

Fall 2008 LEAD
Critical Thinking and Writing 1&2:
Examining Myths of Education: Selfhood, Success and Purpose

Instructors: Eileen Razzari Elrod, Susan Frisbie, Jill Goodman-Gould, Sharon Merritt

Required Texts:

Reading the Lives of Others, eds. Bartholomae & Petrosky.

The St. Martins Handbook, Lunsford

Course Packet (available at CopyCraft)

Attendance at performances of *Yellowjackets* (Berkeley Rep), *Radio Golf* (Theatreworks), the *Hapa Project* exhibit at the De Saisset, and the Kip Fullbeck lecture.

Theme: You recognize the importance of a college education (so here you are!), but have you examined your beliefs about your own schooling and learning? By virtue of your years of experience, you are an expert on the subject of education, and you are now at an important transition point. In LEAD CTW 1&2, we will ask you to become more informed about the experiences you have had and the educational systems you inhabit. We will ask you to expand your critical thinking about your own identity and American education through reading, reflection, discussion, and writing, and to become self-conscious (in the best sense of the word) students as you begin your university education here at Santa Clara.

CTW 1&2 Course Learning Goals

•**Critical Thinking:** The ability to identify, reflect upon, evaluate, integrate, and apply different types of information and knowledge to form independent judgments. You will experience writing and other critical thinking processes as a way to learn.

•**Complexity:** An approach to understanding the world that appreciates ambiguity and nuance as well as clarity and precision. You will become a critical thinker and writer increasingly aware of historical, cultural, and social contexts, and increasingly sensitive to the significance of cultural difference.

•**Communication:** Interacting effectively with different audiences, especially through writing, speech, and second language. You will learn to contextualize your own ideas and the ideas of others through rhetorical analysis, logical reasoning, and information literacy. (adapted from *SCU Core Curriculum*)

CTW 1 Outcomes and Objectives

At the end of the course we will expect you to be able to

•Read and write with a critical point of view that displays depth of thought and is mindful of the rhetorical situation.

•Write essays that contain well-supported, arguable theses and that demonstrate personal engagement and clear purpose.

•Reflect on and/or analyze the rhetorical differences, both constraints and possibilities, of different modes of presentation.

•Reflect on the writing process as a mode of thinking and learning that can be generalized across a range of writing and thinking tasks.

Achieving Class Goals:

Most of our class time will be spent working toward those objectives by talking—about the readings, about our own and others' writing, and about the audiences and situations that shape our writing—and by actually writing, revising, commenting on, and editing our own and others' works. We will ask you to

draw on and develop further the skills specified in the learning objectives as you think about and write a range of responses: informal and formal critical reading log entries, summaries, discussion questions, a class presentation dependent on some library research, and three more distinct essays in response to assigned readings. Each of the essays will be analytical, requiring careful reading, thinking and writing, and each will be revised multiple times. Finally, you will present your work in a course portfolio project at the end of the term.

Reading Assignments:

Careful reading is crucial to your work in this class. In order to be prepared for class discussion you will need to read each selection a number of times. The readings become more challenging as the term progresses, and we expect the assigned readings will give you much to think about as you shape and reshape your responses, and as you think about your position as a writer and student who has encountered various myths of education. You will have time in the course to build, modify, and rethink your writing about these texts in light of other readers' responses, and as you gain a richer sense of context from the other assigned readings, your other coursework, and outside (of the classroom) activities during the fall term.

Critical Reading Logs

The introduction to *Reading the Lives of Others* (which you will read later today) encourages you to become "strong readers" of "strong texts" and to learn to read both "with and against the grain." We ask you to work toward that by keeping a Critical Reading Log, in which you will regularly respond in a variety of ways to the assigned readings.

Events:

In addition to the assigned readings, we will experience several other "texts," which will enrich our discussions of education, success and identity. We will see two plays by contemporary playwrights: *Yellowjackets* by Itamar Moses at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and *Radio Golf* by August Wilson at Theatreworks in Mountain View. And we will attend the *Hapa Project* exhibit and lecture by Kip Fullbeck.

Conferences:

Two or three times during the term we will meet individually to discuss drafts and revision. These are required meetings. Missing a conference with your instructor is like missing a class (and we are not likely to be able to reschedule your conference). In addition to mandatory conferences, we expect you to stop by our offices (during office hours and/or by appointment) and to seek assistance from your peer educator whenever you need help.

Attendance and Participation:

From what you have already read it should be clear that attendance is crucial to achieve the learning goals and objectives of the course. You must be here, every day, on time, prepared. We will make the content of the course together in discussion in this classroom. We cannot reproduce for you the discussions you miss when you do not attend class. Consequently you cannot pass this class without attending regularly. Absences will be reflected in your course grade. If you must miss a class, let us know in advance, if possible. You may not make up any in-class work you miss, but you will be responsible for all assignments made, and all material covered, in your absence.

ANGEL

You will find our course site at <http://angel.scu.edu>. Please enroll in our course site today. You will need to check the ANGEL site regularly (at least once between each class meeting) for assignments, on-line activities, and course updates and changes. You will also note that all class materials (syllabus, assignments, handouts) are stored here.

Essay Assignments and Portfolio Evaluation:

Over the course of our 11 weeks together you will write three separate essays, each one informed by the assigned readings and class discussions. Each essay will have three separate due dates: a draft workshop due date (when you will listen to and offer peer commentary on your work), an essay due date (when you will turn in the paper for instructor comments), and a revision due date (when you will rethink and rewrite the essay for a final grade). You will be required to revise (multiple times, if you wish) all the writing you do in this course. Here's how it works: you complete all writing assignments (including those multiple drafts) by the due dates listed on the syllabus. NOTE: a paper turned in late for *any one* of the due dates will receive a lowered final grade. We read them and provide you with comments designed to help you revise the work into a more effective piece of writing. All of our energy and attention—yours and ours—will be directed toward the revision process, a process most successful writers, and virtually all professional writers, take very seriously. We will assign grades throughout this work—first when you turn in the essay (a preliminary, unofficial, estimated grade to give you a sense of how you are doing in terms of course expectations and grading standards) and then when you revise the essay (the grade that will count as a part of your overall course grade). At the end of the term you will resubmit your work in a portfolio for another grade (and we'll talk about that assignment as we get close to the end of the term).

Grade Weights:

The three essay grades will be worth 20% each, to account for 60% of your grade. Portfolio, 15%; short assignments, CRLs, etc. 15%; and participation 10%.

Academic Integrity:

Consult www.scu.edu/academics/bulletins/undergraduate/Academic-Integrity.cfm. “The University is committed to academic excellence and integrity. Students are expected to do their own work and to cite any sources they use. A student who is guilty of a dishonest act in an examination, paper, or other work required for a course, or who assists others in such an act, may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a grade of “F” for the course.” We will discuss how to use and cite sources in class (and much more fully in CTW2 next quarter). If you have questions or concerns about how or when to cite sources speak to us before you hand in your paper.

Disability Accommodation:

To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must contact Disability Resources located in The Drahmman Center in Kenna (408) 554-4111; TTY (408) 554-5445. Students must provide documentation of a disability to Disability Resources prior to receiving accommodations.