

Nancy Agabian

College Teaching Experience

New York University, Gallatin School of Individualized Study

Oral Narratives. Fall 2012

Designed a creative writing class that incorporates oral tradition, storytelling and oral history as a way to inform written texts. Students will write their own monologue – through improvisation, recording and transcription – in order to discover their own “oral tradition” before interviewing others to create a profile of one individual. The final project will be to conduct oral history interviews of a group to inspire a creative project of their choice: poetry, fiction, nonfiction, theater, etc.

Writing Your Ancestry. Spring 2012, Spring 2011, Spring 2010, Spring 2009

Developed an advanced creative nonfiction course on writing about cultural identity and family history. Taught students various nonfiction genres -- memoir, personal essay, process essay, and historical narrative -- as a means to explore in writing the dynamics of their family, past and present. Chose a variety of writers from multicultural backgrounds to encourage students to write on race, class, gender, mental health issues, and addiction. Covered research techniques such as interviewing, genealogical searches and using the NYU library to aid students in uncovering information about their families.

CUNY Queens College, Flushing, New York:

College Writing. Spring 2012, Fall 2011, Spring 2011, Fall 2010, Spring 2010, Fall 2009, Fall 2008, Fall 2007, Fall 2005, Fall 2004, Fall 2003.

Required composition course. Led students through pre-writing, drafting, revision and editing processes to compose college-level essays. Covered topics of definition, reflection, narration, description, classification, persuasion and argumentation. Systematically taught steps of research papers – collecting, organizing, summarizing and citing. Assigned readings and facilitated class discussions to inform in-class and at-home journal writing. In Fall 2007, 2009, and 2010 taught an honors level course on New York City in the Macaulay Honors College. Developed a special course on Cultural Identity for Fall 2011, used by several faculty members.

Essay Writing. Spring 2011, Fall 2010, Spring 2009, Fall 2008.

Community-based essay writing course, in which students write about themselves as members of communities, defining various identities and arguing current issues of their families, cultures and neighborhoods. Designed course to include readings on New York City, from the New York Times City Section, various blogs (“QC Voices”, “The Hell Gate Review”, “Mr. Beller's Neighborhood”) and for students to write about the readings on a class blog. The last assignment is also a blog post: a substantially line-edited revision of a previous essay. In 2011, designed the course around the theme of “Essays on Change”.

Creative Nonfiction. Spring 2010, Fall 2009, Spring 2008, Spring 2006, Spring 2005, Fall 2004.
A creative writing class on memoir, personal essay and literary journalism. Assigned readings by various contemporary authors to help define each of these categories, to investigate the ways in which they overlap in terms of rhetorical approaches, and to identify the multitude of literary tactics (detail, dialogue, exposition, setting, metaphor, poetics, etc.) that nonfiction writers use to successfully join style and content. Helped students to develop their own versions of creative nonfiction through regular writing exercises inside and outside of class and peer workshops.

Writing, Literature and Culture. Spring 2009, Fall 2005, Spring 2005, Spring 2004.
Designed an intermediate level composition class on autobiographical texts. Students analyzed the themes of three authors dealing with diverse forms of trauma – Primo Levi, Audre Lorde, and Dave Eggers. (For Spring 2009, students read The Color of Water by James McBride, Black Dog of Fate by Peter Balakian, Fun Home by Alison Bechdel and The Woman Warrior by Maxine Hong Kingston.) Essay assignments on the books included definition, compare/contrast, and argument using theories of feminism, psychoanalytic and other forms of criticism.

Dance Writing. College Now. Spring 2008, Fall 2007, Summer 2006, Spring 2006, Fall 2005, Summer 2005, Spring 2005, Summer 2004.
A writing class linked with an intro dance class in a special program for college-bound high school students. Guided students through readings of dance journals, criticism, and physically-oriented literature in order to introduce them to dance history as well as to provide them with a verbal vocabulary to think and communicate about dance. Developed assignments that allowed students to write about dance from the perspective of a dancer, as a critic and as a creative writer.

Business Writing. Business and Liberal Arts Honors Program. Spring 2008, Fall 2007.
Led students through business writing formats of the letter, the memo, the email, informal and final reports, cover letters and resumes. Also detailed persuasive writing, sales language, and modes of breaking bad news. Grammar and editing was also a key feature of the class, emphasized through peer and professorial review and revisions.

Creative Writing. Summer 2006, Summer 2005, Spring 2004.
An introductory creative writing workshop on poetry, playwriting and the short story. Collaboratively formed a supportive environment to encourage written and verbal expression. Developed and implemented creative writing exercises based on readings. Encouraged students to experiment with writing imaginatively and autobiographically. Guided members in learning how to give constructive feedback on their peers' creative writing assignments.

New York City College of Technology, Brooklyn, New York:

Writing for the ACT Exam, ESOL Writing for the ACT Exam. Summer 2004-2012
Prepared remedial college students to pass the ACT and, most recently, the CATW writing exam. Utilized reading, writing, speaking, and grammar exercises to help students improve their writing. Designed exercises to guide students to learn how to analyze texts and write arguments specifically for the exam. Gave constructive oral and written feedback on student essays to help them correct their mistakes. Achieved an 80% success rate. For the ESOL students, added grammar and vocabulary exercises, using textbook, online resources and collaborative speaking, writing, reading and listening activities, to strengthen their writing skills.

LaGuardia Community College, Long Island City, New York:

Introduction to Composition II -- Writing Through Literature. Fall 2009, Fall 2008.

Taught a course on writing literary analyses of poems, short fiction and nonfiction. Led students through process-based writing and a systematic approach to research methods. Designed exercises on close readings and critical thinking, and introduced various forms of literary criticism.

Yerevan State University, Yerevan, Armenia:

Creative Nonfiction, Yerevan State University, Yerevan, Armenia. Spring 2007, Fall 2006.

A Fulbright Fellowship sponsored course. Introduced English department students raised in a post-Soviet educational system to forms of individual expression such as freewriting exercises, class discussion, response papers, and the workshop. Students read examples of contemporary creative nonfiction and wrote their own personal essays on topics of family, relationships, the generation gap and the Karabakh war, particularly relating to Armenian identity.