

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK - POTSDAM

SECD 357 / GRED 557

Writing in the Middle and Secondary School

Fall 2012

Wednesday, 4:30-7

Sat 200

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**Office Hrs:** M, 2-3; W 10-12; Th, 10-11; by appointment

**Course Overview:** This course is designed to help pre-service teachers acquire effective teaching skills in the teaching of writing across disciplines by understanding the diverse text structures and demands of various content areas. The course includes application of teaching methods in the secondary education curriculum to support writing development of native English speakers and students who are English language learners.

**Objectives:**

- To understand and apply theoretically-based principles of writing development and writing-across-the-curriculum to support the uses of writing in the content areas
- To become familiar with various ways of integrating writing skills with teaching subject matter
- To recognize specific knowledge and text structures in each content area
- To incorporate writing activities in planning and instruction, including activities for diverse learners
- To design effective and efficient protocols for assessing student writing
- To identify and design writing instructional practices that work best with struggling readers and writers
- To gain familiarity with diverse uses of technology to support student writing development
- To gain experience communicating knowledge about content-area writing with students, colleagues, and family members

SECD 357/GRED 557 supports the conceptual framework for the School of Education and Professional Studies at SUNY Potsdam: *A Tradition Of Excellence: Preparing Creative And Reflective Practitioners* (2006), as well as the Int'l Reading Association Standards (2010) geared to middle & high school classroom teachers: 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.2 (<http://www.reading.org> > locate "Professional Standards 2010-Middle & HS Content Clsrn Teacher")

**Required Texts:**

1. Daniels, H., Zemelman, S. & Steineke, N. (2007). *Content-area writing: Every teacher's guide*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
2. McConachie, S. & Petrosky, A. (2010). *Content matters: A Disciplinary Literacy approach to improving student learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
3. Literature Circle Text: **Choose & purchase/borrow one of the following (needed by November 6, 2012)**
  - Baden, M. & Roach, M. (2002). *Dead reckoning: The new science of catching killers*. NY: Simon & Schuster.
  - Butler, O. (2009). *Kindred*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
4. Articles & Websites, as indicated for specific weeks/assignments. Links provided on Moodle.

## Materials Needed

1. **Access to Moodle.** Check regularly. Some required articles, assignments, and Web links/resources are posted on Moodle, or need to be uploaded to Moodle, as indicated on the syllabus.
2. **Learning Log:** A folder or notebook to track key points from readings, as well as your questions & responses
3. **Personal email account** (gmail, yahoo, etc.): To use for participation in Wiki project (something other than “potdam.edu” needed for registration)

## Assignments

### 1. “Writing Roots: In and Out of School” (15%):

In *A Fresh Look at Writing*, Donald Graves urges all teachers to mine their histories as writers, to write their way into being effective writing mentors for students by remembering and analyzing how we learned to write, what worked and didn’t, who helped and how, and more. For this assignment, you will do this by writing a brief, analytical memoir. First, identify and relate 2-3 significant, or “telling,” moments in your development and identity as a writer. They may be experiences that shaped your views of what counts as ‘good’ writing; your genre and interest preferences as a writer and/or reader, and how these have been supported in/out of school; your purposes for writing and how they have changed over time; your understanding of the uses of writing to learn, communicate, think; etc.

After creating a vivid snapshot of these moments, analyze your development as a writer & teacher of writing. Select a few, salient ideas from the texts that connect with, and help you make sense of, your experiences, as well as your future teaching role. Use these texts: Resnick (“Literacy In School and Out”), Daniels, et al. (Chs 1-2), and the EduTopia website. Rather than summarizing the text themes, synthesize them and apply/connect key ideas to your experiences. It should be clear you are using the texts to support your analytic reflection of experience. Be specific and cite/quote particular ideas or passages to show this (informal citation style is fine: Author, p. \_\_\_).

End the piece by reflecting on what you perceive to be a personal strength & challenge as a teacher of writing, especially in relation to student learning of your content field. Aim to write at least 5 pages total.

**DUE: ‘Telling Moments’ Sketch – 9/5; Final – 9/26**

[IRA Standards: 1.1, 2.3, 4.1, 5.1, 6.2]

### 2. Learning Log (20% total) : In-Class Check (10%) & Quizzes (10%)

The Learning Log is a record of your reading, demonstrating your understanding of course themes based on ideas raised by the authors and through our class discussion. The course calendar specifies the *minimum* number of “Key Points” and/or “Questions” you should record in your Log each week. Bring your Log to every class since your responses will serve as a springboard for discussion.

There will be two (2) unannounced quizzes that will require you to draw from your Learning Log. Also, I will spot-check Logs during the semester to be sure everyone is contributing to them, and thus contributing to our course conversation on an equal basis.

[IRA Standards: 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.3, 5.3]

### 3. Article Annotation (10%)

Teachers benefit from learning to use professional journals and research literature as a support for continuing growth and expertise. It is vital to be able to link instructional decisions to evidence and to share/communicate research with wide audiences, including your principal, colleagues, and parents. For this assignment, examine teacher professional journals to investigate writing in your content field. Identify and read one article, then write an annotation in which you summarize the article and respond to it analytically, linking ideas to other course readings/texts.

We’ll “practice” this assignment earlier in the semester, when I assign a research article to you and we compose in-class annotations. You’ll draw from these experiences as part of your final “Wiki” project

(see below), to support claims you make and suggestions you offer about “Content Area Writing.” **Article Annotation Due: 10/31.**

[IRA Standards: 1.3, 2.1, 6.3]

#### **4. Techniques Demonstration & Toolkit (20% total; 10% techniques presentation; 10% scrapbook of writing lesson links)**

With a partner, apply two assigned “Writing to Learn” strategies to a lesson typical of your content area and present to the class. Turn-in a lesson outline that explains the learning goals within the content area, and shows thoughtful application of assigned writing strategies to engage and support students’ critical thinking about content. **Presentations: 10/17 & 10/24**

For the overall toolkit “scrapbook,” extend the activity by exploring/explaining how you would apply six (6) additional writing strategies to teach varied content in your area. I encourage you to draw from the NYS curriculum guides for your area, focusing on topics that interest you, that challenge or perplex you, or both. Learn from your course colleagues as they make their presentations, so you can use the insight they share to expand your thinking about writing in your field. For each additional strategy, include an explanation of the content being addressed, as well as a 1-2 paragraph explanation of the strategy you’d use and why. If you find examples that other teachers have developed, which you find helpful, feel free to include them (cite all work that you include, paraphrase, or quote). Even better, create your own exemplars for selected strategies, to show how you are applying knowledge in an original and unique manner. **Due: 11/20**

[IRA Standards: 2.1, 2.2, 3.2, 5.3, 6.3]

#### **5. Literature Circle Idea Piece (10% - full credit given for completion)**

In your Learning Log, keep a record of responses to your Lit Circle text, noting how the writing operates to tell a story, what you think about various aspects of that story, and connections you could make to content-area learning as well as collaborations with other content teachers across the curriculum. With your Lit Circle colleagues, develop a presentation to share an interesting aspect of your text with others. Submit a mini-unit sketch relating ways you could use your text in teaching: make a connection to your curriculum and brainstorm a few additional texts you could use to supplement the unit. **Due: 12/5**

#### **6. Content Area Writing Wiki (15%)**

Gain skill in using new media tools - in a public writing format - to communicate ideas about content area writing. On your Wiki site, you will (a) share research insights related to writing in your subject field; (b) collect and present Web, blog, and other resources that can support and challenge diverse learners of your subject field; and (c) share Web 2.0 resources that emphasize “composing” to deepen learning, promote collaboration, and engage learners in the use of multi-media tools. Details forthcoming. The overall goal is to practice writing in this public medium for multiple types of readers, sharing your well-researched insights in an accessible, engaging manner. *\*Self-assessment* will count for 50% of the overall grade for this assignment. **Due: In-class presentation: 12/12 (scheduled final); Submit final version, w/ self-assessment & analysis by Saturday, 12/15**

[IRA Standards: 2.2, 2.3, 5.2, 6.3]

#### **7. Participation (10%)**

This course requires active, thoughtful participation of all students. Meeting once/week, there are many in-class assignments (in addition to readings, etc.) that rely on your thorough reading and reflection about course materials. You need to be prepared for each class. You’ll do well if you engage fully in all in-class activities, submit required assignments in a timely manner, and take responsibility for building an intellectual community that reflects your values as a learner and future teacher. You must also adhere to

general policies outlined below and demonstrate the SOEPS dispositions criteria. See “Participation Rubric” for further detail.

[SOE&PS Conceptual Framework: Principled Educator]

### Course Policies

**Plagiarism:** Any student who submits another person's work or ideas (including lesson plans, ideas, and units from websites) in his/her name will be subject to a failing grade in the course and any disciplinary action pursuant to the SUNY Potsdam *Code of Conduct*. Give credit where credit is due. When in doubt, ask.

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. Missing any scheduled class, tardiness or early departure is unacceptable and will result in a reduction of your participation grade. In the event of an excused absence, students are responsible for material, assignments, and announcements for class missed. If you attend class, but are unprepared for discussion/activity, or you do not add your voice to the conversation on a regular basis, your participation grade will be lowered. If you seek an excused absence, **email** the instructor by the morning before the class meets; do not send word of an absence with a fellow student.

**Cell Phones/Text Messaging:** Cell phones may be on during class **only** in cases of emergency. If this is the case, please explain to the class and instructor before class. **NO texting** at any time.

**Laptops:** I encourage you to bring your laptop to class, as it will be very useful at times. However, if we are not using the computers for class work, they must be closed—no personal use is acceptable during class time..

**Assignments:** Assignments must be turned in on the due dates. Late assignments will affect the participation grade and will not be accepted after 24 hrs of due date. Assignments will not be accepted via email unless previously approved by instructor. Evaluation of all written assignments will include spelling, grammar, and mechanics as well as content. Students are advised to refer to a writing style guide prior to submitting written work. Unless otherwise directed, all assignments must be typed or word-processed, double-spaced, 12 point Times font, and in APA citation format. Students are encouraged to visit the College Writing Center, Carson 106, [cwc@potdam.edu](mailto:cwc@potdam.edu), x3059, for assistance and support for writing assignments.

**Documented Disabilities:** Any student who believes that he or she may need academic adjustments or accommodations based on a documented disability are advised to make an appointment with the professor. Students in need of an Accommodation Plan should visit Student Support Services in Sisson Hall 119 (x2347).

**Final Grade Submission:** To receive a final grade for the course, students must complete all assignments. An *Incomplete* will not be given without prior consultation.

### Grading Scale

4.0 (A) Excellent  
3.7  
3.3  
3.0 (B) Good  
2.7  
2.3  
2.0 (C) Satisfactory  
1.7  
1.3  
1.0 (Minimum)  
0.0

## CALENDAR OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

<b>Wk</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Readings (due for class)</b>	<b>Assignments (due &amp; in-class activity)</b>
<b>1</b>	W, 8/29	<i>Introduction to course</i> <b>*In-class rdg &amp; 6-traits of writing</b>	1. Course overview, syllabus, introductions 2. Map your literacy roots & current practices
<b>2</b>	W, 9/5	<i>Understanding Youth Writing Development</i> 1. Daniels, et.al - Chs 1 & 2 (pp 1-29) 2. Resnick, “Literacy In School and Out” (on Moodle)	1. <u>Bring to class</u> : 2-pg sketch of ‘telling’ events/experiences related to writing (see “Roots: In School and Out” assignment)—peer conference 2. <u>Learning Log</u> : 5 key points / questions
<b>3</b>	W, 9/12	<i>Writing-to-Learn &amp; Content Area Thinking; Youth &amp; Digital Literacies</i> 1. Daniels, et. al - Ch. 3 (pp 30-67) 2. McConachie & Petrosky, Preface & Ch 1 (pp 1-13) 3. EduTopia website jigsaw (see instructions on Moodle)	1. <u>Learning Log</u> : 5 key points/ questions; Notes for your EduTopia guided tour
<b>4</b>	W, 9/19	<i>Applying Writing-to-Learn Strategies</i> 1. Daniels, et al. - Ch 4 (pp 68-111) 2. McConachie & Petrosky, Ch 2 (pp 15-31) 3. Review your content-area standards & examine ThinkFinity website (*see instructions on Moodle)	1. <u>Learning Log</u> : 5 key points / questions; notes from Web exploring; ThinkFinity lessons 2. <u>In-class</u> : In content-area teams, make connections between Daniels; McConachie; and content area standards/ ThinkFinity resources
<b>5</b>	W, 9/26	<i>Applying Writing-to-Learn Strategies</i> 1. McConachie & Petrosky: <b>your</b> content-area chapter 2. *Bring Daniels, et.al for “Techniques” work in-class	1. <u>DUE</u> : “Roots: In School and Out” <b>final</b> version (include map; notes; sketch) 2. <u>In-class</u> : Meet in content teams to discuss McCon. chapter; teach chapter highlights to class 3. Strategize presentation in “Techniques Teams” (see assignment)
<b>6</b>	W, 10/3	<i>Connecting Writing-to-Learn across Content Areas</i> 1. McConachie & Petrosky, skim <b>all</b> content-area chapters 2. Research / teaching article ( <b>assigned</b> – see Moodle)	1. <u>Learning Log</u> : 2 highlights from <b>each</b> McConachie chapter 2. <u>In-Class</u> : Discuss themes across content-area writing chapters/articles; compose “Annotation” of your research article (keep in Learning Log)
<b>7</b>	W, 10/10	<i>Exploring Writing-to-Learn Research</i> 1. Meet in “Techniques Teams” 2. Library Information Literacy Session: how to locate an article related to teaching writing in your content area (to be used in Wiki project)	*Be sure you are ready to meet in “Techniques Teams” to <b>finish</b> planning your presentation—bring all relevant notes/materials
<b>8</b>	W, 10/17	<i>Sharing Writing-to-Learn Techniques</i> <b>*Present</b> “Techniques” in teams (*provide copy of lesson & supporting materials for instructor)	

9	W, 10/24	<b><i>Sharing Writing-to-Learn Techniques; Using Public Writing in Content Areas</i></b> 1. Present “Techniques” in teams (*provide copy of lesson & supporting materials for instructor) 2. Daniels, et. al - Chs 5 & 6	1. <u>Learning Log</u> : 5 key points/ questions 2. <u>In-class</u> : Take notes on “Techniques” presentations to assist in your development of “Techniques Toolkit”
10	W, 10/31	<b><i>Using Public Writing &amp; New Media in Content Areas</i></b> 1. Daniels, et.al – Review Chs 5 &6; Chs 7 & 9 2. Wikis, Blogs, and Web 2.0 tools – Readings TBA	1. <u>Learning Log</u> : 5 key points/questions 2. Review Wiki project requirements & begin work on Wiki 3. <u>DUE</u> : Article Annotation (*see assignment)
11	W, 11/7	<b><i>Writing for Tests/Assessments; Literature Circle Mtg 1</i></b> 1. Daniels, et. al – Ch 10 2. Read pp _____ of your lit circle book	1) <u>Learning Log</u> : Lit circle book notes – 2) <u>In-class</u> : Explore writing assessment in content areas; meet in Lit. Circles
12	W, 11/14	<b><i>Writing for Tests; Literature Circle Mtg 2; Wiki work</i></b> 1. Continue discussion of writing for tests (no assigned rdg.—follow-up on Daniels, et al.) 2. Read pp _____ of your lit circle book	1) <u>Learning Log</u> : Lit circle book notes 2) <u>In-Class</u> : Lit circles; Status update & work on Wiki project
13	W, 11/21	<b><i>Wiki Consultations as needed (individual or group conferences)</i></b>	1) <u>DUE</u> : “Techniques Toolkit” (see Assignment for detail) 2) *Meet as needed
14	W, 11/28	<b><i>Literature Circle Mtg 3</i></b> - Read pp _____ of your lit circle book	1) <u>Learning Log</u> : Lit circle book notes; develop brief presentation for 12/4 2) <u>In-class</u> : Work on Wiki project
15	W, 12/5	<b><i>Book Share: Making Cross-Content Connections</i></b> *Bring Daniels, et al. to class (review Chs 7 & 9)	1) <u>DUE</u> : Lit Circle Idea Piece & Log Entries 2) <u>In-Class</u> : Book presentations; finalize Wiki Project
16	W, 12/12	<b><i>Final Mtg: Wiki Fair!</i></b>	1) <u>DUE</u> : Wiki project 2) <u>DUE</u> : *By SATURDAY 12/15, upload Wiki analysis and self-assessment