

<p>Dan Melzer Office Phone: 278-6925 Office Hours: 3:00-4:00 MW and by appointment</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Spring 2012 Office: Calaveras 151 Email: melzer@csus.edu Class Web CT site: <a href="http://www.csus.edu/sacct/">http://www.csus.edu/sacct/</a></p>	
	<p><b>English 220D</b> <b>Researching Teaching Writing</b> Section 01, MW 4:30-5:45, DH 206</p>	

## Course Description

English 2220D is a graduate seminar examining the history and the current status of research methods and methodologies in Composition Studies. We will explore the ways research has been conducted in Composition Studies and you will draw on what you've learned about research in Composition Studies to design and conduct your own research project or proposal. Some questions we will explore include:

- What do compositionists study? Writers? Texts? History? Culture? Pedagogy? Technology?
- What critical theories inform research in Composition Studies?
- What research methods do compositionists choose? Quantitative or qualitative? Discourse analysis? Statistical analysis? Case study? Ethnography? Archival history?
- What ethical principles should guide research in composition?
- What are some of the central issues and scholarly debates in research in Composition Studies?
- How can composition instructors make use of research studies when they teach writing?

## Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Choose appropriate methods for answering their research questions
- Read composition research with teacherly insight and critical awareness
- Converse intelligently about their rationale for doing research the way they do

## Texts

*Methods and Methodology in Composition Research*, Gesa Kirsch and Patricia Sullivan

*Under Construction: Working at the Intersections of Composition Theory, Research, and Practice*, Christine Farris and Chris Anson

Excerpts from *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, by John Creswell, available as PDF files on SacCT (you do not need to purchase *Research Design*)

Braddock Award-winning essays from *College Composition and Communication* available as PDF files on SacCT

Additional essays available as PDF files on SacCT

## **Attendance and Participation**

This is a seminar, not a lecture course, and I value everyone's active participation. Because much of the learning in this class will take place during classroom discussions, workshops, and one-one-one conferences, regular attendance and participation is essential. I believe that learning should be student-centered, collaborative, and socially constructed: because of that, I never lecture. I look forward to in-depth exploration of the readings and careful and thoughtful responses to our peers' work. Your "classroom citizenship" grade will be based on your effort in leading class discussions, your participation in class discussions and workshops, your effort in discussion board posts, your annotations of the readings, and your attendance.

### **Active Reading of Class Texts**

The readings in this class will be challenging, and you can expect to need to reread and ask questions about the readings during class. In order to fully engage with the class readings, you will need to be an active reader, underlining key ideas and writing responses or questions in the margins. Before each class discussion I will ask you to review your annotations of the readings. This will refresh your memory of the key ideas in the readings and the central responses and questions you had as you read. I will give you credit toward the classroom citizenship grade for having done your annotations each day.

## **Assignments**

### **Leading Classroom Discussions**

I have a constructivist approach to teaching, which means that I believe students learn best when they play the central role in the construction of knowledge. Because of this belief, I ask that students play the lead role in classroom discussions. Each of you will lead classroom discussions of three class readings. Your role on the day you are leading discussion is to invite conversation by preparing thoughtful questions about the readings. You may use your discussion board post and/or your peers' posts to facilitate discussion on these days: for example, you might copy passages from your peers' posts on a handout, or choose a few posts for classmates to read aloud. If you are leading a discussion of one of the Braddock Award essays, please be sure to focus on the research design, methods, validity, etc. as opposed to the topic. Plan on a thirty-minute discussion for each reading.

### **Discussion Board Posts**

To use writing as a tool for learning and thinking about the class readings, before each class you will write an informal, exploratory post to the class website electronic discussion board, responding to one or both of the articles we're reading for that particular class. Posts should be about 150-200 words. The purpose of these posts is to encourage you to explore (not summarize) the course readings. Challenge the texts, ask questions, evaluate research methods, consider the benefits and limitations of the research methods used, and think about theoretical implications of what you read. I will not evaluate these responses on organization or grammatical correctness: these are informal and exploratory responses, and the content is what matters—the depth and quality of your thinking.

These discussion board posts will be "dialogic": you will post a response and respond briefly to two of your peer's posts. Your responses to your peers can be brief (three or four sentences), but do more than just say you agree or disagree. The goal of the dialogic responses is to further collaborative learning, the social construction of knowledge, and a sense of the classroom as a discourse community. In order to allow time for peer response, post your original response before Saturday for Monday readings, and post your original response before Tuesday for Wednesday readings. I will evaluate and respond to these posts intermittently on a check-plus (excellent), check (good), and check-minus (fair) basis, and at the end of the course the average grade of your posts will make up 20% of your final grade in the course. Posts made after the class in which we discuss the articles you're responding to will not receive credit.

## **Annotated Bibliography or Literature Review**

To help prepare you for your research project for this course or for your thesis, you will choose one of two options: an annotated bibliography of 15 or more sources related to your research project or a literature review (in prose form) of 10-15 sources for a TESOL, Education, or Composition (old requirements) thesis prospectus/thesis chapter. The annotations should summarize each article in one paragraph and discuss how you might use the article in your research project or thesis in a second paragraph. The bibliography is due on 3/28.

## **Research Project**

Your research project should be a substantial research study that uses one or more of the research methods we discuss this semester. You have a choice of a variety of rhetorical situations for your research project:

- A polished draft of a Composition thesis prospectus.
- A draft of a publishable researched essay for a thesis portfolio in Composition (new requirements). The research essay should be at least 15 pages long and include a one-page rhetorical analysis of the conventions of the target publication. This could be original work or a revision of a seminar paper. This option is for those who have already completed their Composition thesis portfolio prospectus (new requirements).
- A prospectus or chapter of a Composition thesis (old requirements) or for a field closely related to Composition (TESOL or English Education).
- A conference abstract proposal for a specific professional Composition Studies, TESOL, or Education conference, a conference presentation (7-9 pages), and a hand-out or multimedia presentation.
- A pilot research project and preliminary report. Design and carry out a small research project (perhaps one that could lead to a larger project). Must include a brief literature review and research plan (3-5 pages) and written report on the pilot (6-8 pages).

A number of activities and assignments will provide scaffolding for the research project: the bibliography assignment, full-class discussion and feedback on research project ideas, two peer response workshops, and one-on-one conferences. The research project is due on the last day of class, 5/9. See the Research Project assignment description on the class website for more details about the project and for the grading rubric.

## **Research Project Mini-Conference Presentation**

On Monday, 5/7 and Wednesday, 5/9 we will have two “mini-conferences” where we will form panels and each of you will make a brief presentation about your research project focus, design, questions, results, and implications. There will be time after each panel for a Q and A session. We will invite students, teachers, and family to these mini-conferences, so hopefully you will be speaking to a broad audience. You can prepare a handout or handouts and/or use Powerpoint or another visual presentation program. See the Research Project assignment description on the class website for more details

## **Grading**

Your final course grade will be broken down the following way:

Classroom citizenship .....	15%	WebCT discussion board posts .....	20%
Annotated bibliography/lit review .....	15%	Research project .....	40%
		Research project conference presentation .....	10%

## 220D Syllabus

1/23 M

Introductions and your questions/concerns about research about writing  
Course information and syllabus  
Your prior knowledge of/experience with composition research

### Overview of Research in Composition Studies

1/25 W

Farris and Anson: Chapter 1 by Ferry and Chapter 2 by Vandenberg  
Sign up for leading class discussions

1/30 M

Farris and Anson: Chapter 3 by Zebroski  
Discuss research project assignment and target conferences and publications  
Using the annotated bibliography assignment to find a research project focus

### Research Methods

*Overview of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods*

2/1 W

PDFs on SacCT: “The Selection of a Research Design,” “Quantitative Theory,” and “Qualitative Theory” from Creswell  
Responding to research vs. responding to content

*Experimental Research*

2/6 M

Kirsch and Sullivan: Chapter 10 by Beach  
PDF on SacCT: “Topical Structure and Revision: An Exploratory Study” by Witte (1984 Braddock Award Winner)

*Coding Data*

2/8 W

Kirsch and Sullivan: Chapter 12 by Grant-Davie  
PDF on SacCT: “The Frequency and Placement of Topic Sentences in Expository Prose” by Richard Braddock (1975 Braddock Award Winner)

*Discourse Analysis*

2/13 M

Kirsch and Sullivan: Chapter 4 by Huckin  
PDF on SacCT: “Ways of Knowing, Doing, and Writing in the Disciplines” by Michael Carter (2008 Braddock Award Winner)

2/15 W

Kirsch and Sullivan: Chapter 5 by Mortensen

PDF on SacCT: "Remediation as Social Construct: Perspectives from an Analysis of Classroom Discourse" by Hull et al. (1992 Braddock Award Winner)

*Historical/Archival*

2/20 M

Kirsch and Sullivan: Chapter 1 by Connors

PDF on SacCT: "The Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse" by Connors (1982 Braddock Award Winner)

*Interviews and Surveys*

2/22 W

PDF on SacCT: "Components of a Survey" from Creswell

PDF on SacCT: "Performing Writing, Performing Literacy" by Fishman, et al. (2007 Braddock Award Winner)

Interviews and questionnaires from the Stanford Study of Writing at <http://ssw.stanford.edu/about/about.php>

*Case Study*

2/27 M

Kirsch/Sullivan: Chapter 6 by Newkirk

PDF on SacCT: "This Wooden Shack Place" by Rose and Hull (1991 Braddock Award Winner)

*Teacher Research*

2/29 W

Kirsch/Sullivan: Chapter 8 by Ray

PDF on SacCT: "Moments of Argumentation: Agonistic Inquiry and Confrontational Cooperation" by Lynch, George, and Cooper (1998 Braddock Award Winner)

3/5 M

Farris and Anson: Chapter 15 by Bishop

PDF on SacCT: "Between the Drafts" by Sommers (1993 Braddock Award Winner)

3/7 W

PDF on SacCT: "Research Questions" from Creswell

Research proposal questions

Research project topic narrowing

3/12 M

Research proposals full-class workshop

3/14 W

Workshop research project interviews and surveys and conference abstracts

3/19, 3/21

Spring Break

3/26 M

*Ethnography*

Kirsch/Sullivan: Chapter 7 by Moss

PDF on SacCT: "Underlife and Writing Instruction" by Brooke (1988 Braddock Award Winner)

3/28 W

*Autoethnography*

Annotated Bibliography/lit review due

Farris and Anson: Chapter 6 by Mutnick

PDF on SacCT: "Gendering the 'Personal'" by Dixon

4/2 M

*Issues of Ethics and Authority*

Farris and Anson: Chapter 12 by Cushman and Guinsatao Monberg

CCCC's Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Research in Composition Studies: Online at

<http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/ethicalconduct>

CSUS Human Subjects IRB policies and forms: Online at <http://www.csus.edu/research/humansubjects/index.htm>

4/4 W

Kirsch and Sullivan: Chapter 11 by Kirsch

## **Research Theories**

*Grounded Theory*

4/9 M

Farris and Anson: Chapter 9 by Mangnotto Neff

PDF on SacCT: "Negotiating Cultural Identities through Language" by Anne-Marie Pederson (2011 Braddock Award Winner)

4/11 W

CSU English Council meeting: Research project Workshop I on SacCT

*Feminist Theory*

4/16 M

Kirsch and Sullivan: Chapter 2 by Sullivan

Farris and Anson: Chapter 10 by Rose and Lauer

*Critical Literacy Theory*

4/18 W

Farris and Anson: Chapter 11 by Chiang, Chapter 18 by Okawa

*Postmodernist Theory*

4/23 M

Farris and Anson: Chapter 17 by Grimm et al.  
Research project questions

4/25 W

Research project Workshop II

4/30 M

Research project one-on-one conferences

5/2 W

Class evaluations  
Class feedback  
Prepare for mini-conferences: presentation advice  
In-class writing: research project process memo

5/7 M

Research Project Mini-Conference I

5/9 W

Research Project Mini-Conference II  
Turn in research project