

**ENGL 3400: Pedagogy and Writing**  
**MW, 5:30-6:45; TLC 1204**  
**Dr. Angela Insenga**

**CONTACT**

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**THE CLASS**

**Course Description:**

**Pedagogy** [*ped-uh-goh-jee, -goj-ee*]-*noun, plural -gies*. 1. The function or work of a teacher; teaching. 2. The art or science of teaching; education; instructional methods.

Most English Education majors spend the lion's share of their college years engaged in close reading, interpreting, and producing various types of writing. There comes a time, however, when English teachers-in-training turn their attention towards the work of learning instructional strategies. When students raise their hands in classes to ask *what, how, and even why* we teach, they signal their readiness to make this large academic shift.

This pedagogy-centered course begins to address how to take our content knowledge and transfer it into lessons applicable in the secondary classroom environment. In particular, we will focus on ways to teach close reading and effective writing practice to adolescents at various learning levels.

Because we become better teachers when we continue to practice the skills of close reading and the craft of writing, we will first talk much about our own writing practices, namely those methods we can detect in the instruction we have received and their effect on our learning. We will write, rewrite, and write again in an effort to hone our own skills recursively. Then, we will turn our attention to current trends and instructional methods deployed in secondary English and Language Arts by reading and analyzing oft-taught primary texts and discussing assumptions that inform classroom practice.

To deepen their understanding of the myriad pedagogical possibilities in English Studies, students will also observe other teachers at work in first-year composition and/or sophomore literature classes and tutorials and will also demonstrate their own burgeoning teaching in class presentations.

**Course Objectives:**

- Students will gain understanding of theoretical foundations in the field of Rhetoric and Composition and its intimate relationship to teaching writing.

- Students will apply said theories in and to the classroom situation through writing, presentation, and discussion of ideas.
- Students will demonstrate understanding of both theory and practice of writing through reflective, informal, and formal writing situations.
- Students will attend classes and writing center consultations, observe English teachers in action, and reflect in writing on the pedagogical practices they witness.
- Students will research, theorize, and articulate a current pedagogical position for themselves toward the end of the semester.

## THE WORK

### Required Texts:

- *Teaching Writing in Middle and Secondary Schools*, by Jim Blasingame and John H. Bushman
- *Hatchet*, by Gary Paulsen
- *Night*, by Elie Wiesel
- *Winter's Bone*, by Daniel Woodrell
- *The Conceptual Framework*, from UWG's Professional Education Unit and the College of Education (nothing to buy, linked on the class resource page)
- *The Code of Ethics for Educators* (nothing to buy, linked on the class resource page)

### Major Assignments:

- 2, 3-4 page essays—10 and 15%
- Localized Observation Events and resulting observation narratives—15%
- 2 short teaching presentations, 1 group and 1 solo—20%
- Pedagogy Project—35%
- Participation—5%

### An Overview of our Spring Semester Together:

Students will spend the first few weeks of the semester discussing elements of fiction and our first two texts: *Hatchet*, by Paulsen, and *Teaching Writing in Middle and Secondary Schools*, by Bushman and Blasingame. They will utilize readings, class discussion, and their existent reading skills to practice collegiate-level analysis of *Hatchet* in the first assigned essay. Such activities will require students to hone and demonstrate to each other and to professor their content knowledge along with cultural sensitivity, decision making, collaborative, and leadership skills.

During the second portion of the semester, students will build upon these skills as they discuss Wiesel's novel *Night*, again in conjunction with Blasingame and Bushman's secondary text. Students will begin demonstrating their growing knowledge of teaching English in the secondary environment utilizing the English and Language Arts standards. The second paper assignment will be student-crafted, though a basic goal will include ways to teach Wiesel's novel.

The final portion of the semester's Pedagogy and Writing class will center on Woodrell's novel, *Winter's Bone*. Students will not only discuss and interpret the text but will also generate specific English and Language Arts activities and bring them to

specific class periods during our study of this third text. All such practice tasks, referred to as “Anatomy of a Lesson Plan” assignments, will prepare students for successful completion of the class’s culminating Pedagogy Project. Students will also take turns presenting one of their Anatomy of a Lesson Plan assignments during this portion of our semester together. Again, this third portion of the course prepares students for their own Pedagogy Project on a text appropriate for the secondary environment.

Over the duration of the semester, students will also participate in approximately three hours of English department Observation Events, outlined below.

### **Description of Major Assignments:**

#### *Essays:*

Students will complete two short essays, one early in the semester that analyzes Paulsen’s novel and the next written about Wiesel’s. These essays require that we practice our own writing processes, deploy various strategies from our own skills arsenals, and even discuss how we might distill and install our writing practices in a secondary classroom. Each essay will have its own assignment sheet. Each essay requires that students bring to class a complete draft for Peer Review. Not having a complete draft for scheduled Peer Review sessions or failing to attend them will result in a five point grade deduction for the particular essay assignment.

#### *Localized Observation Events and observation narratives:*

This semester, ENGL 3400 students will participate in approximately **three** hours of on-campus, English department observation, just over **two** hours in writing classrooms in the department and **one** hour in the University Writing Center (UWC). During the second or third week of classes, I will have a sign-up sheet that lists English professors, class numbers, days, and times. Each student will sign up for two periods of classroom observation with two different teachers. Each student will also need to go by the UWC (TLC 1201) during the last week of January to sign up for one hour of observation. All students must sign up for the UWC observation by the first week of February. UWC observation begins in mid-February to ensure that all of you have a chance to see our wonderful tutors in action during consultations.

Students should schedule all Observation Events carefully, since they **may not** reschedule them except under the direst circumstance.

After each in-class observation of professional teachers in action and after the one hour of observation in the UWC, students will write 300-word Observation Reflection Pieces about each class and the hour of UWC observation, for a total of three Reflection Pieces (900 words) in all. In each of the three Observation Reflection Pieces, students should strive to talk about particular teaching practices they observed and must work not to summarize classroom occurrences. These Reflection Pieces are not about discussing *what* is seen (summary) but about discussing *how* the teacher presents what is seen (teaching strategies and their effect). That is, instead of writing “Dr. Harrison gave a reading quiz, gave back essays, and discussed how to write introductions,” a student might write about the sorts of questions she asked her students on the quiz or how she engaged her pupils during discussion and instruction—lecture, Socratic dialogue, small groups, etc. Then, the writer might discuss how the students

responded to the method. Students could even choose to focus on one or two aspects of each class and/or consultation witnessed, detailing and then reflecting upon how they envision using (or not using) the method(s) and offering up reasons why (or why not).

The three Observation Event Reflection Pieces are due on the last day of class, but I welcome any opportunity to look at drafts of them during office hours so that I can provide feedback to make sure students are on the right track.

#### *Presentations:*

Students will present twice during the semester. During the first presentation, students will work with two other classmates to formulate a twelve to fifteen-minute, standards-based mini-lesson that teaches an assigned grammar convention rule to an assigned grade level and type of learner.

In the second presentation, all of which will occur during our class's "Anatomy of a Lesson Plan" sessions involving *Winter's Bone*, each student will take no more than fifteen minutes to present one of his/her "Anatomy of a Lesson Plan" exercises to the class. Students will sign up for this second presentation in mid-March and we will have three per class period; see the daily syllabus below for details related to dates and topics.

Both presentations are graded based on the following qualities: content correctness and conveyance for a given audience, evidence of collaboration and preparedness, and clarity of purpose through pedagogy.

#### *Anatomy of a Lesson Plan Practice Assignments and Pedagogy Project*

Towards the end of the semester, students will model a multitude of strategies that they could use to teach Woodrell's *Winter's Bone*. For each Anatomy of a Lesson Plan exercise assigned on the daily syllabus below, students will create small secondary-level plans and assignments. Students will bring each Anatomy of a Lesson Plan assignment to class for collaboration and discussion, and I will collect each for a daily grade. These exercises and the discussions about your planning prepare you for the large Pedagogy Project, discussed in the paragraph below.

For the Pedagogy Project, each student will first choose an age-appropriate text or group of shorter texts—one(s) not taught in our class—and will create a sequence of **three** detailed, daily Lesson Plans that include at least one appropriate writing assignment. To go along with these three Lesson Plans, students will write a 3-4 page prefatory essay that provides an overview and justifies their detailed Lessons Plans by explaining the pedagogical philosophies behind them. Students will want to refer to English and Language Arts standards in their Lesson Plans, and should strive to begin articulating their own pedagogical positions about the teaching of writing in this portion of the project. MLA documentation and Works Cited pages are required, and students may use and/or adapt Lesson Plan templates listed on the class resource page. ELA standards are also found at a link on the class resource page. *Students may not adopt anyone else's Lesson Plans as their own but must evidence an ability to craft and justify Lesson Plans.*

## **THE POLICIES**

### **Attendance and Disruptive Student Policies:**

Our class meets twice per week. Students who miss more than four class periods—two weeks of class—*cannot* pass the course. Please also be aware that no distinction exists between excused and unexcused absences. Finally, avoid repeated tardiness, as it disrupts professor's and peers' work.

Students will be dismissed from any class meeting in which they exhibit behavior that disrupts the learning environment of others. Such behavior includes—but is not limited to—repeatedly arriving late for class, allowing cell phones to ring, speaking disrespectfully to the instructor and/or to other students, checking email or surfing the web, and using personal audio or video devices. Each dismissal of this kind will count as an absence and will be applied toward the attendance policy above.

### **Plagiarism, Collusion, and Academic Dishonesty Policy:**

From the English Department's website: "The Department of English and Philosophy defines plagiarism as taking personal credit for the words and ideas of others as they are presented in electronic, print, and verbal sources." The Department expects that students will accurately credit sources in all assignments. An equally dishonest practice is fabricating sources or facts; it is another form of misrepresenting the truth. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the assignment and/or course. You can also be subject to a university disciplinary review, and the university requires professors to report plagiarism in writing to the appropriate university office. Other university policies for handling cheaters are found here: [\*The Faculty Handbook\*](#) and [\*UWG Connection and Student Handbook\*](#).

Please note: "excessive collaboration" includes having family members, friends, or significant others edit your work. This means that no one should "fix" your grammar for you or "write in" sentences/ sources/ documentation for you. This sort of behavior is cheating and will be treated as such. We will collaborate in class, and you have the University Writing Center as well as my input should you need extra advice about your writing. All assignments are included here in the syllabus, and you have ample time to complete work and/or get feedback, should you choose. Should you hire a personal tutor or use an athletic tutor, realize that excessive collaboration with that person can also result in plagiarism charges. In short: do your own work. Should you cheat in this class, and should I have evidence of that cheating, you will be assigned an "F" for the course, and I will recommend that you be sent before a disciplinary committee. My policy is a zero tolerance one.

### **Required Format:**

Each major assignment must be word-processed. When formatting and citing, use MLA documentation. If you need a refresher on MLA format, see the MLA Documentation link on the class resource page and/or come see me for help. All major assignments must be delivered in hard copy.

### **Grading Scale:**

The ENGL department designed and uses a rubric for all ENGL courses 2000-level and above. I will use it to assess student work, and it is linked to the class resource page. Students should familiarize themselves with the rubric and should feel free to discuss it and ask questions for clarification during class or during office hours. As per university policy, I cannot discuss grades online or over the phone. Students should, however, feel free to discuss grades with me in person during office hours or an arranged appointment.

**My Website/Paperless Policy:**

Many professors use Course Den or ConnectComp for getting information to students. However, I use only my website ([www.westga.edu/~ainsenga](http://www.westga.edu/~ainsenga)). All information for this course—this document, assignment sheets, handouts, annotation templates, announcements, and primary and/or secondary resources—are hyperlinked on the website. Students should check the site regularly for updates, especially on days when new assignments sheets are uploaded.

*Students will be responsible for printing out all documents from the website and/or Docutek to bring to class on the days designated on the daily syllabus below.*

**“My UWG” and Professionalism Policy:**

As of fall 2006, all e-mail correspondence between professors and students must occur via university e-mail. Please send all communication to me via a “My UWG” account.

Further, all students should assume a professional disposition when e-mailing or communicating about or in class and/or when speaking to cooperating teachers, Observers, guest speakers, and/or professor about Observation Events, scheduling, and any aspect related to English Education. While observing in our department’s classroom or in the UWC, making certain not to disrupt the learning and working environments of others is an absolute requirement. Your job in these observations, much as it will be in up to half of your public school observations in the future, is to observe, not to participate or cause disruption of any kind.

Finally, students should check university e-mail daily to avoid missing important class or programmatic messages. Checking university e-mail regularly also prevents mailboxes from filling up. If university mailboxes fill up, messages do not get queued; rather, they do not get delivered at all. Therefore, students risk not receiving important information if they do not check e-mail in a timely fashion. E-mailing is an essential part of effective and professional communication for this class, for the English Education program, for the university at large, and for the teaching profession.

Students may refer to the *Code of Ethics for Educators* pamphlet or *The Conceptual Framework* for more information related to developing and maintaining a professional disposition. Both of these documents are linked on the class resource page.

**Late Work Policy\*:**

Because students have ample time to complete assignments and all assignments and due dates are provided on the first day of class, I deduct a letter grade per weekday for any late work. This means, for example, that if a major assignment is due on a Wednesday and not turned in until Friday two letter grades will be deducted from the final grade. Please do not place drafts/work outside of or under my office door unless an arrangement has been made. *I will not accept the work.*

### **Make-Up Work Policy\*:**

Students may not make up missed class work. Group work will be turned in by those who participate in class, and there is no way to make up such work. Students may not make up missed presentations. If any student feels that s/he has an extenuating circumstance, s/he must see me to discuss the problem.

\*NOTE: I fully realize that, occasionally, "life happens" and that some problems beyond control crop up. Students should never hesitate to discuss problems with me if they feel that their circumstance is dire. With honest and swift communication, most issues can be resolved to student advantage.

### **Students with Special Needs/Disability Pledge:**

I pledge to do my best to work with the University to provide all students with equal access to my classes and materials, regardless of special needs, temporary or permanent disability, special needs related to pregnancy, etc. If students have any special learning needs, particularly (but not limited to) needs defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and require specific accommodations, they should not hesitate to make these known to me, either themselves or through Disability Services in 272 Parker Hall at (770) 839-6428.

Students with documented special needs may expect accommodation in relation to classroom accessibility, modification of testing, special test administration, etc. This is not only my personal commitment: it is a right, and it is the law. For more information, please contact Disability Services at the State University of West Georgia.

Any student who has a special need should inform me during the first week of class. We will then set up a conference to discuss the specifics of the official paperwork from Disability Services.

### **Administrivia:**

- The absolute best way for students to contact me outside of office hours is via their university e-mail account. Of course, they may call or come by during office hours or set up appointments with me outside of office hours.
- Please turn off all electronic devices upon entering our classroom. Such noise distracts fellow classmates and me and prevents us from doing our jobs. See the disruptive policy above for further clarification.
- I reserve the right to amend this document with future handouts or reschedule office hours if necessary.
- Coming to class unprepared will result in an automatic absence. Students must have materials in order to participate fully. Of course, students will be free to

stay in class for the benefit of instruction and discussion, but they are, for all intents and purposes, not here when without materials.

## **THE SYLLABUS**

### **January 9**

Course Introduction

Why Peddle Pedagogy?

*For next class:*

-Read the following on the class resource page: *The Conceptual Framework and The Code of Ethics for Educators*

-Read *Hatchet*, pgs. TBA

### **January 11**

Discuss *The Conceptual Framework and The Code of Ethics for Educators*

Discuss *Hatchet*

*For next class:*

-Finish *Hatchet*

-Read the following on the class resource page: "K-12 Teaching Guide for *Hatchet*" and "Learning about Gary Paulsen" from Vandergriff's Young Adult literature page

### **January 16: no class or office house—Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday**

### **January 18**

Discuss *Hatchet*

Essay One assigned, discussed

*For next class:*

-Begin brainstorming and planning for Essay One

-Read the following on the class resource page: "The Glencoe Literature Library's Study Guide for *Hatchet*"

### **January 23**

Discuss *Hatchet*, class resource page links, and Essay One

*For next class:*

-Read Bushman and Blasingame, chapter one

-Read the following on the class resource page: "Models," "Bloom's Taxonomy," "Gardner: Multiple Intelligences," "Gardner Graphic: Ways of Knowing," and "William Perry's Scheme of Intellectual and Ethical Development"

-Plan and draft Essay One

### **January 25**

Discuss Bushman and Blasingame, *Hatchet*, and Essay One

*For next class:*

-Read Bushman and Blasingame, chapter 2

-Continue to plan and draft Essay One

### **January 30**

Finish discussion of *Hatchet* and Essay One

*For next class:*

-Bring a complete draft of Essay One to class for Peer Review

### **February 1**

In-class Peer Review for Essay One

Groups and grammar convention rules for presentation one assigned

*For next class:*

-Finish Essay One

-Read "Grammar for High School: A Sentence Composing Approach—A Student Worktext," and "The Systematic Teaching of Grammar: A Critique," both linked on the class resource page

### **February 6**

Turn in Essay One

Discuss class resource page links, extant grammar pedagogies in the secondary environment

*For next class:*

-Read "Good Grief, It's Grammar Time!" linked on the class resource page

-Read Bushman and Blasingame, pages 145-160

-Plan for your group's presentation

### **February 8**

Discuss class resource page links, extant grammar pedagogies in the secondary environment

*For next class:*

-Plan for your group's presentation

-Read Bushman and Blasingame, chapter 3

### **February 13**

Group teaching presentations on grammar convention

*For next class:*

-Read *Night*, pgs. 3-28

-Read Bushman and Blasingame, chapter 4

### **February 15**

Discuss *Night* and Bushman and Blasingame

*For next class:*

-Read *Night*, pgs. 29-65

-Read the following links on the class resource page: "Facing History and Ourselves: *Night* Study Guide and Various Resources for Teachers and Readers," and "Teaching Elie Wiesel's *Night*: Workbook Questions and Critical Reflection Exercises"

### **February 20**

Discuss *Night* and class resource page links

*For next class:*

-Read *Night*, pgs. 66-97

-Read the following on the class resource page: "Oprah's Book Club Collection: Your Guide to *Night*," and "Oprah's Book Club Collection: Teacher's Guide for *Night*"

**February 22**

Discuss *Night* and class resource page links

For next class:

- Read Bushman and Blasingame, chapter 5
- Brainstorm and write down at least two ideas for Essay Two's assignment sheet

**February 27**

Discuss your ideas for Essay Two, writing assignments

For next class:

Finish *Night*

**February 29**

Finalize our Essay Two assignment

Discuss *Night*

For next class:

- Read *Winter's Bone*, pgs. 3-57
- Read the following on the class resource page: "Words on *Winter's Bone*," from Focus on the Family's *Plugged In*
- Begin Essay Two

**March 2: Mid-Term—last day to drop with a "W"****March 5**

Discuss *Winter's Bone* and class resource page link

For next class:

- Read *Winter's Bone*, pgs. 58-91
- Read the following on the class resource page: "Reading Group Guides: The Online Community for Reading Groups: *Winter's Bone*"
- Continue to work on Essay Two

**March 7**

Discuss *Winter's Bone* and class resource page link

For next class:

- Read *Winter's Bone*, pgs. 92-150
- Bring a complete draft of Essay Two to class for Peer Review

**March 12**

In-class Peer Review for Essay Two

Sign up for presentation two

For next class:

- Finish *Winter's Bone*
- Read the Reading Group Guide at the end of the novel
- Read the following on the class resource page: "Movies and Mental Health: Violence and Despair in *Winter's Bone*" and from NPR's *All Things Considered*, "On Location: The Frozen Ozarks of *Winter's Bone*"

**March 14**

Discuss *Winter's Bone* and class resource page links

Sign up for presentation two and discuss upcoming class periods

*For March 26:*

- Complete and bring to class a standards based, introductory activity that aids students in beginning study of *Winter's Bone*
- Finish Essay Two

**March 19 and March 21: no class or office hours—Spring Break**

**March 26**

Turn in Essay Two

Three presentations on introductory activities for *Winter's Bone*

Discussion of ways to begin study of any text

*For next class:*

- Complete and bring to class a standards based language building exercise for *Winter's Bone*
- Read Bushman and Blasingame, chapters 6 and 7 (these final chapters will not only aid you as you work on the Anatomy of a Lesson Plan assignments but also as you prepare for your larger Pedagogy Project. Use them as you work towards completion of this course!)

**March 28**

Three presentations on language building using *Winter's Bone*

Discuss language building in the secondary environment using *Winter's Bone*

*For next class:*

- Complete and bring to class a standards based, close reading activity related to *Winter's Bone*

**April 2**

Three presentations on teaching close reading using *Winter's Bone*

Discuss close reading

*For next class:*

- Complete and bring to class a standards based, collaborative exercise for *Winter's Bone*

**April 4**

Three presentations on collaborative exercises that aid in teaching *Winter's Bone*

Discuss productive collaboration

*For next class:*

- Complete and bring to class a standards-based, writing assignment for use while teaching *Winter's Bone*

**April 9**

Three presentations on writing assignments related to *Winter's Bone*

Discuss elements of writing assignments, backward design

*For next class:*

- Work on a draft of your Pedagogy Project

**April 11**

Pedagogy Project discussion

*For next class:*

-Bring a complete draft of your Pedagogy Project to class

**April 16**

In-Class Peer Review for Pedagogy Project

*For next class:*

-Continue to revise and work on your Pedagogy Project

-Finish your Observation Event reflection pieces

**April 18—last day of MW classes**

Turn in Observation Event reflection pieces

Course Evaluations

Class Wrap-Up

*For April 23:*

Pedagogy Projects due by 7:30 p.m. at my office