Independent Study Online Course Syllabus

Course Number:   ELA 915
Course Title:   Teaching Grammar in Context

X Online       □ Distance Learning

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Units: 3
Grade Level:  4-12

Course Description

Teaching Grammar in Context is an online, standards-based course that helps teachers learn how to provide grammar and mechanics instruction within the context of student writing. By focusing on literature and writer’s craft, teachers in all disciplines can reinforce the rules of language in a way that brings meaning and importance to written communication. Students of this online course will respond critically to academic texts and will engage their students with innovative teaching strategies and lesson plans. The readings and assignments in this course are aligned with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. The course adheres to the teaching standards established by the National Council of Teachers of English and the five core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Course Dates

This course is self-paced; students may enroll at any time and take up to one year to complete assignments.

Students have up to one year from the date of registration, and no less than three weeks (one week per credit), to complete the course.

Technology Requirements

In order to successfully complete the course requirements, course participants must have Internet access, be able to send and receive email, know how to manage simple files in a word processing program, and have a basic understanding of the Internet.
Please remember that the instructor is not able to offer technical support. In the event that you need help with Moodle, please contact the Center for Online Learning (COL), by telephone 1-559-453-3460. Help by phone is available Mon-Thurs 8:00 am to 8:00pm and on Fridays from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, or by filling out a “Request Services” form at http://col.fresno.edu/contact/request-services. Please identify that you are with the Continuing Education/Independent Studies department.

**Course Materials**


*Cost for this text is included in the materials fee; the text will be mailed to the student upon registration.*
Course Requirements

Students of this course will be expected to write reflective responses to their reading assignments and teaching experiences. They will develop and teach lesson plans that integrate the grammatical and pedagogical concepts modeled in the text. Students will be expected to connect their academic work with state standards and to research current issues surrounding the teaching of grammar. Student/instructor interaction is invited; the website offers forums and provides links for e-mail communication.

National Content/Common Core State Standards

The following Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (Grades 6-12) are reinforced throughout this course:

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Language

Conventions of Standard English

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Knowledge of Language

3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

6. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing

Text Types and Purposes
1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Production and Distribution of Writing
4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge
7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing
10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Feel free to consult the Common Core State Standards document for English Language Arts at http://www.corestandards.org/. This document includes grade-specific applications of these language and writing standards (pages 42-47; 52-55).

In addition to meeting Common Core State Standards, this course promotes the following core propositions that characterize National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs).
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards:
Five Core Propositions (http://www.nbpts.org/)

Proposition I: Teachers are Committed to Students and Their Learning
• NBCTs are dedicated to making knowledge accessible to all students. They believe all students can learn.
• They treat students equitably. They recognize the individual differences that distinguish their students from one another and they take account for these differences in their practice.
• NBCTs understand how students develop and learn.
• They respect the cultural and family differences students bring to their classroom.
• They are concerned with their students’ self-concept, their motivation and the effects of learning on peer relationships.

Proposition 2: Teachers Know the Subjects They Teach and How to Teach Those Subjects to Students.
• NBCTs have mastery over the subject(s) they teach. They have a deep understanding of the history structure and real-world applications of the subject.
• They have skill and experience in teaching it, and they are very familiar with the skills gaps and preconceptions students may bring to the subject.
• They are able to use diverse instructional strategies to teach for understanding.

Proposition 3: Teachers are Responsible for Managing and Monitoring Student Learning.
• NBCTs deliver effective instruction. They move fluently through a range of instructional techniques, keeping students motivated, engaged and focused.
• They know how to engage students to ensure a disciplined learning environment, and how to organize instruction to meet instructional goals.
• NBCTs know how to assess the progress of individual students as well as the class as a whole.
• They use multiple methods for measuring student growth and understanding, and they can clearly explain student performance to parents.

Proposition 4: Teachers Think Systematically about Their Practice and Learn from Experience.
• NBCTs model what it means to be an educated person—they read, they question, they create and they are willing to try new things.
• They are familiar with learning theories and instructional strategies and stay abreast of current issues in American education.
• They critically examine their practice on a regular basis to deepen knowledge, expand their repertoire of skills, and incorporate new findings into their practice.

Proposition 5: Teachers are Members of Learning Communities.
• NBCTs collaborate with others to improve student learning.
• They are leaders and actively know how to seek and build partnerships with community groups and businesses.
• They work with other professionals on instructional policy, curriculum development and staff development.
• They can evaluate school progress and the allocation of resources in order to meet state and local education objectives.

Learning Objectives / Outcomes

Students of this course will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the “rules” of grammar and how they affect written communication (CCSS Language 1, 2; CCSS Writing 4, 5; NBPTS Props. 2, 3)
2. Identify, analyze and address the patterns of error in their students’ writing (CCSS Language 1, 2; CCSS Writing 4, 5; NBPTS Props. 2, 3, 4)
3. Implement visual and “hands-on” teaching strategies to reinforce key concepts of language usage (NBPTS Props. 1, 2, 3, 4)
4. Use mentor texts to model effective grammar and mechanics, as well as to stimulate student writing (CCSS Language 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Writing 3, 4, 5, 9, 10; NBPTS Props. 1, 2, 3)
5. Identify current issues concerning grammar instruction (NBPTS Props. 2, 4, 5)
6. Develop innovative lessons to help students recognize how using correct grammar and mechanics can create powerful written text (CCSS Language 1, 2, 3, 5; Writing 4, 5; NBPTS Prop. 3)
7. Identify the ways that grammar instruction in the classroom meets state and national standards for the teaching of English (NBPTS Props. 4, 5)

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Complete the following assignments. The questions require that you demonstrate evidence of your reading as you incorporate the concepts and strategies into your lesson designs and responses. Please take advantage of this opportunity to try new ideas and material, rather than “recycling” lessons you already have been teaching.

Assignments

1. Teaching Grammar in Your Classroom:

Reflect on your own experience teaching grammar and mechanics. How have you tried to help your students to improve their use of language? Have you found particular strategies that work well? Where have you had frustrations? Have you tried to incorporate grammar "rules" into your teaching? With success? What do you hope to gain from this course?
Read Chapter One of this course's text, Jeff Anderson's *Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer's Workshop*. Do Anderson's comments spark your own reflections? Have you had similar or different experiences? How do you respond to the ideas presented in Chapter One?

Consider the prompts above as you share your reflections in a short written response. (300 words)

2. **Identifying Patterns of Error:**

One of the first steps in preparing to teach grammar and mechanics is to identify where your students struggle. In Chapter One, Anderson includes a list compiled by Connors and Lunsford titled, “20 Most Common Errors in Order of Frequency” (Figure 1.1).

Examine your students’ writing. What are the 20 most common errors that you see your students make? Generate a list that reflects your observations. You may organize your list according to frequency, as modeled by Connors and Lunsford, or by groups, as Anderson demonstrates in Figure 1.2.

3. **Mentoring Through Text:**

A good example can go a long way. One of the best ways to encourage good behavior is to model good behavior. The same concept works when teaching grammar and language usage. The more frequently a student reads well-crafted sentences and paragraphs, the more likely it is that the student will model his or her writing on these examples.

Read Chapter Two of *Mechanically Inclined*. In this chapter, Anderson introduces the concept of using strong literary works and student writing to model effective and correct use of language. He refers to these examples as “Mentor Texts.” According to Anderson, a mentor text is “any text that can teach a writer about any aspect of writer’s craft” (16).

Collect your mentor texts!

**Assignment A: Find Five (5) Mentor Texts**

Find five mentor texts that would be appropriate for use in your classroom. Your texts could be paragraphs, essays, articles, short stories, etc. Consider using texts from a variety of fields and disciplines, especially if you teach in a school that encourages a cross-disciplinary approach.

The mentor texts that you choose should model a range of concepts. Consider the list that you created in the previous assignment. Where are your students’ needs and how do your mentor texts address these patterns of error?
When you submit this portion of the assignment, please identify each text (you do not need to include the text itself) and explain what you would like your students to notice and integrate into their own writing.

Assignment B: Become a “Sentence Stalker”

Collect 10 sentences that would be excellent mentor texts (indicate sources). Briefly note the concept you want your students to recognize and grasp from the sentence. See Anderson’s examples for guidance. You also may want to visit his linked "Sentence Stalker" website for inspiration.

4. Writing on the Walls:

Read Chapters 3 and 4 of *Mechanically Inclined*.

In Chapters 3 and 4, Anderson offers a plethora of resources and ideas for creating a writing and word-rich learning environment. Choose three ideas that you found interesting and write a response to each.

Consider the following prompts as you respond: What is interesting about his idea? How could you see it work in your classroom? How could it help students become more confident with their use of language? How could you adapt an idea to meet your particular teaching situation? For example, could students with access to technology create PowerPoint presentations rather than wall charts? (500 words)

5. Building Scaffolds:

Read Part II of *Mechanically Inclined*.

In Part II, Anderson presents lesson plans that he has created to address many common errors in student writing. Choose five lessons that you find to be effective and engaging. Write a brief assessment of each lesson. You may discuss a new strategy that it presents, an aspect that you like about the plan, why you think it would work well, or what you would add to make it even more effective. (600 words)

6. Making the Rules Come Alive:

Develop and teach three lessons to help your students better understand the power that strong grammar and mechanics can bring to language. Model your lessons on Anderson’s examples. The lessons should embody the concepts presented in the text, particularly the inherent connection that grammar and mechanics have with writer’s craft. You may want to refer to the list you created in Assignment #2 for topic ideas.
Your lesson plan does not need to be longer than one or two pages. Use a format and structure that is comfortable and practical for you, whether that means point form, outline, or short paragraphs.

Your lesson plans should include:

a. Lesson’s objective
b. State standard(s) met through the lesson
c. Classroom context (where the lesson fits within your curriculum)
d. Process you will follow to meet the lesson’s objective
e. Assessment of the lesson’s strengths and weaknesses (after you have taught the lesson)

If you are unable to teach and assess these lessons in your regular classroom, please present your lessons to a substitute group. In your assessment, identify your "makeshift classroom" and describe any adjustments you have had to make. Feel free to recruit friends, relatives, etc., for your "sample class." The students do not need to be the same age/ability level as the students in your regular classroom.

7. Exploring the Contexts of Grammar:

The May 2006 issue of *English Journal* focuses on the “Contexts for Teaching Grammar.” An electronic copy of the issue is included for you here. Please note that this is copyrighted material and is for use in this course only.

Choose three articles in this issue to read and critique. Look through the table of contents and skim articles to find ones that interest you and apply to your teaching situation. You may note that "Zooming In and Zooming Out: Putting Grammar in Context into Context" is written by Jeff Anderson, author of *Mechanically Inclined*.

After reading each article, please write a critical response. What did you find interesting in the article? How do the ideas connect with what you have read in *Mechanically Inclined?* How could you apply the concepts to your own teaching situation? What additional questions does the article raise? (200 words per response)

8. Where Are the Resources?

There are a variety of resources available to teachers of grammar and mechanics. You may begin by exploring some of the resources associated with this course's text. Follow the links below to reach Jeff Anderson's website, Stenhouse Publishers, or an instructional webcast between Anderson and several teachers.
Look for additional resources that address teaching grammar and mechanics. You may explore books, articles, academic journals, online sources, and websites with instructional videos (teachertube.com, schooltube.com, etc.).

Click on the forum link below to post three of the most helpful and creative sources/ideas that you discover. Please write a brief annotation for each.

Be sure to check the forum regularly for new resources!

**Evidence of Learning**

- Student provided evidence of his/her understanding of the course’s objectives and the text’s principles through his/her reflective writing. (Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 6)

- Student demonstrated an ability to think critically, conduct independent research, and integrate findings into his/her teaching. (Outcomes 2, 4, 5, 6, 7)

- Student read a teaching text and responded to its ideas critically. (Outcome 5)

- Student identified ways through which teaching grammar, usage, and style reinforced objectives established by his/her state’s teaching standards. (Outcome 7)

- Student developed lesson plans that demonstrated an understanding of the assignment and its purpose. Each lesson plan included an objective that was clear and attainable, an explanation of the process through which this objective would be met, and an assessment (when appropriate) of the lesson’s strengths and areas for improvement. (Outcomes 3, 4, 6, 7)

- Student demonstrated an understanding of how the teaching of grammar and mechanics is linked with writer’s craft. This understanding was shown through the strategies used in his/her lesson designs, the mentor texts chosen for use in the classroom, and the text responses written. (Outcomes 3, 4, 6)

**Grading Policies and Rubrics**

Evaluation:

- Written Responses (7): 70%
- Lesson Plans (3): 30%

Total scores determine the final grade:

- 90-100% = A
- 80-89% = B

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Instructor: Elaine Reimer-Pare'
Date of Revision 2/2/16

To register for courses go to http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd and log in
79 or below = no credit

- The discernment between an A or a B is at the discretion of the instructor based on the quality of work submitted (see assignment rubrics).
- Coursework falling short of a quality equaling a B or a Credit Grade will be returned with further instructions.
- All assignments must be completed in order to receive a grade. In addition, all assignments are expected to reflect the quality that teacher-training institutions require of professional educators. If completed assignments do not meet this standard, students will be notified with further instructions from the instructor.

**Grading Options**

Course participants have the option of requesting a letter grade or a credit/no credit when submitting the online grade form. Students will submit the grade form when coursework has been completed. (Instructions will be provided for online grading by the instructor.)

**Grading Rubric for Teaching Grammar in Context**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Responses 70%</th>
<th>A 90-100 points</th>
<th>B 80-89 points</th>
<th>No Credit Below 79 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #7, #8</td>
<td>The response is insightful and critical. It demonstrates a close reading of the text and an understanding of its ideas. The response makes specific reference to the text’s principles and connects these ideas in practical ways to the classroom.</td>
<td>The response reflects concepts illustrated in the text, but it does not show evidence of careful, critical analysis. The response does what is expected to “meet the requirement” and “answer the question” without much creativity or insightful reflection.</td>
<td>There is little evidence of effort or reflection. The response does not demonstrate attentive reading of the text or appropriate application of its ideas. Assignments are far from meeting the suggested word length.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lesson plan is</td>
<td>The lesson plan reflects</td>
<td>The lesson plan is not</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson Plans 30%

Assignment #6

| Modeled on Anderson’s teaching strategies and reflects a clear understanding of the text’s premise. The plan is the original work of the student. It includes all required elements and is organized logically and clearly. The lesson is a creative, yet realistic plan that would help young students strengthen their writing skills. |
| a limited understanding of Anderson’s teaching strategies. It is the original work of the student. It includes most of the required elements, but does not provide much development of the ideas. The lesson plan follows the guidelines, but lacks an enthusiasm and creativity that could motivate young writers. |
| the original work of the student. It is not modeled on nor does it demonstrate an understanding of Anderson’s teaching strategies. The plan is not realistic for use in the classroom and does not include the required elements. It lacks a cohesive structure and its ideas are not communicated clearly. |

Instructor/Student Contact

Students who register for this course will receive a welcome e-mail from the instructor with information about accessing the course’s online site. Throughout the course, the instructor is available by e-mail or directly through the Moodle course site to answer questions or provide feedback. Each assignment that is submitted online will receive a response from the instructor.

References


**Internet Resources**

[http://www.englishjournal.colostate.edu/Links/linksforissue_may06.htm](http://www.englishjournal.colostate.edu/Links/linksforissue_may06.htm)  
(Links to resources discussed in the May 2006 issue of *English Journal*)

[http://greatsentences.blogspot.com/](http://greatsentences.blogspot.com/)  
(Notable Sentences for Writer’s Workshop)

[http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content4/grammer.morph.html](http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content4/grammer.morph.html)  
(Grammar myths and teaching resources)

[http://www.stenhouse.com](http://www.stenhouse.com)  
(Jeff Anderson resources and video clips)

(Webcast with Jeff Anderson, author of *Mechanically Inclined*)

[http://www.writeguy.net/](http://www.writeguy.net/)  
(Jeff Anderson’s website)

**National and State Standards**
Final Course Grade and Transcripts

When all work for the course has been completed, students will need to logon to the Center for Professional Development website (http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd) to “Submit Grade Form”. Once the instructor fills out the grade form online, students may log back in to request their Grade Report as well as order transcripts online. Please allow at least two weeks for the final grade to be posted. For more information see the Independent Studies Policies and Procedures that were sent to you when you received your course materials, or in your online course. They are available, also at http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd - under General Information > CPD Policies.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

All people participating in the educational process at Fresno Pacific University are expected to pursue honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic work. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will be handled according to the procedures set forth in the Fresno Pacific University Catalogue. URL http://www.fresno.edu.

CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

| CE 1 | Demonstrate proficient written communication by articulating a clear focus, synthesizing arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to inform and persuade others, and present information applicable to targeted use. |
| CE 2 | Demonstrate comprehension of content-specific knowledge and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts. |
| CE 3 | Reflect on their personal and professional growth and provide evidence of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and professional improvement. |
| CE 4 | Apply critical thinking competencies by generating probing questions, recognizing underlying assumptions, interpreting and evaluating relevant information, and applying their understandings to the professional setting. |
| CE 5 | Reflect on values that inspire high standards of professional and ethical behavior as they pursue excellence in applying new learning to their chosen field. |
| CE 6 | Identify information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, organize that information, identify the best sources of information for a given enquiry, locate and critically evaluate sources, and accurately and effectively share that information. |
### FRESNO PACIFIC UNIVERSITY STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

| Student Learning Outcomes Oral Communication: | Students will exhibit clear, engaging, and confident oral communication – in both individual and group settings – and will critically evaluate content and delivery components. |
| Written Communication: | Students will demonstrate proficient written communication by articulating a clear focus, synthesizing arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to inform and persuade others. |
| Content Knowledge: | Students will demonstrate comprehension of content-specific knowledge and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts. |
| Reflection: | Students will reflect on their personal and professional growth and provide evidence of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and vocational improvement. |
| Critical Thinking: | Students will apply critical thinking competencies by generating probing questions, recognizing underlying assumptions, interpreting and evaluating relevant information, and applying their understandings to new situations. |
| Moral Reasoning: | Students will identify and apply moral reasoning and ethical decision-making skills, and articulate the norms and principles underlying a Christian world-view. |
| Service: | Students will demonstrate service and reconciliation as a way of leadership. |
| Cultural and Global Perspective: | Students will identify personal, cultural, and global perspectives and will employ these perspectives to evaluate complex systems. |
| Quantitative Reasoning: | Students will accurately compute calculations and symbolic operations and explain their use in a field of study. |
| Information Literacy: | Students will identify information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, explain how that information is organized, identify the best sources of information for a given enquiry, locate and critically evaluate sources, and accurately and effectively share that information. |

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