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CO301: Writing in the Disciplines - Sample Syllabus

Weeks 1 - 6: Unit I: Text Analysis. During the first six weeks of the course, students will read and analyze articles written in the field on which the course focuses: (a) arts and humanities, (b) sciences, (c) social sciences, or (d) education. The goal of this reading activity is to help students understand how the rhetorical context in which a text is produced (author/purpose/audience/subject) affects the final product. Students will write three analyses of selected articles. The goal of writing analyses of the readings is to help students understand that the choices writers make are intentional and influenced by a variety of rhetorical factors. These analyses will also help students develop skills such as reading with a writer's eye and understanding how to make informed choices in their own writing.

Week 1: Course overview; Assign readings and first homework assignments; in-class writing and discussions focus on rhetorical situation and students' previous writing experiences

Week 2: Assign first analysis essay; assign additional readings and homework; in-class writing and discussions focus on analyzing rhetorical situations and varieties of text analysis

Week 3: Workshop and revise first analysis essay; assign additional readings and homework; in-class writing and discussions focus on revision techniques, analytical techniques, and workshop techniques

Week 4: Collect first analysis essay; Assign second analysis essay; assign additional readings and homework; in-class writing and discussions focus on additional techniques for analyzing texts and rhetorical contexts

Week 5: Workshop and revise second analysis essay; assign additional readings and homework; in-class writing and discussions focus on revision techniques, additional analytical techniques, and workshop techniques

Week 6: Collect second analysis essay; Assign third analysis essay; assign additional readings and homework; in-class writing and discussions focus on additional techniques for analyzing texts and rhetorical contexts

Weeks 7 - 14: Unit II: Writing Texts. During the next eight weeks of the course, students will focus on writing texts for multiple audiences. One goal of this unit is to help them learn about the demands of writing for different rhetorical situations and of adapting information and arguments for varying audiences. A second primary goal is to enhance their ability to write with appropriate style and register for particular audiences. A third goal is to help them learn to adapt organization strategies and select appropriate forms of evidence for their audiences. A fourth goal is to enhance their planning, drafting, and revising skills.

In this unit, students will select an individual or group topic in the broad disciplinary area upon which the course focuses, conduct a rhetorical analysis of the topic, create a research plan identifying:

- the overall issue(s) they will address
- the texts they will analyze
- the kinds of analyses they will conduct
- the essays they will write.

These essays will consist of a total of at least 15 finished pages of final, polished work and must represent at least two separate pieces written to different types of audiences.

Class time during this portion of the course will be devoted to workshops, conferences, strategy sessions, and student group presentations on style issues.

Week 7: Collect third analysis essay; introduce Unit II; create topic groups; discuss research techniques; begin research on topics

Week 8: Assign rhetorical analysis of a topic paper; homework and in-class writing focus on rhetorical and textual analysis techniques; provide opportunities for topic groups to meet and plan during class

Week 9: Collect rhetorical analysis of a topic assignment; assign research plan paper; homework and in-class writing focus on rhetorical and textual analysis techniques; discuss advanced research techniques; provide opportunities for topic groups to meet and plan during class

Week 10: Collect research plan assignment; assign major writing assignment for the unit (at least two essays totaling at least 15 pages of polished prose written for different audiences); homework and in-class writing focus on generating ideas for the essays; discuss writing processes

Weeks 11 - 14: Workshop mode for the remainder of the unit; classes begin with a daily writing assignment (tied into their essays), then move to brief full class discussions, then move into drafting and workshopping activities adapted to the needs of individual students; teacher conferences and reviews essay drafts with students

Weeks 15 - 16: Unit III: Course Wrap-Up. Collect major essay assignment; class discussions focus on student efforts to adapt their writing to specific audiences and contexts; review analytic techniques for texts and rhetorical situations. The last week of class will be devoted to presentations of student writing and self-analysis of student learning in the course. The final exam will focus on how adapting student essays for an additional audience specified by the teacher.

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