UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Philip Austin Gilreath

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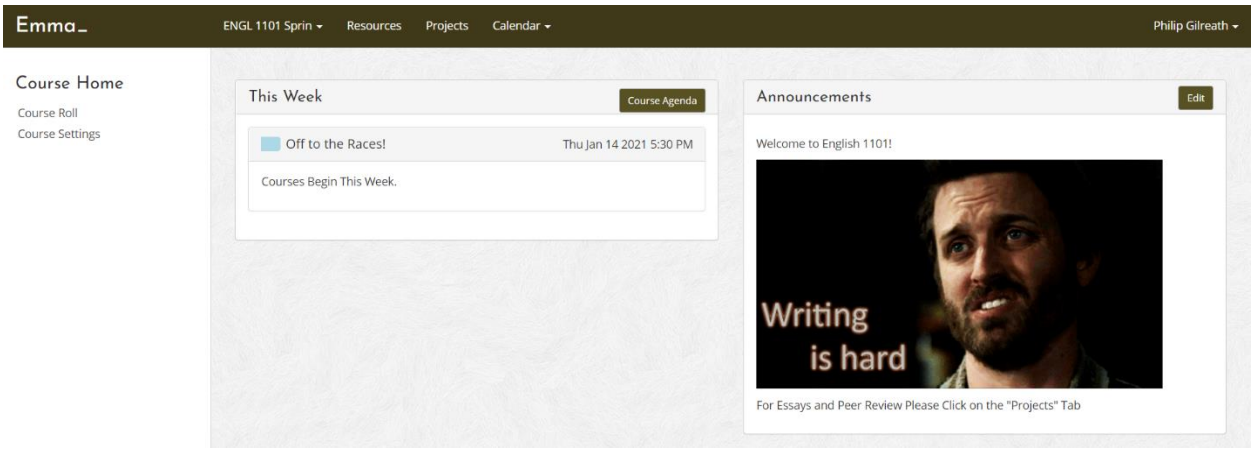
Submitted for the 2021 Excellence in Teaching Award

Philip Gilreath

Teaching Portfolio



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January 25, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to recommend Philip Gilreath for the Excellence in Teaching Award. I have known Mr. Gilreath almost from the moment I assumed my current position as the Director of First-year Writing (FYW) here at UGA, a little over a year ago. Mr. Gilreath was one of the first graduate students I met in our program in part because he is exceptionally committed to the teaching of writing. At the time, Mr. Gilreath was teaching a special ESOL version of our first-year writing courses. He is one of only two GTAs that we have ever entrusted to teach ESOL version of the First-year Writing curriculum, which must teach the standard writing curriculum, but tailor its delivery for non-native speakers of English, a tall task for any instructor, and certainly for one who is also undertaking graduate study.

I have known Mr. Gilreath as his instructor in a graduate course, but primarily as the supervisor responsible for the program within which he teaches. I have found Mr. Gilreath to be a deeply committed teacher, and exceptionally collegial and flexible in his willingness to take on a host of disparate teaching responsibilities, which he in turn executes with exceptional professionalism.

A year ago, the First-year Writing Office selected Mr. Gilreath as a summer instructor, itself a testament to his teaching ability given limited funding for summer teaching. We award summer teaching positions only to our more effective, responsible GTAs. But after the pandemic hit, our summer teachers were challenged to convert their course plans to fully online formats, and Mr. Gilreath, in particular, embraced the change. He was an active participant in the training sessions our office offered, and he designed an approachable and effective asynchronous online course. Students responded well, and his evaluation scores that summer were 4.83 out of 5. While exceptionally high, such outstanding evaluations have been a norm for Mr. Gilreath over the course of his career at UGA.

What impressed FYW staff more than that, however, was Mr. Gilreath's leadership in designing a guide to online instruction for other teachers in the FYW program. Our

office didn't ask him to do this, and in fact we were pleasantly surprised when he and his collaborators presented us with the finished draft: an accessible and comprehensive guide to using UGA's online instruction resources. This proactive engagement with teaching in our program has defined Mr. Gilreath's work with us; he's not only an excellent teacher, he's a supportive colleague and an effective peer mentor.

Philip's teaching work extends beyond UGA's campus. Until the pandemic struck, he worked as a tutor with Common Good Atlanta, an organization that offers and supports college-level courses for incarcerated students. Along with a small group of other UGA faculty and graduate instructors, he traveled to Whitworth Women's Prison several times a semester to work one-on-one with incarcerated students on their writing projects. In the prison, Mr. Gilreath listens carefully to his students' thoughts and writing, then offers useful, pedagogically sound feedback. When the pandemic forced Common Good to shift instructional approaches to a correspondence model, Philip immediately agreed to continue his tutoring work at a distance. Driving an hour each way to work with incarcerated students for no compensation speaks to Mr. Gilreath's dedication to teaching and the liberatory potential of writing instruction.

In summary, Mr. Gilreath represents and enacts the most noble qualities of a graduate instructor. His takes his teaching seriously, which is reflected in his students' success and outstanding teaching evaluations. He has gone well beyond his required obligations to create resources to serve his fellow GTAs and their own students. Finally, he has extended his teaching reach beyond our campus, into a community of vulnerable but hungry learners, demonstrating the true potential of our GTAs beyond the Athens community. In my opinion and the opinion of my office, Mr. Gilreath perfectly exemplifies the qualities that should be celebrated with the Excellence in Teaching Award.

Sincerely,

Nathan Kreuter

[signed electronically]
Nate Kreuter
Associate Professor and Director of First-year Writing

Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

My name is Philip Gilreath, and I am a fifth-year doctoral candidate with the English department, where I teach composition and literature. In this letter, I would like to introduce a few things about my teaching that have helped me do well—within and beyond the traditional classroom—during my time at UGA and especially during the past year.

My teaching, like my scholarship, focuses on adaptation. I tell my students that linguistic flexibility—the ability to thrive within a plenitude of languages and media—is the most important skill to develop in a writing class. My classes engage with the "big" terms in English: grounding concepts like *literature*, *art*, or even *Shakespeare* to each student's purpose. We spend time digging into what I call the "moving components" of persuasion: thinking about the value of purpose of an ambiguous metaphor, an ultimate opening statement in a novel, music review, or student essay; we re-write and paraphrase each other's papers, or remix and imitate works of art, translating image to text, text to image, all the while discussing what takes place when you shift modes, shift between media. As a teacher, you learn to read the room, to help your students learn actively as they create a dialogue with the material. The *plan* is always a *process*.

As one of the English department's ESOL specialists, I help international students adapt to an unfamiliar academic setting. On the flipside, my service work takes me beyond the bounds of the traditional classroom. I tutor for Common Good Atlanta, helping students incarcerated in the Georgia penal system work on their writing as they study literature, ethics, or philosophy. My two terms spent as a graduate administrator with the Oxford program saw me living in England, advising a household of some fifty undergraduates, many of whom had never left the country before, let alone adapted to such a different educational environment.

2020 redefined what it means to be *in* a classroom. That place of emergent learning, the room or lecture hall dissolved. The pivot to asynchronous and HyFlex instruction required rapid and urgent innovation. To that end, I reached out to some peers in the department and asked them to work with me to create a brief, useful resource on remote instruction. We learned by doing, and sometimes failing, and ended up collating our thoughts on organization and structure; on how to make yourself visible to students, and how to deal with crises. This document—"The Handy Dandy Online Teaching Resource"—was acclaimed by peers and professors in the English department this fall and ended up circulating other departments as well as on social media—yet another unlikely place of learning on which I've come to rely.

Teaching is learned through collaboration, and while we didn't reinvent the wheel, we managed to help some other instructors who really needed it. To me, that's what teaching and learning about writing is all about: using language to transform "places" of learning. Teachers adapt so that students can invent.

Philip Austin Gilreath

Philip Austin Gilreath

Teaching Philosophy

I aim to help my students appreciate how strange, nuanced, and compelling writing can be, and how the work of a famous author or the work of an individual pupil can open our eyes to the diversity our language can, and must be, invested with. This is the value of expertise, both for English majors as well as students satisfying their general requirements. My teaching emphasizes linguistic and intellectual flexibility—in part by my developing my students' fluency in genre and media, but most importantly by encouraging them to use their external interests to better understand and animate the works we study in my literature and composition courses.

My teaching foregrounds the power of creative transformation. Just as William Shakespeare adapted works from antiquity and has been in turn adapted and transformed, my students adapt their assignments to suit their needs and dispositions. As an instructor, I strike a balance between the holistic and the particular. To that end, I structure writing lessons around individual pieces—quotations, figures, or operations—single ideas to be expanded and improvised. One day we'll examine the first sentence of famous novels, popular music reviews, and student essays. The next, we'll discuss the rhetorical figure "paralipsis," musing on how absence can be used for emphasis. My focus on transformative creativity has resulted in some off-the-wall student projects: a former student adapted a sonnet by E.E. Cummings into a rock ballad first included in his final portfolio and later performed by his local band *Kudzu Samurai*. Greeting me outside the library several years after our course, he told me the song was a staple of his band's setlist and that I had a lifetime spot on their guestlist. Another student, born in Japan and raised in Georgia, re-wrote Richard Wright's sonnets in Japanese as part of a creative remix assignment. Her commentary discussed how this activity represented an investigation of the multiple sides of her identity as a first-generation English speaker and Georgian. At every step I teach students about the *processes* of writing—so often creative and intuitive—as well as the numerous *products* they will be asked to submit during their academic and professional careers. Writing is collaborative, thrives with flexibility and adaptability, and I orient each of my diverse lessons plans around these principles.

I teach my students to understand the moving components of persuasion. As my research and writing in the history of rhetorical tropes has shown me, formulae, figures, and generic structures provide scaffolding but are also productive categories for learners. I encourage my students to internalize the "rules" of writing, but then to turn around and interrogate the motives behind these rules. Learning a language, like specializing in a field, or even mastering a musical instrument, involves negotiating the code and understanding the transactions that take place when you ask an audience for their attention. Trained in student-centered, constructivist pedagogy in the US, online, and overseas, I introduce genre forms and different types of rhetorical strategies for my students and then let them occupy the center of instruction and activity. In my classroom, we focus not only on the "how" but also on the "why" and the "so what?" of scholarly writing: my first research assignment sends students off the deep end into the library databases. They trawl through the digital collection of published artifacts, and then report back on what's out there, while considering the purpose of all these articles about Shakespeare or Chaucer, what kind of values they transmit, and what it means to try to apprehend an academic discipline from the outside. After this preliminary reflection on scholarship's overwhelming and

teeming multitudes, students learn to break down the individual article into its components, learn how an individual voice contributes to the conversation.

Students need autonomy, need to be able to make choices, for the classroom environment to feel genuine. However, students also need to be challenged by unfamiliar and often difficult material. In a first-year writing course structured around literature, I emphasize to students that "literature"—its elusive definition and endless qualifications—will function as our mutually alienating idiom: that our purpose is not only to survey literary history but also to interrogate concepts like "writing," "literature", or "art," so important to education, yet so unclearly defined. I expose my students to newer, recent works of media that broaden their awareness of the expressive capacity of new media. I also ask them to read and engage with the widespread and iconic, to think about the cultural apparatuses that surround and envelope these texts. We can never assume what our students know, what they have already seen before they enter the classroom community. The collaborative process helps us move through these moments of uncertainty.

In my advanced literature classes I encourage students to explore how media shapes and is shaped throughout time—how context, environment, and appropriation transform literary objects we may take as given. My students interrogate William Shakespeare's cultural currency, how his perceived "value" speaks to the public, who might view Shakespeare as an emissary for culture, the English language, or as a marketing tool. At the same time, we think about the Renaissance and its nascent categories of nationhood, sexuality, or race—how these emergent concepts were created through patchwriting, informed by English literature's liberal borrowing from the works of the cultural and historical other. I think about how rhetorical training in the Renaissance—the humanistic learning curriculums that still inform our pedagogy today—emphasized interpretive transformation while questioning the "naturalizing" processes of writing education. I find ways to blend students' personal experience and values into the bespoke research assignment, or to emphasize rhetorical structure and trope in popular writing genres like the music review or the blog post. My courses use both formative and summative assessment throughout the semester, giving students the opportunity to praise and appraise their work while also challenging them to develop and define their understanding of critical or literary fluency.

The contexts of education—where learning *takes place*—have factored heavily into my teaching and scholarship, and will be more important than ever as the industry transforms over this next generation. My research in media and adaptation interrogates the conditions of production, context, and differentiation: the way media develops in both enabling and restrictive ways. Media tools and the means of transmission will be central to the academic experience as educational models transform, as technology and asynchronous instruction create spaces of learning that do not merely complement or substitute, but foster learning in their own right. I believe that the one essential value I can transmit to my students is the enthusiasm and wonder I have for writing, for both its creativity and practical necessity. I want to use this enthusiasm to help my students develop their own intellectual frameworks, to suit their personal needs. Writing, for my students, will become transitive—a form of empowerment.

Description of Courses Taught

ENGL 1101: First-Year Writing

Instructor of Record

Semesters Taught: Fall 2016, Fall 2017, Spring 21 (in progress)

Course Content: 1101 primes students for college-level writing. Students gain a basis in rhetoric, research methods, essay structure, creative and analytical interventions in writing. Over the semester, the students write in as many genres as possible (editorial, research, reflection) as they produce a final portfolio that represents both the final project but also an opportunity for formative and summative assessment.

These are workshop styled classes featuring generally 20 students. ESOL sections draw students from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities, and tend to cap at 15 students.

Teaching Role: Gathering, ordering, and assigning all materials. Developing syllabus, assignments, and schedule. Developing and maintaining eLC portions of the course as well as the course content on EMMA, the English department's in-house submission and markup site. In 2021, this course features in-person, synchronous, and asynchronous dimensions.

ENGL 1102: First-Year Writing with Literature

Instructor of Record

Semesters Taught: Spring 17, Spring 18, Fall 19 (ESOL), Spring 20 (ESOL), Summer 20 (asynchronous online), Fall 20

Course Content: Students examine articles, short stories, poetry, and artistic adaptations. The aim is to decode or interpret these various works, all the while fashioning arguments about what terms like "literature" or "art" mean or how we can derive meaning from them.

Teaching Role: Responsible for pivot from in-person to asynchronous in spring 20, full asynchronous instruction in summer 20, synchronous and asynchronous options in fall 2020.

ENGL 4320E: Shakespeare in Context

Instructor of Record

Semesters Taught: Summer 19

Course Content: This is an upper division literature course that introduces students to Shakespeare's plays and their historical context in early modern England. Students progress through a variety of interactive assignments: they examine historical/primary documents, familiarize themselves with the layout and geography of early modern London, learn about the renaissance playhouse, all while immersing themselves in Shakespeare's language and plots.

This course was delivered asynchronously using frameworks developed in collaboration with Professor Sujata Iyengar of the English department.

Sample Teaching Materials

Moving Parts, Minimal Lectures

- Writing involves process and product; the techniques and activities by which we develop our abilities, and the things we produce along the way.
- Students learn best by doing.

These precepts in mind, I keep lectures to a minimum, and treat them as framing devices for the students' explorations. I try to focus on generative tools and models for imitation and variation.

Below, I use a set of crucial rhetorical figures (hyperbole, simile, metaphor) to frame an assigned reading: an ambiguous short story about romance, evolution, and death.

Sunday: Introduction to Aimee Bender "The Rememberer"

Here are three more words to think about while reading Aimee Bender's short story "The Rememberer."

These are all rhetorical figures, otherwise referred to as "figures of speech."

Hyperbole: A figure of speech consisting in exaggerated or extravagant statement, used to express strong feeling or produce a strong impression, and not intended to be understood literally.

Simile: A comparison of one thing with another, usually in regard to a particular attribute, esp. as a figure of speech.

Metaphor: A figure of speech in which a name or descriptive word or phrase is transferred to an object or action different from, but analogous to, that to which it is literally applicable; an instance of this, a metaphorical expression.

Let's break it down. Let's pretend that I'm going to write a love poem.

For hyperbole, I might write: "your eyes are literally the most beautiful thing on the planet." My statement is exaggerated.

For simile, I might write: "your eyes are like stars." They are "like stars" because they remind me of stars.

For metaphor, I remove the "like." The eyes become stars. I would say: "Your eyes ARE stars." There is a subtle difference between a simile and a metaphor, but what is it?

Now, if I took this metaphor and turned it into a complete story, it would be called an **Allegory.** A lot of folk stories or myths count as allegories.

My question for Aimee Bender's "The Remember": is this an allegory? Does it need to be? Are we supposed to understand this story in literal terms?

Or, more simply, what is going on?

Students will synthesize other rhetorical figures, use them to generate arguments rather than to answer questions about writing: these "detachable components" of persuasion are part of the process of writing, part of the set of tools my students develop.

In this next lesson, I introduce ways to "open" an argument, then examine first lines from famous novels and books of literary scholarship. Then, students track down these rhetorical opener strategies in music reviews on *Pitchfork.com* before writing their own essay intros.

Monday: Opening Moves

Opening moves

There are many ways to begin a paper.

Notice what I did there? I began with a general statement. This can work, but sometimes your writing is in danger of over-generalization. I call this effect the "Google Earth Effect." It looks something like:

Since the dawn of time, humanity has attempted to figure out how to begin papers.

We don't want this. Here are two strategies to avoid bland openers.

Two approaches

1. **The "jump in" approach**: begin with textual evidence, or a quote that introduces your reader to the main topic or idea of your essay.

Example:

Midway through Aimee Bender's "The Rememberer," the narrator describes her relationship with her lover—who soon after begins a fantastical process of reverse evolution—as follows:

> Last day I saw him human, he was sad about the world. This was not unusual. He was always sad about the world. It was a large reason why I loved him. We'd sit together and be sad and think about being sad and sometimes discuss sadness. (Bender 4)

The speaker and her lover's tendency to routinely discuss and conceptualize sadness offers insight into one of the story's primary thematic opposition, which can be described as an opposition between emotional and rationality… (continue to basic summary and thesis statement)

2. **The "provocative" opening approach**: begin with a statement that draws in your reader

From the stories we have read:

- "My lover is experiencing reverse evolution" (Bender 3).
- "Once there was a boy whose father built a labyrinth. This is a different story from the one that you know" (Currie 132).

One of the openings is startling but blunt; the other subverts expectations.

Frameworks for Successful Writing

For essays, I establish clear solid frameworks that leave room for experimentation.

Here's an example of an essay designed to teach students about scholarly writing and the library database.

Project Three: Research Reflection

In this assignment, you will use the UGA Databases to research a chosen *text*: any film, book, or piece of media. I strongly suggest choosing a text that is familiar to you. Your essay will satisfy three goals:

1) Explore the scholarly consensus: the central topics and themes in the scholarly "conversation" around this text
2) Select a single peer-reviewed, academic article and summarize its argument and structure
3) Reflect on your experience exploring this research.

Your main jobs in this assignment are *curation* and *synthesis*: determine the major areas of critical interest, concern, or controversy with regards to the text you're researching, and then reflect on this experience. Are you surprised that scholars seem to focus on X when discussing this text? What is the importance of these discussions to the world "outside of" literary theory?

The goal for this paper is to help you understand the complex task of comparing dense information within academia. This has applications across many fields of knowledge, and will help you throughout your academic career in the task of understanding the inherent arguments of research papers as well as in the undertaking of comparing, contrasting, and evaluating the enormous amounts of data you will encounter in your college career, and even in your later personal and professional life.

You may most easily locate these peer-reviewed, academic research papers on the following databases: *JSTOR* and *MLA International Bibliography*. Do not use dissertations or other literature reviews. Include an MLA citation for the article you choose for your summary.

Form: This essay is ultimately a combination of **narrative and reflection** about your experience using the online database to investigate a specific topic.

You should divide this essay by goal. First, introduce the text you want to research, give a brief summary, and explain why you chose this text: what about it makes it worth researching? Next, describe the databases you used for your research. Describe the types of journals that publish articles on this text: what are the names of some of these journals, and what other kinds of articles do they publish? After that, **focus on a single journal article**: break it down into its argument and rhetorical structure. Think about argument, organization, style, and delivery. What is remarkable about any of these elements? Finally, spend some time reflecting on 1) the process of research itself, and its difficulties 2) what you think of this type of "work" as far as its practical applications and relevance 3) the ways you might use scholarly databases and e-journals in the future.

Formulate a thesis by focusing on an area of interest in your text. Don't make a claim about the text itself, but rather talk about the conversation around this text: what did you expect when choosing to research X, what did you find, and what are your conclusions about this experience? Any confusion, uncertainty, or weirdness you encounter can become part of your discussion and argument.

Sample of Student Work

Students often allow me to incorporate their work into future lesson designs, so each class is inflected by work from previous students, informed by their creative decisions.

- Here's an example of a student essay that has become an exemplary teaching resource.

Wednesday: Essay 2 Intro and Thesis Samples

Flashbulb Moments: A Study of Splashes in *Persepolis*

Certain moments in one's life, known as flashbulb moments, stand out in one's memory in extreme detail. These moments are marked by clear recollections of an experience that usually contain periods of high or intense emotion. Throughout her graphic novel *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi incorporates flashbulb moments from her childhood through the use of splash pages, or full page panels, which serve as turning points in the novel. *Persepolis* is a story about how Satrapi grows up in a tumultuous and restrictive environment in Iran. Marji faces many challenges, but she ultimately learns to use these obstacles to become a stronger person. While much of the novel is extremely structured and subdued, there are two splashes, or moments, which stand out due to their chaotic design and complexity: the fall of the Shah and the climax of the war with Iraq. These two splashes represent two major moments in Satrapi's life which stand out in her memory due to their great emotional and mental impact; these moments are highly influential and represent the most joyous and most tragic moments in Satrapi's life.

- Here's an example of student work that reflects on how 2020 redefined the idea of *place*.

Five-Star Quarantine

Why would anyone need to leave their home when they can visit their friends online through *Animal Crossing*? With Nintendo's timely release of their latest hit, *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* in March 2020 at the peak of a global pandemic, many people found themselves spending a majority of their time stuck at home running around flower fields and digging up fossils in this virtual universe. Without the possibility of physically spending time with friends due to social distancing guidelines, Animal Crossing was one of many avenues used to stay connected when COVID-19 seemed to be pulling humanity apart. I found my refuge in the game,

spending endless hours tending to my personal universe. Animal Crossing became the main source of my entertainment and socialization. It was the most prominent way I interacted with anyone besides my family. The Coronavirus Pandemic has had an enormous impact on the way we as human beings interact with one another. (Pictured above is my own *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* Island). Virtual action has replaced physical interaction. This raises the question, is there even a need for physical location anymore? And if so, how necessary is it? Technology has expanded our ability to communicate across the globe; despite this convenience, humans will always have a desire for physical locations, contact, and communication.

I also ask students to translate, adapt, or remix texts that we've encountered in class (or out in the world). This works well for both first and second-language students of English, as it tests comprehension, drives students to autonomous conclusions, and challenges them to engage with the material on their own terms.

Here's a Remix of Ezra Pound's "In a Station of the Metro."

Wednesday: Remix Examples

Ezra Pound, In a Station of the Metro (1913-1915)

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;

Petals on a wet, black bough

One student posted this image:

Wednesday: Remix Examples

From Another Student:

I am nobody:

A red sinking autumn sun

Took my name away.

誰でもない：

沈む太陽

名を奪う

I give permission

For this slow spring rain to soak

The violet beds.

許可あげよう

春雨浸る

すみれ花

With a twitching nose

A dog reads a telegram

On a wet tree trunk.

鼻寄せて

This student translated Richard Wright's haiku into Japanese before reflecting on how this process activated and engaged different parts of her own multifaceted identity.

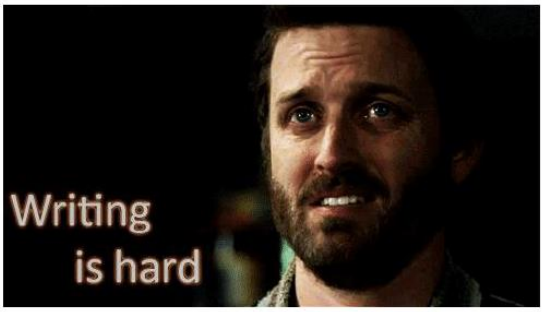
Innovative Teaching Project and Support

Teachers Learn by Collaborating

Here are a few extracts from the asynchronous teaching manual I organized in collaboration with several colleagues last summer. (Full access here)

Asynchronous Writing Instruction

Prepared by: The Summer FYW Team (Katie Hurlock, Michelle-Taylor Sherwin, Philip Gilreath)



This document is meant to aid instructors preparing for remote writing instruction

All advice or comments are welcome. Please submit to Philip Gilreath, UGA

Section Breakdown (use ctrl-f to jump to the section)

My aim was to produce something short, transitive, and generative. I took the same approach to this document that I do to my teaching: frameworks and structures for other instructors to adapt and alter as needed.

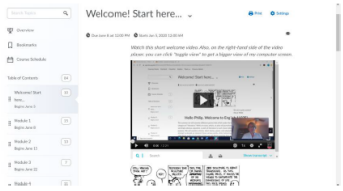
In the lead-up to fall semester, several grad student colleagues expressed their appreciation, I was approached about circulating the document in other departments, and I also posted it to some teaching groups on Social Media.

- Sections included layout, design, delivery
- How to facilitate online discussion
- We brainstormed and collated ways to maintain student contact

General Tips

- Before the course begins, preface with explanatory "Welcome Letter" (example at end)
- This letter should tell students how to access the eLC course on day one.
- Include a "welcome module" at the beginning of the course. This module should provide course information (syllabus, writing center, schedule, portfolio info) but more importantly should teach students how to progress through the online material and access

Emma



Philip: I started my Welcome Module with a short screen-cast video that showed students how to access and progress through my eLC content.

- Redundancy is important in remote instruction: repetition of assignment and activity instructions (I.e. if it's in your lecture video also post as announcement, also in eLC files and discussions)
- Shoot for clarity and accessibility: online readings, chunked materials and activities, considerations for low student bandwidth
- Students will check eLC at the beginning of the week but may not log in every day. Try to have each week fully planned out from the beginning
- Have a goal for each reading/activity: loose discussions are possible, but difficult online

- Crowd-source and share materials with the cohort

- This last section, Helping Students in Need, is worth including in full.

Katie: weird/distracting things will happen in the background of Zoom calls with parents, younger siblings, etc. Just try your best to keep the call going and, if things are getting really out of control, I will usually ask the student if they would like to do another time (but I don't make them.) (I did ask a student to get off a Zoom call once, as they were driving, yikes! So, if something really makes you uncomfortable, ending the call is okay.) -Katie

*Michelle: I had students meet with me twice over the course of the semester for Papers 1 and 2. I had three voluntary Zoom meetings per week, scheduled at a time that worked for the majority of students. *Also! I made sure to contact them at the start of every week with an email, outlining the deadlines/expectations for that week. Some students said it was easy to see it all at once at the start of the week in an email rather than on Emma/eLC.*

Katie: I have done appointment only too, but I've made them have a Zoom conference with me 2 times over the semester. I've also encouraged emailing questions that can be an email with success. Having reflected on how the summer went, I think that appointment only is still the best model. I agree with what Michelle wrote below that email contact on a regular schedule is ideal. I also want to underscore that encouraging students to ask questions over email as much as they can is important.

Helping Students in Need

- **Develop a clear but clear and flexible policy for extensions**

Michelle: When making my schedule initially, I also made an "Alternative Schedule," in which I mapped out for each assignment an acceptable extension deadline so I could more easily and quickly provide a new, extended date for a student in need. - Michelle

Philip: I tell students no late work is accepted unless they arrange for an extension before the due date. I ended up accepting late work anyway in some cases, but the policy made it so most students who saw something coming up would contact me and I knew what to expect and how long they would be MIA. I believe this worked better than the "X points off per day" policy many instructors use.

Katie: I had many students this summer, more than I expected and more, I think, than other people who needed pandemic-related accommodations. I have a feeling that the fall will be a little smoother in this regard (more kids living on campus), but I had multiple students who were working retail, in bad home situations, doing childcare, sick, etc.

I still believe in being as flexible as possible for these students with no questions asked extensions, but for my own sake, I want to be clearer about the latest I will accept assignments and have a better system in place for keeping track of students taking extensions. For example, I had students asking if they could turn in participation assignments from our first unit in during our third unit; by that point, those assignments aren't truly relevant anymore, and the student making them up isn't gaining much by doing them. I want to establish "all unit work due by X day" guidelines for the fall.

That's what this project was all about—helping students (and teachers) in need. The pivot was incredibly difficult and our challenges are ongoing. Collaboration and support are more important than ever, and in my own way I hope I've offered these things to my classmates and students.

After all, grad instructors *are* students too. We learn from and support each other.

Sample Student Evaluations

Average teaching effectiveness: 4.6 out of 5 (5 highest)

Fall 2020

“Mr. Gilreath was a wonderful professor. He made himself available for students and was willing to hold one-on-one appointments where students could talk about their concerns. Though a tough grader, he gave his students multiple opportunities to improve their essay and discuss it with him. At the same time, he probed his students with questions to think outside of the box.”

“No busy work, every assignment was interesting and felt useful. I felt that I could really express myself in my writing.”

Summer 2020

“I think this class was a very safe space online space to write. He always provided very useful feedback and was very understanding to everything going on. The class was very entertaining we read a variety of different texts. Overall 10/10”

“The content was always different each week and interesting.”

“He was very helpful and offered really effective reviews of our work.”

“I liked how the class was set up in “modules” because it made everything easy to stay on top of and the organization of the class as a whole was really effective. I also liked how we had 2 drafts of our essays before the final.”

“Engaging, thoughtful, and not at all boring or condescending.”

Spring 2020

“I think Mr. Gilreath was a really good teacher. He always had his plan ready for the class and knew exactly what we were going to do on that day. I believe he was a really nice and a friendly person. The effective reviews that he gave on my essays were the most helpful.”

“He's one of the greatest and most dedicated teachers I have had since HS.”

“He is great at expanding your ideas and giving you a lot to think about when you go home. He effectively teaches his coursework, and the students can see how each assignment is somehow a part of a larger picture, which makes his course and his teaching very complete. He's honest and intelligent and he can bring out the best thoughts in his students.”

Fall 2019

“Somehow always found a way to introduce a new angle to a pre-existing essay which was never not helpful. Gave us a lot of ideas but made sure we developed those ideas on our own.”

“Professor Gilreath is one of the best Literature teachers that I've ever had in my educational career. He really cares about his students and is willing to accommodate any flaws and imperfections in regards to writing and English in class. I've definitely felt and improvement in

my writing skills during the process of taking this class. Professor Gilreath represents the Quality education that every student at University of Georgia is entitled to."

Fall 2018

"Mr. Gilreath was always available when I needed him to talk to me about my essays. He gave me helpful comments about what I could change and what I needed to do to make my essay more effective. Mr. Gilreath helped me brainstorm what kind of ideas I wanted to include in my essays and focus my thesis more which is something I struggled with initially."

Spring 18

"He is extremely passionate about teaching and educating us on classic literature. Other teachers usually give vague feedback when students ask questions, but Mr. Gilreath actually helps us. He also cares about us as people, Almost everyday he asks, "How are tests going this week?" or "Is anyone busy?" I really appreciate that. I love this class!"

Professional Activities and Training

HONORS & AWARDS

2020 Langdale Award for Exceptional English Graduate Student

2020 UGA Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award

2018 Robert Park Essay Award for Strongest Graduate Essay, UGA English Department

PEER-REVIEWED TEACHING ARTICLES

2019 Philip Gilreath, "'For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings': Henry's Popular Afterlives," *Focus on Henry V*, Edited by Sujata Iyengar and Nathalie Vienne-Guerrin, Scalar, 2009 (Peer-reviewed, open-access educational resource).

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

2019-2021 Common Good Atlanta, higher education for incarcerated students.

2018-2019 University of Georgia, Graduate Administrator, UGA at Oxford Program

CERTIFICATIONS

2016 Graduate Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, Department of Teacher Education, College of Charleston.

2011 Hess International Educational Group TEFL Certification