

Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater  
Moore Humanities Building 3324  
[E\\_chiser@uncg.edu](mailto:E_chiser@uncg.edu)  
334-5263

English 697  
Spring, 2009  
Tuesdays, 6:30-9:20  
Room 2210, Humanities Bld.

*"The desire to read, like all other desires which distract our unhappy souls, is capable of analysis."* Virginia Woolfe

*"Writing, more than any other task, brings one face to face with important human responsibilities."* John Gage

### Reading, Writing, and Response Theory

This course will look at theories of how people read and write, the connections between these processes, as well as those connections to acts of imagination and interpretation. This is then necessarily a course about how personal knowledge is constructed. Applications of theory to practice will be offered whenever possible and we'll test out our theories about reading and writing against our own practices. For example, we'll read a novel together and discuss our responses and we will read and respond to student writing texts. Seminar members will select one or two weeks to lead the class discussions by presenting a short paper for everyone and by posing leading questions. By mid-semester, you will write a small case study of a reader, writer, or reading/writing group. At the end of the course, you'll write a longish (10-15 pages) on a topic related to the ideas that most interested you in this course. The overall goal for the seminar is for you to become critical readings and writers about reading and writing theories.

**Expectations:** My expectation is that you'll come prepared to every class, participate in group work and whole class discussions, prepare for your own class presentations and acknowledge everyone's contributions to the course. I hope that you leave the course with more understandings than you have at the outset. More specifically at the end of the course you should be able to:

- Articulate the range of reading and writing theories of other scholars
- Construct your own personal theories of reading and writing
- Read closely and critically the professional literature in the field
- Research and draft a literacy case study
- Research and draft a scholarly paper on a topic of your choice
- Connect reading and writing theories with pedagogical classroom approaches

**Texts:** Most of the reading for this course will be on e-reserve. There are three texts I would like you to buy online as I didn't order them through the UNCG bookstore. Any edition of the first two of the books will be fine:

Smith, Frank. *Understanding Reading*.

Dillard, Annie. *The Maytrees*

Straub, Richard. *The Practice of Response*, Hampton Press: New Jersey, 2000.

**Week One**

Day	Date	Class topic	Writing/reading
Tue	Jan 20	Introduction	
			Theories and experiences about reading and writing we bring to the table

**Week Two**

Day	Date	Class topic	Writing /reading
Tue	Jan 27	Psycholinguistic Reading Theory	
			<i>Understanding Reading</i> , Frank Smith Bring in a program, article, or artifact that argues against Smith's position that argues that reading is matching the word and the sound. (Check out the movie, <i>The Reader</i> , for another approach to learning to read)

**Week Three**

Day	Date	Class topic	Writing/reading
Tue	Feb 3	Reader Response Theory	
			"The Transactional Theory of Reading and Writing" and "Viewpoints" from Louise Rosenblatt's <i>Making Meaning with Texts</i> -e-reserve Topics for Case Studies due

**Week Four**

Day	Date	Class topic	Writing/reading
Tue	Feb 10	Reader Response Criticism	
			Tompkins, "Introduction to Reader Response Criticism," Iser, "The Reading Process," Bleich, "Epistemological Assumptions in the Study of Response," from <i>Reader Response Criticism</i> -e reserve

**Week Five**

Day	Date	Class topic	writing/reading
Tue	Feb. 17	Gender and Reading Theory	
			Flynn and Schweickart, "Reading Ourselves," Fetterly, "Reading about Reading," from <i>Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts</i> e-reserve Choose one of these feminist literary theorists to present in groups: hooks, Butler, Sedgwick, Bordo, Spivak, Mohanty

**Week Six**

Day	Date	Class topic	writing/reading
Tue	Feb. 24	Applying Theory	
		Literary theories and the reading of Dillard's novel: New Critical, Marxist, Psychoanalytic, Feminist, archetypal approaches to the novel	Annie Dillard, <i>The Maytrees</i> Group Reports

**Week Seven**

Day	Date	Class topic	writing/reading
Tue	March 3	Rhetorical Theory as Intersection between reading and writing theory	
			An Introduction to Rhetoric (1-25 from <i>Rhetoric: Concepts, Definitions, Boundaries</i> by Covino and Jolliffe and Villaneuva, e-reserve  Case Studies due

**Week Eight**

Day	Date	Class topic	writing/reading
Tue	March 10	NO CLASS/ Spring Break	
			Topic for final paper due after break

**Week Nine**

Day	Date	Class Topic	writing/reading
Tue	March 17	Applying Response Theory	
			<p>Straub, Richard, <i>The Practice of Response: Strategies for Commenting on Student Writing</i> and Daiker, Schwegler, Rubin-e-reserve</p> <p>Bring copies of several students papers to share with class</p>

**Week Ten**

Day	Date	Class Topic	writing/reading
Tue	March 24	Process/Expressivist Theories of Writing	
			<p>Berlin, Murray, Elbow, Tobin, Burnham, Flynn -e reserve</p> <p>Annotated bibliography for longer paper due (5 references)</p>

**Week Eleven**

Day	Date	Class Topic	Homework/reading
Tue	March 31	Post-Process Theories of Writing	
			<p>Chapters 1,6,10,12 e-BOOK by Thomas Kent, <i>Beyond the Writing Process Paradigm</i></p>

**Week Twelve**

Day	Date	Class topic	Homework/reading
Tue	April 7	Cognitivist and Linguistic Approaches to Writing	
			Flower, Rose, Emig, Shaughnessy, e-reserve

**Week Thirteen**

Day	Date	Class topic	Homework/reading
Tue	April 14	Social Constructivist Approaches to Writing and Genre Theory	
			Lunsford and Ede, Brufee, Trimbur, Devitt, e-reserve

**Week Fourteen**

Day	Date	Class Topic	Homework/reading (due the following class meeting)
Tue	April 21	Feminism and Writing Theory	
			Richie and Boardman-e-reserve and groups will present one of the following theorists: Payne, Jarret, Royster, Flynn, Min-Zhan Lu from <i>Feminism and Composition</i>

**Week Fifteen**

Day	Date	Class	Writing/reading
Tue	April 28	Integrating Reading and Writing Theory	Roskelly, Elbow, Salvatori, Berthoff-e reserve

**Week Sixteen**

Day	Date	Class Topic	Writing/reading
Tue	May 5	Paper Presentations	Seminar Papers Due

**About the Seminar Papers:**

There will be more specific guidelines given for both the case study and the final paper. You should begin thinking about some person or some group to write a case study about fairly early in the semester as this paper is due before spring break. The possibilities for seminar topics for the longer paper is wide open and should meet your individual scholarly needs. Past topics have included: the history of book clubs, histories of teaching reading or writing, young children's literacy approaches, visual literacy, reading student writing, collaborative group work, peer critique, literacy and social justice, feminism and reading theory, creative writing and composition pedagogy and post colonial composition theories. You will be asked to present a short annotated bibliography for your paper after spring break. Please feel free to make appointments to meet with me about either of these papers as well as any other questions you may have about our seminar.

**About Participation:**

You will be asked to lead one or two class discussions with another class member and you'll work in a small group to do at least two presentations. In both of these assignments, you are asked to work collaboratively to bring your ideas to the class. I understand that this means meeting outside of class to prepare but doing so will yield more information as you learn and share with one another. I believe that knowledge is socially constructed and would like our seminar to reflect that philosophy.

Attendance is required and will affect your final evaluation. Please let me know if there are any circumstances that require you to miss class. Of course, illnesses and emergencies happen but let me know as soon as you know.

**About Evaluation:**

If you complete all the required reading and writing for this course and participate in our seminar discussions, you should do well in this course. Just remember that everything counts.