

I approach teaching with ***constructivist, decentered methods that emphasize learning as ongoing student-led discovery***. This assumption drives my undergraduate and graduate teaching in courses including first-year writing (with foci including writing as inquiry, law and justice in the U.S., the writing process, American women writers, and technology and education), advanced writing, Romantic travel literature, activist and embodied rhetorics, writing pedagogy, composition studies survey, writing and embodiment, rhetorical grammar, and the personal essay.

This assumption means chiefly that I position my *students* to articulate knowledge and practice in their own terms. As facilitator, I model curiosity and questioning, create thoughtful and accessible learning conditions, and observe student learning to meet emerging needs. Much more than any straightforward answers, deep and continuous questions posed by my students and me drive the focus of my courses. This constructivist, discovery approach is elaborated in related tenets of ***practice, inquiry, and reframing***.

Daily my classrooms pulse with the ongoing constructivist ***practice of socially situated thinking, writing, reading, and speaking***. My students intensely practice writing and rhetorical action through dialogic inquiry, responsiveness to contexts, and ongoing revision processes. We practice a range of dynamic classroom activities including:

- structured small group work that emphasizes collective problem-solving;
- student-led whole group conversations;
- structured and ongoing reflective and metacognitive writing;
- “on-the-spot” analysis—collaborative, open-forum application of concepts toward unpacking alphabetic texts, images, videos, advertisements, the campus around us, our classroom, etc.;
- short reflective summaries and question-posing prompts to open and close class meetings;
- Socratic circle methods wherein students shift through leader, responder, observer and other meta-roles in discussion of texts and content and I remain a silent observer;
- collaborative discovery and articulation of criteria for assignment evaluation

The ethos of continuous practice too guides our constructions of writing and communication: not a set of skills learned once and for all, but a social, cultural, and contextual *art* of ethical and informed responsiveness. Practicing this together, responsibly and responsively, is my goal.

Inquiry and curiosity drives and shapes practice. Research—formal and informal, primary and secondary, and inquiry as the fundamental *posture* of teaching and learning—is at the center of my courses’ intellectual work.

- For example, I frame my secondary education English course, “The Teaching of Writing,” with the idea of the *teacher-researcher*, a means to approach the art of teaching as *learning*. Teaching, after all, isn’t about *knowing* as much as it is about *constantly learning* through observation, inquiry, reflection, and redesign. I thus position my teachers-in-training to lead themselves to insights about teaching and writing: they conduct secondary research in English language arts journals on a challenge they identify; they perform formal observations and interviews in a living context related to the teaching of writing, exercising analytical methods they will carry forward into their professional practice where change is a constant. Teachers-in-training need to continuously wonder and learn about methods to address a range of challenges and opportunities: multimodal and digital composing, culturally-relevant reading, universal design and accessibility, language diversities and translanguaging, and formative assessment practices, among others.

Much more than learn and repeat “skills,” undergraduate and graduate academic writers too must also continuously wonder and inquire. I think of first-year, advanced writing, and rhetoric and composition graduate students as *researchers*. I mean this in part in a traditional sense—that my courses build information literacy skills and practice in research writing conventions. But more importantly, I position students to figure things out, or *learn how to learn* to practice writing in unpredictable future contexts.

- For example, I don't prescribe the form of the research project in my first-year writing courses. Instead we study the moves and habits of a set of published public essays as "mentor texts" and students work together to figure out how shape their own writing to enact the genre (and the criteria for evaluation). Writing students also become primary researchers in the course of this project, observing and reporting on writing practices and issues they observe in various contexts in their lives. They also become secondary researchers, taking up critical inquiries related to writing, media, and persuasion in contemporary lives.
- In my graduate courses in rhetoric and composition, I emphasize the disciplinary content and knowledge of the scholarship we read but at the same time, the moves of academic discourses. I expect students at both the Masters and Doctoral level to approximate the genres we read to produce conference papers, proposals, abstracts, and so on.

My pedagogy of discovery builds also upon ***reframing***. I connect my instruction in writing, rhetoric, and pedagogy to students' own diverse worlds.

- For instance, I begin discussion of genre, a critical concept in my literature and writing courses, by exploring typified responses on Facebook and in text messaging. In a course on Romantic travel writing, my students present multimodal projects that explored their own familial and cultural practices around travel and documentation as compared to the Romantics'. This exploration deepened the students' connection to the writing we studied, allowing them to perceive literature as the cultural products of real people experiencing and reconstructing their worlds.

I also reframe students' expectations of what it means to learn writing or teaching.

- I establish in first-year writing, for instance, that the course is not a site of remediation or transportable rules. Instead I emphasize our work as *building upon* the knowledge, experience, and aptitudes students *already have* in writing. We explore rhetorical concepts that will help them think about writing differently. I help students explore writing as socially and historically constructed, radically context-dependent, and driven by purpose, audiences, community conventions, genre, cultural knowledge and tradition, and other situational constraints and affordances. Thinking differently, or reframing in this way, also entails helping students to construct writing *broadly*—the ways writing permeates, and iterates differently, across our academic, personal, work, civic, cultural, digital, public, and political lives.
- In my graduate courses, I challenge students' tacit assumptions about theory and practice with regards to the positioning and practice of teaching, approaching the study and execution of pedagogy as a theoretical, situated, intellectual, and thus rhetorical, practice.

In these ways, I hope that my instruction transfers into students' immediate and distant life domains as a guiding method for lifelong learning, critical thinking, wondering, and taking meaningful social and ethical action through writing, teaching, and persuasion.