



Graduate Teaching Assistant Class Observation Form

Graduate Assistant: Molly Ryan
 Faculty Observer: Megan Weaver
 Term: Fall 2022
 Date Observed: October 5th
 Course: ENGL 1105

 Evaluate the GA's performance on the following criteria by marking the check box next to the statement that best characterizes the class you observed.

1. Organization and Structure of the Class

- Class session was well-organized, with sufficient time allotted for planned activities.
- Class session was organized and with only minor exceptions allotted sufficient time for activities.
- Class may have been planned but only partially adhered to the plan or reflected marked shifts away from timely progression through activities.
- Class session reflected significant concerns with planning, organization, or timing.
- Not applicable or no basis for response.

2. Helpfulness to Students

- Appears to actively seek ways and opportunities to be helpful to students.
- Appears helpful and receptive when approached.
- Answered questions from students but did not appear to welcome them.
- Appeared to discourage questions and/or belittles or berates questioner.
- Not applicable or no basis for response.

3. Knowledge and Facility with Course Materials

- Appears excellent, demonstrating a strong grasp of key concepts or core curricular principles.
- Appears quite good, but would benefit from further background knowledge in Composition theory and best practices
- Appears ineffective due to only partial or provisional familiarity with key concepts or core curricular principles.
- Ineffective due to lack of effort or limited interest in or engagement with key concepts or core curricular principles.
- Not applicable or no basis for response.

4. Communication Skills

- Appears highly effective, explained difficult concepts or instructions well, clear and concise in delivery or responses.
- Appears effective, explained most concepts or instructions well, needed little follow-up.

Appears to have some problems communicating, explains most concepts or instructions to an extent but requires frequent follow-up.

Appears ineffective, reflects difficulty in explaining concepts or instructions.

Not applicable or no basis for response.

5. Ability to Engage Students with Course Materials or Activities

Readily engaged students effectively and placed appropriate emphasis on important points.

Engaged students with material or activities in a followable, organized manner.

Engaged students with materials and/or activities but would benefit from providing further context.

Did not engage students successfully or present materials or activities well to students.

Not applicable or no basis for response.

6. Professionalism

Appears very professional.

Appears professional, but could use improvement in one or two areas such as

Appears mostly professional. Needs improvement in several minor areas such as

Appears unprofessional. Needs major improvement in

Not applicable or no basis for response.

Summary of primary strengths observed:

Molly began by situating today's class meeting in context to Monday's class and in context with the second unit of the course: Reading Spaces. She then shared the day's agenda before moving into a mentimeter poll that served as a mental and emotional check in with students in the class. What stood out as effective to me during this moment is how Molly explained *why* she was having students complete the poll. It wasn't solely an ice breaker or opening check in; rather, as Molly explained, emotional feelings and responses are part of rhetoric, and it is important to pay attention to one's being and feelings in order to engage with rhetoric productively.

After the menti poll, the class moved to complete an opening freewrite activity in their project 2 folder. Prior to starting the writing, students knew that they would be sharing their writing with a partner. I was excited to see that students willingly engaged with one another during the partner share. And, when some students seemed hesitant to partner up, Molly did well to recognize this and combine students into pairs to ensure everyone was participating in the activity. After a few minutes of partner sharing, Molly brought the class back to one large group and began explaining the relationship between rhetoric and storytelling—how they are often viewed as opposites but do very similar work. The lesson about rhetoric and storytelling continued with the use of short video clips and example rhetorical analyses conducted on the board. The lesson itself sought to situate students with the work of Reading Spaces (an introduction to rhetoric and rhetorical reading alongside narrative techniques of describing and explaining individual experience). Two aspects of the lesson stood out as teaching exemplars: 1) Molly brought her own identity as a researcher and

teacher into the classroom through the use of visuals she created to illustrate the relationships of rhetorical appeals and the relationship across rhetoric and narrative; 2) Molly continually made connections to literacy and to their prior unit as a way to situate their current work and current focus in the class. This was very successful in helping students understand how Reading Spaces, as an assignment, built upon their prior experiences with literacy.

After the lesson, Molly directed students back to their opening freewrite. Students were asked to expand on it by writing about how rhetorical appeals worked in their favorite story they had written about (again, this activity sought to bridge the major concepts of rhetoric and storytelling). For the final writing activity of the day, students started brainstorming toward their Reading Spaces project and engaging in detailed description of a specific reading moment. One thing Molly made sure to do for each writing prompt was to provide students with an example text in case any of them were stuck or confused about the questions. Although she didn't spend much time on these examples, they were projected for students in case they were needed. To conclude the class, Molly referenced the course calendar to contextualize the class for what is about to come.

Summary of suggested areas for improvement:

Two suggestions came up for me while observing the class.

- While showing the two example video clips about successful and unsuccessful rhetoric/storytelling, Molly completed an analysis of each on the board. She then went on to explain this analysis to students. I wondered about the possibility of having students do this sort of analysis themselves, either individually or as a large class. Though it would take up more time, it might offer students more practice with the concepts introduced earlier in the class.
- Only at the end of class when Molly showed the class schedule did I, as the observer, realize there was an assigned reading that students completed for homework. This piqued my curiosity as to how assigned readings were typically incorporated into class meetings or if they served a majority purpose for outside of class work. Given that the lesson I observed worked well without direct connection to a reading, I can't suggest the need to incorporate a reference to the homework in the lesson; however, I recommend considering how to make use of assigned texts during class meeting times in order to encourage a purpose for completing the homework.

GA's Comment/Response

Class Observer Megan M. Weaver Date 10/05/22

Graduate Assistant Molly Spur Date 10/05/22