



“Developing a World of Learners Through Knowledge, Leadership and Life-long Learning”

COURSE NUMBER: COMM 5280.01 & 02	COURSE TITLE: Written Communication	TERM: Fall 2006
SITE: Webster Hall	INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION: Marlene Ann Birkman, Ph.D., Professor, Learning and Communication Arts Department 314.968.7094 birkmama@webster.edu or School of Education Office: 314.968.7490 Office Hours: By appointment, Webster Hall 238	

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is a required course for all students seeking a degree in Communication Arts. The class is offered so that students can refine their writing skills as they experience the writing process. The workshop will involve a close look at the process: pre-writing, writing, re-writing, editing, and evaluating. Lectures, readings, speakers, media, and activities will spotlight writing as a process of discovery.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students will view writing as a means of shaping their perceptions and exercising their intellectual skills as they “learn to write by writing.” (James Moffett)

Students will learn that writers thrive in a rich word environment as they read and respond to the writings of professionals and peers.

Students will engage in and learn a variety of writing strategies as they experience the writing process.

Students will discover their strengths and weaknesses as writers through peer workshops, conferences, and instructor response.

E.L. Doctorow said it. “Writing is an exploration. You start from nothing and learn as you go. If you do it right, you’re coming up out of yourself in a way that’s not entirely governable by intellect. That’s why the most important lesson I’ve learned is that planning to write a book is not writing. Outlining a book is not writing. Researching is not writing. Talking to people about what you’re doing; none of that is writing. WRITING IS WRITING,”

Course Outcomes	Program Goals	SOE Goals, SOE Dispositions, MoSTEP, and Professional Standards Addressed
<p>Students will view writing as a means of shaping their perceptions and exercising their intellectual skills as they “learn to write by writing.” (James Moffett)</p>	<p>Communication Arts Goal : Students will refine their written communication skills and understand the importance of language in the communication process.</p>	<p>SOE Goal: 1.1: “ The knowledgeable learner knows content that supports conceptual understanding.” 1.4: “The knowledgeable learner understands theoretical principles of effective instruction to plan learning experiences.” 3.1: ”The reflective collaborator values and integrates reflection to grow as a professional.” SOE Disposition: 1: “An effective teacher understands and respects self.” MoSTEP 1.1: “ The pre-service teacher knows the discipline...,”2.4: “knows theories of learning.” NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts 12: “Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g. for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).” 4: “Students adjust their use of spoken, written and visual language (conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.”</p>
<p>Students will learn that writers thrive in a rich word environment as they read and respond to the writings of professionals and peers.</p>	<p>Communication Arts Goal: Students will refine their written communication skills and understand the</p>	<p>SOE Goal: 1.1: “The knowledgeable learner knows content that supports conceptual understanding.” 3.1: “The</p>

	<p>importance of language in the communication process.</p>	<p>reflective collaborator values and integrates reflection to grow as a professional." SOE Dispositions: 1: "An effective teacher understands and respects self." 2.2: "An effective teacher exhibits empathy." 2.3: "An effective teacher commits to fairness and honesty." 2.4: "An effective teacher listens respectfully to other points of view." 3.4: "An effective teacher accepts academic rigor...." 3.5: "An effective teacher affects change with courage and confidence." MoStep 2.2: "The pre-service teacher strengthens prior knowledge with new ideas." NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts 1: "Students will read a wide variety of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works."</p>
<p>Students will engage in a variety of writing strategies as they experience the writing process.</p>	<p>Communication Arts Goal: Students will refine their written communication skills and understand the importance of language in the communication process.</p>	<p>SOE Goal: 1.1: "The knowledgeable learner knows content that supports conceptual understanding." 1.4: "The knowledgeable learner understands theoretical principles of effective instruction to plan learning experiences." SOE Dispositions: 1: "An effective teacher engages in reflection." 3.4: "An effective teacher accepts academic rigor (willingness to work/high expectations)." 3.5:</p>

		<p>“An effective teacher affects change with courage and confidence.”</p> <p>MoStep 5.1: “The pre-service teacher selects alternative teaching strategies, materials, and technology to achieve multiple instructional purposes and to meet student needs.” NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts 5: “Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.”</p>
<p>Students will discover their strengths and weaknesses as writers through workshops, conferences, and instructor response.</p>	<p>Students will refine their written communication skills and understand the importance of language in the communication process.</p>	<p>SOE Goal: 1.1: “The knowledgeable learner knows content that supports conceptual understanding.” 1.4: “The knowledgeable learner understands theoretical principles of effective instruction to plan learning experiences.” SOE Dispositions 1: “An effective teacher understands and respects self.” 2: “An effective teacher understands and respects others.” 3.4: “An effective teacher accepts academic rigor (willingness to work/high expectations).” MoStep 3.1: “The pre-service teacher identifies prior experience, learning styles, strengths, and needs.” NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts 3: “Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence,</p>

		<p>sentence structure, context, graphics)." 6: "Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g. spelling and punctuations), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts."</p> <p>11: "Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities."</p>

Schedule of required readings, class preparations and assignments, lectures, discussions, student presentations, out-of-class assignments.

Written Communications: A Calendar

"the circle of the seasons returning without fail...." Henry David Thoreau"

"Writers aren't born; they're made." Stephen Judy

**Week 1: Introductions, Expectations, Warm-ups
The Writing Process: A Simulation
(Mail revised writing and begin journal entries.)**

**Week 2: Musings: Who is the writer?
What is the purpose?
Who is the audience?
The what, why, and how of writing.
Pre-writing: Thinking about place
(Read text prefaces, A Note to Student, and 3-53.)
(Read handouts; bring object, journal, and writing inventory to class.)**

**Week 3: Description: The Art of Rendering Character
Workshop
(Write Place Paper, read 95-133; bring list of writing challenges.)**

**Week 4: The Sense of Place and Character in Narrative
Introducing Edward Gorey
Workshop**

Quoted by Fenton, The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway, pp. 31-34

“ If the writing is honest it cannot be separated from the man who wrote it. It isn’t so much his mirror as it is the distillation, the essence, of what is strongest and purest in his nature, whether that be gentleness or anger, serenity or torment, light or dark. This makes it deeper than the surface likeness of a mirror and that much more truthful.”

Tennessee Williams

1. RESOURCES:

Required Text(s): Kane, T. & Peters, L. (Comps.). (1986). Writing prose: techniques and purposes. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hacker, D. (2003). A writer’s reference. (Fifth Edition). Boston: Bedford Books.

Strunk, W. & White, E.B. (1979). The elements of style. New York: Macmillan.

Supplemental Readings: Handouts, Donald Murray

Lamott, A. (1994) Bird by bird. New York: Pantheon Books.

Speakers and Media: Lay and Professional Writers

2. EVALUATION:

Assessments	Links to Course Outcomes	% of Grade
Class Participation (Reading Discussions, Workshop Contributions, Conferences, Lamott Discussion)	Students will learn that writers thrive in a rich word environment as they read and respond to the writings of professionals and peers.	20%
Daily Journal	Students will view writing as a means of shaping their perceptions and exercising their intellectual skills as they learn to write by writing.” (James Moffett)	20%
Weekly Papers	Students will engage in and learn a variety of writing strategies as they experience the writing process. Students will discover their strengths and weaknesses as writers through peer workshops, conferences, and instructor response.	60%

3. GRADING: Because writing is a cumulative process, the revision papers will be weighted heavily in determining the final grade. One of the two revisions will be evaluated using the attached ten-point rubric from the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers, Inc. The following scale will be used to rate one revision in this key assessment course:

Advanced Proficiency	3.50-4.0	9 – 10	Excellent
Proficient	2.50-3.49	5 -- 9	Fair-Good
Nearing Proficiency	1.50-2.49	4	Fair
Unsatisfactory	0-1.49	0 -- 3	Poor

Other:

- Class attendance is expected.
- * Work is to be completed on time.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:

Students at Webster University are expected to practice academic honesty.

Plagiarism is intentionally claiming that another person's work is his/her own or implying that another person's work is his/her own (through inadequate or inaccurate citations of reference material).

Students:

- should not copy whole portions of text from another source as a major component of papers or projects.
- should identify the title, author, page number/webpage address, and publication date of works when directly quoting small portions of texts, articles, interviews, or websites.
- should appropriately identify the source of information when paraphrasing (restating) ideas from texts, interviews, articles, or websites.
- should follow the guidelines of the American Psychological Association Style Guide when referencing all research sources.

Consequences of Academic Dishonesty:

For information about the consequences of academic dishonesty, please consult the Webster University Student Handbook.

ACCESSIBILITY/ACCOMODATIONS POLICY:

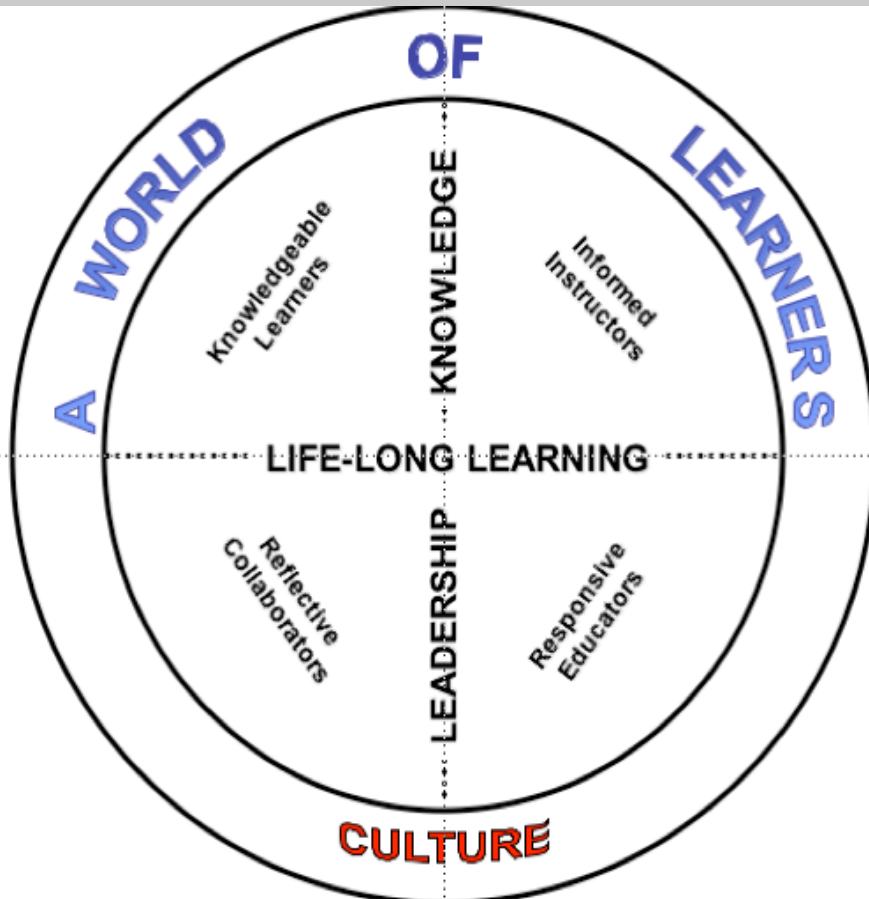
If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, contact the Director of the Academic Resource Center at (314) 968-7495.

**WEBSTER UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

Vision: “ . . . We all must work to make this world worthy of its children.” (Casals, 1970)

Mission: The School of Education at Webster University provides its students with the knowledge, experiences, and practical tools that help them guide both themselves and others toward lifelong learning. The School of Education is a community of educator-scholars who apply critical reflections and creative energies to enhance learning in schools and other educational settings. The faculty strives to support this community by modeling effective teaching practices based on sound theory and research. Personalized approaches create a challenging, yet supportive environment that permits the risk-taking necessary for learning and growth. The School of Education encourages its faculty and students to work actively toward this end, keeping in mind that action must be rooted in visionary, yet realistic, thinking. This thought and action process underscores the development of an inner-directed self-understanding, an outer-directed global perspective, and an appreciation of human diversity that arises from both.

Theme: Developing a world of learners through knowledge, leadership, and life-long learning.



The universal mandala (a circle with intersecting vertical and horizontal lines) graphically represents the conceptual framework of the School of Education. The outer circle provides the framework for a "world of learners" in cultural settings. The two axes represent the theme components of knowledge, leadership, and life-long learning. These lines are broken to emphasize the fluid relationship of the goals and integrated concepts. Each quadrant represents one of the school's four goals for its candidates: to develop knowledgeable learners, informed instructors, reflective collaborators, and responsive educators.

Goals

1. Education candidates will demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter, knowledge of the learner, and knowledge of pedagogy based on inquiry and scholarship. The knowledgeable learner:
 - 1.1. knows content that supports conceptual understanding;
 - 1.2. applies tools of inquiry to construct meaningful learning experiences;
 - 1.3. identifies developmental factors in student learning; and
 - 1.4. understands theoretical principles of effective instruction to plan learning experiences.
2. Education candidates will incorporate multiple assessment and instructional strategies to support effective educational practices based on research and theory. The informed instructor:
 - 2.1. designs curriculum based on students' prior knowledge, learning styles, strengths, and needs;
 - 2.2. understands and uses a range of instructional strategies;
 - 2.3. uses a variety of communication modes, media, and technology to support student learning; and
 - 2.4. employs a variety of formal and informal assessments to monitor learning and modify instruction.
3. Education candidates will reflect on the roles educators take as leaders of change through collaboration with colleagues, students, and families in schools and communities. The reflective collaborator:
 - 3.1. values and integrates reflection to grow as a professional;
 - 3.2. promotes communication and collaboration with colleagues, families, and community leaders;
 - 3.3. seeks relationships with families and students to support student learning; and
 - 3.4. initiates change that benefits students and their families.
4. Education candidates will demonstrate respect for diversity through responsive teaching and learning that values individual differences. The responsive educator:
 - 4.1. understands and responds appropriately to issues of diversity
 - 4.2. acknowledges social and cultural contexts to create effective teaching and learning environments;
 - 4.3. adapts instruction to the learner's knowledge, ability, and background experience; and
 - 4.4. identifies resources for specialized services when needed.

Dispositions:

NCATE defines dispositions as "the values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. " (Professional Standards, p. 53) There is significant value in focusing attention on qualities that make an effective teacher.

1. Understands and Respects Self
 - 1.1 Understands and respects that s (he) may be different from others
 - 1.2 Embraces an openness to change (adaptability, flexibility)
 - 1.3 Exhibits curiosity
 - 1.4 Engages in reflection

2. Understands and Respects Others
 - 2.1 Understands, respects, and responds appropriately to diversity in a variety of settings
 - 2.2 Exhibits empathy
 - 2.3 Commits to fairness and honesty
 - 2.4 Listens respectfully to other points of view

3. Understands and Respects Professional Communities
 - 3.1 Commits to professional behavior in university and school cultures
 - 3.2 Practices informed decision-making in university and school cultures
 - 3.3 Communicates and collaborates in university and school cultures
 - 3.4 Accepts academic rigor (willingness to work/ high expectations)
 - 3.5 Affects change with courage and confidence