



Universidad de Puerto Rico  
Recinto de Río Piedras  
Facultad de Estudios Generales  
Programa de Bachillerato en Estudios Generales

Course Title: ***Writing as discourse, reflection and reasoning: the essay***

Course Code: **ESGE 3038**

Hours/Credits: **45 hours/3 credits**

Pre-requisites: **Basic English or its equivalent**

### **Course Description:**

Using the Writing Process Approach (WPA), this course takes a critical look at dominant discourses, those uses and practices of language that hold ideological leadership and powerfully influence our perception of reality. The purpose of this analysis is to unmask the relationship between language, cognition and social practice. It is an interdisciplinary course that integrates literature, linguistics, cognitive sciences and other disciplines in order to pursue discourse analysis. The WPA leads students to reflect upon writing as a process of refining thinking through conscious awareness of the social discourses underlying their language practices.

### **Course Description (Spanish):**

Usando el método de redacción como proceso (Writing as a Process Approach, WPA en inglés), este curso se acerca críticamente a los discursos dominantes, los usos del lenguaje y prácticas que gozan de liderazgo ideológico y constituyen poderosos factores en la construcción de la realidad, con el propósito de descubrir la relación entre lenguaje, pensamiento y prácticas sociales. Es un curso interdisciplinario que integra la literatura, la lingüística, las ciencias cognitivas y otras áreas del saber para problematizar el discurso; Los estudiantes reflexionarán sobre cómo la redacción los ayuda a refinar sus pensamientos a través del análisis de sus trabajos escritos.

### **General Objectives:**

At the end of the course, students will write academic essays which demonstrate:

1. an awareness of the effects of dominant discourses and their power to maintain, perpetuate or challenge the status quo
2. an appreciation of the WPA as a means to construct, refine and share knowledge
3. the conviction that editing and rewriting are processes that require reflection which in turn leads to more critical and rigorous thinking
4. their ability to produce coherent and critical interdisciplinary essays on a work in their area of which sheds light on how these discourses function to reproduce or challenge dominant discourses that perpetuate inequality
5. their ability to interrogate received ideas and determine which help or hinder social justice
6. ability to foster the inclusion of classmates with disabilities

### **Example Outline and Time Distribution:**

Each professor will choose the particular discourse to be examined (e.g. family, school, gender, etc.). Although the conceptual threads are intricately woven together, the professor will focus on teasing them apart through a critical look at the basic concepts and language that constitute the discourse. The following example focuses on the discourses of education. The same purpose is to help students understand how their “reality” is constructed in social discourses (the language practices that construct knowledge) and is perpetuated through social institutions.

#### **I. Language and cognition (10 hrs)**

- A. Narrating/writing our personal worlds
- B. Language, culture and power: What are naturalized concepts?
- C. Cognitive sciences: Discourse and perception
- D. Experience and memory
- E. Discourse and the cognitive unconscious

#### **II. Education<sup>1</sup>: What are common education metaphors? What do they mean? (10 hrs)**

- A. Education metaphors and lived experience
- B. Manufacturing consent
- C. Narrating/writing experience

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<sup>1</sup> By the same token, the focus could be the discourse of “criminalization” to analyze the metaphors employed to criminalize and naturalize the criminalization of the poor and construct social consensus on the need for tough crime fighting measures in these communities. An analysis of these discourses, images of the poor and their relation to law and order could demonstrate how these serve as the foundations for popular support of political repression.

D. The academic essay on education: experience vs. official discourse

**III. Discourse analysis: Do the texts challenge or reproduce of dominant discourses? (10 hrs)**

- A. Readings and analysis of fictional accounts of schooling
- B. Writing: constructing alternate worlds

The students will be instructed in and practice the WPA in units I, II and III. These constitute preparatory writing. The skills and analytical frame will be applied to a text (essay or fiction) connected to their area of interest. Therefore, they will work independently in the workshop in Unit IV and periodically give brief oral reports on their progress.

**IV. WPA writing workshop (15 hrs)**

- A. Essay structure and outline
- B. The central question
- C. Producing ideas: brainstorming, graphic organizers
- D. Sharing the first draft
- E. Revising, editing and proofreading
  - 1. Meaningful content
  - 2. Choice through grammar
  - 3. Academic and writing conventions
- F. Final Essay

**Instructional Strategies:**

- 1. Brief explanations/lectures.
- 2. Critical readings that are nested to progressively improve critical analysis
- 3. Guided discussion
- 4. Oral collaboration/sharing
- 5. Peer evaluation
- 6. Individual conferencing on written work

**Learning Resources:**

Classroom and board  
Uprp.edu data bases  
Electronic platform for communication

### **Evaluation Criteria:**

|                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Attendance and participation    | 10%         |
| Unit I writing                  | 20%         |
| Unit II writing                 | 20%         |
| Oral collaboration/sharing      | 20%         |
| Critical essay in area of major | 30%         |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>100%</b> |

### **Acomodo razonable**

Evaluación diferenciada a estudiantes con necesidades especiales, en el componente Técnicas de Evaluación. Esto significa que la evaluación que se utiliza para el estudiante con necesidad especial identificada, responderá a la necesidad particular del estudiante. (Por ejemplo, prueba oral en lugar de escrita para un estudiante no-vidente.)

### **Cumplimiento de la Ley 51**

Los estudiantes que reciban servicios de Rehabilitación Vocacional deben comunicarse con el/la profesor/a al inicio del semestre para planificar el acomodo razonable y equipo asistido necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimento (OAPI) del Decanato de Estudiantes. También aquellos estudiantes con necesidades especiales que requieren de algún tipo de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con el /la profesor/a.

### **Discrimen por sexo y género**

"La Universidad de Puerto Rico prohíbe el discrimen par razón de sexo y género en todas sus modalidades, incluyendo el hostigamiento sexual. Según la Política institucional contra el Hostigamiento Sexual en la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Certificación Núm. 130, 2014-2015 de la Junta de Gobierno, si un estudiante está siendo o fue afectado por conductas relacionadas a hostigamiento sexual, puede acudir ante la Oficina de la Procuraduría Estudiantil, el Decanato de Estudiantes o la Coordinadora de Cumplimiento con Título IX para orientación y/o presentar una queja".

### **Integridad académica**

La Universidad de Puerto Rico promueve los más altos estándares de integridad académica y científica. El Artículo 6.2 del Reglamento General de Estudiantes de la UPR (Certificación Núm. 13, 2009---2010, de la Junta de Síndicos) establece que "la

deshonestidad académica incluye, pero no se limita a: acciones fraudulentas, la obtención de notas o grados académicos valiéndose de falsas o fraudulentas simulaciones, copiar total o parcialmente la labor académica de otra persona, plagiar total o parcialmente el trabajo de otra persona, copiar total o parcialmente las respuestas de otra persona a las preguntas de un examen, haciendo o consiguiendo que otro tome en su nombre cualquier prueba o examen oral o escrito, así como la ayuda o facilitación para que otra persona incurra en la referida conducta". Cualquiera de estas acciones estará sujeta a sanciones disciplinarias en conformidad con el procedimiento disciplinario establecido en el Reglamento General de Estudiantes de la UPR vigente.

**Grading System:** A, B, C, D, o F

**Electronic References:**

<http://biblioteca.uprrp.edu> <http://www.discourses.org> <http://www.discourse-analysis.de>  
[unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/transitions.html](http://unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/transitions.html)  
[kcmetro.cc.mo.us/maplewoods/writeplace/conclusions.html](http://kcmetro.cc.mo.us/maplewoods/writeplace/conclusions.html)  
[paragraphpunch.com](http://paragraphpunch.com)  
[tendenciaspr.com](http://tendenciaspr.com) [umbral.uprrp.edu](http://umbral.uprrp.edu)

**Suggested Texts:**

Coser, Lewis A. Sociology Through Literature. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972.

Diaz-Soto, Lourdes and Beth Lee Swadener. "Toward Liberatory Early Childhood Theory, Research and Praxis: Decolonizing a Field." Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood. 3:1 (2002): 38-65.

Docker, John. "The Neocolonial Assumption in University Teaching of English." The PostColonial Studies Reader. Eds. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin. London: Routledge, 1995. 443-446.

Fairclough, Norman. Discourse and Social Change. London: Oolity, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. and Phil Graham, Jay Lemke, Ruth Wodak (eds. Critical Discourse Studies 1 (2004) + subsequent issues.

Federici, Silvia. Enduring Western Civilization: The Construction of Western Civilization and its "Others". Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995.

Fernstein, Linda A. "Writer Identity and ESL Learners: Critical Discourse Analysis Provides a Way to Study Power Relations and the Embedded Ideologies that Shape How Second Language

Students Come to Understand Who They are as Writers." Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy 52,1 (2008): 4.

Foley, Joseph A. (ed). Language, Education and Discourse: Functional Approaches. London: Continuum, 2004.

Graham, Linda J. "Speaking of 'Disorderly' Objects: A Poetics of Pedagogical Discourse." Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education 28,1 (2007):1-20.

Hooks, bell. Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom. London: Routledge, 1994,

Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenges to Western Thought. New York: Basic, 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. and Mark Turner. More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor. U of Chicago P, 1989.

Liasidou, Anastasia. "Critical Discourse Analysis and Inclusive Educational Policies: The Power to Exclude." Journal of Education Policy 23,5 (2008):

McClanahan, Lauren G. "Practicing What We Preach: Using Reflective Writing as an Indicator of Learning." Studying Teacher Education 4,2 (2008).

Turner, Mark. Reading Minds: The Study of English in the Age of Cognitive Science. NJ: Princeton UP, 1991.

\_\_\_\_\_. Cognitive Dimensions of Social Science. NY:Oxford UP, 2001.

Van Dijk, Teun A. Elite Discourse and Racism London: Sage, 1993.

Van Goor, Roel and Frieda Heyting. "Negotiating the World: Some Philosophical Considerations on Dealing with Differential Academic Language Proficiency in Schools." Educational Philosophy and Theory 40,5 (2008): 652-665.