Stanford

# Erik Ellis

Advanced Lecturer, Program in Writing and Rhetoric

## Bio

### BIO

Erik Ellis has been teaching for the Program in Writing and Rhetoric since 2011. He holds a BA from Beloit College, an MA in journalism from the University of Colorado at Boulder, an MFA in creative writing from New York University, and a Ph.D. in Rhetoric, Composition, and the Teaching of English from the University of Arizona.

Erik's PWR 1 course, “Prowling Toward Certainty: Exploration as Argument,” challenges students to research and write about controversial issues about which they feel ambivalent. Students get to practice writing as a way of thinking—an authentic, exciting quest for meaning that values intellectual discovery over formulas.

Students in Erik's PWR 2 course, “Once Upon a Cause: Producing Picture Books for Local Children,” not only analyze picture books and write essays about them but collaborate closely with a group of classmates to create an original, compelling, and educationally appropriate picture book for children at Lucille M. Nixon Elementary (a short bike ride from campus). During a series of field trips to the school, the kids offer inspiration and constructive criticism to PWR 2 students as they develop and revise their picture books, which also reflect individual research projects. Needless to say, Erik loves picture books and considers this multimodal genre not only fun--though not always--but rhetorically sophisticated and powerful. You can read a Stanford News story about the PWR 2 picture book project here: https://news.stanford.edu/2018/03/01/stanford-students-craft-big-life-lessons-books-little-kids/.

Erik has written about style, the essay, the multimedia essay, and is currently working on a project about picture books.

### ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Advanced Lecturer, Program in Writing and Rhetoric

## Research & Scholarship

### CURRENT RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTERESTS

SPECIALIZATION: the essay, style, multimodal composition, visual rhetoric, picture books

## Teaching

### COURSES

**2026-27**

- Writing & Rhetoric 1: Prowling Toward Certainty: Exploration as Argument: PWR 1EE (Spr)

- Writing & Rhetoric 2: Once Upon a Cause: The Rhetoric of Picture Books: PWR 2EE (Aut, Win)

**2025-26**

- Writing & Rhetoric 1: Prowling Toward Certainty: Exploration as Argument: PWR 1EE (Aut, Spr, Sum)
- Writing & Rhetoric 2: Once Upon a Cause: The Rhetoric of Picture Books: PWR 2EE (Win)

**2024-25**

- Writing & Rhetoric 1: Prowling Toward Certainty: Exploration as Argument: PWR 1EE (Aut)
- Writing & Rhetoric 2: Once Upon a Cause: Producing Picture Books for Local Children: PWR 2EE (Win, Spr)
- Writing Academic Arguments: The Art of the Essay: PWR 1D (Sum)

**2023-24**

- Writing & Rhetoric 2: Once Upon a Cause: Producing Picture Books for Local Children: PWR 2EE (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Writing Academic Arguments: The Art of the Essay: PWR 1D (Sum)

## Publications

### PUBLICATIONS

- **Completely Out of My Domain: An Institutional Narrative of Multimedia Collaboration** *Kairos*
  Ellis, E., Underwood, D.
  2015; 20 (1)
- **Back to the Future?: The Pedagogical Promise of the (Multimedia) Essay** *Multimodal Literacies and Emerging Genres*
  Ellis, E.
  edited by Bowen, T., Whithaus, C.
  University of Pittsburgh Press.2013
- **Toward a Pedagogy of Psychic Distance** *The Centrality of Style*
  Ellis, E.
  edited by Duncan, M., Medzerian Vanguri, S.
  The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press.2013
- **Shushes in the Parlor: Reclaiming the "Conversation" Metaphor** *Disrupting Pedagogies in the Knowledge Society: Countering Conservative Norms with Creative Approaches*
  Ellis, E.
  edited by Faulkner, J.
  IGI Global.2012