

Amy J. Devitt

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Consultant, speaker, teacher, writer, and scholar on English language, writing, and rhetoric

- Writing in all genres—academic, professional, and everyday
- Legal writing
- Writing in the sciences
- Teaching writing
- Language standards and conventions

Education

Ph.D. University of Michigan, English Language and Literature, 1982.

M.A. University of Kansas, English Literature and Composition, 1979.

B.A. *summa cum laude*. Trinity University (San Antonio, Texas), English, 1977.

Academic Appointments

Professor Emerita, University of Kansas, 2020-present.

Chancellors Club Teaching Professor, University of Kansas, 2007-2020.

Professor of English, University of Kansas, 2001-2020.

Frances L. Stiefel Teaching Professor, Department of English, 2012-2015.

Conger-Gabel Teaching Professor, University of Kansas, 2001-2004.

Associate Professor of English, University of Kansas, 1988- 2001.

Assistant Professor of English, University of Kansas, 1985-1988.

Assistant Professor of English, University of Tulsa, 1982-1985.

Types of Consultant Experience

Legal Writing--Designer and Leader of Seminars in Legal Writing and individual tutorials for associates in law firms (Dallas, Houston, Wichita), 2000-present.

Legal Language--Expert consultant on contract language (multiple law firms), jury instructions (state of Kansas Death Penalty Defense Unit), Miranda warnings (Expert witness in *State of Kansas v. Carl Dean Rails*, Case No. 98CR-2158, Division No. 1, in the District Court of Johnson County, Kansas (Criminal Court Department), 1987-present.

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Writing in the Sciences--Designer and leader of seminars and workshop on writing more effectively for graduate students in the sciences (Self Graduate Fellowship Development Program in Written Communication, University of Kansas), 2003-present.

Teaching Writing--Designer and leader of seminars and workshops on using writing effectively for teachers of writing and for faculty across campus (multiple universities), 1985-present.

Administrative Positions

Director, First- and Second-Year English Department of English, University of Kansas, 2010-2013, 1994-2000. Acting Director 1989-1990.

Administered campus-wide writing program

Associate Director and Originator, The Writing Center, University of Kansas, 1985-1989.

Created and administered campus-wide writing-across-the-curriculum program

Publications

Books

Landmark Essays on Rhetorical Genre Studies (co-edited with Carolyn R. Miller). New York and London: Routledge, 2019

Writing Genres. Carbondale IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004.

Finalist for CCCO Outstanding Book Award 2006.

Reissued in paperback 2008.

Scenes of Writing: Strategies for Composing with Genres (with Mary Jo Reiff and Anis Bawarshi). New York NY: Pearson/Longman, 2004.

Standardizing Written English: Diffusion in the Case of Scotland 1520-1659. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Reissued in paperback 2006.

Blog

Genre-Colored Glasses <https://www.amydevitt.com/genre-colored-glasses>

Articles and Chapters

Over 2 dozen articles in scholarly publications and chapters in edited collections, 1980-2020

Selected Presentations

Invited Lectures and Workshops

- "When Genres Break Bad: How to See, Name, and Sanction Illicit Communication."
Plenary address. Symposium on Illicit Genres. University of Copenhagen. November 4, 2019
- "Why a Crash is No 'Accident': How Language and Conventions Shape Us."
Chancellors Club Advisory Board. University of Kansas. October 1, 2018
- "Genre Traces: How We Define, Recognize, and Hide Genres."
University of Copenhagen, 22 May 2018.
- "How to Choose the Genres You Use." "How to Use the Genres You Choose."
Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program, University of Rochester, October 10, 2017
- "Meanings and Meaningfulness of Genre: A View from Rhetorical Genre Studies."
Friedrich Schlegel Graduiertenschule für literaturwissenschaftliche Studien, "The Rhetoric of Literary Studies." Freie Universität, Berlin, Germany, July 27, 2017.
- "Conformity and Resistance: Some Challenges from Current Genre Theory"
Bemærkelsesværdig sagprosa: Danmark som tekstkultur, University of Copenhagen, April, 21, 2017.
- "What Genre-Based Pedagogies Reveal about Disciplinarity"
Genre Studies in the Humanities doctoral seminar, University of Copenhagen, Denmark. October 8, 2015
- "Who Gets to Say? What Defines Genre in Rhetorical Genre Studies,"
Genre Studies in the Humanities doctoral seminar, University of Copenhagen, Denmark. October 5, 2015
- "Be(com)ing a Genre-Aware Teacher"
Red River Graduate Student Conference, North Dakota State University, March 28, 2015
- "Choosing Genres to Teach and Teaching Them Well"
University of Michigan, January 23, 2015
- "How to Use Genres Effectively in Your Teaching"
"Developing Genre Awareness for Teachers and Students"
Brigham Young University, November 20, 2014.

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“Understanding Genres as Culturally Meaningful Actions.”

Syracuse University, Keynote Address, April 3, 2014.

“Between Theory and Curriculum”

Genre 2012, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada, June 27, 2012.

“Genre As Rhetorical Construct” “Using Genre Analysis to Help You Write”

Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden, September 15-16, 2011

“Some Ideas for Teaching New Genres from Old Genres”

5th International Symposium on Genre Studies, Universidade de Caxias do Sul, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil, August 2009.

“Integrating Rhetorical and Literary Theories of Genre”

“Current Issues and Challenges in Genre Studies” (with Carolyn R. Miller)

“Teaching New Genres through Genre Awareness”

Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Recife, PE, Brazil, August 2009.

“Studying Writing.” Perspectives on English Language Studies Symposium.

University of Michigan. Ann Arbor, Michigan, December 2008.

“Between Stability and Flexibility: How Genres Change.”

Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, January 2008.

“Why Teaching Genre’s Not What You Think.”

University of North Carolina-Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, October 2007.

“Teaching Critical Genre Awareness, Fostering Critical Genre Action.”

4th International Symposium on Genre Studies, Tubarao, Santa Catarina, Brazil, 2007.

Conference Presentations

Over 3 dozen presentations at scholarly conferences

Courses Taught

Writing

- Basic Writing
- Introductory Composition
- Composition and Literature
- Advanced Exposition
- Advanced Composition (topics: Expository Writing, Writing with Confidence, Writing to Innovate/Writing to Conform)
- Research Writing
- Argumentative Writing
- Writing for the Professions
- Writing in a Democratic Society/Civic Discourse
- Scholarly Writing for Publication
- Legal Writing

Language

- Introduction to the English Language
- English Grammar
- History of the English Language
- Development of Modern English
- Grammar and Usage for Composition
- Correctness in Writing
- Professional Editing
- Modern English Grammars
- Seminar on Standards and Norms in Written English

Composition/ Rhetoric

- Composition Studies
- Study and Teaching of Writing
- The Study of Written English
- Practicum in the Teaching of College English I
- Practicum in the Teaching of College English II
- Rhetoric of Correctness
- Directed Readings (topics: Classical Rhetoric, Pedagogies of Composition)
- Seminars and Topics Courses in Composition Theory [topics: Genres for Social Action, Why Genre Matters, Ways of Knowing About Writing (research methods); Genre; Placing Composition; Creativity and Invention; Writing Program Administration, Genre Theory, Feminisms and Composition].

Literature

- Restoration and Eighteenth-Century British Literature
- Eighteenth-Century Novel
- Directed Reading: The Genre of Cowboy Poetry

Selected Honors and Fellowships

Chancellors Club Teaching Professorship, University of Kansas, 2007 – 2020.
Frances L. Stiefel Teaching Professorship, Department of English, 2012 - 2015.
Conger-Gabel Teaching Professorship. Department of English, 2001 – 2004.
Mabel Frye Teaching Award, Department of English, 1994; 2007.
Keeler Intrauniversity Professor, University of Kansas, 2001.
Kemper Teaching Fellow, 1996.
Byron A. Alexander Outstanding Graduate Mentor Award, 1996.
Edward Grier Award, Department of English, 1996.
Vice Chancellors Fellow, 1995-1996.
Phi Beta Kappa, 1977.