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Teaching Philosophy

At the core of every composition course are students who bring unique elements of language, identity, and previous writing experience. My goal is to offer a welcoming, collaborative, and inclusive learning environment that affords students the opportunity to enhance the social and rhetorical aspects of writing that will aid them beyond their collegiate years.

- Transference of Writing Skills

The study of English Composition will continually serve students for years beyond the academic classroom experience. Writing is a necessary tool that will continuously evolve in both form and meaning. The transference of both writing skills and techniques beyond the walls of the academy is imperative to future success. For this reason, my composition classroom maintains a real-world focus that extends beyond an individual writing assignment; it extends beyond a five-paragraph theme essay; it extends beyond an academic essay with word-count parameters. However, in the said interest of real-world application, understanding genre expectations and conventions are vital to persuading the intended audience, regardless of the genre or employed modality. A successful English Composition course will prepare students to recognize the different expectations between summary, analysis, integration of rhetorical appeals, academic writing (formal vs. informal registers), professional email composition, and multimodal mediums. Adaptability is paramount in my English Composition classroom.

- Diversity, Inclusivity, and Equality

Embracing core components of the Conference on College Composition (CCCC), National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), pedagogical initiatives of diversity, inclusivity, and equality are interwoven throughout the curriculum. Globalization has led to a significant increase in diversity within the walls of academia. English as a second language and English as a foreign language speakers and writers have become the majority as “. . . approximately 80% of English speakers are thought to be bilingual” (qtd. in Mauranen 513). Furthermore, scholars have indicated that “. . . a classroom based on ‘standard’ English and formal instruction limits the linguistic acquisition, creativity, and production among students” (Canagarajah 592). To date, many genre conventions require students to conform to prescriptive and grammatical rules that govern Standard American English (SAE), and this paradigm remains at the forefront of my English Composition classroom, as the expectation resides in the real world. However, as an instructor, I have the ability to integrate composition assignments and instruction that, while teaching to

genre and SAE conventions, offer students a more inclusive classroom experience. Industry scholars suggest one such way to facilitate a more inclusive classroom is the integration of translanguaging, translingualism, and/or code-meshing (Medina 80-89; Gonzales and Butler; Lee and Handsfield 164; Michael-Luna and Canagarajah 72; Canagarajah 402). In my composition classroom, the use of mentor texts and readings that expose students to diverse backgrounds and experiences is incorporated into the curriculum.

- Process-Based Pedagogy

As stated previously, the transference of writing skills from an English Composition classroom is vital for student success, both inside and outside of their collegiate years. Therefore, my curriculum fosters a pedagogical approach to “writing as a process-based technique.” Students are exposed to brainstorming, mind-mapping, outlining, reverse outlining, peer review, and the ongoing cycle of drafting and redrafting. Writing is taught as a recursive process that is applicable in ANY genre. Formative assignments are structured in a scaffolded design to facilitate writing as a process, leading to unit summative evaluations. In other words, low-stakes assignments are scaffolded to prepare students for high-stakes assignments by unit, while individual units are scaffolded, leading to the end of the course. Students embrace writing as a process throughout each unit, whether the end product is an academic essay or a multimodal project. One primary component of the process-based design is the element of reflection. Students are provided writing opportunities to reflect upon their rhetorical choices. In these moments of reflection, students are encouraged to embrace the “process” over the end product. Hence, the “process” will be transferable throughout the university setting, across the curriculum, expanding to personal and professional occupation goals.

- Technology and Adaptability

Embracing the threshold concept, All Writers Have More to Learn (Rose 59), flexibility and adaptability are key components that I strive to facilitate in my English Composition classroom. Not only am I an instructor, but I am also a student; I learn as much as my English Composition students. Humanity will continue to evolve, and as societal needs and expectations evolve, so must academic instruction. A collegiate instructor’s sole purpose is to provide guidance, knowledge, and growth opportunities to their students. Education must meet the academic discourse community’s needs, as well as the population that we serve.

Amid a global pandemic, I experienced compassion and personal growth opportunities from my English Composition students. As a planner, each semester is mapped from beginning to end by the first morning of class. However, individual assignments and coursework expectations must be flexible to meet the needs of students. Technology is here to stay, even when the pandemic ends. I have learned and continue to learn that embracing said technology will support a more collaborative experience for students and instructors alike. Teaching in a remote synchronous capacity has allowed me to integrate all technology modalities available through the university, yet in a live face-to-face simulation. Students have the benefit of live feedback and instruction, but the entire course is developed through a learning software management system, which enables an online experience of having constant access to all materials and assignments. The experience as an instructor has been and continues to be

humbling as I constantly strive to best support my students and their learning experiences. As an instructor, resilient pedagogy has a meaning that transcends lesson planning. As classrooms return to the complete face-to-face instruction modality, technology may and should be used to provide additional support to student learning.

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