

WRD 543, Teaching ESL Writing

Course Description

In the U.S. and around the world, classrooms are increasingly made up of writers who use English as a second or additional language. Even most “mainstream” composition classes at American colleges and universities now include students who have diverse linguistic backgrounds. In this course, we will explore both theoretical and practical issues related to the teaching of writing to multilingual students, with the end goal of preparing you to work effectively with a range of student writers.

By the end of WRD 543 you will:

- develop an understanding of current theory, research, and practice in the field of second language writing.
- be able to use new knowledge to make pedagogic decisions related to feedback, assessment, lesson planning, syllabus design, and other issues.
- gain an understanding of second language writing as a field of study, including its relationships to both composition studies and applied linguistics, and its current questions and debates.
- develop practice in preparing lessons for second language writers.

Readings

Atkinson, Dwight, and Vai Ramanathan. “Cultures of Writing: An Ethnographic Comparison of L1 and L2 University Writing/Language Programs.” *TESOL Quarterly* 29.3 (1995): 539-568. Print.

Benesch, Sarah. “Interrogating In-Between-Ness: A Postmodern Perspective on Immigrant Students.” *Generation 1.5 in College Composition: Teaching Academic Writing to U.S.-Educated Learners of ESL*. Eds. Mark Roberge, Meryl Siegal, and Linda Harklau. New York: Routledge, 2009. 65-72. Print.

Ferris, Dana, and John Hedgcock. *Teaching L2 Composition: Purpose, Process, and Practice*. New York: Routledge, 2014. Print.

Li, Yongyan, and Christine Pearson Casanave. “Two First-year Students’ Strategies for Writing from Sources: Patchwriting or Plagiarism?” *Journal of Second Language Writing* 21 (2012): 165-180. Print.

Ramanathan, Vai, and Dwight Atkinson. “Individualism, Academic Writing, and ESL Writers.” *Journal of Second Language Writing* 8.1 (1999): 45-75. Print.

Reid, Joy M., and Keith S. Folse. *Writing Myths: Applying Second Language Research to Classroom Teaching*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008. Print.

Roberge, Mark. “A Teacher’s Perspective on Generation 1.5.” *Generation 1.5 in College Composition: Teaching Academic Writing to U.S.-Educated Learners of ESL*. Eds. Mark Roberge, Meryl Siegal, and Linda Harklau. New York: Routledge, 2009. 3-24. Print.

Assignments

Class Observation Report

One time during the quarter, you will visit an ESL writing class and write a 3-4 page report on what you have seen. You may do this at DePaul or a different institution. For the report, you should write a fairly free reflection on what you have seen, but you should keep some of the following in mind: the students and their cultural, linguistic, and/or educational backgrounds; the teacher's attention to students' specific language or other needs; connections between what you see and some of our class readings/discussions.

Presentation on a Teaching Context

The teaching of writing to second- and foreign-language learners happens in different places, in different kinds of institutions, with different goals, and through different methods. For this assignment, you will choose one particular context that interests you, or in which you have experience, and help the class learn about how writing is taught there. The presentation will be short (about 8-10 minutes), and you are free to design it in whatever way you think would be most effective. The goal is for you to share and develop some of your own expertise, and to expand our awareness of the diverse range of ESL/EFL teaching and learning experiences.

Preparing and Leading a Class Activity

For this assignment, you and a partner will create a "hands-on" classroom activity that connects to the theme of the readings for a specific week. Then, you will lead and manage the activity as we work on it together in class. Some possibilities for this include analysis and/or discussion of student writing; activities in which we grade and/or assess student work; in-class writing assignments and/or peer reviews; any creative activities you can think of that will help us engage with specific issues connected to the teaching of multilingual writers.

Weekly Discussion Questions

You will be expected to post one thoughtful discussion question each week on D2L that draws on one or more of the readings. We will use your discussion questions to build our class conversations. As far as possible questions, anything goes. The point is to highlight issues of genuine interest or confusion that can give us all a framework for exploring the readings together.

Final Project

For the final project, you can develop any topic you want that connects to the course. I am very open to your ideas. Also, since this is a Methods course in the TESOL series, you can undertake a project that is practical and teaching-oriented, such as designing a syllabus and/or a series of lessons for ESL writers.