

Education 202I, Assessment of Writing

Course Information: Winter 2008, W 1:00- 3:50 Phelps 1309

Enrollment Code: 50187

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Dean

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Office hours: Monday: 11 a.m. to noon, Tuesday: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Wednesday: 11 a.m. to noon **and by appointment**

This seminar focuses on the history, politics, theory, and practice of writing assessment—at the micro and macro level. The principal focus will be on higher education assessment, but time will certainly be spent thinking, writing, reading, and researching about PK-college issues as well. We will be looking at everything from the way that the Spellings Commission and “No Child Left Behind” affect writing assessment at the national level, to how assessment works in elementary school and college classrooms.

Our discussions will be mediated by a variety of writing technologies (computer-aided, pen-and-ink, and graphic interfaces), and we will be operating under the assumption that writing assessment, and its kissing cousin evaluation of student writing, are always political acts—enmeshed in ideas of what constitutes language, literacy, and even our larger nation.

Practically speaking, students will be asked to do the following: read and respond, in depth, to at least one book length text on writing assessment—creating a **short book review** on the subject of writing assessment—**one-paragraph in length**; engaging in **research** on an issue in programmatic, or classroom, writing assessment; **leading part of the classroom discussion**, on a given class meeting, on an assessment topic; and, finally, creating a paper and presentation on an issue of writing assessment.

Required Texts

Available at UCSB Bookstore:

Cooper, Charles R and Lee Odell, eds. *Evaluating Writing: The Role of Teachers' Knowledge about Text*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1999.

Huot, Brian. *(Re) Articulating Writing Assessment for Teaching and Learning*. Logan, UT: Utah State UP, 2002.

White, Edward M., William D. Lutz, and Sandra Kamusikiri. *Assessment of Writing: Politics, Policies, and Practices*. New York: MLA, 1996.

Available Online:

Articles on writing assessment, located in our moodle class: <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>

Articles on writing assessment, located at our class homepage: <http://www.writing.ucsb.edu/faculty/dean>

A Note: *This course's design is indebted to the courses in writing assessment designed by Brian Huot and Sue McLeod. I have particularly borrowed, in terms of design and execution of this course, from Dr. Sue McLeod.*

Course Requirements and Grading

1. Regular participation in class discussions.
 - **Percentage of grade: 20%**
2. Regular postings to the following to the on-line forum labeled "Discussion of Readings". All postings must be made weekly before the class meets at 1 p.m. on Wednesdays. The form and content of the posting is up to you. You are, after all, graduate students. **One person will post a more "formal" response paper (of 500 words or so), and the rest of us will create a short response (of 200-300 words) in the forum. I'll show you how this is done.**
 - **Percentage of grade: 10%**
3. Book reviews (A short annotation to be added to our book list).
 - **Percentage of grade: 10%**
4. Presentations to the class on the book(s) you have reviewed
 - **Percentage of grade: 10%**
5. A research project on which you will present at a mini-conference at the end of the quarter, and a **conference proposal/PAPER** based on your research, suitable for submission to a conference.
 - **Percentage of grade: 50%**
6. One required meeting, with Chris, where you discuss your research project and the class in general.

Schedule of Readings

Please read all of the selections in a given week before the class meets.

Each week the person who writes the "formal response paper" will be responsible for heading up our discussion. This doesn't mean that they will "teach" the class; they will be the resident expert on the texts under discussion (along with Chris), and they will give us a starting point for the discussion. Also, each week, starting in **week three**, we will have presentations from folks on the book that they have read for the short book review.

ALL READINGS AND ACTIVITIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE INSTRUCTOR

Week 1: Introduction to the Course and Writing Assessment

Activities: Introduction to the class. Minilecture on "The History of Writing Assessment in the USA". In class reading and discussion on the politics large scale writing assessment. Discussion of research possibilities: online 50 assessment materials, Writing Program Evaluation research, Review of Writing 2. Sign up for conferences with Chris to discuss research project.

Week 2: Grading and Responding

Reading:

- Grading and teaching writing: Huot Chapters 3 and 5
- Haswell's "Minimal Marking"—online at <http://www.lagcc.cuny.edu/ctl/dfi/dfi0304/midyearinstitute/Haswell%20Minimal%20Marking--ADV%20Set%2022.htm>

Assignments: Post and respond to Chris' response paper in moodle: <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>

Activities: Work with student papers from Writing 50 study. Discussion of readings. Workshopping of research ideas.

- **Response paper/discussion leader: Chris Dean**
- **Book Review:** *12 Readers Reading*, reviewed by Chris Dean

Week 3: Issues in Grading and the Teaching Writing

Reading:

- Selection from Straub's "Reading and Responding to Student Writing"—online at <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>.
- Reviews of Straub and Lunsford's *Twelve Readers Reading*—online at <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>.
- "What Happens when Machines Read our Students Writing?"—available online at <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>.
- "Computer-Assisted Writing Assessment" in White et al.

Assignments: Post and respond to **this week's** response paper in moodle: <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>

Activities: Discussion of texts. Book review presentation. Discussion and demonstration of classroom grading practices. In-class work with student papers.

- **Response paper/discussion leader:** _____
- **Book Review:** Zak, *The Theory and Practice of Grading Writing* by _____

Week 4: On-Line Writing Assessment and Issues in Writing Placement

Reading:

- Les Perelman (from MIT) and directed self-placement: Read the information on iMOAT at <http://web.mit.edu/imoat/>
- Handouts on the history of Subject A at the UC—online at <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>.
- Read the coverweb to the *Kairos* article on New Media (<http://english.ttu.edu/kairos/10.2/binder2.html?coverweb/bridge.htm>) and then read Madeline Sorapure's article on assessing New Media in Kairos (<http://english.ttu.edu/kairos/10.2/binder2.html?coverweb/sorapure/index.html>).

Assignments: Post and respond to **this week's** response paper in moodle: <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>

Activities: Discussion of texts. Book review presentation. Look at erater/Criterion: <http://www.ets.org/Media/Products/Criterion/tour2/critloader.html>.

- **Response paper/discussion leader:** _____
- **Book Review:** Royer and Gilles, *Directed Self-Placement or Stumping E-Rater : Challenging the Validity of Automated Essay Scoring* by Donald E. Powers et al. (Located at www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/RR-01-03-Powers.pdf) by _____

Week 5: Holistic Scoring

Reading:

- Yancey, Kathleen Blake. "Looking Back as We Look Forward: Historicizing Writing Assessment." CCC 50.3 (1999): 483-503. Located at <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>.
- John Katzman's article in *The Atlantic.com*: "Would Shakespeare Get Into Swarthmore?"—located at <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200403/katzman>.

Assignments: Post and respond to **this week's** response paper in moodle: <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>

Activities: Discussion of texts. Book review presentation. Holistic scoring session simulation. Peer work on research questions.

- **Response paper/discussion leader:** _____
- **Book Review:** Williamson and Huot, *Validating Holistic Scoring for Writing Assessment* by _____

Week 6: Portfolio Assessment

Reading:

- “Assessing Portfolios” in *Evaluating Writing*.
- “How to Read a Science Portfolio” in *Evaluating Writing*.
- “Creating a Climate for Portfolios” in *Evaluating Writing*.

Assignments: **FIRST DRAFT OF CONFERENCE PRESENTATION/PAPER.** Post and respond to **this week’s** response paper in moodle: <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>

Activities: Discussion of texts. Book review presentation. Evaluating a Student Portfolio Exercise. Peer Review of Conference proposal/Paper.

- **Response paper/discussion leader:** _____
- **Book Review:** Black et al., *New Directions in Portfolio Assessment* by _____

Week 7: Large-Scale Writing Assessment/Testing

Reading:

- *White et al.*, Part II
- Huot Chapter 2
- NCTE/IRA Standards for K-12 teachers: <http://www.ncte.org/about/over/standards/110846.htm>
- NCATE/NCTE Standards:
http://www.ncte.org/library/files/Programs/Teacher_Prep/RevisionApprovedStandards707.doc

Assignments: Post and respond to **this week’s** response paper in moodle: <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>

Activities: Discussion of texts. Book review presentation. PRAXIS work:

http://www.testprepreview.com/praxis_practice.htm and

<http://www.ets.org/portal/site/ets/menuitem.1488512ecfd5b8849a77b13bc3921509/?vgnextoid=23932d3631df4010VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD&vgnnextchannel=89a25ee3d74f4010VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD>. Discussion of Teacher Testing and Literacy. Research QandA.

- **Response paper/discussion leader:** _____
- **Book Review:** Hillocks, *The Testing Trap* by _____

Week 8: Issues In Large-Scale Writing Assessment

Reading:

- *White et al.*, Part I, Part III 120-134 and , Part IV
- “Let The Experiment: Accommodating Diverse Discourse Practices in Large-Scale Writing Assessment” by Roxanne Mountford in *Evaluating Writing*.

Assignments: Post and respond to **this week’s** response paper in moodle: <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>

Activities: Discussion of texts. Book review presentation. Closer look at the Subject A. BEV test:

<https://www.unb.ca/sweb/psychology/fields/psyc1024/module09/write/essay/chitlingfs.html>.

- **Response paper/discussion leader:** _____
- **Book Review:** Shaughnessy, *Errors and Expectations* by _____

Week 9: Writing Assessment As Research

Reading:

- Huot Chapters 4, 6, and 7
- Selection from *Coming to Terms: A Theory of Writing Assessment* by Patricia Lynne—located <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>.

Assignments: Post and respond to **this week's** response paper in moodle: <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>

Activities: Discussion of texts. Book review presentation.

- **Response paper/discussion leader:** _____
- **Book Review:** Faigley et al., *Assessing Writers' Knowledge and Processes of Composing* by _____

Week 10: Assessing Writing/WAC programs

Reading:

- "A Process for Establishing Out-comes Based Assessment Plans for Writing and Speaking in the Disciplines" by Michael Carter—located at <http://wac.colostate.edu/llad/v6n1/carter.pdf>.
- Draft of Chris' Paper.

Assignments: Post and respond to **this week's** response paper in moodle: <http://moodle.id.ucsb.edu>.

Also, turn in your final version of your paper/presentation proposal for Chris' review.

Activities: Discussion of texts. Book review presentation. Work on presentations. Course Evaluations.

- **Response paper/discussion leader:** _____
- **Book Review:** Witte and Faigley, *Evaluating Writing Programs* by _____

Week 11: Finals Week and Presentations!

Mini-conference to present research results to classmates stakeholders in SH 1432, the Writing Program Conference Room. From 1-3:50 on day to TBA.

Have a great Spring Break.