

English 506
Spring 2005
CRN: 45928
Administration Building, Room 206
MW, 3:30 - 4:45 pm
January 12 - May 4, 2005

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Syllabus for English 506 Rhetoric and Composition: History, Theory, and Research

Course Goals: The course will survey the field of rhetoric and composition and try to determine its current state. We will take a brief look at some of the empirical research methods, but we will focus on the historical developments that shaped the way composition is taught today. We will focus most of our attention on how and why the process movement developed in the late 1970s and how this sort of research led to what is sometimes called the “social turn” in the mid-1980s. This will put us in a position to explore in more detail some of the various post-process pedagogies and theories that developed in the 1990s.

Our purpose in studying composition research and theory is two-fold: to give you a wider background in composition studies so that you are a better informed composition instructor and to contribute to your understanding of rhetorical theory as it applies to writing. Studying composition research and theory will not in itself make you a better composition teacher, but it should help you understand why the things that you do well do help your students’ writing and why other things may not be so successful. A course like this, combined with English 505 and the number of composition courses you will have taught by the time you graduate, will greatly contribute to your future prospects for employment as a writing instructor.

Requirements: **READING** from the assigned readings and one outside article. **WRITTEN WORK**: two one-page handouts prepared for your presentations, two short paper (5-7 pages), and a long paper (15-20 pages). **JOURNAL/READING LOG**: Regular assigned summaries of the articles and reflections on those articles. **CLASS ATTENDANCE**: Regular attendance (all classes, unless you’re deathly ill). **PARTICIPATION**: a careful reading of the assigned work, informed participation in class discussions. **PRESENTATIONS**: one presentation of an article, one presentation on a book you have read, and one oral report related to the long paper. Here is how all of this will be weighted:

First Short Paper:	15%	Attendance:	7½%
Second Short Paper:	15%	Presentations:	10%
Journal/Reading Log:	20%	Long Paper:	25%
Participation:	7½%	Total:	100%

Textbooks and Other Materials: The required texts are as follows:

- Menand, Louis. *The Metaphysical Club: A History of Ideas in America*. (paperback or hardback is OK.)
- Villanueva, Victor, Jr. *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory: A Reader*. 2nd ed. Urbana: NCTE, 2004.

Plagiarism: I will assume that you understand that you may not copy work from another source and represent it as your own. To do so violates Regulation O-2, and you could end up failing the course as a result.

Tentative Schedule: See www.class.uidaho.edu/thomas/English_506/Schedule_Spring_2005.pdf