

**Frances S. Johnson Junior Faculty Innovative Teaching Award
Application Form**

Application Deadline: Friday, July 30, 2010

Name: Bill Wolff

Department: Writing Arts

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Email: wolffw@rowan.edu

Year hired: 2006

In submitting this application, you are verifying that you have not have received tenure at Rowan or any other university by July 30, 2010.

In **no more** than 1500 words and using the following subheadings, describe your fulfillment of the criteria for the Junior Faculty Innovative Teaching Award:

Context for the teaching methodology and its implementation

This application is asking you to consider my spring 2009, fall 2009, and spring 2010 sections of Writing, Research, & Technology (WRT), a required undergraduate course for Writing Arts majors. These sections challenged students to rethink traditional conceptions and metaphors of writing by asking them to complete innovative, disciplinarily significant, pragmatic, and theoretically-informed work in three topic areas: video composition, remix, and video oral history.

In 2008 I received a Rowan Innovations in Teaching with Technology Grant to fund the purchase of 20 Flip video cameras and support a complete overhaul of my sections of WRT. (In 2010 I received a grant from the College of Communication to fund the purchase of 22 more cameras so I can teach two sections per semester.) I redesigned WRT so that students would be able to continue to challenge the idea of contemporary modes of composition first discussed in Introduction to Writing Arts. Specifically, the course extends traditional conceptions of composition in innovative ways by applying it to the medium of video.

Kevin Kelly (2008) described the emerging video movement as a cultural shift “from book fluency to screen fluency, from literacy to visuality.” As a means of engaging visuality the primary 10-week assignment is to create an oral history video composition that asks students to think critically about how writing, research, and technology are evolving in digital age. Students learn oral history research methodologies; construct

interview questions informed by documentaries, Studs Turkel interviews, and chapters from *The Oral History Reader* (Perks & Thomson, 2006); interview community members; and compose 8-10 minute (minimum) videos that mash together interview footage with still and moving images, primary documents, and sound.

Students also jump headlong into the complexities and controversies of a burgeoning field in composition and rhetoric: remix (Gaylor, 2008; Lessig, 2009; Tryon, 2009). By asking students to create their own videos that remix and build on the creativity of others, this unit challenges students' understanding of central terms for writers: text, authorship, creativity, ownership, and plagiarism. Students think about and engage with pressing contemporary social, political, and economic issues surrounding copyright by using Creative Commons licensed work (from Flickr and the music sharing site, Jamendo) and work in the public domain (from The Moving Image Archive); and make important rhetorical decisions by choosing an appropriate Creative Commons licenses for their work.

WRT is one of the few required upper level writing courses in the country that asks Writing majors to use video to further develop the critical thinking, reading, and writing skills that are necessary for a contemporary "literacy [that] today is in the midst of a tectonic shift" (Yancey, 2004). That literacy is visual and textual; it consists of being able to understand the complex, evasive relationships among texts and images—and how those relationships impact and are impacted by contemporary cultures. Writing is no longer just about using a keyboard to put words on a screen nor about using a pen to put words on paper. Writing, in our highly mediated, highly visual culture, is composing—in all the forms, media, and genres we can think of. It is the blending—or mashing-up—of images (still and moving), words, and music (Bezemer & Kress, 2008; Elbow, 2007; Haas, 2008).

Each of the courses I teach reflects my passion for learning, eagerness to challenge students in new ways, and desire to connect what happens inside the class with what is happening in students' lives outside the classroom. My courses are theory-driven and pragmatic. Theory-driven in the sense that they have theoretical content and also that they are informed by and re-conceive established and contemporary theories in composition pedagogy. Pragmatic in the sense that course assignments are project-based, sequenced, and often collaborative. WRT is no different.

Because studies show that the majority of contemporary students in all disciplines prefer courses that use a moderate amount of information technology, however, I try to make the technology as invisible in the class as possible. I do not consider contemporary information technologies to be tools. Tools become the focus of activities. Rather, I consider them to be part of what Nardi and O'Day (1999) define as an information ecology: "a system of people, practices, values, and technologies in a particular local environment. In information ecologies, the spotlight is not on technology, but on human activities that are served by technology" (p. 49). The primary human activities that are served by technologies in my classes are learning, teaching, critical thinking, and collaboration. In his observation of my spring 2010 section of WRT, Dr. Sandy Tweedie

supported my innovative pedagogical approach by writing: “Professor Wolff’s approach to [WRT] not only works, but is quite effective in teaching students about writing.”

Why this technique is innovative

The course is innovative because it is pushing the envelope of writing practices and pedagogy by employing a host of new assignments (video oral history, remix, video responses to readings), technologies (Flip video camera), and applications (iMovie, Windows Movie Maker, YouTube) to challenge students to rethink traditional modes of composition. The assignments take students out of their comfort zone, require significant risk-taking, and result in wonderfully imaginative and innovative video compositions.

Consider the oral history assignment. Oral history is “in the middle of a fourth, dizzying digital revolution in oral history and its outcomes are impossible to predict. . . [T]he future of oral history . . . has never been so exciting, or so uncertain” (Perks & Thomson, 2006, p. 8). With Flip video cameras in hand students are engaging that uncertainty. And, more importantly, by putting the assignment, web pages discussing oral history video composition tips, and their video oral histories online we are *shaping* the future of the field and contributing important conversations to the social fabric of society. The Oral History Video Archive that I created and students have populated is the only such video archive that I have found online. The videos present individuals whose voices on important social issues might never have been recorded, preserved, and broadcast to a world eager to watch, listen, and learn from the others’ experiences. And watch they do: the 55 videos on the site have been viewed over 10,000 times. We are similarly pushing the boundary of composing through the remix assignment, though there is not enough space to discuss that here.

Others within the university and without also consider the work innovative. In 2010, I presented on this course and student work completed in it at the two premier conferences in my field. I also ran a well-attended workshop organized by Rowan’s Information Resources Training Services based on my blog post “6 recommendations for teaching with the flip video camera” (2009). This post has been viewed over 11,000 times and led to me being featured in an *eLearn Magazine* article, “How Tiny Camcorders are Changing Education” (Rowell, 2009).

Impact on students

Prior to my sections of WRT, there was a dearth of critical study and creation of electronic multimodal texts in the Writing Arts curriculum. Our students were falling behind the emerging trends in a job market that was looking for writers who know not only how to compose a sentence, but also how to compose rhetorically sophisticated image-based multimedia that (often) enhance the written text.

Now, when these students make their way into a job market they can display a portfolio that contains written *and* visual texts. They can talk fluently about how new, low cost technologies (Flip video camera) and free software applications (iMovie, Windows Movie Marker, YouTube) are providing writers with the ability to expand their compositional practices in new, innovative ways. Students can discuss the different

rhetorical strategies necessary for composing alphabetic versus visual texts. They can point to the social, cultural, and economic realities that have constructed our copyright system and offer innovative alternatives that provide businesses with new avenues for distribution of products. In short, they can show themselves to be innovative composers in multiple modes and media.

Student videos from my three sections of WRT have been viewed over 55,000 times on YouTube, many receiving significant comments and engagement from the YouTube community. Posting the videos online has the impact of making real for students the concept of “composing for an audience”—an important concept for writers but one that is often abstract.

Three student videos have been accepted to appear in the online journal, *The Journal of Undergraduate Multimedia Projects*—a journal where two university faculty or graduate students review each submission and if accepted two others compose academic responses to the text. The impact of having a community of scholars outside of Rowan review, take seriously, and validate a student’s work is extraordinary for an undergraduate. It goes beyond the publication line on their resume, though that should not be downplayed. Rather, it instills confidence in their ability to compose texts that are valued outside their local settings—two characteristics they will need to become successful writers.

The broader impacts of the courses’ innovations are evidenced by students’ discussions of the course in their course evaluations (see Supplemental Documents).

Supplemental Documents (can exceed 1500-word limit)

The following supplemental documents are attached:

- References
- List of related materials available online
 - Course web sites URLs
 - Course YouTube channel URLs
 - Oral History Video Archive URL
 - URLs for student publications in *The Journal of Undergraduate Multimedia Projects*
 - Conference presentation URLs
 - Workshop presentation URLs
- Student acceptance letters to *The Journal of Undergraduate Multimedia Projects*
- Observation letter from Dr. Deb Martin
- Observation letter from Dr. Sandy Tweedie
- Innovations in Teaching with Technology Grant letter
- College of Communication grant email
- WRT course evaluations for spring 2009, fall, 2009, and spring 2010

References

- Bezemer, J., & Kress, G. (2008). Writing in Multimodal Texts: A Social Semiotic Account of Designs for Learning. *Written Communication*, 25, 166 – 195.
- Elbow, P. (2007). The music of form: Rethinking organization in writing. *College Composition and Communication*, 57, 620 – 666.
- Gaylor, B. (2008). *RiP! A Remix Manifesto*. Documentary, EyeSteelFilm. Retrieved from <http://www.hulu.com/watch/88782/rip-a-remix-manifesto>
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- Kelly, K. (2008, November 23). Becoming Screen Literate. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/23/magazine/23wwln-future-t.html?_r=1
- Kress, G. & van Leeuwen, T. (2001). *Multimodal discourse: The modes and media of contemporary communication*. London: Hodder Arnold.
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- Tryon, C. (2009). *Reinventing Cinema: Movies in the Age of Media Convergence*. Rutgers University Press.
- Wolff, B. (2009, June 10). 6 Recommendations for Teaching with the Flip Video Camera. *Bill Wolff's Composing Spaces*. Retrieved July 30, 2010, from <http://williamwolff.org/composingspaces/some-recommendations-for-teaching-with-the-flip-video-camera/>
- Yancey, K.B. (2004). Made not only in words: Composition in a new key. *College Composition and Communication*, 56, 297 – 328.

List of Related Online Course Materials with URLs

Writing, Research, Technology, Spring 2010:

- course Web site: <http://williamwolff.org/courses/wrt-spring-2010/>
- course YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/wolffwrts10>

Writing, Research, Technology, Fall 2009

- course Web site: <http://williamwolff.org/courses/wrt-fall-2009/>
- course YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/wolffwrft09>

Writing, Research, Technology, Spring 2009 (note: I redesigned my web site after this semester and as a result the internal navigation is no longer online)

- course Web site: <http://williamwolff.org/courses/wrt-spring-2009/>
- course YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/wolffwrts09>
(note: In spring 2009 I used the YouTube channel as a hub and asked students to

have their own channels where they posted their assignments. These are linked off of the course channel. I changed how I used channels in fall 2009 so that all students were posting to the same channel rather than having their own. This worked much better.)

Oral History Video Archive: <http://www.youtube.com/user/oralhistoryvideo>

Student publications in *The Journal of Undergraduate Multimedia Projects*

- Chris Cullen, “The One: Contagious Kindness,” <http://jump.cwrl.utexas.edu/content/theone>
- Michael Pfister, “Hitler Finds Out About the *Downfall* Parodies,” <http://jump.cwrl.utexas.edu/content/hparody>
- Sarah Gould, “A Closer Look into Physical Disabilities: An Oral History,” to be published soon, but part 1 can be seen at: <http://j.mp/d4RSNI>; part 2 can be seen at” <http://j.mp/bL15zQ>

Conference Presentations

Wolff, B. (2010, March). “Revealing meaning, broadcasting history: Notes on the composition of oral history video.” Paper delivered at the *Conference on College Composition and Communication*. Louisville, KY. <http://prezi.com/73kxhurkpe6h/>

Wolff, B. (2010, May). “Remixing composition in the writing classroom: An installation of student videos.” Online installation and presentation at *Computers and Writing Online Conference*. West Lafayette, IN. <http://www.netvibes.com/wolffcw2010online>

Workshop

Wolff, B. (2010, March. “6 7 Recommendations for Using Flip (and other) Video Cameras in the (non-video) Classroom.” Workshop presented at Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ.

- Prezi online at: http://prezi.com/agcyt_gid6zn/
- Full workshop video downloaded from: <http://users.rowan.edu/~karlton/downloads/FlipVideoFull-BWolff.mp4>

Regarding: "The One: Contagious Kindness"

Bill Wolff
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Dear Dr. Wolff,

On behalf of The Journal for Undergraduate Multimedia Projects, I would like to extend to you an offer to include Christopher Cullen's video, "The One: Contagious Kindness" in our upcoming issues of The Journal for Undergraduate Multimedia Projects (TheJUMP). We feel the work raises critical issues in the interspaces amidst technology, rhetoric, and pedagogy, and we think it does a solid job of speaking to the heart of the issue in your "One" assignment.

Please have Christopher indicate whether or not he would like to accept our offer by sending me an email at hodgson@mail.utexas.edu. Note that by accepting our offer to include the work, the student author grants TheJUMP the right to display the work as part of a specified volume and issue of the journal. He is in no way releasing any ownership rights of the work to TheJUMP. He retains all rights, responsibilities, and liabilities to the work, and has the option to publish the work elsewhere at his discretion (we merely ask, in good faith, for acknowledgement of our initial publication of the work).

Should he accept, the two of you would need to arrange to have the additional materials sent to me no later than May 10, 2010. The additional materials are listed below.

Please send us the following supporting materials:

[Student] Design Rationale/Project Reflection - These are short papers (250 – 750 words) where the students provide critical insight into their own work. They can focus on the design/production choices made and how they see those choices working for the project (or how they might impact a potential audience); they can reflect on the process itself, discussing what challenges they encountered or specific things they learned from the process); they can provide insight into what they learned from the assignment or from making the project. More specific guidelines can be provided upon request or you can see examples in our current issue (<http://jump.dwrl.utexas.edu/v1.1>).

[Instructor] Assignment/Project Reflection - Short paper (250-750 words) or short video (1-3 minutes) by the instructor who offers his/her own critical insight into the assignment, the students' work, or both. These can be situated in relation to the class and the pedagogical value of this particular project; it can be a critical engagement of the

student's work, or some additional hybrid; or it can contextualize the assignment/project creation to some larger academic conversation.

[Instructor] Course Description - Description from the University, College, or Department course catalog as well as (if applicable) course description from instructor's syllabus.

[Instructor] Assignment Description/Handout - Provide short explanation of assignment or provide a copy of the assignment handout provided to the students.

[Student or Instructor] Project Timeline - Detailed timeline of project development: either from instructor's point of view (how things unfolded in terms of course calendar and syllabus) or from students' point of view (work plan, generated project timelines, etc.).

[Student or Instructor] Work Cited - An external, printed copy of all works borrowed or cited in the creation. We begin with MLA format as our default guide, but welcome a variety of hybrid creations that may or may not suit the citation approach (and our electronic format) more appropriately.

Suggested Revisions or Specific Directive Comments - none.

We look forward to hearing from you and Christopher in regards to our offer to include the submission and we really appreciate you considering us a viable option for this project creation.

Sincerely,



Justin Hodgson, Ph.D.
Editor, TheJUMP
Assistant Professor
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512.471.9957

Regarding: "Hitler Finds Out About the 'Downfall' Parodies"

Bill Wolff
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201 Mullica Hill Rd.
Glassboro, NJ 08028
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856.873.4571

Dear Dr. Wolff,

On behalf of The Journal for Undergraduate Multimedia Projects, I would like to extend to you an offer to include Michael Pfister's video, "Hitler Finds Out About the 'Downfall' Parodies" in our upcoming issue of The Journal for Undergraduate Multimedia Projects (TheJUMP). We feel the work raises critical issues in the interspaces amidst technology, rhetoric, and pedagogy—particularly in the viral video remake meme that is integral to the YouTube community—and we feel it would be a vital addition to our second issue (expected publication date of May 15, 2010).

Please have Michael indicate whether or not he would like to accept our offer by sending me an email at hodgson@mail.utexas.edu. Note that by accepting our offer to include the work, the student author grants TheJUMP the right to display the work as part of a specified volume and issue of the journal. He is in no way releasing any ownership rights of the work to TheJUMP. He retain all rights, responsibilities, and liabilities to the work, and has the option to publish the work elsewhere at his discretion (we merely ask, in good faith, for acknowledgement of our initial publication of the work).

Should he accept, the two of you would need to arrange to have the additional materials sent to me no later than May 10, 2010. The additional materials are listed below.

Please send us the following supporting materials:

[Student] Design Rationale/Project Reflection - These are short papers (250 – 750 words) where the students provide critical insight into their own work. They can focus on the design/production choices made and how they see those choices working for the project (or how they might impact a potential audience); they can reflect on the process itself, discussing what challenges they encountered or specific things they learned from the process); they can provide insight into what they learned from the assignment or from making the project. More specific guidelines can be provided upon request or you can see examples in our current issue (<http://jump.dwrl.utexas.edu/v1.1>).

[Instructor] Assignment/Project Reflection - Short paper (250-750 words) or short video (1-3 minutes) by the instructor who offers his/her own critical insight into the assignment, the students' work, or both. These can be situated in relation to the class and the pedagogical value of this particular project; it can be a critical engagement of the

student's work, or some additional hybrid; or it can contextualize the assignment/project creation to some larger academic conversation.

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[Student or Instructor] Project Timeline - Detailed timeline of project development: either from instructor's point of view (how things unfolded in terms of course calendar and syllabus) or from students' point of view (work plan, generated project timelines, etc.).

[Student or Instructor] Work Cited - An external, printed copy of all works borrowed or cited in the creation. We begin with MLA format as our default guide, but welcome a variety of hybrid creations that may or may not suit the citation approach (and our electronic format) more appropriately.

Suggested Revisions or Specific Directive Comments - We would like for you (Bill) to spend some time in your teacher reflection talking about the meme and the importance of the meme for the assignment, the project, or something to that effect. Essentially, we need to help situate the piece in terms of a larger conversation, and while the responses may touch on that, it seems a good fit to talk about it here, in your reflection, as the meme is the focus of the assignment.

We look forward to hearing from you and Michael in regards to our offer to include the submission and we really appreciate you considering us a viable option for this project creation.

Sincerely,



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Regarding: "A Closer Look into Physical Disabilities: An Oral History"

Bill Wolff
Assistant Professor
Department of Writing Arts
Hawthorn Hall
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856.873.4571

Dear Dr. Wolff,

On behalf of The Journal for Undergraduate Multimedia Projects, I would like to extend to you an offer to include Sarah Gould's video, "A Closer Look into Physical Disabilities: An Oral History" in one of our upcoming issues of The Journal for Undergraduate Multimedia Projects (TheJUMP). We feel the work raises critical issues in the interspaces amidst technology, rhetoric, and pedagogy, specifically within the frame of the mini-mentary, and we feel it would be a vital addition to our journal.

Please have Sarah indicate whether or not she would like to accept our offer by sending me an email at hodgson@mail.utexas.edu. Note that by accepting our offer to include the work, the student author grants TheJUMP the right to display the work as part of a specified volume and issue of the journal. She is in no way releasing any ownership rights of the work to TheJUMP. She retains all rights, responsibilities, and liabilities to the work, and has the option to publish the work elsewhere at her discretion (we merely ask, in good faith, for acknowledgement of our initial publication of the work).

Should she accept, the two of you would need to arrange to have the additional materials sent to me no later than July 1, 2010. The additional materials are listed below.

Please send us the following supporting materials:

[Student] Design Rationale/Project Reflection - These are short papers (250 – 750 words) where the students provide critical insight into their own work. They can focus on the design/production choices made and how they see those choices working for the project (or how they might impact a potential audience); they can reflect on the process itself, discussing what challenges they encountered or specific things they learned from the process; they can provide insight into what they learned from the assignment or from making the project. More specific guidelines can be provided upon request or you can see examples in our current issue (<http://jump.dwrl.utexas.edu/v1.1>).

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[Student or Instructor] Work Cited – An external, printed copy of all works borrowed or cited in the creation. We begin with MLA format as our default guide, but welcome a variety of hybrid creations that may or may not suit the citation approach (and our electronic format) more appropriately.

Suggested Revisions or Specific Directive Comments – none.

We look forward to hearing from you and Sarah in regards to our offer to include the submission and we really appreciate you considering us a viable option for this project creation.

Sincerely,



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Teaching Observation: Writing, Research, Technology, Spring 09

Instructor: Bill Wolff
Course: Writing, Research, and Technology
11 March, 2009
Number of Students Enrolled: 15

Observed by: Deb Martin
Section: 01301 4
Room: 2113 Education Hall
Number in Attendance: 15

Class started with Dr. Wolff showing a vlog titled, "Hair Cut," a student's response to a previous assignment that had garnered 580 viewings during the short time it had been posted to YouTube. The class discussed possible reasons for such high viewership in relation to other student-produced videos.

Professor Wolff announced the two topics for the class session: Creating an Oral History and requirements of the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Dr. Wolff displayed information on oral histories from a website he created for the course. The site, linked from the course homepage, contained best practices for interviewing as well as key points from the last session. He used the resource to review key points – then added and elaborated on a few more bullet points using his own experiences with his oral history. In explaining the function of the site, Dr. Wolff stated, "I'll keep adding information as we continue so, look here to find answers to your questions. When it's finished, it will be something people can use as a resource." As the discussion continues, he answers each question thoroughly, once going to the board to draw a picture of a difficult concept.

The day's lesson, in part, is devoted to setting up the interview room. Building on his own experiences, Dr. Wolff illustrates key ideas by sharing an oral history interview he conducted with his mother. He candidly points out mistakes in his own set up and says, "These are common mistakes that you can avoid in your own videos now that you are aware." In response to the discussion, one student asks, "Do we have to clear the walls in the background?" Dr. Wolff resists the simple answer and instead offers a lesson in visual rhetoric that is accessible and immediate. He talks about the video he made with his grandfather and how the complicated and cluttered elements in the background reflected his grandfather's personality and character. They understood then that visual elements reflect the subject and should be a deliberate choice.

Dr. Wolff extends the discussion of setting up the interview room by examining the immediate spaces in the classroom and in the hallway. He segues into the planned activity. "Today we are going to practice interviewing skills - somebody is shaking his head." Students are squirming in their seats as they think about leaving their comfortable position as viewers to take on the more challenging position of producers and subjects. Dr. Wolff assures them, "That's okay...you will get a good idea how your narrators are feeling when you are filming them."

Next, Dr. Wolff demonstrates the new tripods then asks for a guinea pig. One student volunteers. Dr. Wolff asks the class, "Where should we set up?" Students look around the room and collectively determine the best spot based on what they have learned

about setting up an interview. The volunteer takes her place and Dr. Wolff explains the thinking behind how he set up the camera and also troubleshoots potential problems. Students take turns looking through the camera.

When everything is set Dr. Wolff starts the interview. The volunteer begins talking and soon all the awkwardness of the situation disappears. The students, now gathered around the camera, are leaning in and listening hard. The interview continues for several minutes. Dr. Wolff stops and turns to the class. "What did you notice?" Students respond and add more questions as they anticipate their own practice session. Students are released to set up their tripods and cameras. Dr. Wolff reminds them that they have 15 minutes on this project and shouts out last minute reminders. "Interviewers read the sheet a few times and then put it away so you are not reading off the page." Students disperse into the halls to begin their interviews. Fifteen minutes later students come back to review their video interviews on computer screens.

Dr. Wolff brings the class together and explains that the teacher computer is freezing. "While we are waiting, let's talk about the IRB." Dr. Wolff conducts a question and answer session concerning key points of the IRB while simultaneously coaxing the computer back to life. "I want us to see at least one interview. I hope you can stay a few minutes past six." Dr. Wolff asks, "What are some of your observations based on your review of your video?" Students respond.

The computer is revived and the video finally begins. As the class reviews the interview Dr. Wolff prompts them through a range of questions, first critiquing camera angle, background, and other technical aspects. Then he directs students' attention to a more pointed critique of interviewing skills. Dr. Wolff replays several times a section of an interview where Victor asks Christina a Yes/No question. Dr. Wolff stops the video and asks viewers what they notice. He reinforces the response that it was an excellent time to ask the question, but explains that the question could have been worded differently to encourage elaboration. In another video, Dr. Wolff identifies an example where a student forced the question. "Look what happens when you read off the paper" and reinforces a teaching point, "Get to the idea slowly – let her talk. Finesse the interview, letting talk happen." When Dr. Wolff asks if anyone else would like to show an interview, several hands shoot up which suggests students found this fishbowl critique a valuable learning experience. As Dr. Wolff gets the next video ready, he keeps the class involved in thinking about other questions. "How did it feel to be interviewed?" he asks.

After a critique of several interviews, class ends at 6:10.

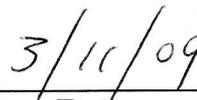
Dr. Wolff's lesson was well crafted; the activities were expertly sequenced, challenging, and appropriate to the course. His teaching points were reinforced with pertinent examples from his own experience with the tasks.

But, what demonstrates his brilliance is the way Dr. Wolff integrates technology into the classroom. Effective use of technology happens when the technology seems routine and transparent. In this case, the students were focused on critiquing and producing oral histories; the cameras and computers were tools supporting the goal. Students were actively engaged as individuals and in groups throughout the lesson. They had multiple opportunities for interaction and feedback. Through the use of YouTube, students made connections to real-world audiences. Dr. Wolff's use and development of the oral history webpage as a dynamic space demonstrates an important understanding of writing in new media. This high level of proficiency takes skill and knowledge. It takes a great deal of professional dedication, patience, and risk-taking.

Beyond a well crafted lesson and an insightful understanding of teaching with technology, Dr. Wolff also demonstrates one other key component of successful teaching, an amazing rapport with students who resist technology as well as tech-savvy students who are eager to learn more. Working with students at both ends of the spectrum, I found Dr. Wolff to be encouraging and at the same time persistent, helpful as well as challenging.



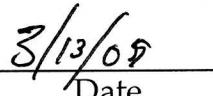
Deb Martin



Date



Bill Wolff



Date

Observation of Professor Bill Wolff
Course: Writing, Research and Technology, Spring 2010
Observer: Sanford Tweedie
Date of Observation: April 12, 2010

This section of Writing, Research and Technology is held in an Education Hall computer lab to give students full access to computers while they are in class. Even though this observation took place in week 12—or perhaps because of it—prior to class beginning some students were expressing their frustration with the technology. One student exclaimed to anyone willing to listen, “I hate computers. I really do. I hate computers.” Then she tried to entice her machine by talking to it. “Nice computer,” she soothed. When that didn’t work, she turned to the woman next to her and declared, “I have no idea how we’re going to get our video done!” To a casual observer, it might appear that the student has some justification in her frustration: making oral history videos for a writing class? But the more observant will see why Professor Wolff’s approach to Writing, Research, and Technology not only works, but is quite effective in teaching students about writing.

Class began with Professor Wolff showing the semester schedule on the overhead screen to remind students where the class had reached and where it was headed, sending around a sign-up sheet for individual conferences, previewing what would be covering that day, and reminding them about an assignment due that night. Here, we already see one of the advantages of this classroom dynamic. Since the work is completed electronically, due dates can be outside of class time. Thus, students do not show up exhausted after having overextended themselves to finish an assignment or do not show up at all if they have yet to complete it.

On this day, Professor Wolff explained, the class would be looking at the first 2-3 minutes of four oral histories, an assignment the class had already begun working on. These four videos, completed by students in previous semesters, would be examined in terms of five questions that Professor Wolff displayed on the overhead screen. These concerned how each used texts differently to set up the oral history, the rhetorical and emotional impact of the introduction, the biases they revealed, the effectiveness of each, and how students might take what they have seen and apply it to their own oral history introductions.

In discussing the questions, Professor Wolff noted that his use of “texts” in the first question obviously referred to more than just written texts. And, yet, if one looks at the questions asked, all of them could just as easily relate to written texts. In this way, Professor Wolff is defamiliarizing the familiar. This class is filled with junior and senior Writing Arts majors who are well into their major requirements and have had much experience with writing classes and theories relating to writing. This exercise—and indeed the whole course—gives students the opportunity to see how texts of different kinds function in similar and different manners. Thus, writing—that which they are familiar with—becomes defamiliarized—and seen through the lens of a different text-creating technology. And it was clear from the discussions that followed students were continually drawing these comparisons.

Professor Wolff showed the four sample video introductions, which the former students had posted on youtube, reviewed the questions again, and asked the class to divide into small groups to discuss the questions. They did so quickly and got on task right away.

While Wolff walked around the room, answering student questions, I eavesdropped on one group. As they addressed the questions and one took notes, all four participated, listening to one another and responding carefully and with consideration to what each had to say. Indeed, after initially agreeing that one introduction was the best, the group talked through each one and decided that they actually preferred a different one. They did so by reviewing the videos, stopping them at certain spots, commenting on what they saw.

Throughout this discussion, the students kept relating the videos to writing. Of one introduction, a student said, "It's just like how I read. The more I watched, the more I found myself wanting to change parts. And it's just like how I write. I wanted to pick at everything." Toward the end, this group asked questions about each other's videos, wondering what they were going to include and then, more importantly, asking why they chose to do such and such or offering advice on that choice. Further, pragmatic concerns arose about ethical issues in ways they often don't in other writing classes. Said one student about a music clip she hoped to use, "I don't think I can use it because it's copyrighted. I sent an email to the record company, but haven't heard." She then began to sing *I fought the law and the law won*, both lyrics from the song she hoped to use and also a comment on her experience trying to get the record company's permission to use them.

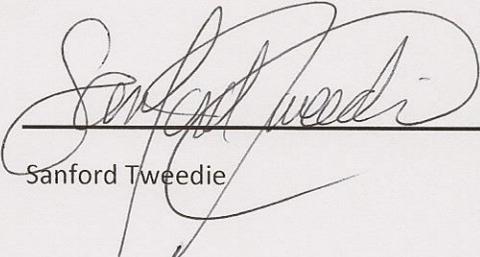
When the whole class began discussing the same questions, the discussion was lively. Of the fourteen students in class, twelve participated. Topics of the discussion included the ethos and pathos created by the introductions; the creator's credibility with the audience via the use of experts and statistics; the effectiveness of titles, pacing, narrative structure, and attention-grabbing techniques; the constraints of form; how shifts in the video are like paragraph breaks in writing; and the overall importance of introductions to audiences and how these particular introductions appeal to the public audiences viewing youtube. One student even pointed out that the introduction is "like a thesis statement" and must make clear to a viewer what the video is about. Another compared these videos to the five-paragraph essay, saying that when one is taught this form, the idea is to move from the broad triangle at top down to specifics. A brief discussion about the worthiness of the five-paragraph essay ensued.

Throughout this, Professor Wolff clarified, prodded, answered questions, asked new ones, made connections to writing and rhetoric, and kept the students involved.

At the end of class, Professor Wolff previewed what they would be doing the next class meeting and reminded students of what was due that evening. Afterwards, he worked one on one with students to address questions and practical concerns they were having with their creative processes.

In the meantime, at the back of the room, one student helped another with her own questions about the technology while also herself admitting the connection to writing: "I know how to write an essay. Do you know how many years that took to learn how to write an essay? This video. . . ." She paused, then continued, "This is one of hardest classes I've ever taken. I'm not a computer geek."

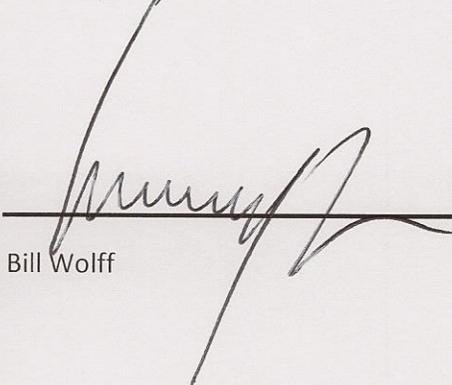
But writing always involves a technology. This student's statement—and the class overall—simply makes that clearer. And, it is important to note, the class discussion was never about the technology, only the comments before an afterwards. The class emphasis was not on teaching the technology but on learning the effects technologies, be they pencils, computers or Flip video cameras, have on the creation of text. By asking these students to step away from their comfort zone of writing for a moment, he was helping them to increase their understanding of what it means to be writers.



Sanford Tweedie

4/26/10

Date



Bill Wolff

4/26/10

Date



Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning

June 16, 2008

Dr. William Wolff
Writing Arts
Hawthorn Hall

Dear Dr. Wolff,

Congratulations. The Innovations in Teaching Using Technology Grant Program is pleased to inform you that your grant, "Reconceiving WRT by Introducing Multimodal Video Composition, Oral History, and Educational Outreach," has been funded for \$2500.

The committee met and reviewed the grant applications, evaluating each one in terms of its quality of innovation, scalability, and adaptability. The committee also considered the plans for support, evaluation, and budget before making a decision. The competition was keen with eight applications, and the decision was a difficult task as the proposals were excellent. However, your proposal clearly met the stated criteria and we believe it will have considerable impact on improving teaching through technology.

As part of this award you will be expected to prepare a workshop sponsored by the Faculty Center and Instructional Technology on your efforts with this project. In addition, we are asking that you share the results of this grant more informally with your departmental and university-wide colleagues, guiding them to embrace the wider use of technology in their own classes. Finally, as one of the 2008 recipients we ask that you serve on the committee to review applications for the award next summer (2009).

Please contact Dr. Neil Toporski, Director of Instructional Technology, for further information about your equipment purchase and IT assistance (Toporski@rowan.edu).

The committee thanks you for your efforts in continuing to explore the intersections between teaching and technology and congratulates you on your award.

Sincerely,

Frances S. Johnson, Director, Faculty Center
Neil Toporski, Director, Instructional Technology



Bill Wolff <william.i.wolff@gmail.com>

Flip-Cam requests

Arnold, Lorin B. <arnold@rowan.edu>

Mon, May 17, 2010 at 12:23 PM

To: "william.i.wolff@gmail.com" <william.i.wolff@gmail.com>

Bill,

Having reviewed the last round of IT proposals for this year, it appears that we can support the request for the flip-cams. If such equipment becomes commonly used in WA courses, we may need to implement a policy asking students to purchase a camera as part of their supplies in one of the early courses (via the bookstore so that financial aid can be used), particularly since the cost – while not low – is less than many textbooks at this point. Managing a significant number of cameras, in addition to issues of replacement and maintenance, is unlikely to be the best solution.

Please work with Pat as soon as possible on the purchasing once things are worked out, as the due dates approach. If the acquisition is not made in this year's budget, I cannot promise the funds will be available in AY11.

Lorin

Lorin Basden Arnold, Ph.D.

Professor

Interim Dean

College of Communication

Rowan University

856-256-4290

arnold@rowan.edu

visit *The Dean Blog* at <http://thedeanblog.wordpress.com/>

Professor: Bill Wolff
 Course: Writing/Research/Technology 4
 Date: 5/04/09
 Administered by: D. Martin

Summary of Student Evaluations						
Responsive	0	0	0	1	13	4.93
Fair		0	0	2	12	4.86
Enthusiastic	0	0	0	0	14	5.00
Makes you think Classes	0	0	0	6	8	4.34
productive	0	0	2	7	5	4.21
Knowledgeable	0	0	0	1	13	4.93
Comments help Assignments	0	0	2	2	10	4.57
help	0	0	0	8	6	4.43
Teacher rating	0	0	0	5	9	4.64
Course rating	0	0	4	4	6	4.14
					Teacher mean	4.66
					Grand mean	4.61

ALL STUDENT COMMENTS INCLUDED

1. **Is the teacher responsive to the students' needs, questions, and ideas?**
 - He gets back to you super quick!
 - One of the most responsive I've had here at Rowan.
 - Meets with us whenever we need it.
 - Class was molded around how the assignments fit with us to help us get the most out of our assignments.
 - He is always willing to help.
 - Always willing to help.
 - He went out of his way to help me on numerous occasions. I know he did this with other students as well. He is very patient and helpful.
 - Always willing to help out and set-up meetings during office hours, always gives feedback constructively.
 - Professor Wolff was always attentive to student's needs in the class. Promptly responding to emails or questions, especially since the class was a challenge technologically.
2. **Does the teacher treat students with fairness and respect?**
 - Always willing to add a little humor in or modify the dates if difficulties arose.
 - Always
 - He always criticizes us constructively and his comments and advice are helpful.
 - Always
 - Addresses students with respect and asks that it is given back. Was very understanding with experimental nature of the class.
3. **Is the teacher enthusiastic about the subject?**

Professor: Bill Wolff

Course: Writing/Research/Technology 4

Date: 5/04/09

Administered by: D. Martin

- Definitely! He's always willing to help.
 - Very passionate about what he does.
 - Very! Always interested in the subject and trying something new, learn new things along with us.
 - He is always so excited and enthusiastic to teach.
 - Loves technology and teaching.
 - He definitely loves technology.
 - Is well-educated and excited and enthusiastic about both writing and technology.
 - Showed enthusiasm by multiple ways. Even started to mimic the work students were doing.
4. **Does the teacher make you think?**
- Thoughtful questions and assignments all around.
 - Yes, I thought I knew everything about computers and the internet. I was very wrong.
 - Though many things we already have/know he helps us to think more about the future.
 - This is all new to me so it forced me to think.
 - I learned how to do so many new things and learn so many new programs in this class.
 - Professor Wolff challenged and reinforced the ideas of what is considered writing and helped us to think outside the box.
5. **Are the teacher's classes productive?**
- A couple of tangents here and there, but otherwise.[sic]
 - We should have done more work on project.
 - This class is focused mostly on class participation and discussion.
 - Yes, but we could have had more in-class work days for our project.
6. **Is the teacher's knowledge of the subject matter thorough?**
- Definitely! Knows about everything.
 - Yes, most tech-oriented teacher I've ever had.
 - Can answer any question we ask.
 - Professor is constantly introducing us to new technologies and software that is very useful.
 - He is always on top of the ball when it comes to work.
 - Very thorough. Definitely knows what he is talking about.
 - He uses all the programs and learns the new ones with us.
 - Extremely, I've never had an instructor at Rowan that knows their stuff more than Dr. Wolff!
 - Always had a well researched solution to a problem, was very knowledgeable.
7. **Do the instructor's comments and suggestions help you improve your work?**
- Very simple and obvious suggestions goes over drafts carefully.[sic]
 - They are helpful to see what I did but the changes are still confusing to make.

Professor: Bill Wolff

Course: Writing/Research/Technology 4

Date: 5/04/09

Administered by: D. Martin

- If I didn't have his suggestions and comments I would be lost.
 - He helped me formulate ideas for projects.
 - In the process of creating multiple drafts, Professor Wolff was eager to help me improve.
8. **Are the assignments in the course helpful learning activities?**
- Definitely, really helped me to understand the flow between technology and writing.
 - More time should be allotted for activities, especially final projects. In addition, computer experience should be added to course description.
 - Each assignment built off of the previous assignment.
 - They are intense and difficult but good for learning.
 - Liked learning about windows movie maker and oral history.
 - I learned a lot of new programs that I didn't even know existed.
9. **Considering everything, how would you rate this teacher?**
- Friendly, helpful, enthusiastic to teach and the subject.
 - Makes me proud to be a Writing Arts Major.
 - Very enthusiastic and knowledgeable.
 - He is always attentive and helpful.
 - Great professor! Knows what he is talking about!
 - He is very helpful, enthusiastic and fair.
 - Helpful and enthusiastic about subjects.
 - Charismatic, interested in the material, very friendly and understanding. Great qualities.
10. **Considering everything, how would you rate this course?**
- Lots of work outside of class, definitely worth it though.
 - Experience with software prior to class is necessary.
 - In order to get the most out of this class you needed to be willing to try new things though.
 - It was too much work at the end of the semester.
 - There is a lot of work.
 - I was not particularly interested in the course from the start but I did wind up somewhat enjoying it.
 - Despite being an experimental class, it was an interesting topic and a new way to learn.
11. **What was the most helpful aspect of this course?**
- Tutorials on how to use the various programs and watching "when the leaves broke" to really get a sense of oral history.
 - The guidance and thorough explanations of all material. No matter how foreign to me. Professor Wolff was very patient and helpful.
 - Everyone learning and trying something new together. We could discuss and help one another pretty easily.

Professor: Bill Wolff

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- The most helpful aspect was receiving feedback on rough drafts and meeting with Dr. Wolff one-on-one.
 - Learning how to conduct online interviews and use the different programs on computer.
 - Learned new software and how to compose movies.
 - Editing using software such as Microsoft movie manager and photo story 3, as well as the flip video camera itself.
 - The most helpful aspect in this course was how Professor Wolff had all of the course requirements and assignments posted on his webpage.
 - Approaching ideas in different ways and being able to compose using a new technology.
 - The professor always knew how to answer questions; he's always a step ahead.
 - Learning the true meaning of oral history and composing one.
 - New technologies are exciting and motivating.
 - Ability to ask group members questions and meet with Dr. Wolff at any time.
12. **What changes or improvements would you make in this course?**
- Do more work in class! I felt we did lots of stuff out of class but in class was mostly examples and tutorials.
 - No VLOGS although I did learn from them.
 - Possibly lessen number of Vlogs, it became tough to talk about important unique things twice a week.
 - It was a lot of work to do throughout the semester. I would eliminate like 1 or 2 little assignments.
 - Not as many vlogs.
 - More time for final project. Introduction to software.
 - A clearer set of guidelines for assignments and less vlogging.
 - I would allow more class time to speak with the professor and work on projects in class.
 - I think the course was very well designed. Maybe more peer reviewing before final cut.
 - I would spread the work out more, the oral history project felt rushed.
 - Option of putting yourself on you tube.
 - The projects are very time consuming.
 - More in-class work sessions, more time for projects.
 - More technical knowledge needed/required to sign up for the class.
13. **If you were asked to evaluate this instructor and this course for other students, how would you do so in 50 words or less?**
- Lots of outside work, but there's an actual real-life application for all this stuff. Feels like more than just class work.
 - Dr. Wolff has a thorough knowledge of the subject matter and wants to see his students do well. He is passionate about the course and challenges his

Professor: Bill Wolff

Course: Writing/Research/Technology 4

Date: 5/04/09

Administered by: D. Martin

students to their best work. Dr. Wolff is a smart man looking to instill techniques and ideas into open minds.

- A unique hybrid/experimental course with a teacher more than willing to take time out of his day to help. For an experiment, it was a success. I'd recommend it to anyone willing to try something new and put in effort.
- Definitely take Wolff for this course. It's very fun and different from other courses. It may seem tough to keep up but in the long run it will be the most enjoyable projects you'll take in any writing course. Try and take this class.
- Dr. Wolff is very enthusiastic about the course and is very knowledgeable about what he is teaching. The course is very time consuming, but is worth it in the end. Between the professor and the ideas it makes this course very interesting.
- I think this is a good course with a professor that really knows what he is doing. It is a lot of work but you learn just as much.
- I would tell other students to take this course and that the instructor was excellent and was relevant.
- Good experience!
- I would say this is a fast-paced, intense and concentrated course that requires a lot of out of class work. We did a lot in this course, it was interesting and I feel as if my hard work paid off.
- Professor is very dedicated to the course and is willing to work with you to be sure you achieve the goals of the class.
- The instructor and the course is great. I would definitely suggest future students to take it. I had a lot of fun the whole semester in this class!
- This class was exciting and fun.
- Dr. Wolff is enthusiastic about his subject and very well-educated, always willing to help and is patient. Great teacher!
- Teacher is enthusiastic about material and engages the students in challenging ways. Hard work, but worth it.

Professor: William Wolff
 Course: Writing, Research and Technology
 Date: December 14, 2009
 Administered by: Jennifer Courtney

	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Responsive	0	0	0	3	9	4.75
Fair	0	0	0	0	12	5.00
Enthusiastic	0	0	0	0	12	5.00
Makes you think	0	0	1	1	10	4.75
Classes productive	0	0	3	4	5	4.17
Knowledgeable	0	0	0	3	9	4.75
Comments help	0	0	0	4	8	4.67
Assignments help	0	0	1	4	7	4.50
Teacher rating	0	0	1	2	9	4.67
Course rating	0	1	1	4	5	4.18
					Teacher Mean	4.69
					Grand Mean	4.64

ALL STUDENT COMMENTS INCLUDED

1. Is the teacher responsive to the students' needs, questions, and ideas?

Dr. Wolff takes a while to respond to emails, but when he does his advice is very valuable.

He always offers help.

Can be a little hard to reach, unless you use twitter, then you're guaranteed a timely response.

Always willing to help; willing to negotiate deadlines.

In class and online

He is open to students' ideas and creativity. Sometimes he doesn't respond to emails though.

Responds to emails quickly.

Dr. Wolff always answers my emails right away, especially when I am having difficulty with an aspect of a project.

Prof Wolff has asked about the value of each and every one of his assignments.

2. Does the teacher treat students with fairness and respect?

Dr. Wolff always respects our opinions and often allows for open discussions/interpretations.

Very respectful and concerned.

He's open to extensions of projects as needed.

Professor: William Wolff
Course: Writing, Research and Technology
Date: December 14, 2009
Administered by: Jennifer Courtney

3. Is the teacher enthusiastic about the subject?

It's clear that Dr. Wolff truly loves what he does. He's incredibly enthusiastic and it shows in every class.

He really enjoys what he does.

Lots of videos and fun examples that relate to the course and topics.

He loves teaching this class.

4. Does the teacher make you think?

This class makes you think so much. We have to think what is the best way to compose our videos, what message we want the audience to get, and we had to learn all new technologies.

Always probing students to dig deeper and come up with detailed evidence.

The course itself requires a lot of thinking, and the teacher is always prodding us to expand our knowledge of the course.

This class really challenged the way I think of writing and technology together.

5. Are the teacher's classes productive?

Most classes are productive. I would have liked more time to actually work on projects in class.

During the process of a project we should have more class time to work on things.

6. Is the teacher's knowledge of the subject matter thorough?

Dr. Wolff is very knowledgeable and if he doesn't know the answer to a question, he will always try to get back to you with one.

Yes, he knows the subject very well.

As thorough as one can be with technology.

The only issue I had was that he was unaware that some of the things he made mandatory to download or use wouldn't work or would gum up our computers.

Professor: William Wolff
Course: Writing, Research and Technology
Date: December 14, 2009
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Wolff seems very interested and informed about the coursework.

7. Do the instructor's comments and suggestions help you improve your work?

His comments probably would have helped if we got our grades from previous projects back before the next one was due.

He always offers me a way to get an assignment complete in a better way.

Dr. Wolff always gives positive feedback and constructive criticism to help push us to make our final projects the best possible.

This is a requirement of the course.

8. Are the assignments in the course helpful learning activities?

Some of the reading assignments were very tedious but the video assignments were all necessary to learn the technology.

Yes, but the group discussions should be fewer.

There are tons of how to videos on his website that are easily accessible.

The work I've done in this class has been far more interesting and challenging than I've come to expect.

9. Considering everything, how would you rate this teacher?

He's helpful when he actually responds to emails. He's also very patient because we are working with new technologies (which don't always cooperate).

I like that he's available and willing to help. Also he doesn't make the student feel incompetent when they are struggling with issues.

I would surely take a course with him again.

Best teacher for the class.

Dr. Wolff is an excellent professor. He has made this class extremely interesting and thought provoking.

I would go out of my way to recommend this professor to others.

Professor: William Wolff
Course: Writing, Research and Technology
Date: December 14, 2009
Administered by: Jennifer Courtney

10. Considering everything, how would you rate this course?

It would have been helpful to know we weren't actually writing anything in this class, but it was interesting.

Quite difficult, but also fun.

I love it and I love using the flip cameras. I learned more in this course than any of my other courses this semester.

One of the more interesting classes I've taken at Rowan.

I would recommend this course to others.

11. What was the most helpful aspect of this course?

Seeing the similarities in every aspect of video composition and writing.

Helping me learn new technologies and applying that knowledge to writing assignments.

Learning about copyright laws and creative commons.

Dr. Wolff was always extremely helpful if there was a problem or question I had in the course. He also made available many resources should we ever have a need for them.

Actually learning through doing; well organized and structure; prof enthusiastic and caring of students success

All the instructions that were always available online. Wolff's quick response to e-mails.

The course taught me a lot about technology which is helpful to know as a future teacher.

Learning about the new forms of writing for the future.

Understanding the application of the composition process to visual texts (videos)

It taught me other alternatives to traditional writing, let me see other aspects of the writing arts.

Learning that writing can take place through multiple mediums. Creating the videos has really opened up a whole new side of creativity for me.

12. What changes or improvements would you make in this course?

Professor: William Wolff
Course: Writing, Research and Technology
Date: December 14, 2009
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I would absolutely add more class time to complete projects. I would also like to have grades handed back in a more timely fashion.

I think the class should be longer and more time should be spent in class learning and working on the actual projects.

Test programs before asking students to download them.

Not download a bunch of programs in the beginning but instead, make the programs available as needed. Also, make deadlines more concrete. By making them flexible, it's unfair to those who do the work on time.

Somehow make it easier to work on projects at home (esp for people without Macs @ home)

Not so early. And have Macs more available. All my work would be saved on the school computers, but they closed at 10.

More days off to work on projects and more days in class to work on them. Most class discussions weren't necessary. Instead, help with the time consuming projects would be a more productive use of time.

More actual writing but that's a minor gripe.

None.

Focus on something other than imovie and video recording, or incorporate other elements into the video projects as to add some variety to the course. Make it available online; most class periods were used as individual work periods and all material covered was generally done independently.

I cannot think of any changes or improvements to the class.

Make this course a lab.

13. If you were asked to evaluate this instructor and this course for other students, how would you do so in 50 words or less?

The professor is helpful when he finally answers emails but be prepared to work with all new technologies. There's no writing at all. If you're not technologically inclined don't take this class. It's very frustrating if you don't know what you're doing.

The professor is wonderful. He is understanding and concerned. He is patient and he wants the students to learn. His criticism is respectful and non judgemental. This creates a good learning environment. As for the course, I think there's too much crammed into one semester and we

Professor: William Wolff
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spent too much time focusing on sitting in group discussions instead of getting to know the technology.

Really fun course, but requires a learning curve on technology. The teacher is open for questions and comments, and tries to help us as best he can. He is pleasant and generally makes you want to come to class.

The course is a lot of work and very time consuming but it is useful information and gives a good skill to have. Dr. Wolff is extremely helpful with any problems that arise. Overall, this course is worth it.

The instructor is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject. He spends a lot of time and effort to make the class fun, intellectually stimulating, and understandable. If you need help, he is always willing to provide it. I'm not sure I would have enjoyed the video composition, or the class in general, had I had a different professor.

This is a fun, hands on course that gets you up out of the classroom and pushes you out into the world to film people and come up with creative ideas for videos. The topics are a great starting point then its up to you to edit and have fun with it. It doesn't feel like work—its fun.

He is a really enthusiastic teacher who is willing to help you. He knows a lot and shares his knowledge well with the class. Overall the class is a fun way to look at other forms of text you will learn a lot; and it's a nice break from simply writing papers.

Dr. Wolff is the best teacher for this class. The assignments are fun and easy and he gives you plenty of leeway on when they can be turned in. Very good at explaining everything and making sure the students understand what he wants done.

Dr. Wolff has a strong understanding of the subject matter, yet his teaching style makes complex aspects accessible to students.

The professor knows what he's talking about. You will never be misinformed by him, he will explain things thoroughly and provide immense help and feedback whenever you need it. The course is difficult because you focus only on video/video editing, all three projects are basically the same—so if you don't enjoy the first project you won't enjoy the 2nd or the 3rd. If you aren't technologically savvy, you shouldn't take this course.

I would recommend everyone who is a Writing Arts major to take WRT with Dr. Wolff. He is an excellent professor who really cares about his students excelling in the course. This course will challenge you to think, but it also allows you to be as freely creative as possible.

The professor cares about the value of the course and makes a serious effort to make it a good experience.

Professor: Wolff
 Course: WRT 01301 2
 Date: 5/03/10
 Administered by: S. Tweedie

	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Responsive	0	0	0	2	11	4.85
Fair	0	0	0	3	10	4.77
Enthusiastic	0	0	0	1	12	4.92
Makes you think	0	0	2	4	7	4.34
Classes productive	0	0	3	4	6	4.23
Knowledgeable	0	0	1	1	11	4.77
Comments help	0	0	3	3	7	4.31
Assignments help	0	0	1	4	8	4.54
Teacher rating	0	0	2	3	8	4.46
Course rating	0	1	3	4	5	4.00
				Teacher mean		4.58
				Grand mean		4.52

Comments begin on the following page.

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ALL STUDENT COMMENTS INCLUDED

1. **Is the teacher responsive to the students' needs, questions, and ideas?**
 - Often changed course material or due dates based on students' needs which helped us get the class work finished and helped students gain the most out of the course.
 - Responsive, yet I don't think he realizes all of his biases yet in terms of how different sides of arguments can be made. He's very competent, and most of the students are not, so he takes on a guide-like aura that hinders other competent students' ability to discuss in-depth.
 - Dr. Wolff is very responsive to communication and comments through email very quickly and readily.
 - Yes, whenever a student raises his hand, Dr. Wolff answers promptly.
 - Professor Wolff always responded to emails immediately and answered questions and concerns in class right away.
2. **Does the teacher treat students with fairness and respect?**
3. **Is the teacher enthusiastic about the subject?**
 - The professor is extremely knowledgeable about the subject and seems to love the material he teaches.
 - He really knows a lot about his content.
 - Professor is always enthusiastic in class and makes sure every student participates.
4. **Does the teacher make you think?**
 - Makes you think "outside the box".
 - Writing, Research and Technology brought me outside my comfort zone and make me critique my own work more thoroughly.
 - Dr. Wolff challenged my thoughts and really let me engage and explore each topic.
 - Each project completed this semester was challenging and made me think and use my creativity.
 - He asks us thought provoking questions about readings and our projects and has us break into groups to answer them together, then we discuss the answers as a class.
5. **Are the teacher's classes productive?**
 - The most productive classes are group discussions. When we sit in class multiple times during the year, working on our video projects, that's a waste of time for some (like me) who use different software and need a quieter environment to edit video. The students in this class aren't savvy enough always to forgo these in-class workdays, though.
 - Each class was planned exceptionally and work was able to be completed and discussions were able to be fully involved without being cut off.
 - I loved how he gave us time and worked with the students on our projects.

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- Each class meeting we covered a sufficient amount of material that was beneficial to our learning.
 - More time on projects in class for individual help would have been nice.
 - Towards the beginning of the semester we learned how to use the editing software in class and at the end we were given a lot of time to work on projects and be able to ask questions and get help.
6. **Is the teacher's knowledge of the subject matter thorough?**
- In some of the editing and creation of video he knew some but I feel I learned more by asking RTF majors how to do something I was stuck on.
7. **Do the instructor's comments and suggestions help you improve your work?**
- The professor guided the class through a lot of material students had never come in contact with before, and was extremely successful in doing so.
 - I would suggest more feedback on assignments throughout the course.
 - We differ on our aesthetic values. His comments and suggestions are valid, but so are mine. This wouldn't be a problem except (even when I justify my aesthetic choices) I am graded according to his aesthetic beliefs.
 - I wished that comments were more direct and targeted to specific concerns.
 - Some of his critics were vague. It seemed more like an opinion than what is right or wrong.
8. **Are the assignments in the course helpful learning activities?**
- Very interesting method of studying writing.
 - Loved the projects! Made me think about composition in a completely different way.
 - Whole-class discussions are helpful. Everything else is so-so. But I should note that whole-class discussions are infrequent. Few students are knowledgeable or quick enough to keep up with the competent students. This can occur because student's real-world knowledge has a greater value in this class than in others.
 - I did learn a lot about how to use the software that I have available to me more easily and was able to use this knowledge in another class for a different project.
9. **Considering everything, how would you rate this teacher?**
- He's getting there. Nitpicks, updates his website sporadically, takes months to grade assignments (when grades would help us change our approach to follow-up projects) grades aesthetically, but he's getting there.
 - Dr. Wolff is an excellent teacher and mentor. I value that I have not had a bad experience with him or feel like I did not learn anything. I learned more in 15 weeks than I thought was possible.
10. **Considering everything, how would you rate this course?**
- I'm so glad I enrolled in this course, and I hope to take similar classes in the future.

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- WRT teaches students valuable thinking skills and creates more dynamic writers with the learned ability to think outside the box. Students walk away more willing to take risks with future writing.
- I didn't hate it, but I wouldn't rank it as my top 5 favorite courses.
- I enjoyed the content of the class. But windows movie maker made this class more time consuming than needed. It also took away from the learning process because of the frustration of the program.

11. What was the most helpful aspect of this course?

- In this course, students learned to relate writing to video composition, which is relative to the changing technology of today.
- Learning new technologies and mediums of test, expanding my comfort zone, enhancing my creativity.
- The peer critiques were helpful in this class because they allowed us to understand what would attract attention and what wouldn't.
- The professor's feedback and openness when helping students complete assignments.
- I learned a lot about using technology. I learned how to use Window's Movie Maker.
- Learning about technology and gaining a deeper understanding of video composition.
- Learning new technologies and programs that allow me to think in new and exciting ways. Broadening my idea of writing. Engaging in new communities of writing.
- The open discussion about topics before they were fully explored and used in my work.
- The most helpful aspect of this course is that I learned to view video composition in a new light. Prior to this class I didn't realize how much thought, time and effort go into making a video.
- The most helpful aspect of this course was learning how to use windows movie maker. This program taught me new things I will be able to use in the future.
- I think learning more about technology and what is a new cutting age program.
- Learning to use my own software better.

12. What changes or improvements would you make in this course?

- The course was a bit intense, and may be hard for some students to keep up with. I would slow down the rate of assignments.
- More examples and analyzing previous work to better our own projects (the examples were very inspiring and made me anxious to start my own, learning from their mistakes and their examples.)
- More examples of creators work. A better system to use for making the videos since we as a class had so many issues with Windows Movie Maker.

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- None, I really enjoyed every aspect of this course.
- I would find a new program to do the remix project with. Windows Movie Maker seemed to crash a lot.
- Maybe more spread out assignments and less overlap. A paper/varied assignment.
- While I didn't have any issues with Windows Movie Maker, I know other students did, so maybe offer alternative software. Adjust due dates, they often got pushed back but this allowed for better finished work.
- None
- That we are provided an outline of each effect and what it means when we compose our videos.
- The only changes I would make would possibly having students upload so many videos to the class you tube page.
- I would let students know beforehand they will be working with I movie and Windows Movie Maker ahead of time. Both of these programs are difficult to work with.
- I might pair it with a music class that could help to compose music to fit the videos we make rather than searching and searching for creative commons music. This could then benefit both classes and both students that worked on the project would have a final product to be proud of.

13. If you were asked to evaluate this instructor and this course for other students, how would you do so in 50 words or less?

- This course is good to help familiarize students with the technology of present day, and relate it to writing. The professor is extremely informed and helpful.
- A teacher who knows his technology stuff and is very passionate about his work. The class focuses on making and editing videos, as well as research techniques. Dr. Wolff understands most of his students have never used the programs used for this class and works with you.
- Absolutely take this course with Dr. Wolff. He is very intelligent and eager to share his knowledge. The class is interesting and fun and you'll learn a lot. He makes it fun too, very well worth it!
- I don't think this course should be taught effectively in any other way. Part of writing, research and technology is understanding how to incorporate the three into one. This course teaches you how to do that with a teacher who is helpful, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic about the subject.
- This class was fun and different. If you enjoy using technology, this class would be great for you. Although we are writing arts majors, it is sometimes nice to learn about other writing forums. All of our projects were done online and required no paper and pencil.
- Prof. Wolff is helpful and knowledgeable but the workload was a little rough. He seems to expect a little too much from students in this course

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being that video isn't necessarily our major or something we have an eye for.

- Excellent. I loved this class and would recommend it to anyone interested in new technology and or non-traditional writing and/or film. I learned so much.
- This course is most valuable for writing arts majors as it teaches students to think outside the box and take risks. Dr. Wolff is receptive and a partner in the work with his students. He will sit down with you and make sure you understand. Not only has Dr. Wolff been a professor to me, but a friend that is trusted enough to critique my work and push me to take it further.
- Dr. Wolff is a smart, understanding and reasonable professor. In his class you learn so much through hands on experiences.
- Professor Wolff is an outstanding instructor who is in this profession to help students enhance their knowledge and succeed. He always came to class prepared and made each class meeting fun. Overall, great course and great semester with this professor.
- If you want to take a class where you want to work with new aspects of technology, then this class is for you but know its very time consuming. They're not very many projects but you spend double the amount on them than a normal class. Professor Wolff will email you back if you have problems. But sometimes he has a hard time realizing that majority of students have never worked with these programs before.
- This professor is willing to help if you have a problem just ask. Remember too, if you're having trouble with the technology let him know ahead of time or with a good amount of notice and he will try to help you fix the problem.