

ENG 315: Teaching Writing in the Elementary and Middle School

<http://eng315fall2014.wikispaces.com>

Fall 2014
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"If we ourselves are immersed in an ongoing way in our own writing, we have a fabulous resource to draw from when we teach."

Lucy Calkins, *The Art of Teaching Writing*

ENG 315 is designed for you to grow as a writer and as a teacher of writing.

We all write.

Yet, not all of us consider ourselves to be "writers." For many of us, we have fond memories of writing in the early years of elementary school, yet by high school and college few of us would claim to enjoy writing.

How can we help our students write about topics that they care for, in genres that they appreciate, while still meeting state and national standards? These are the types of questions

we will explore in ENG 315 as you explore what it means to be a writer and a teacher of writing.

Through a variety of course readings that will be assigned each week – as well as numerous writing activities and your midtier field placement – *as a teacher of writing* you will have opportunity to explore key concepts related to writing and teaching in a writing workshop such as student choice, structured management, genre

study, and publication.

Equally important, you will explore your own ideas *as a writer*. We will work through the writing process and discover new ways to revise our writing. You will have opportunities to give and receive feedback from your classmates and teacher. And, we will incorporate digital writing into our repertoire as well.

And, through this process, my sincere hope is that you re-discover a passion for writing.

Course Objectives:

1. Become familiar with a variety of writing process pedagogies and theories.
2. Learn "best practice" methodologies for writing in the language arts curriculum and across other subject matter.
3. Write and respond in a classroom setting, both our own and in a midtier placement.

Personal Writing Projects

1. Writer's Profile (Sept 15)

Based on your experiences as a writer, you will create a writer's profile that shares your interests and goals.

2. Personal Narrative/Memoir (Sept 29)

In this assignment, you will develop a short story based on a personal experience that includes elements of plot, character, and conflict.

3. "This I Believe" Essay/Podcast (Oct 27)

Also based on a personal experience, you will craft an argumentative essay and record it as a podcast.

4. Digital Story (Dec 1)

As a final writing project, your digital story will allow you to combine your voice, images, music, and other elements in a short video.

Each of these assignments will also include a brief reflection in which you analyze the genre, audience, and purpose for your writing, connecting it to the Common Core standards.

Choice. Inquiry. Reflection.

These ideas will guide your writing.

Multigenre Research Project

As a future teacher of writing, this assignment invites you to delve deeper into a topic of personal interest and explore that topic in a manner that will be professionally useful beyond ENG 315.

This will begin with the process of a traditional research paper, integrating sources and your own experiences, but will be written in different genres (e.g., magazine-style interview, informational website, annotated lessons, etc.).

It will be created as a classroom website and will include:

- An interview with a teacher written as a professional article/profile (apx 750-1000 words)
- A letter to parents sharing your beliefs about teaching writing (apx 250-500 words)



- A letter to students describing your writing workshop.
- An additional classroom visual or teaching tool (such as a poster, interactive, or handout) that you create.
- Two additional pieces of your choice that speak to different audiences including fellow teachers, students, or parents. This could include book reviews, assignment sheets, or other classroom-based genres. **Due Date: December 8**

Midtier Field Experience

We have a unique opportunity to work with Riley Elementary in St. Johns this fall, so all midtier placements will happen there, as will some of our class meetings.

Riley Elementary School
5935 W. Pratt Rd.
Dewitt, MI 48820
(989) 227-5100

You will be expected to be at Riley for at least 2 hours of writing instruction each week.

Key Dates:

- First Week of Midtier: September 15
- Final Week of Midtier: December 1
- Make-Up Week: December 8

After you are in your midtier placement each week, you will

compose a brief entry in Google Drive (apx 100 words) about the teaching practices you see during workshop time as well as describing your interactions with a focus student.

At three points in the semester, you will write a set of field notes about your experience shared via Google Drive. Your writing should discuss and analyze the environment, lessons, and student work, demonstrating depth and complexity, integrating materials from class and course readings.

You are allowed *no absences in your midtier*. If you miss a day in your midtier, due to school cancellations or personal reasons, you must make it up so your total for the semester are between 20-24 hours.



Professional Development Experience

Teachers are expected to design personalized professional development plans. This response will consist of three parts: a draft of your professional development plan and a final presentation/book review presented in a webinar.

For part of your PD, you should attend a professional conference, workshop, or online event. The purpose of this assignment is for you to, quite literally, enter the professional conversation about what it means to be a teacher of writing. If financial considerations prevent you from attending any of the following events, you may complete an appropriate alternative assignment by responding to articles from a professional journal or viewing webinars or online videos.

Requirements:

- Six hours of outside professional development
- Read and review one professional book
- Create a brief presentation to be shared online

Presentation due on November 24

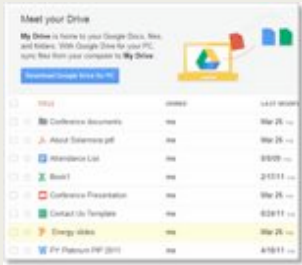
Teaching a Mini-lesson and Assessment of Student Writing

With the support of your midtier teacher, you will design and teach one mini-lesson on an appropriate topic. A mini-lesson template will be provided later in the semester and you should aim to teach this mini-lesson sometime between mid-October and mid-November.

In addition, you will collect the students' writing from the mini-lesson and assess the quality of their work (and, of course, the quality of your teaching). This could include collecting their writing notebooks, or it could be a separate assignment.

Integrating Digital Writing

Google Drive
drive.google.com



As a teacher of writing, you will use a variety of technology tools to collaborate with colleagues and enhance writing instruction. While I understand that technology can be frustrating at times, my experience as a teacher has been that the benefits of using technology can far out-weigh the costs, especially as we consider what it means to be a writer today.

Two of the web-based services that we will explore and use this

semester will include Google Drive and Wikispaces. Please make accounts with these services before we begin using them in class.

Moreover, all of your final work from ENG 315 will be collected in your Mahara portfolio, so creating your work with these digital tools will allow you to make a smooth transition at the end of the semester.



Attendance

Because we only meet once a week, you are allowed *one absence from class* without penalty to your grade. Additional absences will result in an automatic 40 point reduction from your final score. If you have extenuating circumstances that may lead to multiple absences, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss options.

Background Check

Procedures require that you need to have an ICHAT form on file for the ENG 315 midtier experience. Procedures for acquiring an ICHAT will be discussed in class.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

CMU provides students with disabilities reasonable accommodation to participate in educational programs, activities or services. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in class activities or meet course requirements should first register with the office of Student Disability Services (250 Foust Hall, 774-3018, TDD #2568), and then contact me as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity

I would expect that because you are planning to be teachers, you already value academic honesty and respect for others in the classroom. Violation of the University policies will result in a failing grade for the assignment and/or course and could seriously jeopardize your student teaching plans. **All forms of plagiarism are in violation of these policies and are unacceptable in this class.**

Writing Center

Because writing is such an important part of a college education, CMU provides free writing center support to all CMU writers, at any stage of the process, from brainstorming to final editing, and for any class. I encourage, but will not require, you to utilize the writing center. You will find their services valuable both as writers and future teachers of writing. For questions about this service, email: writcent@cmich.edu or call 989.774.2986

Overview of Course Meetings (Mondays, 2:00 – 5:00 PM @ CMU Lansing Center)

Please complete all readings before the scheduled course section. You will need to have access to the readings during class, whether on your laptop, tablet, or as a printed copy. Additional readings – based on current events in education, recent blog posts from teachers, and our own inquiry – will be assigned throughout the semester.

August 18 – Beginning Our Writing Workshop

- Katie Wood Ray: [Understanding the Essential Characteristics of the Writing Workshop](#)
- Katie Van Sluys: [Becoming Writers in the Elementary Classroom](#)

August 25 – Reading as Writers, Writing for Readers

- Katie Wood Ray – [Reading Like Writers](#)
- Donald Graves – [Children Want to Write](#)

September 1 – Labor Day, No Class Meeting

- Creating your own professional learning network and reading list

September 8 – Deepening Our Understanding of the Writing Standards

- Lucy Calkins et al – [Pathways to the Common Core](#)
- Gretchen Owacki – [Common Core Writing Book](#)

Meet at Riley Elementary

September 15 – Launching the Writing Workshop

- Ralph Fletcher and JoAnn Portalupi – [Launching the Writing Workshop](#)
- Ruth Ayres and Stacey Shubitz – [Day-by-Day](#), Chapter 1, pp. 8-35

Middtier Placement Begins

September 22 – Understanding Our Students as Writers

- Vicki Spandel – [The Right to Write Badly](#)
- Jeff Anderson – [What Every Writer Needs to Know](#), Prologue and Overview

September 29 – Considering Genre, Audience, and Purpose

- Nell Duke et al – [Reading and Writing Genre with Purpose](#)
- Kimberly Hill Campbell and Kristi Latimer – [Beyond the Five-Paragraph Essay](#)

October 6 – Conferring with Student Writers

- Calkins – [One to One – Efficient Recordkeeping](#)
- Holly Slaughter – [Small Group Writing Conferences](#)

Meet at Riley Elementary

October 13 – Designing and Teaching Mini-lessons

- Fletcher and Portalupi – [Fiction Craft Lessons](#)
- Fletcher and Portalupi – [Non-Fiction Craft Lessons](#)

October 20 – Integrating Effective Grammar Instruction

- Jeff Anderson – [Mechanically Inclined](#), Intro and Chapter 1
- Don and Jenny Killgallon – [Sentence Composing](#)

October 27 – Visual Literacy

- Steve Moline – [I See What You Mean, Second Edition](#), Chapters 1 and 2
- Katie Wood Ray – [Why Illustration Study Matters to the Development of Young Writers](#)

November 3 – Creating Rich Writing Opportunities

Meet at Riley Elementary

- Traci Gardner - [Defining New Tasks for Standard Writing Activities](#)
- Bernabei and Hall – [Inner Streams/Gritty Life](#)

November 10 – Providing Opportunities for Diverse Writers

- Wheeler and Swords – [Code Switching Lessons](#)
- Catherine Compton-Lilly – [Confronting Racism, Poverty, and Power](#)

November 17 – Assessing and Celebrating Writers

- Carl Anderson – [Assessing Writers](#)
- Ruth Ayres and Christi Overman – [Celebrating Writers: From Possibilities Through Publication](#), Chs 1 & 2

November 24 – Professional Development/Book Review Presentations

No Midtier Required

- Online course session
- Readings to be announced

December 1 – Becoming and Being a Teacher of Writing

Final Midtier Visits

- Kirby and Crovitz – [Being a Teacher of Writing](#)
- NCTE [Beliefs About the Teaching of Writing](#)

December 8 – Presenting Your Multigenre Research Project

Meet at Riley Elementary

- No Readings
- Make up Midtier Hours if necessary

Course Evaluation

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|---|--------------|
| • Personal Writing Portfolio | 200 Points |
| ○ Writer's Profile | (25 Points) |
| ○ Personal Narrative | (25 Points) |
| ○ "This I Believe" Podcast | (50 Points) |
| ○ Digital Story | (100 Points) |
| • Midtier Field Notes and Reflections | 300 Points |
| • Multigenre Research Project | 300 Points |
| • Professional Development Presentation | 100 Points |
| • In-Class and Online Participation | 100 Points |

The scale for your final course grade is as follows:

Final Point Total	Final Letter Grade
960 – 1000	A
920 – 959	A-
880 – 919	B+
840 – 879	B
800 – 839	B-
799 or less	C or below

