

CO301D - Writing in the Disciplines: Education
Spring 2017 - Tu/Th, 9:30-10:45am, Eddy 2

PROFESSOR: Dr. Cindy O'Donnell-Allen

OFFICE HOURS: T/Th., 11:00-12:30, or by app't

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FOCUS OF THE COURSE

Welcome to CO301D! According to the CSU Course Catalogue, this course focuses on “writing strategies for addressing general audiences in education.” I’ve designed this course to help you as a future English Language Arts teacher develop expertise in current issues in the field of education (especially literacy education) that will inform your writing for public and practitioner audiences. That means you’ll read and analyze multiple texts written in print and multimodal genres (because that’s what writing looks like these days), you’ll construct and refine your own theories about education (because you already have them, whether you’ve articulated them or not), and then you’ll write (A LOT) to make better sense of what you, your classmates, and other experts know so that you can communicate your views via public writing.

“But isn’t all writing public?,” you may be wondering. Technically perhaps, but in school, writing tends to move along a one-lane street connecting you and the teacher only. This class aims to move the vehicle of your thought onto a multi-lane information super highway with lots of on-ramps and off-ramps so that others can traffic with your ideas, and you can traffic with others’. On that freeway, we’ll consider the following questions, among others:

*“Why school?,” as Mike Rose puts it. That is, even though anyone can ask Google (or Siri or Alexa) anything at any time these days, school remains a bedrock institution in America. Why is that the case? Assuming that there **is** a point (otherwise, you’re wasting a whole lot of money on tuition), what is it that every educated person in a democracy, including students and teachers, should be able to know and do as a result of her/his schooling? What role do you as a future teacher, as well as schools in general, have to play in expanding access to equity for all students? What does it mean to be ambitious on behalf of youth?*

For that matter, why write? How do other educators communicate what they think in regard to the above questions? For whom do they write? How do they craft their messages, and for what purposes, so that their ideas can be heard? Where do educators’ voices fit in today’s political debates about education? How can they shape public conversation and educational policy instead of being pawns in it?

*Which brings us to you. Why should **you** as a soon-to-be-teacher engage in public writing about literacy and education? Who needs to hear what you have to say and why? Since everyone has been to school, what can you tell them that they don’t already (think they) know about education today? How will you communicate your ideas for colleagues and others outside of the field of education, including students, colleagues, parents, and the general public? And when you do write, **what will that writing look like** in our digital, multimodal age?*

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education has approved CO301D for inclusion in the Guaranteed Transfer (GT) Pathways program in the GT-CO3 category. For transferring students, successful completion with a minimum C-grade guarantees transfer and application of credit in this GT Pathways category. You can find more information on the GT Pathways program [here](#). As a GT Pathways course, CO301D is guided by the following objectives:

Written Communication Competency—Criteria for Written Communication

Competency in written communication is a student's ability to write and express ideas across a variety of genres and styles. Written communication abilities develop over time through layered, interactive, and continual processes and experiences across the curriculum.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) Students should be able to:

1. Employ Rhetorical Knowledge
 - a. Exhibit a thorough understanding of audience, purpose, genre, and context that is responsive to the situation.
2. Develop Content
 - a. Create and develop ideas within the context of the situation and the assigned task(s).
3. Apply Genre and Disciplinary Conventions
 - a. Apply formal and informal conventions of writing, including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices, in particular forms and/or fields.
4. Use Sources and Evidence
 - a. Critically read, evaluate, apply, and synthesize evidence and/or sources in support of a claim.
 - b. Follow an appropriate documentation system.
5. Control Syntax and Mechanics
 - a. Demonstrate proficiency with conventions, including spellings, grammar, mechanics, and word choice appropriate to the writing task.

Advanced Writing Course (GT-CO3)—Content Criteria

1. Extend Rhetorical Knowledge
 - a. Use texts from rhetoric, discourse studies, communication, or related disciplines to extend understanding of rhetorical concepts to the discipline that is the focus of the course.
 - b. Develop sophisticated strategies for critical analysis of disciplinary or specialized discourse.
 - c. Learn more sophisticated ways to communicate knowledge to appropriate audiences.
 - d. Apply reflective strategies to the synthesis, communication, and creation of knowledge.
2. Extend Experience in Writing
 - a. Hone recursive strategies for generating ideas, revising, editing, and proofreading for disciplinary or specialized discourse.
 - b. Critique one's own and other's work, including the work of professional writers and/or scholars.

3. Extend Critical and Creative Thinking

- a. Reflect on the implications and consequences of context.
- b. Incorporate alternate, divergent or contradictory perspectives or ideas within one's own position.
- c. Extend and complicate the consequences of the stated conclusion.

4. Use Sources and Evidence

- a. Select, evaluate, and synthesize appropriate sources and evidence.
- b. Use discipline-appropriate criteria to evaluate sources and evidence.

5. Extend Application of Composing Conventions

- a. Select and adapt genre conventions including structure, paragraphing, tone, mechanics, syntax, and style for disciplinary or specialized discourse.
- b. Use specialized vocabulary, format, and documentation appropriately in more extensive or in-depth writing objects.

COURSE TEXTS WE WILL READ IN COMMON

- *Why School?: Reclaiming Education for All of Us* by Mike Rose
- *Writing Outside Your Comfort Zone: Helping Students Navigate Unfamiliar Genres* by Cathy Fleischer and Sarah Andrew-Vaughn
- Various articles, chapters, and online materials accessible from our class website

COURSE TEXTS YOU WILL READ INDEPENDENTLY DEPENDING ON YOUR CHOICE OF BADGES

- *The Teacher Wars: A History of America's Most Embattled Profession* by Dana Goldstein (for Teacher As Advocate badge)
- *Teaching in the Connected Learning Classroom* edited by Antero Garcia (for Connected Learning badge)
- *This Is Not A Test: A New Narrative on Race, Class, and Education* by Jose Vilson (for Teacher as Ally badge)
- Books of your choice from Cindy's "book trunk" (for Teacher as Reader and Teacher as Researcher badges)
- Various articles, chapters, and online materials accessible from our class website

STUDENT RIGHTS, RESOURCES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rights to Full Participation: If you have a physical challenge or special learning needs that may prevent you from fully demonstrating your abilities, contact me as soon as possible so that we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and to facilitate your educational opportunities. Also, please realize that every voice is important in this class. If at any time you feel harassed on the basis of race, ethnic or cultural background, gender, or sexual orientation, or because you are differently abled, please notify me so that we can address the situation immediately and/or make the proper referrals to the appropriate campus personnel.

CSU's Student Sexual Harassment and Violence policy, following national guidance from the Office of Civil Rights, requires that faculty follow CSU policy as a "mandatory reporter" of any personal disclosure of sexual harassment, abuse, and/or violence related experiences or incidents shared with the faculty member in person, via

email, and/or in classroom papers or homework exercises. These disclosures include but are not limited to reports of personal relational abuse, relational/domestic violence, and stalking. While faculty are often able to help students locate appropriate channels of assistance on campus (e.g., see the CSU Health Network link below), disclosure by the student to the faculty member requires that the faculty member inform appropriate CSU channels to help ensure that the student's safety and welfare is being addressed, even if the student requests that the disclosure not be shared.

Resources for Student Wellness: For counseling support and assistance, please see the CSU Health Network, which includes a variety of counseling services that can be accessed at: <http://www.health.colostate.edu>. Also, CSU's Victim Assistance Team is a confidential student resource that does not have a reporting requirement and that can be of great help to students who have experienced sexual assault. The web address is <http://www.wgac.colostate.edu/victim-assistance-team-volunteers>.

Academic Integrity: This course will adhere to the CSU Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found in the CSU Policy Library (<http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/policy.aspx?id=442>). Here are the specifics of how this code will play out in CO301D:

- *What constitutes "academic integrity" in this class and why does it matter?* Good ideas reflect hard work, and academic integrity requires that when you've drawn on others' intellectual property, you must give credit where credit is due. In this class that means three things: 1) you may not present the work of others as your own. When you draw on other sources to support your own ideas, including Internet sources, you must cite them properly; 2) you may not submit identical work in this course that you created for prior courses or for the courses you are currently enrolled in; doing so is considered "self plagiarism"; and 3) you must truthfully state the degree and substance of your contribution to any collaborative projects I ask you to complete in this class. To foster academic integrity, I'll ask you to accompany course projects with a bibliography and to include a signed honor pledge with major assignments.
- *What specifically constitutes plagiarism and cheating?* See the definitions included in the CSU Student Conduct Code [here](#).
- *What happens if I suspect you of academic misconduct?* Depending on the severity of the violation, instructors are within their rights to impose consequences that range from giving you a zero on an assignment, to recommending the loss of the repeat/delete privilege and a notation of "AM" (for academic misconduct) on your transcript, to failing you for the course. The exact wording regarding academic integrity, the consequences of violating it, and the procedures for addressing it can be found [here](#) in section I.5 of the CSU Faculty and Professional Manual on the CSU website.

Attendance Policy: **Be present.** Come to class and engage yourself in learning for the entire period each and every day. You'll be missed and you'll be missing something if you don't. Because the class is so interactive, much of what goes on simply isn't reproducible outside of class. We will also sometimes complete writing and small-group activities that cannot be made up outside of class. Having said that, I also understand that illness or other extenuating circumstances sometimes cause you to miss class. Don't come to class sick. Stay home, drink lots of fluids, and e-mail me so I can tell you what you missed. (FYI, my mom gene kicks in when you're not here, and I worry.)

I also understand that sometimes students must miss class for an established religious holiday or to participate in university-sanctioned extracurricular/co-curricular activities (e.g., competitions, events and

professional meetings in which you are officially representing CSU). If you need to do either of these things, please let me know in advance so that I can tell you what you'll miss and we can make the necessary accommodations.

It almost goes without saying that grades inevitably correlate with attendance and participation, but to be crystal clear, *excessive absences will override all percentages for class assignments noted in the section below.*

More specifically, you are allowed no more than 3 absences, including any absences related to illness. Your course grade drops by one letter for **each** additional absence. Attendance counts if you are present for, and participating in, the *entire* class period. If you arrive late or need to leave early for part of the period, you will be counted absent.

COURSE STRUCTURE, CLASS PARTICIPATION, AND BADGING PROJECTS

Course Structure: I've designed CO301D using a **digital badging system** that will allow you to customize your learning within the parameters of the required course objectives. Digital badging systems are intended to make learning more engaging, self-directed, and interest-driven. They are currently in use worldwide in multiple contexts, including K-12 education, higher education, gaming and online spaces, community and professional organizations, and the workforce. Badges communicate a learner's credentials to others by hyperlinking focused projects and activities that a learner has completed to the criteria for a specific badge. In so doing, outsiders are able to gain insight into the learner's knowledge, skills, and achievements in a way that wouldn't be possible through more traditional measures of assessment like report cards, transcripts, and standardized test scores.

There is one required badge that we will complete together during the first 6 weeks of the semester (*Teacher as Writer*) and five other badges from which you can choose (including *Teacher as Advocate*, *Teacher as Ally*, *Teacher as Connected Learner*, *Teacher as Reader*, and *Teacher as Researcher*), depending on the grade you wish to earn for the course. Each of these badges features topics, texts, and leveled learning activities relevant to the particular badge, all of which build toward a major composition project. After we complete the *Teacher as Writer* badge together, we will engage in whole-class activities on a limited basis (e.g., daily blogging, writing groups, mini-lessons, student presentations, etc.), and the bulk of the course will be organized in a workshop format. We will begin each day with writing, and I will conduct up to two 10-minute mini-lessons during each class based on your requests and the writing needs I see emerging across the class. You will spend the remainder of class time working on your project badges at your own pace with my and your classmates' feedback, consultation, and support. This course structure affords you both abundant freedom to pursue your own learning and considerable responsibility in using your time wisely to grow as a writer and future teacher.

1. Class Participation (10 points): Professionalism is key to your success as a teacher and is defined by your respect for and accountability to your colleagues as well as your willingness to share your thinking. Thus part of my job as your professor is to help you learn how to be part of a "faculty" in this class. As such, I will expect you--and you should expect one another--to come to class each day with something to say about what you've read and an openness to each others' responses and questions. I will expect you--and you should expect one another--to demonstrate a commitment to collaboration and the joint construction of meaning. I will expect you--and you should expect one another--to grow as writers in the midst of the writing community we will develop and cultivate together. By the end of the semester, all of us should be better thinkers, writers, and people than we would have been otherwise if we had not shared these moments in this space on this earth together.

You can use the following questions to evaluate yourself in this area, and I'll periodically record a "working grade" for your participation on Canvas:

- Am I present and on time for each class? Do I show respect for my colleagues by practicing “dinner table etiquette” (i.e. refraining from cell phone and technology use *unrelated to the class period at hand*, avoiding sidebar conversations, taking care of personal necessities like using the restroom prior to class)?
- Do I participate substantively, but judiciously, in classroom discussion, writing groups, and other in-class activities? Do I share my ideas regularly? Do my contributions move thinking forward? Do I avoid hogging the floor? Do I offer generative feedback to my classmates’ writing?
- Do I collaborate well? Am I an innovative thinker? Am I willing to consider ideas that may not map neatly onto my own? *Am I being the student in this class that I expect my future students to be?*

In relation to the first bullet point, please note that you are free to check e-mail or surf the web before and after class, but once class has started, *technology use should be confined to class-related activities*. If you are using e-mail or social media, browsing online, or gaming, I will warn you once. If the behavior continues, you will lose your class participation points for the day.

2. Morning Pages (25 points): We will begin each class blogging to a given prompt for approximately 10 minutes. You will also sign up with a classmate to supply a prompt for the class at one point during the semester. Each Morning Pages entry is worth 1 point. Your prompt is worth 3 points.

3. Project Badges (65 points): You get to choose the number of badges you would like to complete in order to earn the grade you want. The more badges you successfully complete, the higher your grade. You can revise your work based on my feedback (oral and written) and resubmit it for consideration in order to earn the grade you desire on each badge (with the exception of your final badge since its due date corresponds with the end of the semester).

The Teacher as Writer badge is worth up to 25 points, as follows: 18 points are awarded for completion of all the badging requirements. You can earn up to 7 additional “innovation points,” depending on the clarity, thoroughness, and thoughtfulness of your work.

To earn an “A” or “B” in the Project Badges category for the class, you must complete 2 more badges beyond the Teacher as Writer badge. Each badge is worth up to 20 points, as follows: 15 points are awarded for completion of all the badging requirements. You can earn up to 5 additional “innovation points,” depending on the clarity, thoroughness, and thoughtfulness of your work.

- *To score in the A-/A/A+ range*, ...you must earn an additional 3-5 “innovation points” per badge.
- *To score in the “B / B-” range*, ... you must earn an additional 1-2 “innovation points” per badge.

To earn a “C” in the Project Badges category for the class, you must complete 1 badge in addition to the Teacher as Writer badge. This badge is worth up to 40 points, as follows: 30 points are awarded for completion of all the badging requirements. You can earn up to 10 additional “innovation points,” depending on the clarity, thoroughness, and thoughtfulness of your work.

To earn a “D” in the Project Badges category for the class, you must partially complete the requirements for 1 badge in addition to the Teacher as Writer badge.

You will receive an “F” in the Project Badges category for the class if you complete no other badges in addition to the Teacher as Writer badge.