

Citings

Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies Newsletter

December
1999

Volume 6
Issue 2

In this Issue

Aritculation	
Conference	2
Evaluation Form	2
From the Chair	2
Papers Etc.	2
City College	
Courses at DRWS	3
Spring Orientation	3
Promote DRWS	
Programs	4
Book Review	4

Published
by and for
DRWS

Faculty and Staff



SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

DRWS Spring Graduate Courses Announced

RWS 601: History of Rhetoric
Wednesday 3:30 - 6:10
Prof. Glen McClish

According to the Bulletin of the Graduate Division, which is a study in laconism, this course covers "selected major works on rhetoric from antiquity through nineteenth century," "how these works inform pedagogy and public life," and the "relationship of historical texts to contemporary rhetorical practices." Despite the rather stuffy description, this is fascinating, highly relevant, perpetually challenging material that never ceases to interest me.

I plan to put particular emphasis on classical rhetoric, which raises many, if not most, of the issues that have shaped the discipline.

Thanks to an impassioned plea from Cezar Ornatowski, we'll become expert in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. We'll also emphasize those Platonic dialogues on rhetoric so close to Ellen Quandahl's heart. Beyond the classical period, we'll sample from Medieval, Renaissance, Enlightenment, and nineteenth-century rhetoric. Whenever possible, we'll discuss the relationship between theory and practice.

As many of you know, the history of rhetoric has a reputation as a "dead white male" subject. Although it's true that everyone we'll read has long been gone, and most of them were European males (who no doubt enjoyed smoking pipes or cigars while

See "Spring Courses" on page 3

Darlene Rosa Leaving DRWS

Darlene Rosa will be leaving us after 15 years with the department. She remembers when she came to work at the Academic Skills Center as a student assistant, working toward her degree in Anthropology. At that time, the tenured faculty consisted of Don Basile, Carol Sweedler-Brown, Ann Johns and Mary Denman. By January 1985 Darlene had become a full-time employee and later that year, she became Administrative Coordinator. In 1985 the math component was added and two years later, the ILE Freshman Success Program. Soon after Don Basile died, the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies was established, with Carol Sweedler-Brown as Chair. Darlene became

Administrative Coordinator in 1985, always providing a sense of continuity and efficiency for students, staff and faculty.



Darlene will work half-time for the department until she retires officially in January of 2000. She will not be idle, however, since she'll be working half-time in the Department of American-Indian Studies. She plans to continue her singing and choir directing, and to complete her family genealogy, study orchestral conducting, become an ordinance worker at the San Diego Mormon

Temple, and complete some long-awaited improvements to her home and garden.

We all wish Darlene well in her new endeavors.

Papers Etc.

John Malenich's article, "Creating The Stereotype: The Colonial Origins of Savagery and Intemperance in Joyce's 'Counterparts,'" has been accepted for publication in the 2000 edition (volume 12) of *Notes on Modern Irish Literature*.

Jim Musgrave's novel *Sins of Darkness* (about the assassination of RFK in 1968) has been accepted for publication by Dead End Street Publications (<http://www.deadend-street.com>).

Jane Robinett will be reading her paper "The Long Shadow of Trauma" which deals with a Conrad short story, "Il Conde," at the MLA in Chicago on Monday, December 27th.

Evaluation Form Recognized

Due in part to the responsive and critical support of 46 DRWS lecturers and TAs who participated in the pilot test in Spring '97 semester, my article "Fostering Liberatory Teaching: A Proposal for Revising Instructional Assessment Practices" will appear in the 25th Anniversary issue of WPA: Writing Program Administration (Spring 2000). Thank you all for your assistance. The results are available concerning the reliability and validity of the instrument you helped test.

The article presents an alternative evaluation form, as well as a statistical analysis of the results of a pilot test run in six sections of Women's Studies courses at the University of Arizona and 73 sections of DRWS.

Chuck Hohm, Associate Dean of the Division of Undergraduate Studies, introduced my teaching evaluation instrument to other departments. As a result, faculty in the Department of Biology will be testing the instrument this semester, providing data for an interesting comparison of data evaluating teachers from entirely different disciplines.

Jane E. Hindman

Articulation Conference a Success

On Monday, November 8, high school teachers of English and math, counselors, and administrators from San Diego and Imperial counties gathered in Montezuma Hall for the EO665 Articulation III Conference. They came to update their knowledge of the English Placement Test (EPT) and the Elementary Math test (ELM) and to learn more about SDSU's English and math expectations for incoming freshmen. With them were thirty-four DRWS lecturers in math and English, who volunteered their time to participate with the high school teachers in exploring the common ground between high school and university practices in these two fields.

Doug Langdon, coordinator of Learning Resources and Educational Technology at the San Diego County Office of Education led the plenary session on the EPT and the ELM, SDSU's

two placement exams. Morning and afternoon break-out sessions for math and English gave high school teachers and DRWS lecturers time to discuss SDSU's remedial and freshmen math and writing classes. They shared information on class assignments, materials and expectations and exchanged ideas about how to help better prepare students to meet the demands of the ELM and EPT.

Evaluations from participants show that the conference did succeed in creating the kind of exchanges that both groups felt were very helpful to our common goal of preparing high school students for university classes. Pat Morgan and Jane Robinett, who organized the DRWS break-out sessions for the Articulation III Conference, want to express their thanks to all of the DRWS lecturers who participated.

From The Chair

I'd like to invite you to give careful thought to the future of the DRWS. In this era of increased planning and pressure for accountability, it's become more and more important for academic departments to articulate their goals, as well as their strategies for reaching them. We, too, need to decide who we want to become and communicate these desires to the University administration.

Departments shouldn't try to do everything. To succeed in this environment, academic units need to specialize, to do a few things very well. Although we don't want to limit intellectual diversity, I do believe it's wise to focus our efforts by developing several subspecialties within the greater field of rhetoric and writing studies in which we excel.

This focusing strategy frees us from the impossible burden of covering every facet of our discipline. Eventually, it provides a warrant to specialize, to forge stronger, more direct links

between teaching and research. Furthermore, this concentration of departmental energies will affect the way we request and recruit for new tenure-track positions. Rather than trying to hire an expert in every area, we'll identify and build on existing strengths.

It is my hope that our emerging departmental foci will provide impetus for our pending graduate program. Once we become known as the best place in Southern California (or, more grandly, the best place on the West Coast) to study several specialties (such as, say rhetoric and technology), our ability to attract the highest quality of graduate students for our MA will be greatly enhanced.

Thus, I'd like to encourage everyone to dream a little about our future. As you generate ideas about the potential shape of the Department, share them with members of the DRWS Council.

Glen McClish

Spring Courses

Continued from Page 1

buttressing the patriarchy), expect a surprise or two, particularly in the nineteenth century.

RWS 745: Research Methods in Rhetoric and Writing
Monday 3:30 - 6:15
Prof. Jane E. Hindman

Though this course will prepare you for the research and writing you'll need to do for your thesis, it could also serve as an introduction to the diversity and complexity of academic, scholarly work in general. Our texts and discussions will particularly emphasize the discipline of Rhetoric and Composition. However, Rhetoric is often considered the "meta-discipline" - that is, the discipline whose work it is to examine the construction and use of discourse in ANY discipline - we will certainly consider many and varied approaches to scholarly work.

Because the last three decades have demonstrated the enormous impact of feminist theory and methodologies on scholastic work in all disciplines, we will spend considerable time examining the interface of feminist inquiry with various scholarly approaches.

By semester's end you should be able to design studies of several different types. You will also be acquainted

with the journals publishing scholarly work in Composition and Rhetoric, as well as any other area of inquiry of interest to you. In addition, you will have studied the emergence and on-going maturation of a young discipline (rhetoric and composition); considered the ways that institutional knowledge is constructed, compiled and evaluated; and predicted the future roadblocks to and provocative contributions to the making of knowledge in your discipline.

RWS 609
Thursday 3:30 - 6:10
Prof. Richard Boyd

This course is designed as an introduction to the theory and methods of teaching writing. In addition to extensive readings in some of the most important approaches to this important pedagogical issue, the class will also involve much work with the practical, day-to-day components of teaching writing in a university setting.

This course is a requirement for those intending to become Teaching Associates in the DRWS writing program, but students with other professional goals (e.g. future high school teachers) will also benefit from the course

Spring Orientation Welcomes New TAs

A new group of Teaching Associates are currently being selected for appointments to DRWS for the Spring 2000 semester. These TAs will be welcomed to the department at our annual Spring Orientation, which will be held this year on Tues. and Wed., January 25 and 26. The orientation, coordinated by the TA Team, offers current DRWS faculty the opportunity to further their own professional development by sharing their research and teaching experience with a new group of fledgling

writing instructors.

This year's Orientation will include more emphasis on the common RWS100 assignments, and will introduce a set of "anchor papers," student papers representing the department's grading norms. If you have a suggestion for an orientation session or you are interested in participating in a session, please contact any member of the Team.

Melody Kilcrease

Editor to Visit DRWS

Ken Smith, one of the editors of *Literacies*, a popular textbook in DRWS, will give a presentation on strategies for using his text on Thursday morning during the DRWS Spring Orientation.

The event, sponsored by Norton and Houghton Mifflin publishers, will include a catered lunch and an afternoon workshop.

City College Offers Courses at DRWS

In Fall 1998, the developmental writing program faced a Chancellor's Executive Order that mandated that all incoming freshmen enroll immediately in required remedial courses before they enrolled in any other courses.

Faced with the prospect of more than doubling the size of the developmental writing program, university and department leadership sought ways to manage such an enrollment surge. One of the outcomes was a cooperative arrangement between the English Department of San Diego City College and our developmental writing program.

This is the second year of that collaborative program in which instructors from San Diego City College teach RWS 92A courses in the fall and 92B courses in spring. Under the supervision of Sheryl Gobble, Professor of English at SDCC, this semester, ten City College instructors are teaching a total of twenty sections of RWS 92A.

In this arrangement, students are enrolled at both SDSU and City College. The curriculum, semester schedule, and final writing proficiency exam for the City College sections are identical to those of SDSU sections of 92A.

We would like to thank all of the instructors from City College: David Duran, Gretchen Hanscom, Jeff Harrington, Micah Jendian, Karl Kline, Elinor Ovies, Cara Thompson, James Towner, and John Vanderpot. It is a pleasure working with you!

Elise Miller

Instructors Can Help Promote Our Programs and Courses

It is again the time of the semester when your undergraduate or graduate students may be looking for interesting courses to take next semester or for some way of applying what they have learned. Please recommend the following offerings to your classes.

Tell your freshmen or sophomore students about the upper-division writing offerings: RWS 305W Academic Writing, RWS 500W Advanced Composition, as well as RWS 503W Technical Writing. Recommend RWS 503W as a very useful class for students in engineering, business, or science, or for that matter in any field.

If you teach RWS 100, please tell your students about the new interdisciplinary, integrated undergraduate program that I will be team teaching next semester with Adelaida DelCastillo in Mexican-American Studies and Evelyn Cruz in Theatre. The course is a 9-

semester-hours interdisciplinary course that fulfils the GE requirements for RWS 200, Humanities, and Social Science. The course promises to be an intellectual adventure and will have a community learning and research components. Students will learn the research methods and theoretical perspectives of Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, Literature, Rhetoric, and Political Science.

Please also tell potentially interested senior and graduate students about the Certificate Program in Technical and Scientific Writing. Why? Excellent written and oral communication skills are critical to professional success in business, industry, and government.

Professional communicators are in strong demand across the nation and in Southern California. Technical and Professional Writing is an excellent career or stop-gap opportunity especially for liberal arts (such as MFA or English

majors) students concerned about their job prospects or for technical and business students who want to get more options or enhance their career prospects and choices.

Qualified upper-division students may register for an RWS 506 Internship, where they may work in a variety of public agency, organizational, or other settings (i.e. KPBS on campus) honing their writing and communication skills. Have interested students contact me.

Finally, please let potentially interested seniors know about our new graduate program in Rhetoric and Writing Studies. Next semester, Glen McClish is going to teach RWS 601 History of Rhetoric, one of the core courses in the graduate program. Please promote the class especially among graduate students.

Cezar Ornatowski

Book Review

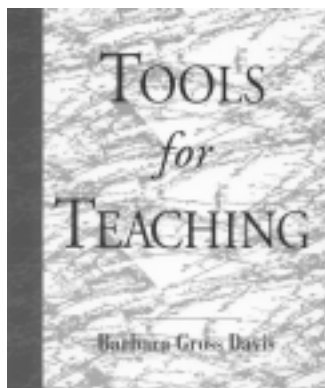
Tools for Teaching

by Barbara Gross Davis

Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993

Tools for Teaching offers a variety of educational suggestions and strategies, addressing practical issues for college and university instructors. Designed as a reference book, it contains forty-nine tools organized into twelve sections. The suggestions can be adapted to particular circumstances and needs, and each tool includes a list of references for further reading.

For example, Section 3, "Discussion Strategies," contains four tools which provide ideas on how to lead a productive discussion, frame challenging questions, encourage participation, and effectively respond to students' questions. Also helpful is Section 6, "Enhancing Students' Learning and Motivation," which relies on current theories of learning for



instructional strategies that help students to learn, becoming more confident and independent in mastering course material. Section 10, "Evaluation to Improve Teaching," is beneficial because it describes how an instructor can determine his or her strengths and weaknesses through various modes of assessment.

The lack of discussion regarding underlying theory and philosophy for each tool may be a drawback for some instructors. However, I believe Tools for Teaching is quite helpful and valuable because it stimulates thinking about effective teaching.

Author Barbara Gross Davis has a website (<http://uga.berkeley.edu/sled/bgd>) with sections of Tools for Teaching accessible under the heading "Good Teaching Practices." The book is also available in the SDSU library.

Cindy McDaniel

SDSU
San Diego State University

Citations

Published twice a semester
by and for the
Faculty and Staff of the

**Department of Rhetoric
and Writing Studies**

College of Arts and Letters
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-4452
619-594-6515

Glen McClish
Department Chair

Peter Manley
Editor
pmanley@home.com

Phyllis Cohen
Editing and Distribution