As teachers we construct syllabi on a relatively regular basis. Why not discuss our pedagogical plans and theories by sharing copies of our syllabi with other instructors. Both syllabi and teaching portfolios link documentation to multiple audiences. These documents must also be flexible enough to accommodate change, including large-or small-scale revisions, without teachers feeling compelled to misrepresent their teaching

- identities,
- practices, and
- philosophies.

Getting feedback from a mentor and/or colleague during the construction process can be useful in negotiating issues of audience, purpose, and effect.

Arizona State University Preparing Future Faculty Portfolio

Lisa Cahill
1999–2001

Shelley Rodrigo Blanchard
1999–2001

Virtual Rhetoric Course Proposal

Who:
We developed a course proposal for a 300-level course in Visual Rhetoric.

What:
In response to the English department's invitation for graduate students to submit course proposals, we constructed a course that would help students think about the significance of visual media (such as web pages, digital art, computer games, television, and film) in their civic, personal, academic, and professional lives.

When:
Summer 2000, in preparation for spring 2001 offering

Where:
Arizona State University, Main campus, English Department

Why this particular experience?
We wanted experience in constructing a special topics course and in designing a course syllabus (including a reading list, week-by-week themes, and assignments). Additionally, we wanted to propose a topic to the department that we felt was important to discuss and that would appeal to students across disciplines.

How did this facilitate professional development?
This experience facilitated our professional development in terms of syllabus construction and course objective design. It also provided us with the opportunity to meet Dr. Dawn Bates, Associate Chair of the English department, and to discuss the terms that make offering a course feasible.

Supporting Documents:

Proposal Cover Letter (MS Word doc)
Proposal for Virtual Rhetoric (MS Word doc)
Notes from Debriefing Meeting (MS Word doc) with **Dr. xxxx xxxxx**

Course Proposal De-Briefing
with Dr. xxxx xxxx, Associate Chair, English Department

8 August 2000

The course appears kind of dense for our target audience of students—undergraduate; 50/50 split between English majors and nonmajors.

Good cover letter—good material for pitching the course idea to the committee reviewing proposals in English department

Try pitching the course description to actual students to see what they have to say—could help in revising the course.

Would the undergraduate students understand the relevance of the course content and theory?

Title is good for a graduate course but not for an undergraduate course—we need to keep the titles short.

Consider the restriction in the fall/spring schedule of classes: 17 characters allowed in catalog (17 characters after "Special Topics:" _____)

We have a robust reading list and offer high intellectual substance.

Offering a hybrid course design is a good idea (students meet sometimes totally online and sometimes in a traditional, face-to-face environment).

Need to offer ourselves as instructors who can handle a hybrid course (explain why we're qualified to do this); Pitch to the department committee in our cover letter.

Submit a draft of a flyer to the department committee that is more geared to the information needs of the department committee.

There is an issue with courses that are co-taught—salary payments.

A hybrid class component would allow the class to be larger; make 2 sections of ENG 394 and then department committee could offer another graduate student his/her own 394 course. 38 students is the "norm" for a 394 class.

The department only offers 2 sections of 394 and pays for two different instructors. Our course proposal means that the department would pay for a total of 3 instructors (Shelley and Lisa to teach ENG 394: Visual Rhetoric) and another instructor to teach ENG 394: xxx.

There is a possibility of offering the course to the Humanities department and then cross listing the course with the English department—in order to sell the idea of a co-taught class to the English department committee.

Need to cut down the reading list and list the books on the course description.

Draft of the Course Outline—good detail but too dense in terms of readings

It was unclear to the committee how the mediums and the readings tie in together.

- Need to integrate this information into the actual draft of the course outline
- Explain the connection better in the letter/proposal to the department committee
- Alert students to the "show and tell aspect" of the course

Reading List—Need to strike a balance between the doability and the intellectual robustness of the course.

All 300-level ENG courses require a term paper or equivalent.

Talk to a faculty member in the English department about co-teaching this class (a collaborative venture).

- Possibly break in the realm of the break-out sections typically offered as part of literature classes
- Take it out of graduate student-taught 394 courses and into the realm of faculty-taught 394 courses