

English 413

Critical Questions in Language & Composition: *Sound it Out 2.0*

College of Arts and Letters, Michigan State University
Department of English

Meeting

Mon, 12:40pm – 3:30pm; Wed, 12:40 – 2:30
104 Berkey Hall

Online location

@GOgreenGOwrite #413sounds

Professor

Dr. Emery Petchauer

Office hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 10:30am – 12:30pm
and by appointment (in person & online)

Course Description

This course is designed to facilitate our growth as writers and as teachers of writers. That is, we don't teach writing; we teach writers. We don't learn how to write, we become writers. We will write in different genres and modes, work to understand our processes and identities as writers, and learn "structured processes" approaches for teaching writers in middle and high schools. You should finish this course a different writer than when you started, have a portfolio of writing that you can use alongside your students, and possess specific approaches to apply in your own classroom.

Course Theme

The theme for our course this semester is *Sounding it Out*. This phrase might remind you of some of the earliest advice you got from a teacher when you couldn't spell a word: "Well, just sound it out!" – horrible advice, really. For us, sounding it out means thinking about the intersection of sound and writing. How do the soundscapes all around us shape our writing? How can we write about sound? What do we hear, and how do we listen? How do we compose with sounds? How does sound work in tandem with our other

senses? These are open ended, exploratory questions that draw from the field of sound studies. Open ended in nature, these questions will guide some of our learning this semester.

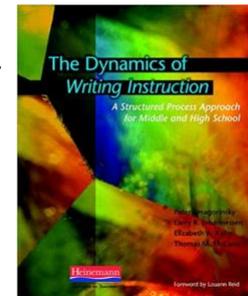
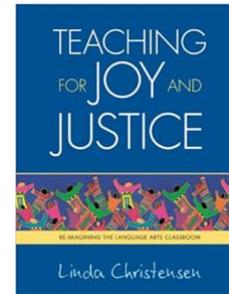
Course Objectives

1. Deepen our understanding of the nature of writing, ourselves as writers, and their relationship to other forms of composition
2. Explore how sound/sonic material intersects with written composition
3. Produce multi-genre writing that is worthy of publication
4. Practice and become familiar with different apps and tools that can be useful in the secondary classroom
5. Develop, create, and critique structured approaches for developing students into writers

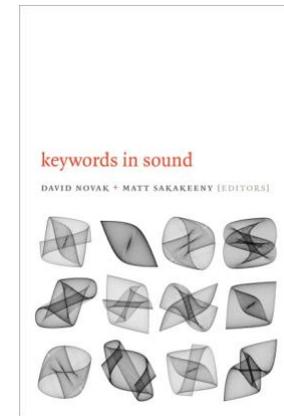
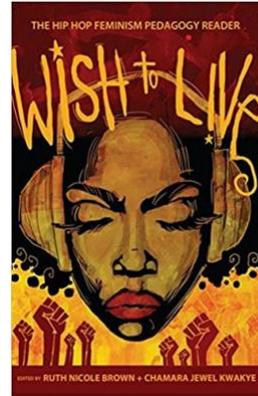
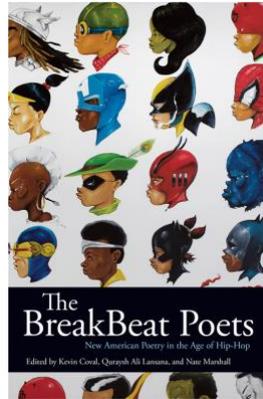
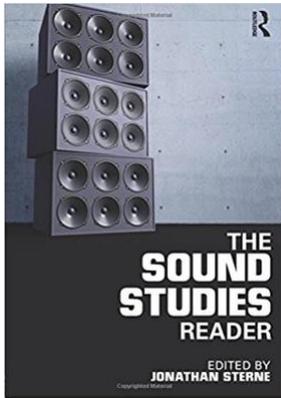
Required Texts & Materials

**Bring assigned readings to class on the days they are due*

1. *The Dynamics of Writing Instruction: A Structured Process Approach for Middle and High School* by Peter Smagorinsky, Lary Johannessen, Elizabeth Kahn, and Thomas McCann. Heinemann Press, 2010.
2. *Teaching for Joy and Justice: Reimagining the Language Arts Classroom* by Linda Christensen. Rethinking Schools, 2009.
3. A Twitter account for professional purposes. Follow the class account, @GOgreenGowrite The class hashtag is #413sounds
4. Recording device (like in any smartphone)
5. Headphones



The books that follow are not required, but we will be reading various selections from them on D2L:



OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS

(See full assignment sheets on D2L for instructions)

Portfolio of Your Writing (35%) - Due May 2nd by end of the day

We will write a great deal this semester. You'll submit a portfolio of your writing at the end of the semester. The requirements for the portfolio are below:

1. At least five pieces of writing that have been revised (include original draft(s) and revisions. Must be three different genres of writing among the five pieces)
2. An overview of how each piece changed through the process of revision. One paragraph for each revised piece.
3. An introductory essay that gives an overview of the portfolio connected to the course theme: *Sounding it Out*. Think about each word of this phrase. *Sounding*: what does this mean in context with your portfolio as a whole? How does your writing sound? *It*: what is the "it" of your portfolio? What do your pieces suggest you are sounding out? *Out*: out to where? To whom? From where? Have some fun with it. One-page single spaced.
4. A self-assessment of how you've developed as a writer this semester. What came easy? What did you struggle with? What happened to your inner hater/critic? What are you most proud of in your growth as a writer? What are the next steps in your trajectory of growth as a writer? Etc. One-page single spaced.
5. An overview of how each piece changed through the process of revision. One paragraph for each revised piece.

Publication Submission (25%)

This semester you will submit a piece of your writing for publication in a relevant venue. The piece does not have to be accepted for publication for you to get credit (but great if it does!); you simply have to provide evidence that you have submitted it. This evidence is usually email/online confirmation that you have successfully submitted your piece. How will you know where to submit your piece? How does this work? Good questions. See the assignment sheet on D2L for further instructions and possible venues. We will also talk about this in class.

Structured Process Class Session (15%)

You are learning what is called the “structured process approach” to writing instruction in this class (as outlined in the Smagorinsky et al. text). During the second half of the semester, we’ll spend some time in class designing structured processes that we will then apply to our own writing. We’ll do this instead of developing them for an imaginary group of students. We’ll use some of the structured processes in the Smagorinsky book as models to emulate, hack, etc. to further our growth as curriculum and learning designers. You’ll keep these structured process procedures together in a subfolder.



Sound Work (25%)

Our work with sound this semester will entail a number of ongoing and evolving routines. Alongside definitional readings early in the semester from sound studies, we’ll be partaking in embodied listenings, capturing/recording sounds from our daily soundscapes into an archive, thinking about how these sounds can be source material for composition (through sites like Booktrack classroom, for example), and eventually chopping, cutting, and “playing” them through music production software and instruments like you see pictured below. From this work, we will put on a kind of sound installation or interactive demonstration at the end of the semester. This part of the class will likely push us into unknown territory, so you will have a lot leeway with what you want to focus on individually or collaboratively, likely anchoring to one key concept from sound studies (e.g., voice, listening, space, noise, etc.). Evaluations tied to exploratory work like this will be about the risks you are willing to take and the thoughtfulness behind those risks.



GRADING & EVALUATION

Assignment	Value
Portfolio of your writing	35%
Publication submission	25%
Teaching structured process session	15%
Sound work	25%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

94% - 100% = 4.0	75% - 79% = 2.5	60% - 64% = 1.0
86% - 93% = 3.5	70% - 74% = 2.0	Under 60% = 0.0
80% - 85% = 3.0	65% - 69% = 1.5	

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change)				
	Date	Topics & Focus	Readings & Assignments	Sound Work
Week 1: Poetry and Community	Mon, 1/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course introduction • Setting up routines • Structured processes to render “I was Raised by” 		
	Wed, 1/10	<p>Discuss and <i>T4JJ</i> chapters</p> <p>Play with SpeakingPhoto app</p> <p>Read out and Workshop your poems</p>	<p>Read Introduction and Chapter 1 in <i>Teaching for Joy & Justice (T4JJ)</i>; on D2L)</p> <p>Write an “I was Raised by” poem and other kind of your choice as modeled in the <i>T4JJ</i> chapter (Age Poem, For My People, or Knock Knock). Use our classwork from today and the advice Christensen gives to her students as your own. Upload these poems to your WRITING folder before class.</p>	<p>Download the free app SpeakingPhoto app. Set-up a Twitter account for professional purposes if you don’t have one already.</p>

Week 2: Soun scape	Mon, 1/15	No Class: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day		
	Wed, 1/17	<p>Discuss sound studies readings (see notes on D2L) and soundscapes</p> <p>Share your soundscapes</p>	<p>Read “Sonic Imaginations” and “The Soundscape” pieces on D2L. <u>Read in this order</u> and be sure to read the paragraph I’ve put under each reading on D2L. Think about how these readings connect or inform the soundscape snippets you record →</p> <p>Check out the Religious Soundmap project here. It is based upon the ideas of soundscape</p>	<p>Capture an audio clip of 3 different soundscapes from your life and upload it to your SOUND folder. Use your phone (likely voice memo) to record. Make each clip between 15 and 30 seconds. Tag them with the word #soundscape in their file names and another label that you see fit.</p>
Week 3: Liste ning	Mon, 1/22	<p>Discuss “A Locus of Control and the Erasure” and poems</p> <p>Question: What do we want to erase?</p>	<p>Read: “The Three Listening Modes” + “Listening” + “A Locus of Control and the Erasure” by Aziza Barnes + the poems “Juicy (an erasure)” + “Badu Interviews Lamar (an erasure)” (all on D2L). Optional: “Teaching Through Erasure” (D2L)</p>	<p>Capture three audio clips focused on the in-between moments of your life. Is it waiting in line for coffee? Making breakfast? It’s up to you. Upload them to your SOUND folder. Tag them with the word #inbetween and anything else you see fit</p>

	Wed, 1/24	Share and workshop erasure poems	<p>Read (Re)educating the Senses: Multimodal Listening, Bodily Learning, and the Composition of Sonic Experiences” by Steph Ceraso (D2L)</p> <p>Write an erasure poem. Write two if you like. Bring it to class and upload to your WRITING folder beforehand. Also bring the text you are erasing. Be ready to talk a bit about your process of creating it.</p>	
Week 4: Listening	Mon, 1/29	Discuss and workshop 100 word stories	<p>Read “The Sonic Color Line and The Listening Ear” + the assignment sheet for your publication submission (D2L). Peruse some of the links for publication sites on the sheet. Read around the sites and find a few pieces you like. Come in ready to talk about them.</p> <p>Peruse 100 Word Story. Read the “about” section and read at least 5 of the stories on the site. Write and post a 100 word story of your own for their monthly photo prompt. Upload to your WRITING before class and post on the 100 Word Story prompt.</p> <p>Check out diaspora2488. Consider how voice, silence, sound, and place work in the project.</p>	<p>Capture three audio clips focused on (in)justice. What does (in)justice sound like? What can we learn about (in)justice though sound? Upload them to your SOUND folder. Tag them with the word #(in)justice and anything else you see fit.</p>

	Wed, 1/31	Discuss and workshop 100 word stories and booktracks	Go to Booktrack Classroom and create a student account. Then go to the pulldown menu under your name, click “join a class,” and use this code to join our class: tkLqty Watch this video about how Booktrack Classroom works. Create a booktrack with your 100 word story from Wednesday.	
Week 5: Voice	Mon, 2/5	Introduction to Red Cedar Writing Project Discuss and present voice pieces	Read “Voice” (D2L) + “Listen to the Sound of My Voice” by Kelly Barfield Watch this video about how Kanye West uses voice in his music production. Write a piece about your voice. You can use Barfield’s as a model, riff off of a section of hers, or go in a totally different direction. Hers is kind of a downer; yours doesn’t have to be. Any genre but poetry. Upload to your WRITING folder before class.	Capture three audio clips focused on voice that somehow connect to your piece. Think big (a roaring crowd!), small (a quiet whisper) and in between. They don’t have to be of your voice or a voice, actually. Upload them to your SOUND folder. Tag them with the word #voice and anything else you see fit.

	Wed, 2/7	Discuss King Britt performance and Regina Bradley piece	<p>Read “Sandra Bland: #SayHerName Loud or Not at All” by Regina Bradley (@redclayscholar). Tweet the author if you like. She very active on Tw and really nice!</p> <p>Listen/View summary of King Britt’s To SubServe and UnProtect: A Sonic Response and read the explanation/analysis of it here that will help make sense of it.</p>	
Week 6: Noise and Silence	Mon, 2/12	<p>Thinking about hip hop aesthetics, sound, and composition.</p> <p>DJ/Turntablism demonstration</p>	<p>Read “Noise” + “Silence” + “The Art of the Mistake: Some Notes on Breaking and Making” (D2L) Patrick Rosal + “On Lit Hop” by Adam Mansbach.</p>	<p>Capture three audio clips focused on noise and silence. Think of these as concepts (e.g., “to be silent in the face of injustice”) to guide your listening.</p> <p>Upload them to your SOUND folder. Tag them with the word #noise and anything else you see fit.</p>

	Wed, 2/14	Read and share break pieces	Take the concept of <i>the break, breaking, or the mistake</i> from Monday and write a piece based upon it. Maybe intentionally break a conventional form. Maybe take the idea of the fortuitous mistake (like June’s shoe flying off) and use a mistake as a jumping off point. Maybe go back to something you wrote before (a paper in a different class?) and find the break to loop and extend into something new and fresh. Upload it to your WRITING folder before class.	
Week 7: Space	Mon, 2/19	Discuss space readings and share home sound captures	Read “Space” (D2L) + “SO! Amplifies #HearMyHome and the Soundscapes of Everyday Life” Check out Project Cabrini Green , a public sound mural art installation made with youth. Click some of the “rooms” in the exhibit and listen to some of the pieces. Note some of them to talk about in class. Think about the <u>form</u> of the exhibit. Read about the youth workshops too.	Capture a three audio clips focused on the idea of home. Upload them to your SOUND folder. Tag them with the word #space and anything else you see fit.

	Wed, 2/21	Situating sound around writing	Pick one of the pieces you've written so far this semester and create a sonic collage of three audio clips to accompany it. Do you want clips to sound <i>against</i> your piece? To <i>amplify</i> your piece? To give <i>context</i> to your piece? Think of these clips as an opportunity to render additional textual layers to your piece. Be ready to talk about the collage you bring in.	
Week 8:	Mon, 2/26	Writing and revision week Meet in Linton 9 (basement)		
	Wed, 2/28	Midterm publication submission due by midnight on Friday		
	Spring Break			

Week 9	Mon, 3/12	<p>Discuss a structured process approach, results of Figure 1-1 activity, and scenario.</p> <p>Start generating ideas for sound event.</p> <p>Where to go next as a writer</p>	<p>Read Smagorinsky et al. Chapters 1, 2, & 9. Complete the Figure 1-1 activity (pp. 9-15) and write your own scenario, guided by pp. 15-16. Upload to your MISC folder before class.</p>	
	Wed, 3/14	<p>Discuss #T4JJ4</p> <p>Develop a structured process for our own purposes</p>	<p>Read T4JJ Chapter 4 + Smagorinsky et al. Chapter 3</p>	<p>Revisit your sound archive and make sure they are appropriately organized and labeled. It will matter next week.</p> <p>And TBD</p>
Week 10	Mon, 3/19	<p>Create and design with our sound archive.</p> <p>Guest producer: MVG the Beat Whisperer</p>	<p>Sound Session 1</p> <p>Convert to mp3 or wav any of your sound files you want to use in the sound session. Uses a converter like this one: https://online-audio-converter.com/ M4A files (from SpeakinPhoto) will not work. Convert these to mp3 or wav</p>	

	Wed, 3/21	<p>Discuss #T4JJ2</p> <p>Apply the structured process from last week to our writing</p>	<p>Read Smagorinsky et al. Chapter 4 + T4JJ Chapter 2</p>	
Week 11	Mon, 3/26	<p>Discuss #T4JJ3</p> <p>Develop a structured process for our own purposes</p> <p>Guest teacher speaker: Kristia Castillo (Teacher in San Francisco)</p>	<p>Read T4JJ Chapter 3 + Smagorinsky et al Chapter 5</p>	TBD
	Wed, 3/28	<p>Discuss #T4JJ5</p> <p>Apply the structured process we developed to our writing</p>	<p>Read Smagorinsky et al. Chapter 6 + T4JJ Chapter 5</p>	
Week 12	Mon, 4/2	<p>Create and design with our sound archive.</p> <p>Guests: Cassie Bronwell (MSU grad student and sound studies scholar) + MVG</p>	<p>Sound Session 2</p>	TBD

	Wed, 4/4	Develop a structured process for our own purposes	Read Smagorinsky et al. Chapter 7	
Week 13	Mon, 4/9	Discuss #T4JJ6 Apply the structured process we developed to our writings	Read T4JJ Chapter 6	TBD
	Wed, 4/11	Create and design with our sound archive, moving toward completion Guest producer: MVG the Beat Whisperer	Sound Session 3	
Week 14	Mon, 4/16	Work week: Revise and finalize writing portfolio submissions		
	Wed, 4/18			
Week 15	Mon, 4/23	Work week in class: Finalize work for sound event		

	Wed, 4/25		
Final s	Mon, 4/30	<p style="text-align: center;">Our Sound it Out Event Location TBA (12:45pm – 2:45pm)</p>	Artist statement write-up due by end of the day April 30th.
	May 2nd	Writing portfolio due by end of the day	