Internal Revision: A Process of Discovery")
3. Heard pages 25-35
4. Fletcher Introduction ("What is a Writer’s Notebook, Anyway?"), Chapters 1 & 2 ("Unforgettable Stories," "Fierce Wonderings")
5. Research for Mid-Term Project

*Note: Jeffrey is on deck for presenting the above readings next week.*
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| 3    | Tue 09/15/15 | Essential Questions:  

**Jeffrey**  

*In Class:*  
1. Raising the Curtain—*Jeffrey*  
2. Process Piece—*Jeffrey’s presentation*  
3. Discuss/Process Readings (Gallagher, Murray, Heard, Fletcher)  

*To Read (for next week):*  
1. Gallagher Chapter 4 (“Evaluate and Judge”)  
   "Writing as Process: How Writing Finds Its Own Meaning")  
3. Heard pages 37-59  
4. Fletcher Chapters 3 & 4 ("Writing Small," "Seed Ideas")  
5. Research for Mid-Term Project  

*To Write/Do (for next week):*  
1. Write a Reaction/Reflection Paper (your choice, always)  
2. Write a draft of XXXXXXXXX  
3. Work on Mid-Term presentation  

*Note: Jacqueline is on deck for presenting the above readings.*

| 4    | Tue 09/22/15 | Essential Questions:  

**Jacqueline**  

*In Class:*  
1. Raising the Curtain—*Jacqueline*  
2. Process Piece—Jacqueline’s presentation  
3. Discuss/Process Readings (Gallagher, Murray, Heard, Fletcher)  
4. Discuss Mid-Term Project ideas/issues  

*To Read (for next week):*  
1. Gallagher Chapter 5 ("Inquire and Explore")  
2. Newkirk Chapter 5 ("Listening to Writing")  
3. Heard pages 60-75  
4. Fletcher, pages 41-42 ("Thoughts about Notebooks from Paul Fleischman"), Chapters 5 & 6 ("Mind Pictures," "Snatches of Talk")  

*To Write/Do (for next week):*  
1. Write a Reaction/Reflection Paper  
2. Work on Mid-Term Presentation  

*Note: Kim prepares to present on the above readings for next week.*
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| 5    | Tue 09/29/15 | **Essential Questions:**  
Kim  
**In Class:**  
1. Raising the Curtain—Kim  
2. Process Piece—Kim’s presentation  
3. Discuss/Process Readings (Gallagher, Murray, Heard, Fletcher), via Reaction/Reflection Papers  
4. Discuss Mid-Term Projects ideas/issues  
**To Read (for next week):**  
1. Gallagher Chapter 6 (“Analyze and Interpret”)  
2. Newkirk Chapters 8 & 10 (“Teaching the Other Self: The Writer’s First Reader,” “Writing Badly to Write Well: Searching for the Instructive Line”)  
3. Heard pages 76-94  
4. Fletcher, pages 67-71 (“Thoughts about Notebooks from Naomi Shihab Nye”), Chapter 7 (“Lists”)  
**To Do (for next week):**  
1. Work on Mid-Term Presentation  
**Note:** Laureen prepares for presenting the above readings for next week. |
| 6    | Tue 10/06/15 | **Essential Questions:**  
Laureen  
**In Class:**  
1. Raising the Curtain—Laureen  
2. Process Piece—Laureen’s presentation  
3. Discuss readings  
**To Do (for next week):**  
1. Work on the Independent Book Project For Next Week (Midterm) |
| 7    | Tue 10/13/15 | **Essential Questions:**  
What book did you read? What are the major points it makes? How can you connect that book to other discussions we’ve had in this class? What is the best way to present your book to the other students in the class? How can you capture their attention?  
**Midterm Due:** Independent Book Project Midterm Presentations  
**To Read (for next week):**  
1. Gallagher Chapter 7 (“Take a Stand/Propose a Solution”)  
3. Heard pages 95-123  
4. Fletcher, pages 83-85 (“Thoughts about Notebooks from Louise Borden”), Chapter 8 (“Memories”)  
**Note:** Stefanie will prepare next week’s Raising the Curtain from the above readings. |
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| 8    | Tues 10/20/15 | Essential Questions: 
Stefanie

In Class:
1. Raising the Curtain—Stefanie
2. Process Piece—Stefanie’s presentation
3. Discuss/Process readings

To Read (for next week):
1. Gallagher Chapter 8 ("Polishing the Paper")
2. Newkirk Chapters 7 & 24 ("Getting Under the Lightning," "The Importance of Making Snow")
3. Fletcher Chapters 9 & 10 ("Writing that Scrapes the Heart," "Writing that Inspires")

To Write/Do (for next week):
1. Reaction/Reflection Paper

Note: Donnie will prepare the opening "Raising the Curtain" presentation from the above readings.

| 9    | Tues 10/27/15 | Essential Questions: 
Donnie

In Class:
1. Raising the Curtain—Donnie
2. Process Piece—Donnie’s presentation
3. Discuss/Process readings

To Read (for next week):
1. Gallagher Chapter 9 ("The Wizard of Oz Would Have Been a Lousy Writing Teacher")
2. Newkirk Chapter 17 ("One Writer's Secrets")
3. Fletcher Chapter 11 ("Rereading: Digging Out the Crystals")

To Write/Do (for next week):
1. Reaction/Reflection Paper
2. Think about your relationship to poetry
3. If you have a favorite poem, bring it in!

| 10   | Tues 11/03/15 | Essential Questions: 
Julie

In Class:
1. Discuss/Process readings
2. Questions about Final Portfolio?

To Read (for next week):
1. Newkirk Chapter 19 ("A Writer’s Geography: One Writer at Work")
2. Fletcher page 130 ("Thoughts about Notebooks from Lillian Morrison"), Chapter 12 ("Writing about Writing")

To Write/Do (for next week):
1. Reaction/Reflection Paper
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<td>Julie</td>
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| 11   | Tues 11/10/15 | **In Class:**  
1. Process reading: read around of R/R Papers  
2. Article: TBA  
**To Read (for next week):**  
1. Newkirk Chapter 22 (“All Writing is Autobiography”)  
2. Articles TBA  
**To Write/Do (for next week):**  
1. Reaction/Reflection Paper  
2. Work on Final Portfolio  
3. Based on the above readings, establish one Essential Question for next week  
4. Brainstorm a list of questions you have: What are some of your concerns surrounding the teaching of writing that still remain? Be as specific as possible—these will inform articles and essays for the remaining weeks. |
| 12   | Tues 11/17/15 | **In Class:**  
1. Essential Questions  
2. Process this week’s reading: Reaction/Reflection Papers  
3. Articles: TBA  
**To Read (for next week):**  
1. Articles TBA  
**To Write/Do (for next week):**  
1. Work on Final Portfolio  
2. Based on the above readings, establish one Essential Question for next week  
3. Write a response to the following question: How do you feel about the phrase and establishment of “The Essential Question?” Can you think of a more appropriate title? Are Essential Questions even necessary? |
| 13   | Tues 11/24/15 | **In Class:**  
1. Essential Questions  
2. Process this week’s reading  
3. Articles TBA  
**To Read (for next week):**  
1. Articles TBA  
**To Write/Do (for next week):**  
1. Reaction/Reflection Paper  
2. Work on Final Portfolio  
3. Bring at least one Essential Question based on this week’s reading |
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<td>Friday 12/11/15</td>
<td>Final Portfolios Due (to be confirmed):</td>
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**Additional Information:**

**Praxis Alignment** - For pre-service teachers, EN 411 is aligned with topics measured on the Praxis English Language Arts exam. Specifically, instruction in this course will help students to:
1. understand various modes of writing
2. understand how awareness of task, purpose, and audience contributes to effective writing
3. understands the characteristics of clear and coherent writing
4. understands effective and ethical research practices, including evaluation credibility of multiple print and digital resources, gathering relevant information, and citing sources accurately.
5. understands components of effective oral speech and presentation delivery
6. knows approaches for instructing students on the effective use of digital mediate to support and enhance communication
7. understands commonly used research-awed approaches to teaching components of writing
8. understands purposes and methods of assessing reading, writing, speaking, and listening
9. understands the components of effective oral communication in a variety of settings
10. knows that students bring various perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds to reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and how to incorporate that awareness into classroom instruction.

**Technology** - We are living in new times (and this is awesome). In spite of my frustration at times with technology, I have come to rely on it more than I ever thought I would. With this said, we need to think intelligently about our classroom space. We will operate tech-free except when technology is encouraged as a part of our class time. We all can “tweet” and “update” our statuses later. I know I will...but in here...let’s detach a bit (and this includes cell phones and texting). It’s proper ‘netiquette.’ In other words, we’ll use technology in class when it is useful to in-class goals. We will refrain from urges of using technology for out-of-class purposes.

**Attendance and Late Work** - Your maturity to attend class and to stay responsible to assignments will be factored into your final grade. Missing more than three classes during the semester (without an excused reason) will result in lowering your average by 5% for each additional class missed. Students who arrive late to class or leave early will also be documented and monitored. Late work is never acceptable.

**Academic and Disability Support Services** - If you have a documented disability or wish to discuss academic accommodations with Fairfield University, please contact Dr. Jennifer L. Claydon at the Office of Academic & Disability Support Services, Aloysius P. Kelley, S. J. Center, extension 2615. jclaydon@fairfield.edu
**Fairfield Academic Integrity Policy** - Under no circumstances is cheating acceptable. The use of someone else’s words, research, and/or ideas without proper citation, recognition, or acknowledgment is plagiarism and will **not be tolerated**. Papers that have been plagiarized will receive an automatic “F” in this course and disciplinary actions will be taken by the University.

**Paper Formats**: Please type all assignments in Times, Times New Roman, Helvetica or similar 12 font. Margins should be 1 inch and, unless otherwise negotiated, use MLA format. We will discuss other formats in this course and these can be accommodated, as well.

**Note**: Student work may be used for course advertising, evaluation data, or other publications about course activities with student names and other identifying information removed to assure confidentiality.

A more specific explanation of the Reaction/Reflection Paper will be added to the syllabus at a later date and will be supplied as a separate handout for students.