

## Teaching Philosophy

In the teaching of writing, I aim to facilitate the development of rhetorical flexibility as students compose texts across multiple genres. Whether developing theoretical frameworks for an engaged curriculum in a graduate class, writing rhetorical or genre analyses in advanced composition, workshopping nonfiction in creative writing, or writing proposals and argument remixes in first-year composition, my students will compose a range of assignments that challenge them to reflect upon the textured, social, and ideological influences of writing. I make space for imagining writing as a personal and rhetorical transaction, and I challenge students to inquire about their perspectives on the processes of learning and writing. My first-year composition classes are often geared toward that type of reflection in relationship to critical analysis of texts, from printed publications to physical learning spaces to public art, which then leads to the composing of practical arguments often situated in local contexts. This has led to projects such as a military veteran's impassioned letter to a conservative Kansas senator known for supporting the funding of VA clinics or another student's public, text-based resistance of Kansas legislation seeking to limit restroom access based on perceived gender. I have also involved students in international collaborations; for instance, one semester I partnered with a colleague at the American University in Cairo to engage students in assignments that focused on examining definitions and practices associated with revolution, resistance, and social change. We designed a selfie assignment inspired by the Lebanese selfie protest on Twitter (#notamartyr), which responded to the death of Mohammad Char in 2013. The assignment provided a consequential space for Egyptian and American students to discuss and critique the effectiveness of viral posts and became the basis for writing and research projects that semester. I cite these examples because they reflect my efforts to encourage critical, dynamic inquiries that take into account how diverse perspectives and identifications might meet, pass, regress, converge, diverge, conflict, and grow. It is an approach I continue to develop but that has grown from my experiences working with a variety of students for many years and in several capacities. I have worked with first-generation students, students from rural parts of Kansas, multilingual learners, both privileged and marginalized Egyptians at the American University in Cairo, community college students in California, veterans, athletes, and many others. Additionally, my interdisciplinary research and writing has developed and refined my capacity to teach, write, and research in multiple contexts and with many purposes in mind. In the classroom, I work to be responsive, reflective, and fair with my students. I try to find out what students already bring – their experiences and types of knowledge. I work to avoid prescriptive comments, encourage creative approaches to structure and content, and establish critical feedback as not punitive but useful (and difficult) for several reasons. I take a long view about the acquisition of rhetorical flexibility. As a writer engaged in scholarly, creative, and publicly accessible writing, I place significance on the idea that “text” is an expansive term with many possibilities for critical engagement.

