

Theory and Practice of Teaching

Course Catalog Description: This course will help to prepare students to teach first-year composition at the university and community college level. Students will become familiar with the critical approaches and theoretical issues central to the teaching of writing, and they will gain practical skills transferable to the classroom.

Instructor: Katherine Bridgman, PhD, Associate Professor of English

Office: Classroom Hall 326

Office Hours: Wednesdays 3-5 pm and by appointment

Course goals:

- Begin preparing students to apply for teaching positions at local community colleges or TA positions in FYC
- Engage students with conversations about literacies in and out of the classroom that inform Composition instruction
- Introduce students to facets of the multidisciplinary and often historical conversations about core facets of Composition classrooms

Outcomes: Students in this course will

- Read and synthesize a range of perspectives on key pedagogical issues and engage their peers in these dialogues
- Begin putting theory into practice through the production of pedagogical documents
- Connect conversations about Composition to broader conversations about literacy
- Examine where the work of literacy teaching and learning is happening outside of institutions of formal education and examine the connections between these spaces and the curricula students participate in as learners, community members, and potential future teachers

Communication: My email address is Katherine.Bridgman@tamusa.edu. I check email regularly and prioritize responding to student emails. If you do not receive a response from me within two business days, please send a follow-up email. I do not respond to email on weekends unless an arrangement has been previously made.

Instructional methods: This course expects attendance and active engagement. The course has been designed with the understanding that not everyone in the course may have career goals that include teaching Composition. I cast no judgment on that decision. Everyone in the course has experienced a context that facilitated the development of their literacy practices, whether that be in a church or community setting, a formal school setting, or the context of your family. As members of multiple and overlapping communities and individuals working to earn MA degrees, you will be looked to by many for your leadership in how your communities celebrate, legislate, and educate about literacy. In this way, this class is applicable to everyone. I will prepare for class with the expectation that you have also prepared for our time together by completing our readings and the threading assignment for that week.

A note on AI: This course is asking you to engage with foundational skills for graduate work. If you find that you are needing to use AI to complete an assignment, you should meet with me or another professor about the skill you are struggling with. For example, if you are having trouble generating ideas or summarizing and synthesizing readings, let's talk about what you are struggling with and begin to hone these key literacy practices.

Grading:

- Threading Assignments: 40%
- Course materials: 30%
- Research project: 30%

* Attendance is required. Each course missed will result in 5 points deducted from your grade. One week of class can be missed without penalty.

Major Assignments

First-Year Composition Course Materials

Research Project

Minor Assignments

Weekly “threading”

Course discussion lead twice during semester

Full assignment sheets are posted in Blackboard under “assignments.” All assignments should be submitted through Blackboard.